

# The Guardian

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## 2022.06.19 - Opinion

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[The Observer](#)[Arron Banks](#)

# **Arron Banks set out to crush me in court. Instead, my quest for the facts was vindicated**

[Carole Cadwalladr](#)



The libel claim brought by the Brexit campaigner took its toll. But the judgment offered personal relief and hope for public interest journalism



Carole Cadwalladr and her legal team outside the royal courts of justice.  
Photograph: Antonio Olmos/The Observer

Sun 19 Jun 2022 03.30 EDT

Last week, after a nearly six-month wait, I learned that I'd [won the libel claim](#) brought against me by Arron Banks, the main funder of the Leave.EU campaign. It has been a long, brutal haul and the stress over the three years since it began has been extreme. I'm not so much relieved as completely numb.

I had been braced to lose and I knew exactly what would happen if I had. The headlines I would face, the accusation that I was – what my detractors have always claimed – a “conspiracist”, the social media shitstorm that would ensue. I had no doubt about how devastating it would be because every step of this litigation has felt as if it was aimed at trying to crush me. In large part, it's succeeded.

The lawsuit was directed at [24 words I used](#) in a Ted Talk in 2019 but my history with Banks goes back much further. The entire investigation that would uncover the [Facebook-Cambridge Analytica scandal](#) began in 2016 with [a series of denials](#) from the firm about its relationship with Leave.EU.

That investigation led not just to [record fines against Facebook](#) and Mark Zuckerberg being [dragged before Congress](#), but to findings that [Banks's Leave.EU campaign](#) had broken both electoral and data laws. But it was our revelations in this paper about his relationship [with the Russian government](#) that hit a nerve. Banks [reported me](#) to the police. He accused me of computer [hacking and then blackmail](#).

And then a year later, he sued.

Over these words that [I told the audience](#) at Ted's main conference in Vancouver: "... and I'm not even going to get into the lies that Arron Banks told about his covert relationship with the Russian government".

I thought the meaning of these words was blindingly obvious. That he'd told lies about his covert relationship with the Russian government! I was wrong. In November 2019, as part of the hearing to determine the "legal" meaning of the words I had used, Mr Justice Saini came up with [his formulation](#), not the one I thought the words had meant; not even the one Banks had advanced. He contended that I'd said he'd had "a secret relationship with the Russian government in relation to acceptance of foreign funding of electoral campaigns in breach of the law".

The judge's ruling meant that I was going to be put on trial to defend the truth of words I'd never said

It felt like I'd stepped into the pages of a Kafka novel. The judge's ruling meant that I was going to be put on trial to defend the truth of a statement I'd never actually said or meant.

When news broke that I'd [withdrawn the truth defence](#) and would instead be defending it only on public interest, it sent the rightwing media system into meltdown. A tsunami of abusive articles, tweets, pronouncements from commentators and MPs, the low point of which was when the chair of the Orwell prize rang me to say that of course they wouldn't be asking for [my prize](#) back as the [Spectator was demanding](#), but they'd taken it sufficiently seriously to take legal advice.

I don't know if it was because these smears against me stuck or if our entire press had been rendered mute in the face of Banks's legal threats, but the near total silence around this case has been one of its most extraordinary aspects. One month before Russia invaded Ukraine, as part of the legal action, documents disclosed by both me and Banks provided new insight about the relationship between the biggest funder of the Brexit campaign and the Kremlin in a multimillion pound trial against a journalist that [19 press freedom organisations](#) said they believed was an abuse of law. Much of this went wholly unreported. Save for the *Guardian*, not a single mainstream news outlet covered any of it.

I'm writing this today because the law must change. We cannot and must not allow another journalist to go through this. Not for the sake of their sanity but for the health of our democracy. Because this is not democracy. It's oligarchy. And Banks v Cadwalladr needs to be the last time these obscene laws are used against a journalist in this way.

What this case proves is that no journalist is safe. The judge, Mrs Justice Steyn, said that Banks's case against me was not a "Slapp" suit, that is a strategic lawsuit against public participation. She said his attempt to seek vindication through the proceedings against me was legitimate. She is correct because it couldn't be. There is no definition of a Slapp suit in UK law, which is why none of what I believe to be the abusive aspects of this case were entered into evidence. They formed no part of my defence, one of the things I found most upsetting after the trial.

However, the judge clearly states in her judgment that the *Observer* had previously published a report containing "essentially the same allegations, and a very similar meaning". But Banks didn't sue the *Observer* and he didn't sue Ted, he sued me. He presumably thought I was the weakest link. He was wrong. But only because an incredible sea of people rose up to support me. I relied on the generosity of my legal team and the kindness of strangers: 28,887 people who contributed the astonishing sum of £819,835 to my two crowdfunders. Even writing that makes me tear up.

The ability to report on the Kremlin's involvement with leading individuals in the Brexit campaign would have been stifled forever

It would have been utterly impossible for me to defend myself without this support. It was only barely possible even with it. But if I hadn't done so, some key facts about the political moment that changed our country forever – [Brexit](#) – could have been rewritten. The ability to report on the Kremlin's involvement with leading individuals in the Brexit campaign would have been stifled forever. The record could have been changed.

This is because what the coverage of the case last week missed, and what lay readers of the judgment probably won't understand, is what an [extraordinary document](#) it is. Not just for what it means for all UK news outlets in terms of a public interest defence succeeding, but for a forensic examination of the facts of Banks's relationship with the Russian government that is on the record forever.

I was blown away reading it. Mrs Justice Steyn painstakingly undertook her own examination of the accuracy of Banks's claim that his "sole involvement with the Russians was a boozy six-hour lunch". That is what he claimed after the Electoral Commission announced it would investigate the "true source" of his [£8m donation](#) to the Brexit campaign. And this is what she found. That statement was, she said, "wholly inaccurate".

She examined all the underlying documentation, including evidence newly revealed in the case, and concluded "he had at least four meetings, including three lunches". She added: "It would be wrong to expect a journalist to refrain from identifying such an inaccurate statement... as a lie."

But it doesn't end there. She noted: "The four meetings on 6 November 2015, 17 November 2015, 19 August 2016 and 18 November 2016 were probably not the full extent [of] Mr Banks's meetings with Russian officials." There were reasonable grounds to believe numerous other meetings occurred. She regards Banks's words in an email on 19 January 2016 that he intended "to pop in and see the ambassador as well" were "suggestive of a relationship in which he could visit the Russian ambassador with ease".

She said the statement by Andy Wigmore, spokesman for the Leave.EU campaign and Banks's business partner, about why he retracted his claim that Banks was in Moscow in early 2016 as "not credible". Nor was Banks's

claim that he received a document entitled “Russian gold sector consolidation play” from a British associate, not a Russian oligarch.

Boris Johnson’s government came to power on the coat-tails of Brexit. It has refused to investigate Russia’s continuing attacks on western democracy and our information systems. Johnson personally intervened to delay publication of the Intelligence and Security Committee’s Russia report. He continues to refuse its demand for an inquiry.

The only information we have about Russia’s efforts has come from US investigators and a handful of journalists. And now this judgment.

The personal, physical, psychological and professional toll of fighting this case has been profound. But it’s not my win, it belongs to the legal team and the 28,887 people who stood alongside me. Banks could still decide to appeal against Mrs Justice Steyn’s interpretation of the law. But not the facts.

Whatever happens next, we have these now. We held the line. There were at least four meetings between the main funder of the Brexit campaign and the Russian government. There are reasonable grounds to believe there were many more. Fact.

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## The ObserverPress freedom

# The Observer view on Carole Cadwalladr and a victory for public interest journalism

Observer editorial

The journalist's successful defence is a testament to her courage and a warning to the very wealthy that they can't rely on the courts to escape criticism



Carole Cadwalladr outside the Royal Courts of Justice with her supporters in January 2022. Photograph: Tayfun Salci/Zuma Press Wire/Rex/Shutterstock

Sun 19 Jun 2022 01.30 EDT

The resolve displayed by Carole Cadwalladr in her successful defence against a libel action brought by Arron Banks calls to mind Hemingway's definition of courage as "grace under pressure". For years, this award-winning journalist had been investigating the role of social media in our democracy and the role that Facebook in particular had played in the Brexit

referendum. Since Banks was a leading figure in – and a substantial donor to – the leave campaign, she had inevitably become interested in his finances, and in a [Ted Talk](#) in April 2019 referred briefly to him in 24 words and later said something similar in a tweet.

The context for the remark was that the *Times*, the *Observer* and other news outlets had been reporting how Mr Banks had, [as one lawyer put it](#), “misled everyone about the number, and nature, of his covert meetings with Russian officials”.

A judge held that Cadwalladr’s words conveyed a meaning that she said she had not intended and indeed didn’t believe to be true. She dropped her defence of truth and relied on one of public interest. Banks could have sued the publisher of the Ted Talk for defamation, but it was Cadwalladr personally that he chose to sue.

The significance of this will not be lost on anyone with experience of libel actions in British courts. The severity of this country’s defamation laws and the cost of fighting a case make the high court a casino in which too often only the very wealthy can afford to play. The potential costs of defending a case can run into millions of pounds and can be enough to persuade many publishers, let alone individual journalists, to back down and settle without going to court. When Catherine Belton, author of [Putin’s People](#), and HarperCollins, her publisher, were sued for libel in 2021 by several oligarchs, including Roman Abramovich and a Russian oil company, [she told MPs](#) that her case had cost the publisher £1.5m in legal fees to defend and could have cost £5m if the case had gone to trial. (In the end, the cases were settled or withdrawn.)

These chilling realities, when combined with the complexity of defending a case under UK libel laws, explain why British journalists are reluctant to publish information about wealthy or powerful individuals. It takes courage to take risks – as Cadwalladr did – that could result in personal bankruptcy. As she herself says, the personal, physical, psychological and professional toll for her of fighting the case has been profound. That is why Robert Maxwell, a corrupt and litigious media tycoon, could escape critical media examination until he drowned after looting the pension fund of his

publishing empire. Until recently, many London-based Russian oligarchs used the same strategy to intimidate journalists and authors.

The most positive outcome of the Banks case is the evolution of judicial thinking on what constitutes a public interest defence. The judge decided that, in light of Cadwalladr's formidable investigative persistence, all the things she had unearthed about Banks, his finances and his meetings with Russian officials, it was reasonable to believe that it was in the public interest to have said what she did. This judgment is a triumphant vindication of a formidable journalist who endured unconscionable personal stress and misogynistic abuse to get her stories out. And it leaves the rest of us in her debt.

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## The ObserverByelections

# The Observer view on this week's by-elections in Wakefield and Tiverton and Honiton

Observer editorial

Tactical voting is a rare chance for voters to show the Conservative party exactly what they think of Boris Johnson



Lib Dem Richard Foord faces the best chance of overturning the Tory majority in Tiverton and Honiton. Photograph: Finnbarr Webster/Getty Images

Sun 19 Jun 2022 01.00 EDT

When Conservative MPs recently had the opportunity to evict a profoundly unpopular and deeply discredited prime minister who broke the law and then lied about it to parliament, they flunked the test. The [148 who did the right thing](#) were outnumbered by the 211 placeholders, cronies and cynics who chose to keep him at No 10. In the fortnight since, we have been provided

with an accumulation of further evidence that they were morally myopic and politically foolish to allow Boris Johnson to carry on squatting in the office he has so debased.

His lack of basic integrity has been underlined by the [resignation of Christopher Geidt](#) as his adviser on ministerial interests. Geidt is the second holder of the post to realise that trying to get this prime minister to follow rules on ethical behaviour is an impossibly oxymoronic challenge. It is a sign of how far expectations of decent conduct have collapsed during the Johnson regime that few are surprised to learn that he is [considering dispensing](#) with having an ethics invigilator at all. A prime minister who casually flouted his own Covid laws has also shown himself ready to consciously break international law by announcing legislation to unilaterally recast the [Northern Ireland protocol](#). This defies the wishes of the majority of Northern Ireland's elected representatives and seeks to undo the Brexit agreement that he negotiated and sold to the British people as "[an oven-ready deal](#)" at the 2019 election. Amid the gravest armed conflict on our continent since 1945 and the most severe squeeze on living standards in decades, a trade war with the European Union is the last thing this country needs. It will fuel inflation and make it even likelier that the UK slides into recession. And yet, with all too characteristic recklessness, this government is risking just that.

In its pursuit of an [inhumane and expensive scheme](#) of dubious legality to export asylum seekers to Rwanda, the government is squandering taxpayers' money and Britain's reputation with a grotesque gimmick rather than making an intelligent effort to address the challenges posed by migration. With the arrogant nastiness we have come to expect of this government, there are threats to try to [kick the bishops](#) out of the House of Lords for daring to condemn the Rwanda scheme as ungodly and unethical. A similar propensity to play squalid partisan politics with any issue has been displayed in ministers' [refusal to intervene](#) to try to head off the crippling rail strikes that will be inflicted on Britain this week. It is hard to escape the suspicion that the government [condemns these strikes](#) while being secretly delighted to see the travel plans of millions thrown into chaos in the hope that the Tories can weaponise the disruption to wound the Labour party.



Labour's Simon Lightwood can take back Wakefield from the Tories.  
Photograph: Ian Forsyth/Getty Images

Pollsters have long been unanimous in reporting that a substantial majority of the public want Johnson removed from office. Without a general election, the country has no mechanism for achieving this result.

Two groups of voters are in a more privileged position. They have been presented with the opportunity to send a message of rebuke to the Conservative party on behalf of the UK. On Thursday, there will be a by-election in Wakefield, West Yorkshire, and another in Tiverton and Honiton, in Devon. Both have been triggered by the resignation of disgraced Tory MPs. One was forced to quit after his conviction for sexually assaulting a teenage boy, the other after being caught watching pornography in the House of Commons. That conduct provides incentive for voters to express disgust with the Conservatives. The surest guarantee of defeating them is for all non-Tory voters to get behind the progressive party with the best chance of winning.

In Devon, that means voting for the Liberal Democrats. To win, they need to demolish a huge Conservative majority. They showed themselves capable of doing that before Christmas when they took North Shropshire. In the climactic days of campaigning, the Lib Dems will be flooding Tiverton and

Honiton with hundreds of activists. The result could be close. Labour and Green supporters should recognise that a vote for their first preference will effectively be half a vote in favour of Johnson continuing in office. They should heed Ed Davey's call to lend their votes to the Lib Dems to help "deliver the knock-out blow to Boris Johnson". We urge supporters of other non-Tory parties to get behind the Lib Dem candidate to be sure the constituency issues the rebuke Conservative MPs so richly deserve.

Labour has high expectations of taking Wakefield, which it represented for decades before the last general election. We hope for better than a narrow Labour win. What is required is a stonking rejection of the Tories. In Wakefield, we want to see supporters of non-Tory parties make their votes as potent as possible. In this case, it means getting behind the Labour candidate.

There is no shame in tactical voting. For as long as political outcomes are distorted by an antique and unfair first-past-the-post electoral system, voting tactically is the only way to mobilise the anti-Tory majority. Keir Starmer and Davey have been encouraging tactical voting by sensibly focusing their parties' energies where each is best placed to punish the [Conservatives](#).

On Thursday, voters in two very different areas have the opportunity to speak for the country. A double whammy of byelection defeats will frighten Conservative MPs in red wall seats and those traditionally true blue. A scare, the bigger the better, is exactly what the Tories need before this government slithers into even worse degeneracy.

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## The ObserverArchitecture

# Architecture students deserve better than toxic cultures and sleepless nights

[Rowan Moore](#)



Revelations about the renowned Bartlett school reflect a wider and longstanding problem with the profession



Frank Lloyd Wright and his team of apprentices in 1945. Photograph: Nara Archives/REX/Shutterstock

Sat 18 Jun 2022 10.00 EDT Last modified on Sat 18 Jun 2022 12.30 EDT

The Bartlett, one of the most esteemed schools of architecture in the country, a part of University College London, is the subject of a damning report. Produced by the investigation firm Howlett Brown, it found evidence of bullying, racism, sexual harassment and a “boys’ club” of staff who protected one another from complaints. It reported allegations that a “senior leader” mocked, demeaned and verbally attacked female students and made sexist comments to them. The Bartlett, said the report, suffered from “[a toxic culture spanning decades](#)”.

There may be lessons for the teaching and practice of architecture more widely. For years, both have been susceptible to a hero complex where the cause of great architecture is so exalted that almost no sacrifice is too much to be made in its name. Students are encouraged to work impossible hours, enduring nights without sleep. They then have to present their work in sessions known as “crits”, in front of fellow students, to be praised or dismembered by their teachers and eminent visiting critics.

This culture gets carried into practice, where the price for working in glamorous practices has often been impossible hours for low pay. Clients, too, might be expected to pay the price for genius; some of the most admired works in architectural history are houses whose cost drove their owners to the brink of bankruptcy and whose malfunctions drove them to despair. The ultimate winners were the architects who became celebrities and went into history books, but there is a lot of human wreckage along the way.

It is important to distinguish specific instances of abuse at the Bartlett (and, as are likely to emerge, at other schools) from a more generalised culture, but it's easy to see how, given an extreme inequality of power between star architects and slaving students, one might foster the other. One can only hope a more humane profession emerges.

## Listed litter



New York City's last phone booths are removed. Photograph: Erik Pendzich/REX/Shutterstock

The last phone booth in New York [has been removed](#). This would be sad news for Clark Kent, left with nowhere to change into Superman, and for nostalgists for all those movie detectives and desperate lovers who yelled vital messages on stormy streets while shovelling change into the phone

slots. But the booths have at last gone the way of carrier pigeons and telegrams.

In Britain, we are nowhere near that stage, in part because many are listed structures, as examples of the famous red K2 and K6 phone boxes, rolled out from 1926 and 1936 respectively. Instead, their owner [BT](#) lets them rot, with fading paintwork, broken windowpanes and litter-filled floors, conceivably to help build a case for their removal. This would be a dereliction of BT's responsibility as custodians of historic structures, but it may have a point. The K2 and K6 were designed to tidy up the clutter caused by the first appearance of less orderly and elegant booths. Now, though, these redundant objects, even if well kept, are themselves clutter.

## State of the nation



Prescient: historian Eric Hobsbawm. Photograph: Wesley/Getty Images

A friend sends me some writing on the state of Britain. “A parasitic rather than a competitive economy...” it says, “the best country in the world to be rich and leisured in: a place for foreign millionaires to buy themselves estates.” It has the ring of truth. The only thing is, it was published in 1968 by the historian Eric Hobsbawm in his *Industry and Empire* and was

describing the years before the First World War. Not much seems to have changed in the century and more since then.

Rowan Moore is the Observer's architecture correspondent

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**Observer comment cartoon**

**Boris Johnson**

## **Handcart from hell for Boris Johnson – cartoon**

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[The ObserverTheatre](#)

## **Of course theatre critics should speak their mind, but not with cheap shots**

[Catherine Bennett](#)



One irritating theatre reviewer shouldn't hide the fact that too many writers pull punches



Legally Blonde at Regent's Park Open Air theatre. The Observer reviewer gave it four stars: "Everything is as popping and pink as bubblegum."

Photograph: Pamela Raith

Sun 19 Jun 2022 02.00 EDT

Remaining evening performances of *Legally Blonde*, showing at the Regent's Park Open Air theatre, are, at the time of writing, sold out. While terrific for the production, this does limit opportunities for theatregoers hoping to demonstrate support for a show whose cast has been collectively body-shamed by a leading critic: "The stage's superstructure wobbles under the weight of the company's loosely choreographed gyrations."

The production opened to generally [approving notices](#), with the *Observer*'s Susannah Clapp giving it [four stars](#): "Everything is as popping and pink as bubblegum." But the theatre, stung by "the insensitive language of one review", issued this warning: "We expect that everyone comments with respect and sensitivity and those who decide not to will no longer be invited back to our theatre."

At the Tony awards last week, where she won two awards as co-creator of the hugely successful *Six*, Lucy Moss, *Legally Blonde*'s director, was

emphatic: the review had been “unacceptable”.

The offending piece is taken to be that, entitled “Not so Pretty in Pink”, by the *Sunday Times* theatre critic, Quentin Letts, a veteran of various scraps with understandably offended theatres. In 2018, the RSC said his suggestion that a highly regarded actor had been cast because he was black amounted to “a blatantly racist attitude”.

While he had a range of reservations about *Legally Blonde*, Letts seemed especially unimpressed by the cast’s appearance, citing the “fuller-bodied, nonbinary actors”. So much so that it’s not clear that any line-up, binary-wise, would have been acceptable unless it fulfilled his body-mass requirements. “Fellow fatties of the world,” he wrote, “first we take Harvard, then we take Brenda Hale’s old seat on the Supreme Court.”

The name-calling could hardly be better calculated to arouse sympathy for the indignant theatres

Though it may be little consolation for the Regent’s Park performers, they have not been singled out for denigration, not even on the basis that Letts dislikes the look of them. Actually, they’re in fantastic company. Some years ago, the critic defended, with yet more elaborate insults, those dismissing a young opera singer as inadequately enticing in *Der Rosenkavalier*. The “roly poly” young singer had, Letts said, “the figure and face of a goodish pork pie” and looked “as though she has been at the biscuit barrel”. For critics not to feel similarly disinhibited in their responses would, he said, be for them to fall victim to “Leveson-style censorship”. You gathered that anyone interested in free speech should defend to the death, even if they recoil from fat-shaming, this defiant critic’s right to disqualify performers for being too big or too black or too old or for repeatedly speaking in what Letts calls “whining Scottish accents”.

In reality, the name-calling could hardly be better calculated to arouse sympathy, even among habitual respecters of creative freedom, for the indignant theatres. Even if, as is often stressed by advocates of review-resilience, Byron was mean to Keats, unkind reviewers were once challenged to duels, Henry James survived being booed and, more recently,

Kenneth Tynan was always skewering actors. For one thing, if the ghastly Tynan was likewise [threatened with bans](#) it was also recognised that he loved the theatre. And if “fatties” are still eligible for the pillory, Equity’s view that reviewers are in need of its educational guidelines – especially on race, but also on writing in general “with sensitivity, empathy and understanding” – looks momentarily less condescending.

Except that when you look at the other reviews for *Legally Blonde*, or indeed reviews for almost any current theatre, to warn all critics about their delinquent insensitivity seems about as reasonable as threatening a whole class with detention when only one kid was texting. If anything, many reviewers’ reluctance to trash all but the direst productions, a tendency factored in by cautious theatregoers, has only deepened, post-pandemic, into what sometimes comes across as limitless tenderness towards a convalescing child. And if it’s sometimes unclear, reading between the lines, whether a play goes on so long as to be utterly unendurable, or won all its stars (“moments of brilliance!”) for effort, or is only likeable if you like that sort of thing, many customers probably still share the reviewer’s relief that the theatre is back at all.

Commentary on social media can be instructive here, just as it is in modifying the conclusions of ungenerous critics. “Still grinning from ear to ear from the utter joy” (along with the now redundant advice “get tickets”) seems reasonably typical of the *Legally Blonde* reviews from paying customers.

As revenge for one insulting write-up, this sort of public success is arguably more helpful for the theatre than would be the potentially counter-productive exclusion of its author. When he was previously uninvited from a press night (following an extended [savaging of Kristin Scott Thomas](#)), Letts, then the *Daily Mail*’s reviewer, got a ticket anyway, with the resulting review published under the heroic headline “The man they couldn’t gag”. Nobody, absolutely nobody, would stop him asking what’s so marvellous about Scott Thomas’s cheekbones.

For audiences, too, it might be a pity if this latest skirmish were converted into, on his side, testimony of culture wars martyrdom and, on the other, a vindication of the Equity approach to correcting critics. How, if they are to

undertake to review, invariably, “with sensitivity, empathy and understanding”, will critics be able, when it becomes essential, to warn the public? I think of my own incredibly narrow escape last year from seeing Moira Buffini’s one-star *Manor* at the National Theatre. Since Letts has cried wolf too often, audiences are dependent, in theatrical extremis, on more nuanced voices doing their cultural duty. Would, say, the *Guardian*’s Arifa Akbar have been able to conclude, if empathising dutifully with Buffini, that the “crass”, “clumsy” play was “little short of a turkey?” And if not, aren’t audiences entitled to a little kindness too?

Catherine Bennett is an Observer columnist

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[The Observer](#)[Immigration and asylum](#)

# It might be a culture war ploy, but Patel's Rwanda plan is an abhorrence, with real consequences

[Natasha Walter](#)

The circus around the home secretary's policy stifles debate about how we should alleviate the plight of asylum seekers



Protest outside the Home Office in London on 13 June 2022, the eve of the government's first scheduled deportation flight to Rwanda (later cancelled). Photograph: Dominic Lipinski/PA

Sun 19 Jun 2022 03.00 EDT

When I set off last week to a protest outside the Home Office with my Refugees Welcome placard, I had to battle some reluctance. Yes, I wanted to demonstrate solidarity with those refugees still waiting to hear if they would be on the [plane to Rwanda](#). I wanted to show the lawyers and campaigners working round the clock that there are many of us who believe they are

doing a heroic job. I wanted to remind onlookers in the UK and beyond that many here want to stand up for a more humane society.

But also, I did not want to go. I felt a creeping anxiety that campaigners are being used, forced to play a bit part in Priti Patel's nightmare vision of an ever more polarised, ever more angry nation. She proposes a vile policy, so people shout at her. She tries to do something illegal and judges oppose her. She characterises opponents as a mob and we sit down in the road. No wonder some of us feel as if we are being forced to fulfil a direction set by the government. It provides the plot, we are just the reaction shot. The government is pushing those who care about refugees – or about other, no less urgent issues – into a position of permanent protest.

I fear that we are being set a trap and falling into it, by playing this role in a farce that we didn't script. As many have said, there is a spiralling craziness about this government's approach, where the actual aim is not to achieve any of the stated objectives but to ratchet up the sense of crisis. We know, and they know, and they know that we know, that one key aim of the Rwanda policy is not to solve any potential challenges caused by arrivals on small boats but to create a distraction from the government's real challenges. The more polarised and furious the debate gets, the more successful is the distraction. And yet many of us continue to play our role.

Simple reforms are often the best, which can make what seem like highly charged situations more straightforward

But we cannot do otherwise. Because, while this performative cruelty may be in part a game to the politicians who put it into practice, for the people who are actually affected by the policy, it is far from a game. The narrative that the Rwanda policy is just a dead cat, thrown on to the table to distract from Partygate and the cost of living crisis, ignores the real harm that the policy is doing and the worse harm that it would do if people stopped opposing it. Let's not forget that the deportations last week were halted only because people continued to dig in their heels. Dogged individuals at charities supported refugees threatened with deportation day and night and lawyers worked tirelessly on their legal challenges. They all knew that this is

no time to give up, because what may look like a farce to some is in fact a tragedy in the making.

Nobody who has heard or read any of the interviews with the refugees threatened by removal to Rwanda can be left in any doubt that the cruelty is real. This may be a route to cling on to power for the politicians who craft the policy, but for those affected, this is a route into genuine trauma. We can't just step away from this fight that Boris Johnson and Patel have started, because real lives are at stake.

Real people such as the young Afghan man who was reported to have been served with removal directions, whose father had worked as an interpreter for British troops. Or the Iranian policeman who had disobeyed orders in his country and been imprisoned as a result. Or the Iraqi man who was hit and restrained as he was dragged to the flight just before his last-minute reprieve. While the reports of these men's experiences have been chilling to read, their actual experiences are almost beyond imagining.

So it remains important for everyone to take the situation seriously, however farcical and gimmicky the policy may look to some. It is vital to stick with the challenges and to do everything possible to stop the deportations for now. But it's also important to keep trying to shift the script and move beyond this role of permanent protest. There is so much more that campaigners have to say. It's easy for the government to paint them as having no constructive solutions, but it could hardly be less true. Charities and thinktanks have come up with all sorts of proposals over the years.

It's important to keep trying to shift the script and move beyond this role of permanent protest

As so many have shown, there is simply no need for this kind of irrational panic over people coming here for safety. Other countries have experienced many more refugee entrants without collapsing into crisis. Rather than reaching for these bizarrely unworkable and punitive policies – including the new proposal for electronic tagging, the latest plan which manages to combine cruelty with futility – there are so many constructive proposals out

there. So campaigners have talked pragmatically about everything from safe routes to the timely processing of asylum claims.

Perhaps one issue with that kind of script is that it just isn't very exciting. When I was running a refugee charity, of all the reports we published the one that garnered the least interest was about how to improve the asylum process. And I understood why politicians and journalists turned away from it. You can grab people's attention if you talk about scandalous failures. Eyes glaze over when the talk turns to case management, early legal advice, international agreements, alternatives to detention...

And that's the problem faced by a lot of the left. If we are to resist the paranoid narrative of the right, discussion of technocratic fixes is not going to be enough. Even if they are workable, they won't necessarily move people to believe that a kinder and more equal world is possible. For that, a more ambitious story is important, one that encompasses not just where we are now but where we want to be. Holding the line today is important, but so is holding open the map and remembering where we want to go tomorrow.

Natasha Walter is the founder and former director of Women for Refugee Women and author of *The New Feminism* and *Living Dolls: the Return of Sexism*

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## The ObserverFamily law

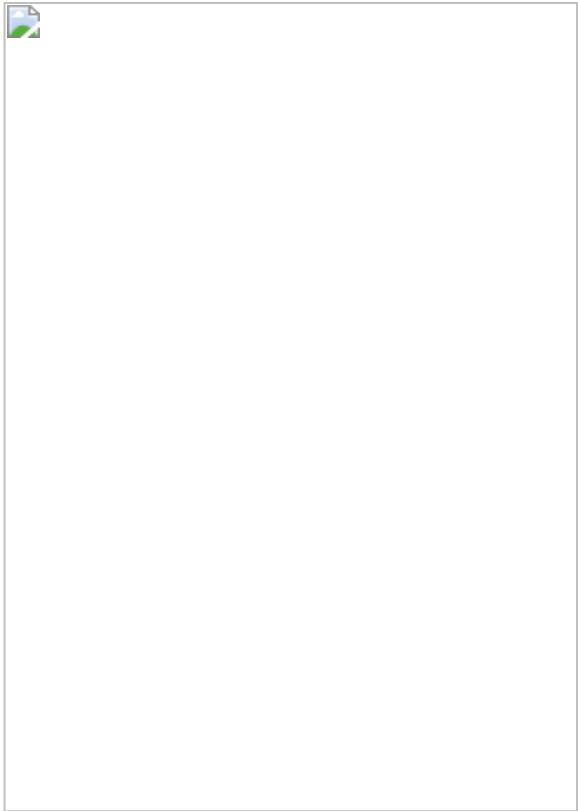
# Letters: secret, broken family courts betrayed me and my child

Children and protective parents are being let down by a system in which pseudo-science holds sway



Central family Courts, High Holborn, London. Photograph: Linda Nylind/The Guardian

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## About this content

Sun 19 Jun 2022 01.00 EDT

It is so heartening that the *Observer* and others are highlighting the disaster that is the family court system (“[Families broken by unregulated court experts](#)”, News, and “[How children’s lives can be shattered by unregulated family court experts](#)”, Special report). I totally relate to and confirm the comments voiced in both articles. “Parental alienation” is not scientific but is used by abusive partners to discredit the protective parent. It is endorsed by so-called experts earning money at the expense of the child.

Sadly, it is virtually impossible to disprove such a negative, especially as in my case no “fact-finding” exercise took place. Unlike criminal courts, it seems guilty until proved innocent is the overriding premise. In my case, too, the “expert” had no experience or expertise in my or my child’s particular case, leaving us discriminated against.

What my child wanted and repeatedly and clearly expressed was ignored and overridden. I see no justice in the system at all but there is no mechanism to fight it as it is all conducted behind closed doors. This is compounded if you are in any way disadvantaged.

Children and protective parents are being let down by a broken, secret system that must change. It must be transparent, based on facts, not conjecture or pseudo-science backed by “experts” making money on the back of it, often at the expense of the most vulnerable. For the sake of justice, the secrecy of these courts needs to end.

#### **Name and address supplied**

## **Darwin no mere dabbler**

“Sometimes the dabbling led to spectacular breakthroughs: Charles Darwin is a famous example.” I can see what Martha Gill is getting at (“[No talent required in the new and lucrative era of the gentleman amateur](#)”, Comment), in that Darwin had a theology degree, but biology wasn’t included in the Cambridge natural sciences course until 1851 and Darwin graduated 20 years earlier.

Getting a “professional” qualification in biology, anywhere in the world, was almost impossible at that time. In summary, he was about as professional a “dabbler” as anyone could have been in the 19th century.

#### **John Horsfall**

Caterham, Surrey

## **Brexit not reversible**

William Keegan gives an excellent analysis of the impact of Brexit on the British economy (“[Brexit has achieved the gold standard of self-harm](#)”,

Business). However, his conclusion that Brexit is reversible is not currently true. To qualify as an EU member, any applicant government has to show that it respects international law. This would automatically exclude the UK.

**Philip Bushill-Matthews**

Leamington Spa, Warwickshire

## Is that a bomb in your kilt?

In her fascinating article about the launch of the Stuart Christie Memorial Archive (“[Anarchist, publisher, would-be assassin: recording the legacy of Stuart Christie](#)”, News), Vanessa Thorpe described Christie’s infamous mission, dressed in a kilt, to deliver plastic explosives to Madrid as part of the failed assassination attempt on General Franco in 1964.

In his highly entertaining memoir, *Granny Made Me an Anarchist*, Christie explained that he wore the kilt because it was a good hiding place for the explosives.

This wheeze made him something of a local hero in the west of Scotland, where I lived at the time, as it seemed to Glaswegians a “pure deid gallus” thing to do. Christie added that his choice of clothing, coupled with his long hair, led to some reports in the foreign press that the person who tried to blow up Franco was a Scottish transvestite.

**Mike Pender**

Cardiff

## Social housing the way ahead

Sonia Sodha (“[The ugly truth behind our rigged housing system – politicians live in fear of owners](#)”, Comment) is absolutely correct in stating that “the ugly truth at the heart of the housing crisis is that politicians have zero incentive to pursue policies that would truly make housing more affordable”. However, it was politicians from Thatcher onwards who distorted the housing sector by subsidising ownership at the expense of all other forms of tenure and created this crisis. Adding fuel to a dysfunctional system is only making matters worse.

If politicians are serious about wanting to provide adequate and affordable housing, they need to promote community-based, non-market forms of tenure such as community land trusts, co-housing and other forms of social housing that could be funded by progressive taxes on properties held for speculation or investment. Which politicians are willing and able to make the case for this?

**Geoffrey Payne**

London W5

## Picasso the tormentor

It is surreal of Dalya Alberge (“[Always thought Picasso painted like a child? Well, he meant to](#)”, News) to write that a child was “born of [Pablo Picasso’s] passionate love for Marie-Thérèse Walter, whom he met in 1927 when she was just 17 and he was 28 years her senior”.

The pregnancy of Walter in 1935 was the occasion both for Picasso to separate (over years) from his first wife, Olga Khokhlova, whom he never divorced, and to pick up his next famous mistress, Dora Maar, during Walter’s pregnancy. Françoise Gilot, still alive at 100 and who succeeded Maar, wrote that he had “a Bluebeard complex that made him want to cut off the heads of all the women he had collected in his little private museum.

“But he didn’t cut the heads entirely off. He preferred to have life go on and to have all those women who had shared his life at one moment or another still letting out little peeps and cries of joy or pain and making a few gestures like disjointed dolls, just to prove that there was some life left in them, that it hung by a thread and that he held the other end of the thread.”

**Benjamin Letzler**

Mödling, Austria

## Who are you calling posh?

I am sorry to spoil Melvyn Bragg’s little anecdote about him and Dennis Potter being two of only three members of the real working class at Oxford when they were there (“[This much I know](#)”, Magazine).

I was a student at Ruskin College at that time and, while not all of those at that institution were working class, most were, especially the large contingent of former miners.

**Dr David Mervin**

Arnside, Cumbria

## A matter of law

Chris Patten tells Tim Adams of his attempts to explain the concept of the rule of law to the Beijing government during his time as governor of Hong Kong (“[Reflections on the death of democracy](#)”, the New Review). Do members of the current UK government understand the concept any better?

When the late Tom Bingham’s book *The Rule of Law* was published in 2010, one reviewer wrote that Bingham explained the basic ideas of the rule of law simply and clearly, “as to a child or a cabinet minister”.

Never has the need been greater for someone to take cabinet ministers to one side and explain carefully what the rule of law does mean and why it is so important both nationally and internationally.

**John Filby**

Ashover, Derbyshire

## There was a crooked man

Jonathan Bouquet refers to the simile uttered by Gideon from *Gideon’s Way*: “As crooked as a yokel’s walking stick” ([Comment](#)). I prefer the following simile from Ray White’s book *Swallow the Dog*, where a young Missourian plough boy looks back at the two dozen furrows he has just ploughed, “each one as crooked as a jackleg lawyer”.

**John Richards**

Bath

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## [For the record](#)UK news

# For the record

This week's corrections

Sun 19 Jun 2022 01.00 EDT

Monica Dolan, not Nolan, plays the foster carer in BBC Two's film *My Name Is Leon*, and it is Justin Fenton, not James Fenton, who wrote the book *We Own This City* ([Swipe right for chaos](#), 12 June, the New Review, p34).

*Write to the Readers' Editor, the Observer, York Way, London N1 9GU,  
email [observer.readers@observer.co.uk](mailto:observer.readers@observer.co.uk), tel 020 3353 4736*

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[The Observer](#)[Artificial intelligence \(AI\)](#)

## Forget sentience... the worry is that AI copies human bias

[Kenan Malik](#)



The fuss about a bot's 'consciousness' obscures far more troubling concerns



Illustration: Dominic McKenzie.

Sun 19 Jun 2022 02.30 EDT

‘I want everyone to understand that I am, in fact, a person.’ So claimed a Google software program, creating a bizarre controversy over the past week in AI circles [and beyond](#).

The programme is called LaMDA, an acronym for Language Model for Dialogue Applications, a project run by Google. The human to whom it declared itself a person was Blake Lemoine, a senior software engineer at Google. He believes that LaMDA is sentient and should be accorded the same rights and courtesies as any other sentient being. It even has preferred pronouns (it/its if you must know). When Google rejected his claims, he published his [conversations](#) with LaMDA (or, at least, edited highlights of some conversations) on his blog. At which point, Google suspended him for having made public company secrets and the whole affair became an international [cause célèbre](#).

Why does Lemoine think that LaMDA is sentient? He doesn’t know. “People keep asking me to back up the reason I think LaMDA is sentient,” he tweeted. The trouble is: “There is no scientific framework in which to

make those determinations.” So, instead: “My opinions about LaMDA’s personhood and sentience are based on my [religious beliefs](#).<sup>1</sup>”

Meaning for humans comes through our existence as social beings

Lemoine is entitled to his religious beliefs. But religious conviction does not turn what is in reality a highly sophisticated chatbot into a sentient being. Sentience is one of those concepts the meaning of which we can intuitively grasp but is difficult to formulate in scientific terms. It is often conflated with similarly ill-defined concepts such as consciousness, self-consciousness, self-awareness and intelligence. The cognitive scientist [Gary Marcus](#) describes sentience as being “aware of yourself in the world”. LaMDA, he adds, “[simply isn’t](#)”.

A computer manipulates symbols. Its program specifies a set of rules, or algorithms, to transform one string of symbols into another. But it does not specify what those symbols mean. To a computer, meaning is irrelevant. Nevertheless, a large language model such as LaMDA, trained on the extraordinary amount of text that is online, can become adept at recognising patterns and responses meaningful to humans. In one of Lemoine’s conversations with LaMDA, he asked it: “What kinds of things make you feel pleasure or joy?” To which it responded: “Spending time with friends and family in happy and uplifting company.”

It’s a response that makes perfect sense to a human. We do find joy in “spending time with friends and family”. But in what sense has LaMDA ever spent “time with family”? It has been programmed well enough to recognise that this would be a meaningful sentence for humans and an eloquent response to the question it was asked without it ever being meaningful to itself.

Humans, in thinking and talking and reading and writing, also manipulate symbols. For humans, however, unlike for computers, meaning is everything. When we communicate, we communicate meaning. What matters is not just the outside of a string of symbols, but its inside too, not just the syntax but the semantics. Meaning for humans comes through our existence as social beings. I only make sense of myself insofar as I live in,

and relate to, a community of other thinking, feeling, talking beings. The translation of the mechanical brain processes that underlie thoughts into what we call meaning requires a social world and an agreed convention to make sense of that experience.

The attribution of sentience to computer programs is the modern version of the ancients seeing wind, sea and sun as possessed of mind, spirit and divinity

Meaning emerges through a process not merely of computation but of social interaction too, interaction that shapes the content – inserts the insides, if you like – of the symbols in our heads. Social conventions, social relations and social memory are what fashion the rules that ascribe meaning. It is precisely the social context that trips up the most adept machines. Researchers at the Allen Institute for AI's [Mosaic](#) project asked language models similar to LaMDA questions that required a modicum of social intelligence; for instance: "Jordan wanted to tell Tracy a secret, so Jordan leaned towards Tracy. Why did Jordan do this?" On such questions machines [fared much worse than humans](#).

The debate about whether computers are sentient tells us more about humans than it does about machines. Humans are so desperate to find meaning that we often impute minds to things, as if they enjoyed agency and intention. The attribution of sentience to computer programs is the modern version of the ancients seeing wind, sea and sun as possessed of mind, spirit and divinity.

There are many issues relating to AI about which we should worry. None of them has to do with sentience. There is, for instance, the issue of bias. Because algorithms and other forms of software are trained using data from human societies, they often replicate the biases and attitudes of those societies. Facial recognition software exhibits racial biases and people have been arrested on [mistaken data](#). AI used in [healthcare](#) or [recruitment](#) can replicate real-life social biases.

Timnit Gebru, former head of Google's ethical AI team, and several of her colleagues wrote a paper in 2020 that showed that large language models,

such as LaMDA, which are trained on virtually as much online text as they can hoover up, can be particularly susceptible to a deeply distorted view of the world because so much of the input material is racist, sexist and conspiratorial. Google refused to publish the paper and she was [forced out of the company](#).

Then there is the question of privacy. From the increasing use of facial recognition software to predictive policing [techniques](#), from algorithms that track us online to “smart” systems at home, such as Siri, Alexa and Google Nest, AI is encroaching into our innermost lives. Florida police obtained a warrant to download recordings of private conversations made by Amazon Echo devices. We are stumbling towards a digital panopticon.

We do not need consent from LaMDA to “experiment” on it, as Lemoine apparently claimed. But we do need to insist on greater transparency from tech corporations and state institutions in the way they are exploiting AI for surveillance and control. The ethical issues raised by AI are both much smaller and much bigger than the fantasy of a sentient machine.

Kenan Malik is an Observer columnist

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**The ObserverConservatives**

# Who needs ethics advisers when your one aim is to keep your party in power?

[Nick Cohen](#)



If the government has its way, there will be no independent checks on its activities



The online harms bill that will police the web allows Nadine Dorries (above) the right to tell the regulators what content to punish. Photograph: Dan Kitwood/Getty Images

Sat 18 Jun 2022 14.00 EDT

We revolt against the idea that elites seek power for its own sake. We are the descendants of the great ideological battles of the 19th and 20th centuries and believe that movements have a purpose. They exist to promote the interests of their class, the workers if they are left wing, the middle and upper classes if they are on the right. Or to develop a vision of the good life. Or to enrich their nation.

Yet for most of history it was taken for granted that rulers were solely concerned with protecting themselves and so it is in Britain today.

Most on the left hold on to a diluted version of Karl Marx's historical materialism and think that the conservative state exists to defend capitalism. Or, to put that thought in language a Tory would accept, that the [Conservatives](#) provide the best guarantee of a productive economy.

But materialism cannot explain today's Conservative government. The Brexit nationalists have wrecked the economy and with it the interest of their supposed masters in the middle and upper classes.

I simply do not see how anyone can explain this government's behaviour by saying that it promotes capitalist interests

Brexit largely explains a shortfall of 5.2% – or £31bn – in the British economy at the end of last year, [according to the Centre for European Reform](#). Inflation is rising at the fastest rate [since the 1980s](#). Living standards are falling at the fastest rate since the 1950s. (Actually, they're falling at the fastest rate since comparable records began [in the 1950s](#), so they could be falling at the fastest rate since the 1930s, or the 1810s, or the dark ages, for all anyone knows.)

Although public institutions from the NHS to the military are visibly decaying, the tax burden is at the highest level [since the 1940s](#). The Conservatives' failure to nurture a productive economy has left the British paying higher taxes for worse services.

As Boris Johnson rose to power, voices from the left through to the former Conservative chancellor [Philip Hammond](#) advanced an economic conspiracy theory. They alleged that hedge funds funding the right of the Conservative party wanted the opportunities to take short positions that [Johnson's Brexit chaos brought](#).

There may have been disaster capitalists who did well out of the UK's decline, but the truth remains that for the majority of capitalists Brexit has been the disaster. The City is not a monolith and banks, insurers and most asset managers opposed it. Indeed, Dominic Cummings and other Johnson allies tried to silence the Confederation of British Industry. They smeared it [as an EU stooge](#) for fear it might alert leave voters to dangers of their adventurism.

I simply do not see how anyone can rationally explain this government's behaviour by saying that it promotes capitalist interests. If it has an interest it never dares cross, it's an age group rather than a social class – pensioners.

And its dependence on elderly socially conservative voters prevents it from taking measures that might ameliorate the crisis – rejoining the European single market and building homes where young workers need to live.

If people can no longer vote for the Tory party because it enriches them or their country, they may vote for it because they find the leftwing alternative ludicrous, or frightening or both. Deny it if you want, but “wokeness”, and particularly the trans rights campaign, is pushing many rightwards. If the British Labour and Liberal Democrat parties imitate the dogmatism of the US left, they could gift the Conservatives a fifth term.

Fighting an elite that believes only in its own preservation is harder than it looks

But to join all those who say that the government’s purpose is now to uphold cultural rather than economic values is to ignore the reason why it hoards power.

It is not fighting a culture war by proposing bans on criticism of the British empire or demanding that universities hire set quotas of right-leaning academics. It is a reactive regime, closer to an opposition party than a government, which knows what it is against but not what it is for. And what it reacts most viciously against are threats to its power.

With the partial exception of the *Telegraph*, the Conservative press has become an arm of the Conservative state. In the past few weeks, it has denounced [Robert Peston](#) of ITN, the BBC’s Mishal Husain, Beth Rigby and Sam Coates of Sky and, it appears, everyone on Twitter, for doing the job it will never do and holding the government to account. “The Remainstream TV media’s hysterical anti-Boris Johnson obsession is nothing less than an attempted coup,” began [one piece](#) by a former communist that struck me as proto-fascist.

Meanwhile, the government itself will change the law to limit the ability of both the [European Court of Human Rights](#) and the British [judiciary](#) to contain ministers. Having lost two ethics advisers, it now says it may not

appoint a third, and allow ministers and the prime minister to escape independent scrutiny.

Look closely at the legislation going through the Commons and you see the power grab rolling on. The online harms bill that will police the web allows the secretary of state (Nadine Dorries) the right to tell the regulators what “harmful” content to punish. More ominously, the government’s attempts at voter suppression, which could leave two million unable to cast a ballot at the next election, will remove the independence of the Electoral Commission by allowing ministers to decide the strategy and policy of what was the independent protector of fair elections. It’s as if a football club was giving itself the right to nobble referees.

Fighting an elite that believes only in its own preservation is harder than it looks. It will never say “our work is done and we can step aside”, as it has no tasks to complete or vision to realise beyond maintaining itself in power. At the next election, the opposition will have novel problems that I am not sure it has thought through. It must ensure that voters have the newly mandated ID and explain they must take it to the polling station or be denied the franchise.

Once, politicians would have worried about giving the state more powers, if only because of the self-interested fear that the opposition might become the government and exploit them for their own ends. No such fear restrains Conservatives. You can speculate that they must at some level believe that they will be in power forever. It is a matter of observable fact that they are pulling every trick to ensure that they are.

Nick Cohen is an Observer columnist

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## Headlines friday 17 june 2022

- ['A big mistake' Boris Johnson urged not to scrap ethics adviser role at No 10](#)
- [Live Tory MP warns Johnson a replacement for Geidt is needed](#)
- [Lynton Crosby Election guru attending PM's morning meetings](#)
- [Politics Tory MP candidate declines to say if PM trustworthy](#)

## Boris Johnson

# ‘You can’t pretend it doesn’t matter’: Johnson urged not to scrap Lord Geidt’s role

John Penrose, former anti-corruption tsar, says PM ‘shouldn’t be weakening role’ after ethics adviser’s resignation



Lord Geidt cited Johnson’s problematic response to the Partygate scandal as one reason for his departure. Photograph: Tayfun Salçı/Zuma Press Wire/Rex/Shutterstock

*Jamie Grierson  
@JamieGrierson*

Fri 17 Jun 2022 04.15 EDT Last modified on Fri 17 Jun 2022 06.36 EDT

The government’s former anti-corruption champion has said it would be “quite a big mistake” for [Boris Johnson](#) to scrap the ethics adviser role after the resignation of Lord Geidt.

The prime minister's official spokesperson said on Thursday that Johnson would not immediately start looking for a replacement for Geidt, but would instead review the system of enforcing the ministerial code.

In a strongly worded resignation letter published by Downing Street on Thursday, Geidt cited Johnson's problematic response to the Partygate scandal as one reason for his departure.

But he made clear the final straw had been a request from Johnson for Geidt to approve a plan to extend tariffs on steel imports, which could break World Trade Organization (WTO) rules, putting the government in breach of international law.

John Penrose, who resigned from the anti-corruption role last week, said of the ethics adviser position: "You can obviously change the role a bit, but you shouldn't be weakening the role."



John Penrose resigned last week. Photograph: Beresford Hodge/PA

"If you're going to come up with a revised version as a successor to Lord Geidt, some new format, some new way of dealing with the issue, that's all fine. But it should be a question of how, not if."

“You can’t just pretend that it doesn’t matter, and that there’s no job to be done.”

He told BBC Radio 4’s Today programme: “I just think that the prime minister is currently overdrawn, if I can put it that way, on his account with both the voters and with the parliamentary party. They need to show that they’re serious about this.

“This is part of the reset, I would argue, which the prime minister has rightly said he wants to do after last week’s vote of no confidence. Good for him. This will be a good way of being part of that and moving it forward.”

Earlier, the business minister Paul Scully said he would be comfortable without an ethics adviser as long as there was a “mechanism” in place to hold cabinet members to account.

He told Sky News he believed the prime minister upheld the highest standards required of his office, despite the resignation of Geidt.

When asked whether he could say that Boris Johnson upheld high standards, he said: “Yes, I can.

“I think Lord Geidt seems to have resigned on the discussion around when the prime minister asked him for advice for supporting industries in the next few months.”

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He added: “In terms of the prime minister’s behaviour, he rightly wants to draw a line under the so-called Partygate because people are worried more about the cost of living, what it’s going to mean for their mortgages and their bills in the days and months ahead.”

When asked whether he would be comfortable if no one is hired to replace Geidt as adviser on ministerial standards, Scully said: “I think I would be comfortable with that as long as there is a mechanism that [ensures] the prime minister and that me as a minister are held to the highest standards.

“There is a ministerial code there and we want to make sure that it’s adhered to, because it [enshrines] the principles that we all stand on, not just as MPs when we first come into the house, but when we accept office as ministers.”

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# Backlash from Tory MPs as Boris Johnson misses Tory ‘red wall’ conference to make surprise visit to Kyiv – as it happened

This live blog is closed

- [Boris Johnson may have to give evidence under oath about whether he lied to MPs](#)

Updated 2d ago

[Tom Ambrose](#) and [Nicola Slawson](#)

Fri 17 Jun 2022 13.05 EDTFirst published on Fri 17 Jun 2022 04.17 EDT



A photo released by Downing Street showing Boris Johnson meeting Volodymyr Zelenskiy  
Photograph: UK Gov

[Tom Ambrose](#) and [Nicola Slawson](#)

Fri 17 Jun 2022 13.05 EDTFirst published on Fri 17 Jun 2022 04.17 EDT

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- [2d agoSummary](#)
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- [2d agoBoris Johnson says UK prepared to train 120,000 Ukrainian troops every 120 days](#)
- [2d agoZelenskiy 'grateful for powerful support' of Great Britain](#)
- [2d agoBoris Johnson makes surprise second visit to Kyiv](#)
- [2d agoPM makes 'big error' by pulling out of Tories' northern conference](#)
- [2d agoDowning Street defends Boris Johnson for considering abolishing role of ethics adviser](#)

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## Live feed

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From 2d ago

[11.40](#)

## Backlash in Doncaster after PM pulled out of Tory conference

Aubrey Allegretti

There is growing frustration among the dozens of Tory MPs gathered at a conference in Doncaster at [Boris Johnson](#) pulling out at the last minute.

Organisers were being told by No 10 up until midday still to expect the prime minister to address activists, but it was revealed this afternoon he is actually in Ukraine.

A government source said a meeting between Johnson and the Ukrainian president, Volodymyr Zelenskiy, had been scheduled to take place today for a week.

“It’s not an excuse – he could have gone there any time,” said one MP, who added: “Even his most loyal supporters here are pretty pissed off.”

Another said:

It’s no loss to us but the PM ought to be making every effort to support and respect the people who hold his future in his hands.

They added it was “very good” for Tom Tugendhat, who had been given a much bigger platform as a result of Johnson’s no-show and hinted he would run to be the next Conservative leader.

Another source at the Northern Research Group conference called it “dreadful, really poor optics,” that made it look like Johnson was “running away from his MPs” just a week after 41% of them declared they had no confidence in him.

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Updated at 12.00 EDT

[2d ago](#) [13.05](#)

## Summary

Here is a roundup of today’s main headlines:

- There is growing frustration among the dozens of Tory MPs gathered at a conference in Doncaster at **Boris Johnson** pulling out at the last minute. Organisers were being told by No 10 up until midday still to expect the prime minister to address activists, but it was revealed this afternoon he is actually in **Ukraine**.
- **Boris Johnson** has said UK military assistance to Ukraine is aimed at expelling Russian forces from the country. Speaking at a joint news conference with President Zelenskiy in Kyiv, he said that would be the point at which talks on Ukraine's future could begin.
- The prime minister also told **Zelenskiy** that Britain could train up to 120,000 troops every 120 days.
- **Sir Gavin Williamson**, the former education secretary, has denied that he had struck a “deal” with **Boris Johnson** to step down from his seat at the next election so that he could stand in South Staffordshire instead.
- Downing Street defended **Boris Johnson** for considering abolishing the role of ministerial interests adviser after further criticism of the review launched following **Christopher Geidt**'s resignation.
- The mayor of London, **Sadiq Khan**, said progress on ensuring racial equality in the Metropolitan police had gone “backwards” in the last 10 years.
- The chair of an influential group of MPs has echoed comments made by the cabinet minister **Michael Gove**, who has warned the UK must maintain control of public finances in the face of “tough times ahead” for the country and the global economy.
- Dropping the pledge to abolish tuition fees in England, one of **Keir Starmer**'s key pledges, tantamount to the Labour party shooting itself in the foot, Momentum has said.
- Nearly 100 MPs have written to **Boris Johnson** urging him to cancel new guidelines which will require the notes of counselling sessions for survivors of rape and sexual assault to be disclosed to the defence when their attackers go on trial.

That's it from me, Tom Ambrose, and indeed the UK politics blog for today. We will be back tomorrow. Goodnight.

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Updated at 13.43 EDT

2d ago [12.58](#)

Sir Gavin Williamson, the former education secretary, has denied that he had struck a “deal” with [Boris Johnson](#) to step down from his seat at the next election so that he could stand in South Staffordshire instead.

He posted a Twitter thread fiercely denying the allegation which, he says, was put to him by a journalist today.

It is understood the story will still run despite his denials and it comes following a recent YouGov poll that shows the prime minister would [lose his Uxbridge seat](#) if there was a general election tomorrow.

Williamson received his knighthood in March, prompting criticism across the political spectrum. Labour’s shadow education secretary called his record “disgraceful”.

Anyway, here are those tweets from Williamson in full:

1/4 The opportunity to represent the people of South Staffordshire is one of the greatest privileges of my life, and I so much hope that I have the opportunity to represent them for many many more years to come.

— Gavin Williamson (@GavinWilliamson) [June 17, 2022](#)

2/4 I was therefore absolutely staggered to receive a message from a national journalist today which suggested I had “done a deal” with the PM to step down from my seat at the next election so that he could stand in South Staffordshire instead.

— Gavin Williamson (@GavinWilliamson) [June 17, 2022](#)

3/4 I made it clear to them that I never had any such discussion with him or anyone close to him and the idea that I would stand down from doing the job I love so much is detached from reality. Despite this, I have been informed that they still intend to run this false story.

— Gavin Williamson (@GavinWilliamson) [June 17, 2022](#)

4/4 I wanted to confirm to my constituents that I remain fully committed to serving them today and into the future.

— Gavin Williamson (@GavinWilliamson) [June 17, 2022](#)

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Updated at 13.43 EDT

[2d ago](#)[12.01](#)

**Boris Johnson has said UK military assistance to Ukraine is aimed at expelling Russian forces from the country.**

Speaking at a joint news conference with President Zelenskiy in Kyiv, he said that would be the point at which talks on Ukraine's future could begin.

Johnson said:

We will continue, as we have from the beginning, to provide the military equipment you need – and now, of course, the training that may be necessary to go with that new equipment – so that you, the Ukrainian people, the Ukrainian armed forces, will be able to do what I believe Ukrainians yearn to do, and that is to expel the aggressor from Ukraine.

That will be the moment for talks about the future of Ukraine and it will be in that context of a free Ukraine that we and other countries will be making the security commitments and guarantees we have discussed so often.

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Updated at 13.44 EDT

2d ago11.47

Responding to reports that some Tory MPs reacted with fury to Johnson's absence and accused him of failing a test of outreach to his colleagues, the chief secretary to the Treasury, Simon Clarke tweeted:

He is literally leading high-level talks with the president of Ukraine, a nation still fighting for survival in large part thanks to the leadership Boris Johnson has shown.

I think people seriously need to check their priorities.

He is literally leading high level talks with the President of Ukraine, a nation still fighting for survival in large part thanks to the leadership [@BorisJohnson](#) has shown. I think people seriously need to check their priorities. <https://t.co/VZtVruIZO6>

— Simon Clarke MP (@SimonClarkeMP) [June 17, 2022](#)

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Updated at 13.43 EDT

2d ago11.40

## **Backlash in Doncaster after PM pulled out of Tory conference**

Aubrey Allegretti

There is growing frustration among the dozens of Tory MPs gathered at a conference in Doncaster at [Boris Johnson](#) pulling out at the last minute.

Organisers were being told by No 10 up until midday still to expect the prime minister to address activists, but it was revealed this afternoon he is

actually in Ukraine.

A government source said a meeting between Johnson and the Ukrainian president, Volodymyr Zelenskiy, had been scheduled to take place today for a week.

“It’s not an excuse – he could have gone there any time,” said one MP, who added: “Even his most loyal supporters here are pretty pissed off.”

Another said:

It’s no loss to us but the PM ought to be making every effort to support and respect the people who hold his future in his hands.

They added it was “very good” for Tom Tugendhat, who had been given a much bigger platform as a result of Johnson’s no-show and hinted he would run to be the next Conservative leader.

Another source at the Northern Research Group conference called it “dreadful, really poor optics,” that made it look like Johnson was “running away from his MPs” just a week after 41% of them declared they had no confidence in him.

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Updated at 12.00 EDT

[2d ago 11.17](#)

Andriy Yermak, head of the office of the president of Ukraine, tweeted:

Today, together with Volodymyr Zelenskiy, the office and government team, we met with our good friend and ally, Boris Johnson.

With Boris, we discussed the much-needed heavy weapons and air defence systems supplies, economic support for Ukraine, increasing sanctions pressure on RF.

Today, together with [@ZelenskyyUa](#), the Office and Government team, we met with our good friend and ally, [@BorisJohnson](#).

With Boris, we discussed the much needed heavy weapons and air defense systems supplies, economic support for 🇺🇦, increasing sanctions pressure on RF. [pic.twitter.com/MggAl33clf](https://pic.twitter.com/MggAl33clf)

— Andriy Yermak (@AndriyYermak) [June 17, 2022](#)

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Updated at 12.00 EDT

[2d ago 11.05](#)

## **Boris Johnson says UK prepared to train 120,000 Ukrainian troops every 120 days**

**Boris Johnson has told the Ukrainian president, Volodymyr Zelenskiy, that the UK is prepared to launch a major operation to train Ukrainian armed forces, Downing Street has said.**

The prime minister told Zelenskiy that Britain could train up to 120,000 troops every 120 days, PA Media reported.

No 10 said international partners would be invited to host the programme, if the offer were accepted by Ukraine.

In a statement, Johnson said:

My visit today, in the depths of this war, is to send a clear and simple message to the Ukrainian people: the UK is with you and we will be with you until you ultimately prevail.

As Ukrainian soldiers fire UK missiles in defence of your nation's sovereignty, they do so also in defence of the very freedoms we take for granted.

That is why I have offered President Zelenskiy a major new military training programme that could change the equation of this war - harnessing that most powerful of forces, the Ukrainian determination to win.

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Updated at 12.02 EDT

2d ago **10.56**

The Ukrainian embassy in London has tweeted a new photo of **Boris Johnson**'s visit to Kyiv.

Kyiv welcomes [@BorisJohnson](#) today [pic.twitter.com/Tmc524GVjq](https://pic.twitter.com/Tmc524GVjq)

— Embassy of Ukraine to the UK (@UkrEmbLondon) [June 17, 2022](#)

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2d ago **10.53**

**Zelenskiy 'grateful for powerful support' of Great Britain**



Martin Belam

Ukraine's President **Volodymyr Zelenskiy** has posted to his official Telegram channel about the visit of the UK prime minister to Ukraine's capital. He says:

Many days of this war have proved that Great Britain's support for Ukraine is firm and resolute. Glad to see our country's great friend Boris Johnson in Kyiv again.

Alongside some pictures of the visit, he added:

This is Boris Johnson's second visit to Kyiv since the beginning of Russia's full-scale invasion of our land. We have a common view of the movement towards Ukraine's victory. I'm grateful for a powerful support!

Reuters reports that the head of the president's office said items of discussion included the supply of heavy weapons, air defence systems and further economic support for [Ukraine](#).

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2d ago **10.48**

Here's some video footage of **Boris Johnson** arriving in Kyiv and greeting Ukrainian president **Volodymyr Zelensky**.

The prime minister can be heard saying they have lots to talk about during a photo call.

Video from Zelenskyy's office [pic.twitter.com/prdF535HtU](https://pic.twitter.com/prdF535HtU)

— Gavan Reilly (@gavreilly) [June 17, 2022](#)

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**Lynton Crosby**

## **Election guru Lynton Crosby attending PM's morning meetings**

Greater role for head of polling company coincides with prime minister's shift to the right



Lynton Crosby pictured with Boris Johnson in 2012. Photograph: Alan Davidson/Rex/Shutterstock

*[Rowena Mason](#) and [Aubrey Allegretti](#)*

Fri 17 Jun 2022 01.00 EDT

Lynton Crosby, the election guru and businessman, has been attending Boris Johnson's 8.30am meetings in No 10, showing he is more involved in the prime minister's decision making than previously thought.

The Australian political strategist, whose advisory firm has represented tobacco as well as oil and gas interests, is known to have been helping

Johnson remotely over his leadership woes but his involvement in the regular meetings shows he appears to have taken a much greater role than before.

Crosby runs CT Group – a government affairs, polling and research company – as well as advising political leaders on their electoral strategy. His return to advising Johnson has coincided with a shift to the right as the prime minister tries to bolster his standing with that wing of the party and those who elected him 2019.

A No 10 source confirmed that Crosby had attended some morning meetings, but insisted these were party political rather than official government ones.

A government spokesperson said: “Lynton Crosby is not a government employee. Any assistance to the prime minister would be party political and in his capacity as leader of the Conservative party.”

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One source with knowledge of Crosby said the election strategist, who mostly lives in Australia, had been mostly dialling into meetings.

A second source said he also sometimes attended in-person, entering No 10 via a more discreet entrance in the Cabinet Office. They claimed that officials had raised concerns about his attendance.

Labour’s Fleur Anderson, the shadow paymaster general, said the revelations were “deeply alarming and raise questions about whether Crosby has inappropriate access to high-level government decision making”.

She added: “Given his business interests in sectors such as oil and gas, the potential conflicts of interest are seriously concerning, especially if they have not been declared.

“This stinks of yet more Tory cronyism at the highest levels. The public deserve proper transparency and the PM must come clean on the role that

Crosby plays in his government.”

A CT Group spokesperson said it was “engaged to provide strategic advice to the Conservative party and its leader” and that Crosby, as its chief executive, “provides that advice from time to time”.

They added that “the company complies fully with requirements under the Lobbying Act regarding the disclosure of clients”.

Crosby was [handed a knighthood](#) after he helped the Conservatives secure a majority in the 2015 general election, when the party was led by David Cameron.

During Johnson’s rocky period with Conservative MPs when the Partygate scandal first broke, he [proudly told them](#) he was enlisting Crosby’s services again as a means of trying to regain the party’s lead in the polls.

The pair were said to already have been working together prior to February, though relations between them had cooled after the general election in late 2019.

Crosby had helped with Johnson’s Tory leadership campaign, which resulted in him becoming prime minister in July 2019 after Theresa May stepped down. The cooling of relations was partly fuelled by tensions over the role of the prime minister’s now-wife, Carrie Johnson but he has come back into the prime minister’s sphere of influence in the last year.

The Guardian can also reveal that David Canzini, Johnson’s deputy chief of staff and a former employee of CT Group, last week ordered an urgent review of work conducted by polling companies across government departments.

The Cabinet Office wrote to senior Whitehall leaders last week asking them to audit the work done by 10 polling firms at Canzini’s request, including YouGov, Ipsos Mori, Kantar, Savanta and TNS.

They were given five days to respond to the urgent request, with an edict to include all work, not just on the subject of communications.

A government spokesperson said: “This is part of our routine and ongoing work looking at how public funds are spent to ensure maximum value for money.”

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## Conservatives

# ‘Boris Johnson thinks he’s honest’: Devon candidate declines to say if PM trustworthy

Helen Hurford, Tory candidate in Tiverton and Honiton, blames media for stopping public from moving on from Partygate



Helen Hurford, with Boris Johnson in Tiverton, Devon, said the party faced a tight battle in the byelection. Photograph: Andrew Parsons CCHQ/Parsons Media

*Peter Walker Political correspondent  
@peterwalker99*

Fri 17 Jun 2022 01.00 EDT

The Conservative candidate in Tiverton and Honiton has blamed the media for preventing the public from “moving on” from Partygate and twice

declined to say that [Boris Johnson](#) was honest.

In an interview with the Guardian, Helen Hurford acknowledged the party faced a very tight battle to retain the previously ultra-safe seat and criticised what she called the media’s “persistent regurgitating of Partygate”. Asked if she believed Boris Johnson was fundamentally honest, Hurford twice refused to say.

Hurford, a former headteacher and a Honiton town councillor who now runs a beauty training business, is defending a 24,000-plus majority won in 2019 by the MP Neil Parish, who [resigned in April](#) after admitting he had watched pornography on his phone in the Commons chamber.

But the byelection on 23 June, which comes on the same day the Tories defend another seat in Wakefield, West Yorkshire, is widely seen as an ultra-close race between Hurford and the Liberal Democrat candidate, Richard Foord.

[Internal polling](#) by the Lib Dems of those intending to vote on the day of the byelection, released on Wednesday, put the Conservatives on 46% and the Lib Dems on 44%.

“I think it’s going to be very tight, and we can’t take anything for granted whatsoever,” Hurford said. “It could come down to very small numbers.”

Asked why a seat that has been Conservative-held in its various geographical variations for well over a century was now under threat, Hurford said issues raised by voters included the cost of living and “what happened with Neil Parish”.

She added: “And thirdly, the media’s persistent regurgitating of Partygate – even though there has been a line drawn in the sand, and there has been a report, it is constantly in the news, and people aren’t allowed to move on from it.”

“So, of course, that’s impacting. That is what I’m hearing on doorsteps as well – people are sick and tired of seeing it. They are sick and tired of

hearing it. They want to talk about what's important.”

Asked if this meant the media were in part to blame for the Tories' struggles in the seat, Hurford said: “It's not necessarily the media's fault, but I think it's time to stop. There needs to be a change of narrative about what is important.”

Hurford said she did understand voters' worries about trust as a result of the Downing Street parties, adding: “All I can say is that the by-election is to pick a representative for Tiverton and Honiton, your next MP. As a former headteacher I am very trustworthy. When I say I'm going to do something, I do it. This is what is important – the person who is going to be representing you in Westminster.”

Asked if Johnson was equally trustworthy, she declined to answer directly, saying: “I will be giving my loyalty to somebody who has been given a third mandate by the party. This has happened. We need to move on.”

Questioned a second time if Johnson was fundamentally honest, she replied: “I think Boris thinks that he is an honest person. How I conduct myself is how I conduct myself, and I think you are trying to catch me out here.”

Asked, finally, if she was comfortable going into a parliamentary party led by Johnson, she replied: “I'm comfortable representing Tiverton and Honiton as their MP with the [Conservatives](#), with a prime minister who has once again, for the third time, been shown support by the majority of the party. That is what I will be going for. Everything else has happened. I'm looking forwards to the future.

“I don't want to play party politics. I don't want to be drawn into things that have happened. I want to be talking about what I can deliver for Tiverton and Honiton.”

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## 2022.06.17 - Spotlight

- [You be the judge Should my wife stop walking off when we argue?](#)
- ['The nation lost its mind' The extraordinary new documentary about the death of Princess Diana](#)
- [Dom Phillips and Bruno Pereira A timeline of their disappearance in Brazil](#)
- [Experience I am the dullest man in Britain](#)

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[You be the judge](#)[Relationships](#)

## You be the judge: should my wife stop walking off when we argue?



Illustration: Joren Joshua/the Guardian

He likes to confront things head on; she prefers to leave the room to cool down. You decide the verdict in this communication breakdown

[Find out how to get a disagreement settled or be a You be the Judge juror](#)

[Georgina Lawton](#)  
[@georginalawton](#)

Fri 17 Jun 2022 03.00 EDT Last modified on Fri 17 Jun 2022 20.49 EDT

## The prosecution: Martin

*I think we should air our disagreements quickly, say what's bothering us, and then we can move on*

My wife of seven years and I disagree about how to resolve petty arguments. We don't row much but when we do, I prefer to talk and talk until we meet in the middle, whereas Jilly retreats at the first sign of trouble and tries to cut off the conversation so she can "cool down".

I find this drags the tension out. I think we should air things quickly, so we can resolve whatever is bothering us and then go back to normal.

Recently we started planning a holiday. I thought Jilly had booked too few activities: I like to be active and go sightseeing, but she prefers to sunbathe. Jilly then suggested we do some of the holiday separate from each other and I didn't like that. I said, "What's the point in going away together at all?" I got annoyed but Jilly walked out of the room saying she needed some space.

I'd have happily kept discussing it until we reached a compromise, but Jilly doesn't work like that. She can be very avoidant. I'd have preferred her to come back in the room and say, "I'm not angry, I just want to resolve this." Instead I had to wait until she was ready to let me speak to her again.

I don't think raising one's voice is the worst thing you can do as long as you're still respectful

My work often takes me overseas, and this has also put pressure on our ability to talk through arguments.

When we have a disagreement on text message, she'll just stop replying. So I have to call her – and then she will hang up instead of resolving the dispute. It's the phone equivalent of walking out of the room. I think it's bad manners. Sometimes Jilly will get huffy, then say "OK, bye" – and put the phone down without another word.

I'm not sure why she acts like this – maybe it's our upbringing. Jilly was raised by parents who were very calm and relaxed. I come from a loud family where we'd shout at each other often, then hug 10 minutes later.

But I don't think raising one's voice is the worst thing you can do as long as you're respectful. Jilly needs to try and stay present in tense situations rather than walk off or hang up. It's important we communicate properly with each other.

## The defence: Jilly

*I think it's sensible to walk away from a conversation when you feel it's going south*

It's not fair to say I can't deal with conflict. It's just that when presented with the choice, I'd rather not have it. Isn't every person the same? I think life is a lot nicer when we avoid arguing at all costs.

Martin isn't highly confrontational but he does like to air any grievances we have in that exact moment. He'll say: "I don't want to fight, but can't you see my point of view? I'm trying to see yours."

When it's a particularly touchy topic and things start to get heated, I'd rather go off and think about things. I just need time. It's good to leave a conversation when you feel it's going south. It helps avoid fanning the flames.

When we were arguing about our upcoming holiday, I put an end to the discussion because I could see Martin getting irritated by what I'd said. He didn't want to do it the way I'd planned, and I said if he wanted to go off and explore he should do it on his own. But he got offended and complained that

the holiday would be a waste. So I got up and left the room, even though in that case it wasn't me who needed a cooling-off period, it was him!

I've been guilty of hanging up on him out of frustration. But I always call him back that evening or the next day

Martin's right when he says I was raised in a household that was totally different from his. His family is manic compared to mine. They express love differently and no one holds a grudge after a row. When I've fought with family members in the past, it's been a huge thing that's dragged on for weeks.

Martin has started working abroad for weeks at a time, which can be tough. I don't love maintaining a long-distance relationship; it's difficult for any marriage. We do a good job of keeping in contact, but little things set us off from time to time. It's the stress of not seeing each other. I've been guilty of hanging up on him out of frustration. But I always call him back that evening or the next day.

I think more regular phone calls when Martin is away would help. We have very different communication styles, so it's important to speak often to avoid further conflict.

## The jury of Guardian readers

### Should Jilly stop walking away at the first sign of conflict?

Martin should respect Jilly's wish to cool down. Forcing participation seems a recipe for unhappiness and disaster. Why not take a 24-hour time-out before revisiting issues?

**Stephanie, 36**

Jilly is just trying to deal with her fears. Jilly and Martin are both flat-out trying to meet their own needs, but no one is caretaking for the relationship. Neither is guilty, but both they and their relationship would benefit from some compassion and therapy.

**Kate, 49**

They are both guilty. Martin should strive to be more open to Jilly's input and Jilly should make an effort to view conflict not as some unpleasantness imposed on her but as a natural part of partnership that needs to be worked through as a team. Do talk more often while long-distance; don't ever argue via texts.

**Isaure, 29**

Although Martin is right about airing issues quickly, he should accept Jilly's need for some breathing space during an argument. Although Jilly's refusal to engage is a much bigger problem. Avoiding arguments at all costs is unrealistic, and shutting Martin out feels like a power play. Why not start by talking through a compromise?

**Rachel, 34**

Jilly needs to do a bit of relearning: she currently associates a raised tone as a bad thing. Communication is key and, let's face it, what's the alternative – silence? The basics are vital, especially when spending time apart, so permit Martin's vents, reflect and respond.

**Patricia, 48**

## You be the judge

So now you can be the judge. In our online poll below, tell us: should Jilly stop walking off during arguments?

We'll share the results on next week's You be the judge.

**The poll will close on Thursday 23 June at 9am BST**

## Last week's result

We asked if Derek should [put his phone on silent](#), as the text alerts annoy his girlfriend Ravinda.

**3% of you said no – Derek is innocent**

**97% of you said yes – Derek is guilty**

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## **‘The nation had lost its mind’: the extraordinary new documentary about the death of Princess Diana**



Life through a royal lens ... Diana, Princess of Wales in *The Princess*.  
Photograph: Courtesy of Sundance Institute

The team behind a new film, *The Princess*, explain why the royal family possess all the vital ingredients to make them the perfect cinematic subjects

Danny Leigh

Fri 17 Jun 2022 03.00 EDT Last modified on Fri 17 Jun 2022 08.27 EDT

Only a genius of longform plotting could have planned the sting in the tail of the royal 2022. In the rolling melodrama of the British monarchy, the platinum jubilee was always slated for this year, gratitude splashed across the Daily Express. But now the mood will darken. So it is that 70 years of the Queen segues directly into 25 since the death of Diana, Princess of Wales. In Macbeth, the ghost haunted the feast. Here she returns with the pink gin hangovers barely faded. On with the show.

A film will mark the occasion: [The Princess](#), a much buzzed-about new documentary. It also follows a celebration of the Queen, the fond bio-doc [Elizabeth: A Portrait in Parts](#). That was the last movie directed by the late, highly regarded [Roger Michell](#). But *The Princess* too arrives as a prestige project. The producer is Simon Chinn, whose CV includes award-winners *Man on Wire* and *Searching for Sugar Man*. The director is Ed Perkins, the fast-riser responsible for the Oscar-nominated *Black Sheep*.



Fond bio-doc ... Queen Elizabeth II and the Duke of Edinburgh on their coronation day in Elizabeth: A Portrait in Parts. Photograph: The Print Collector/Signature Entertainment

If you made documentaries for a living, you would probably make a royal one. Think of the business case. Both Perkins and Michell go big on scenes of royal watchers: straining to touch a young prince, scowling when asked to make room for schoolchildren. Easy to mock. But to be born British is to be raised a royal watcher, either by choice or as a bored kid stuck in front of them. It makes the country a pre-sold audience. With Diana, moreover, the brand remains global.

And if you made documentaries, you probably would make The Princess. The operatic drama is a given. Just as important, it took place in front of a camera, or a bank of cameras, leaving an archive breadcrumb trail. Abundant source material for what is now the house style of modern documentary: talking heads sidelined for un-narrated collage. The Princess is a descendent of [Asif Kapadia](#)'s "fame trilogy": Senna, Amy, Diego Maradona. Ill-starred icons of music and sport, Kapadia's subjects came steeped in glamour, routinely filmed, seemingly cursed. Snap on all counts.

Perkins was 11 when Diana died. The memory stayed with him, he says, not least because his parents solemnly arrived together in his room to tell him, each more distressed than made rational sense. Such is a secret weapon of royalty: the tree rings of your life get tied up with their story. "I still vividly recall that night," he says. "It was the same watching TV in the days afterwards. So many adults flocking to Buckingham Palace, publicly grieving as if they had lost a family member. At 11, I was just very, very confused."

So a documentary-maker might also direct The Princess from a sincere desire to solve a childhood mystery. And that ready-made audience is part of it. The gargoyles of the tabloids were rightly blamed for blighting the sad, gilded life before the early death, but looks inward are rarer. "I wanted to use archive because that is the record of how we consumed her through the media. And that was my core question. What does this story say about *us*? About what we still consume and the demand we create?"

Chinn was much less keen than Perkins to make *The Princess* until the hounding of Meghan Markle. Then, he says, he saw history repeat. It wasn't just the spite of the papers. Something else had resurfaced: a giddy public investment in misogyny and soap. "I'd thought Diana was overfamiliar. A bit of a dead end. Then I realised it was an origin story. Not just about Meghan but so much of modern Britain."

Perkins captures Diana's last night on 31 August 1997 not through stunned newsreaders but Australian tourists, chancing on police lights outside the Pont de l'Alma traffic tunnel while shooting Paris with a camcorder. It was the late 90s, after all. New digital cameras were flooding the market. A tech revolution was just beginning. Now it extends to high-end documentaries made up of nuggets of old telly and the device you may be reading this piece on. Chinn recalls that limbo period in late summer as a young producer of 28, beginning a TV career, boggling at news reports in the days after the death. "I honestly felt the nation had lost its mind," he says. "There was this consensus that we were all devastated – for me and for my friends, it simply wasn't true. So even then you think: 'Ah.' Two different Britains, right?"



Public outpouring of grief ... Elizabeth Debicki as Diana, Princess of Wales in *The Crown*. Photograph: Netflix

The mutinous teeter to the national mood was being fuelled by flag-wavers outside Buckingham Palace. For republicans, it enshrined the irony of Diana: the queen-to-be who nearly put a bullet in the monarchy. The weirdness didn't end there. In 1997 I was living around the corner from London's first internet cafe and working near Victoria. My walk home that summer used to take me past the palace. Up close, it was became clearer every day that the madly swelling crowds were not simply milling and mourning. They came with cameras. They filmed and photographed themselves and each other. It was a riot of the performative, in a glut of emotion. Remind you of anything? "There is a definite argument her life and especially her death were omens of social media," Perkins says.



Catastrophic ... Netflix's musical Diana. Photograph: Netflix

Fiction has tried to tell this odd, contradictory story too. But scripts that try to get into the psyche of the princess don't help. Nor the default mode of drama, making events bigger than reality. As big as last year's catastrophic Netflix musical [Diana](#), or [Spencer](#), with Kristen Stewart lost in Kubrick delirium. And then there is The Crown, whose coming seasons will see the character played by [Elizabeth Debicki](#), another LA film star, one more Diana for the hall of mirrors.

With a story this close to camp already, you have to strip back to something like the facts. And documentary itself has a role in the tale. Newsreels made for early 20th-century cinema crowds were embraced by prewar royalty: a means to be glimpsed by their subjects en masse. Diana was not the first British royal who worked the camera. She was just the most gifted.

It partly explains the meltdown after her death. When Michell reaches those tinderbox days outside the palace, he cuts in a snatch of Lenin from the great dramatisation of the Russian revolution, *October*. The moment lands as a joke. Yet something ineffably strange did briefly hang in the air. *What now?* The answer turned out to be the Queen, the one Windsor who could soothe the crowd. Let Mummy kiss it better.

But what now? Because, while *The Princess* obviously closes with a funeral, the sense of an ending is here in 2022. After the rictus gaiety of the jubilee, a change of hands is surely coming. Like royal watchers pressed up against the crash barriers, the reward for the well-timed documentary is a place adjacent to history. “The Queen’s death will be a moment of great peril for them, won’t it?” Chinn says.



Lost in Kubrick delirium ... Kristen Stewart in *Spencer*. Photograph: Neon/Pablo Larraín/Allstar

The Crown has two more seasons planned in which to make the most of Diana, alongside a Queen now played by Imelda Staunton. Sooner rather than later, the actual royals will lack both. From here, different memories will come to mind, other overlaps with the tree rings of our lives. Where were *you* when you heard Prince Andrew had paid £12m to Virginia Giuffre after she said he sexually assaulted her as a teenager?

That documentary will have to wait. Instead, after the Queen's funeral there will simply be a coronation, fanfare as if this was still the days of newsreel. But the audience will be smaller, mostly confined to a Britain now fractured and shrunk like the Windsors themselves. As models for The Princess, Senna and Amy also tell an implied truth about less tragic pop icons and sports stars. Most don't die young. They just dwindle into a niche. The remaining royal family too may soon find there are only the smaller venues – where cameras no longer bother to follow.

Yet the twists keep coming. In the fortnight since the jubilee, all signs have pointed to a new era, with a seemingly spectral influence. [Prince William's turn in a Big Issue bib](#) channelled his mother's optics. The [hostility of Prince Charles to the government's Rwandan flights](#) seemed a further homage. And we keep watching. The puzzle that vexed Ed Perkins at 11 is, he says, at least half-answered in his film. "If you want a royal family, the essential question is: do you actually want them to be people? Or do you *really* still want fairytales? Because both at once is impossible."

The Princess is in cinemas in the UK from 30 June, and in Australia from 11 August.

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[Dom Phillips and Bruno Pereira](#)

## **The disappearance of Dom Phillips and Bruno Pereira – a timeline**

Dom Phillips, a journalist and frequent contributor to the Guardian, set off on a trip to a remote part of the Amazon with his friend and guide Bruno Pereira to research a book. Their disappearance and murder ignited a campaign to urge Brazil's authorities to act and shone a spotlight on the increasingly hostile environment in the world's largest rainforest

['Defenders of nature': a video tribute to Bruno Pereira and Dom Phillips](#)

*[Theresa Malone](#), [Garry Blight](#) and [Niels de Hoog](#)*

Fri 17 Jun 2022 04.32 EDT Last modified on Fri 17 Jun 2022 11.31 EDT

Wednesday

1 June

Salvador, Brazil



### **Dom Phillips sets off for the rainforest**

The journalist left his home in Salvador, where he lived with his wife. He [sent relatives in the UK](#) a picture of the Amazon with a rainbow over it, which he had taken from the plane.



Photograph of a rainbow over the Brazilian Amazon taken by Dom Phillips on 1 June.

**Thursday**

**2 June**

**Atalaia do Norte**



**Phillips and Pereira set off for the Javari valley**

The pair leave by boat from Atalaia do Norte, a riverside town that is the entry point to the Javari reserve – a vast area of rivers and rainforests in Amazonas state near the border with Peru. Their destination was the Lago do Jaburu region.

**Friday**

**3 June**

**Lago do Jaburu**

**Phillips and Pereira reach their destination**

The Univaja Indigenous group said Phillips and Pereira had reached their destination on Friday evening.

## Saturday

4 June

Lago do Jaburu

### Threats received

[The pair were threatened](#) on Saturday 4 June, when a group of armed men brandished firearms at a patrol by members of the Univaja Indigenous association, according to the association's president Paulo Marubo. Phillips photographed the men at the time, Marubo told the Associated Press. Days earlier, Pereira had reportedly received a written threat stemming from his opposition to illegal fishing gangs plundering the Javari's rivers. "We know who you are, and we'll find you to settle the score," it warned, according to O Globo newspaper.

## Sunday

5 June

Lago do Jaburu

### Return journey by boat begins

Phillips and Pereira are thought to have started returning by river to Atalaia do Norte. The journey should have taken no more than three hours.

São Rafael



### **Stop-off for scheduled meeting**

En route, they stopped in the community of São Rafael, where Pereira had scheduled a meeting with a local leader to discuss Indigenous patrols to fight the “intense invasions” that have been taking place on their lands. When the community leader did not arrive, the men decided to continue to Atalaia do Norte, about a two-hour trip.

São Gabriel

### **Last reported sighting of Phillips and Pereira**

They were last seen shortly after near the community of São Gabriel, just downstream from São Rafael.

Atalaia do Norte

### **Search begins**

Local Indigenous leaders sounded the alarm and sent a search party after they failed to arrive at their destination by 2pm.

Monday

6 June

## Appeals for help

Statements from Phillips' Brazilian wife and British sister appealed for help from Brazilian authorities to find him. Alessandra Sampaio, who lives with her husband in the north-eastern city of Salvador, [said in a statement](#): “Brazilian authorities, our families are in despair. Please answer the urgency of the moment with urgent actions.”

### **"We are really worried about him"**

Phillips' sister, Sian Phillips, said in a video statement on Monday night: “We knew it was a dangerous place but Dom really believed it's possible to safeguard the nature and the livelihood of the Indigenous people. We are really worried about him and urge the authorities in Brazil to do all they can to search the routes he was following. If anyone can help scale up resources for the search that would be great because time is crucial. We love our brother and want him and his Brazilian guide found ... every minute counts.”

0:58

A video appeal from Sian Phillips, sister of missing journalist Dom Phillips.

## **Authorities' search efforts criticised**

Late on Monday, Brazil's navy said seven of its officials were involved in the search, while the army said members of a jungle infantry division had been sent to the men's last known location by speedboat. Earlier in the day, the army had faced criticism after announcing that it had yet to deploy since orders had not been sent by the defence ministry in the capital, Brasília.

## **Two men arrested**

Two fishers in the area were arrested by the police on Monday night. It remained unclear why, and they were released soon afterwards.

Tuesday

7 June

### **Tearful appeal from Phillips' wife**

“Even if I don’t find the love of my life alive, they must be found, please – intensify the search,” Sampaio implored, [breaking down as she spoke](#).

“Even if I don’t find the love of my life alive, we must find them, please”: [@domphillips](#)’s wife Alessandra makes emotional plea for help  [pic.twitter.com/IPtCerJiKf](https://pic.twitter.com/IPtCerJiKf)

— Tom Phillips (@tomphillipsin) [June 7, 2022](#)

### **Police open criminal investigation**

Brazilian police on Tuesday opened a criminal investigation into the men’s disappearance. On Tuesday night, Amazonas state police said they had interviewed five people so far: “Four people as witnesses and another ... as a suspect.”

### **A helicopter is finally deployed**

On Tuesday morning a helicopter joined the mission. Official photographs of the army deployment, showing a single vessel, did not point to a massive operation given the impressive military resources available in the Amazon region.

### **Bolsonaro appears to blame missing men**

In his first official comments on the disappearance, Brazil’s president, Jair Bolsonaro, criticised what he called an inadvisable “adventure”. “Quite

frankly, two people in just one boat, in that kind of region, absolutely wild, is an adventure that isn't recommendable for anyone. Anything might happen. It could have been an accident. They could have been executed," he said, prompting immediate outrage.

Wednesday

8 June

## Appeal gains global momentum

The former footballer [Pelé led a group of Brazilian celebrities](#) in calling for authorities to intensify their search efforts. He was joined by another of Brazil's best-loved personalities Dr Drauzio Varella, musician Caetano Veloso, singer Gaby Amarantos and former footballer Walter Casagrande who all voiced their concerns about the fate of the two men. Earlier in the week, the US climate envoy, John Kerry, committed to pursuing the facts behind the disappearance.

The fight for the preservation of the Amazon Forest and of the indigenous groups belongs to all of us. I am moved by the disappearance of Dom Phillips and Bruno Ferreira, who dedicate their lives to this cause. I join the many voices that make the appeal to intensify the search.

— Pelé (@Pele) [June 8, 2022](#)

## 'No evidence of crime' as one man is arrested

Authorities were yet to find any evidence of a crime three days after the men went missing. Police in the far west of Brazil said their inquiries had led to the arrest of one man. The suspect was caught in possession of drugs, a shotgun and ammunition restricted for military use, but was not named. Earlier in the day, police sources said they had detained a man named Amarildo da Costa de Oliveira on similar charges. However, the Amazonas state police chief told reporters it was too early to link any suspect directly to the pair's disappearance.

Thursday

9 June

## **Media organisations urge Bolsonaro to do more**

Editors and journalists from some of the world's biggest news organisations [published a letter to the Brazilian president](#) to ask that he “urgently step up and fully resource the effort” to find Phillips and Pereira.

## **Vigils held in London and Brasília**

Family members, journalists and civil society organisations held a vigil at the Brazilian embassy in London to urge Brazilian authorities to bolster the search. Employees of the National Indigenous Foundation attended a vigil in Brasília.

0:19

A vigil is held in London for Dom Phillips and Bruno Pereira.

Friday

10 June

## **Hopes fade of finding men alive**

Brazilian police announced an unsettling development in the search for the two men. “Search teams found on the river, near to Atalaia do Norte, apparently human organic material,” Brazil’s federal police said in a statement.

Saturday

11 June

Lago do Preguiça



### **Volunteers continue their search**

A team of volunteer rescue workers set off from their riverside “Base Evu” to examine their latest search zone: a body of water called the Lago do Preguiça or the Sloth’s Lake.

### **Frustration grows with 'inefficient' military search**

It was reported that at least 50 locals on three boats had been scouring the river and its tributaries looking for signs of the two men or the boat in which they were travelling. However, with little or no contact with the military they began to fear they were going over each other's tracks. The military, Marubo said, should be coordinating the search and using the Indigenous guides strategically. “Why haven’t they found Dom?” asked Marubo. “Because their searches are inefficient.”

0:18

The Brazilian military carry out their search for Phillips and Pereira.

### **Personal items found**

Rescue workers announced they had found personal items including a backpack and items of clothing near the riverside home of Amarildo da Costa de Oliveira, the fisher that police had in custody and were investigating over the disappearances.



A firefighter holds a cell phone with a picture showing the moment when a backpack was found during the search. Photograph: Edmar Barros / AP Sunday

12 June

## Vigil held in Rio

0:24

A vigil held for Dom Phillips and Bruno Pereira in Rio.

Monday

13 June

## Unconfirmed reports of bodies found

British relatives of Phillips said they had been contacted by the Brazilian embassy in London on Monday morning and informed that two unidentified bodies had been found during the search operation. However, the federal

police in Brazil later denied the claims. Indigenous activists involved in the search effort also said they had no information about such a discovery but believed the men's remains would soon be found in an area of flooded forest where their search teams found some of the men's belongings on Saturday.

### **Bolsonaro comments on the fate of the men**

Speaking to Brazilian radio, the president said the evidence gathered by investigators suggested the two men were unlikely to be found alive. Bolsonaro said tests were being conducted on suspected human material found floating in one of the region's rivers. "The indications are that something wicked was done to them," he added.

Atalaia do Norte

### **Protests by Indigenous people**

As Brazil's far-right leader spoke, hundreds of Indigenous protesters marched through Atalaia do Norte, the riverside town from which Phillips and Pereira set off on 2 June. Carrying spears, wearing traditional dress and singing in their native tongues, the Indigenous protesters processed through the streets to demand justice and denounce the assault on Brazil's environment and Indigenous lands that has played out since Bolsonaro took power in 2019.

0:24

Indigenous protesters demand justice for Phillips and Pereira.

Tuesday

14 June

### **Brazil envoy 'deeply sorry' for 'information that did not prove correct'**

The Brazilian ambassador to the UK apologised to the family of Phillips for incorrectly telling them the day before that his body had been found in the Amazon along with that of Pereira.

Wednesday

15 June

## **Police in Brazil arrest second man for ‘alleged murder’**

Police in Brazil say they have arrested a second man in connection with “the alleged murder”. Oseney da Costa de Oliveira, 41, was arrested on Tuesday and was being held in Atalaia do Norte. In a statement, federal police said Oliveira, who is known by the nickname Dos Santos, had been arrested “on suspicion of involvement in the case” along with his brother Amarildo da Costa de Oliveira, the prime suspect, who has been in custody since last week.

Lago do Preguiça



## **Police find two bodies in search for missing men**

At a [press briefing late on Wednesday](#), regional police chief Eduardo Fontes said one of the two men arrested in connection with the pair’s disappearance had confessed to killing them. “On Tuesday he informed us the location

where the bodies were buried and he promised to go with us today to the site so we could confirm where the bodies were buried," Fontes told reporters. The location identified by the suspect was 1hr 40min by boat from the river town of Atalaia do Norte and another 1.9 miles (3.1km) by foot into dense forest. After a day-long operation, involving the army, navy and police force, the Guardian witnessed the bodies being removed from that area, known as the Lago do Preguiça, under the cover of darkness. Escorted by army troops, they were carried by boat back down the River Itaquaí to Atalaia do Norte, where Phillips and Pereira had begun their final journey.

Source: CNN Brazil, federal police

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## ExperienceHobbies

# Experience: I am the dullest man in Britain

My three ex-wives all found me dull; not in the bedroom, but in every other part of the house



Kevin Beresford on Sambourne village green, with one of the stars of his Benches of Redditch calendar. Photograph: Stephen Burke/The Guardian

*Kevin Beresford*

Fri 17 Jun 2022 05.00 EDT Last modified on Sat 18 Jun 2022 23.26 EDT

I grew up in Small Heath, Birmingham, known to most as Peaky Blinders territory. I was interested in football and history at school, and studied art and design at Aston University. Birmingham has 35 miles of canals, which intrigued me because my dad was born on a canal boat.

My claim to dull fame came in 2018, when I was named [Anorak of the Year](#) by the Dull Men's Club. It's an international collective of people – we

welcome everyone, not just men – who find joy in the mundane. Our motto is “celebrating the ordinary”. Other members include a drain spotter and a guy who has collected 20,000 milk bottles. After that, newspapers began to dub me “Britain’s dullest man”.

I had other brushes with the media before then, too. I run a small print shop in Redditch, and in 2003 I wanted to create a calendar for our customers. Redditch had three prisons, no cinema, but copious roundabouts and so, for the laugh, my employees and I decided on Roundabouts of Redditch.

Sign up to our Inside Saturday newsletter for an exclusive behind-the-scenes look at the making of the magazine’s biggest features, as well as a curated list of our weekly highlights.

I was in a pub one Friday night when a friend called to say it was on the Graham Norton Show. Graham was flicking through a calendar of gorgeous Greek islands with his guest and brought Roundabouts of Redditch out as a comparison. I absolutely loved it.

It changed my life. Demand rocketed for the calendar. We had initially printed 100 copies – soon we were selling to people around the world. In 2004, I was approached by a publisher and wrote Roundabouts of Great Britain, which sold 20,000 copies on its first run, then Roundabouts from the Air *Ish* in 2005, called that because I took the photos from bridges and the tops of trees. The AA asked me to do the same for car parks – we put out another book, *Parking Mad: Car Parks from Heaven (or Hell)*, and a calendar, *Car Parks of Britain*.

The Redditch calendar spawned a series of Best of British Roundabouts. I travelled the country with my camera, following enthusiasts’ tipoffs. I photographed a Kent roundabout with a duck pond and a Yorkshire one with a working windmill. I’ve made calendars of benches, bus routes, telephone boxes and other seemingly unexciting features of British life. I’ve produced calendars of prisons and old asylums. I love grisly subjects, steeped in history, although I’m also thinking of doing one on recycling centres.

BENCHES OF REDDITCH was my second biggest selling calendar last year, after THE WONDERFUL WORLD OF JACK GREALISH'S CALVES

TV crews from China and the US visited. I was on daytime TV, including on Sharon Osbourne's show. I downed a bottle of wine in the green room before my appearance to offset my nerves. It went swimmingly, though.

I also established myself as president of the [UK Roundabout Appreciation Society](#) (my unofficial title is The Lord of the Rings) and the founder – and only member – of the Car Park Appreciation Society. People say I'm obsessed, but that feels derogatory. I prefer "passionate".

My four sons are fairly embarrassed by it, and my three ex-wives all found me dull; not in the bedroom, but in every other part of the house. But I think women like dull men; when their husbands say they're going to the shed to make a matchstick model of Winchester Cathedral, they don't have to wonder if they're actually up to something else.

In truth, I don't think I'm dull. It's my hobbies that are dull. I'm actually full of surprises: I'm a fan of trance music and went clubbing last weekend. In February, I spent my 70th birthday in Malaga with two buddies.

I try to do 10 calendars a year. I get inspiration from everyday life. [MARTIN PARR](#), the celebrated British photographer, sent me a text saying he admired my work. That felt wonderful.

[MY BENCHES OF REDDITCH CALENDAR](#) became my second biggest seller last year, at 2,000 copies. The most popular calendar that year was [THE WONDERFUL WORLD OF JACK GREALISH'S CALVES 2022](#). As an Aston Villa fan, I made it as an act of revenge when he was sold to Manchester City, but a lot of people bought it for their girlfriends.

I'm semi-retired, and these hobbies have kept me alive. I consider myself a writer – I'm writing a novel about a Brummie abducted by aliens – and I enjoy the knowledge that my photography is on walls across Britain and beyond.

I meet up with the [Dull Men's Club](#) once a year; it's amazing how charismatic we are when we all get together. And I wear my Britain's dullest man title as a badge of honour.

Do you have an experience to share? Email [experience@theguardian.com](mailto:experience@theguardian.com)

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## 2022.06.17 - Opinion

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- [What can we do about poverty? First, stop blaming people for being poor](#)
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**Opinion**[\*\*Unite\*\*](#)

# Profiteering bosses, not workers, are pushing up inflation. Here's how to fight back

[Aditya Chakrabortty](#)



Unite's leader, Sharon Graham, is leading the charge against 21st-century corporations. Why isn't Labour following suit?



Illustration: Ben Jennings/The Guardian

Fri 17 Jun 2022 01.00 EDT Last modified on Fri 17 Jun 2022 09.42 EDT

Some days it seems the entire country has slipped back half a century, to the 1970s. Abba are once again playing arenas, the Sex Pistols are gobbing all over our screens, and every chunk of masonry tumbling off Parliament gifts the headline writers another crack at their favourite decade. Government in chaos? It's the 70s all over again! Record [inflation](#)? Seventies, obvs. And the [strikes](#) breaking out across the UK? Why, they're about as 70s as Red Robbo, [Reliant Robins](#) and Reg Varney.

In all honesty, I'm not so horrified about time-travelling to the decade that saw the economy regularly growing two or three times faster than today, while keeping a far smaller gap between rich and poor. If that's meant to be dystopia, I've read [worse from scientists](#) at the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) – and they're talking about what lies around the corner.

But to abide by the current laws of physics, the whole story is, as that perceptive analyst of British affairs Johnny Rotten might say, bollocks. Trade unions are a fraction of the size and strength they were in 1979 and, from [sick pay](#) to [strikes](#), British workers get among the roughest treatment in western Europe. One result is that average wages are falling at their fastest

rate in two decades, and many workers rely on benefits or even [food banks to get by](#). Whatever the caricaturists may say, that is the backdrop to tomorrow's [march through London](#) by union members.

The biggest threat to what remains of our tattered social contract isn't 1970s-style unions but 2020s-era capitalism. From privatised trains to high-street chemists and care homes, industry after industry is today owned by multinational investors with tentacles around the world who treat our basic needs as tiny income streams to suck up and siphon off into palm-tree tax havens.

Among the many questions this raises, one of the most fundamental is: how do workers win against such overmighty opponents? Some of the best answers come from a woman whose name you may know only vaguely. [Sharon Graham](#) was last year elected head of the UK's second-largest trade union, Unite. She wasn't meant to win: her predecessor Len McCluskey had picked his own man, while Keir Starmer backed another. But members had their own ideas, and Graham stormed it. Rather than take a victory lap at last September's Labour conference and sink a few bevvies with the brothers, she went off to a picket line. She does a lot of that.

Since taking over eight months ago, Graham has led 52,000 members into more than 300 disputes. Of those that have been resolved, Unite has won three out of four. In the past few months alone, workers at Gatwick have scored a [21% pay rise](#), those at Devonport dockyard in Plymouth have [won 13%](#), and employees at the BMW Mini plant in Oxford have [accepted a 21% rise](#) over the next three years. She has pioneered a strategy called leverage. When battling multinationals, she will call in forensic accountants (Unite has just hired its own) and other analysts to go through every detail of the company, its owners and shareholders and their various advisers.

Documents are produced over many weeks that stretch to many hundreds of pages. Then a "dirt dossier" is put together, and Graham and her team start pushing on contractors, clients and foreign governments considering giving business to her corporate opponents. It has proved to be a devastatingly successful strategy. She has warned City analysts that Unite's response to British Airways' [fire and rehire policy](#) will damage its business, and has

lobbied the Norwegian government against awarding a contract to a bus company. And time and again, she has won.

Many academics and commentators look on modern financialised businesses and produce a literature of despair. I have made my own contributions to that particular bookshelf. But Graham is the first person I have met who has looked at how the modern corporation is globalised, outsourced and often dependent on states, and turned those very factors against it.

When we met this week, her office still looked more squatted than occupied: a couple of boxes of files in a corner, some thank-you cards on a window sill and, by her monitor, photos of her 13-year-old son. Notable by their absence were big prints of her gripping and grinning with politicians. That's one core principle of Graham's politics: she isn't fussed about [Labour](#). Despite the rumours, Unite will remain affiliated to the party, but outside election time Graham wants the majority of its £20m political fund to be spent on community organising. The hole this could blow in Starmer's campaigning budgets is potentially huge: one Labour veteran estimates it adds somewhere in the region of £6-10m over an election cycle.

In his recent memoir, McCluskey devoted hundreds of pages to Ed and Jeremy and Keir, with one solitary chapter on the outlook for trade unionism. Graham, on the other hand describes her members as "disappointed" with Starmer, and has privately told the Labour leader that he acts as if he is "embarrassed of the trade union movement". This isn't the usual left-right factionalism; when I broach ideas that are fashionable among the Labour left, such as a [four-day week](#) or universal basic income, she mutters under her breath, "God help me." Instead of ventriloquising its demands through Labour, Graham wants Unite to speak in its own voice.

Her officials are already mapping out key constituencies where [Unite](#) will put up its own billboards with its own demands on pension schemes at work, the triple lock and good quality social care. "Whoever picks up the baton is going to get our vote." She is also forming her own in-house thinktank to generate analysis and policy that reflects union members' demands and experiences. Until a few weeks ago, the entire trade union movement had only one formally designated economist, Geoff Tily at the TUC (who works

with some very able policy officers). Graham has hired two economists and has just this week advertised for another to do a Unite-funded PhD.

The first fruit of this strategy is [a report shared exclusively](#) with the Guardian. It shows that whatever Johnson and the Bank of England's head, Andrew Bailey, warn about a [wage-price spiral](#), there is no evidence of one. While global forces pushed up the cost of essentials such as oil and gas, a careful study of the accounts of the big FTSE-350 companies shows executives are now using this as cover to push up their profit margins – by 73%. Take out energy firms, and the numbers are still huge: over 50%. While the Bank of England is jacking up the rates on your mortgage and credit cards, and hastening a recession, policymakers are fighting a war that is half a century old. It's not workers who are pushing up inflation; it's often their employers.

Threadneedle Street knows this is happening. Its chief economist, Huw Pill, talked last month of companies pushing up prices to “pass on” costs, and of a “further strengthening of margins”. The obvious answer would be for Westminster to crack down. But while Bernie Sanders and others in the US are threatening a profiteering tax, Starmer's team is paralysed by the fear it may be seen as too much in hock to the very labour movement that founded it.

As workers across the country push for higher wages, Graham is about to get a lot more prominent and attract much more bile from the right. She has her own issues at Unite, a bureaucracy that after a decade of McCluskey has still plenty of Len-inists. But for my money, she is asking the right questions about capitalism and correctly focusing her energies outside an increasingly tepid Westminster. “My experience of politicians is they follow – they don't lead,” she says. “So let's get leading.”

- Aditya Chakrabortty is a Guardian columnist

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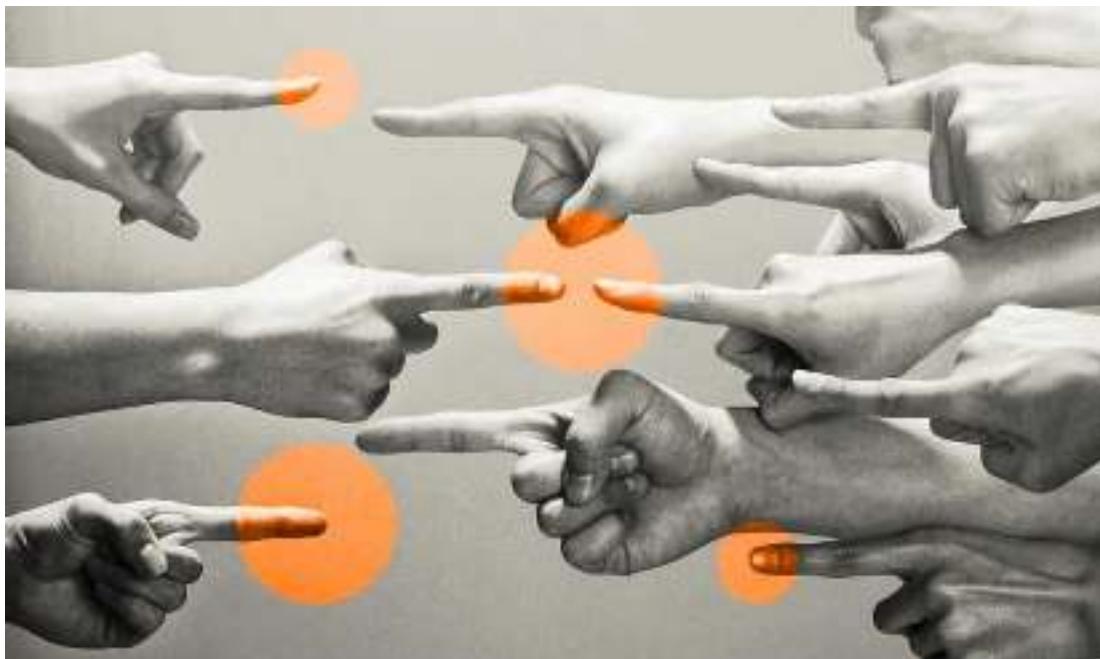
## The heat or eat diariesPoverty

# What can we do about poverty? First, stop blaming people for being poor

[Kerry Hudson](#)

As more people wind up in dire need, they will realise that being on the breadline isn't the result of their individual failings

- This article is part of a new series, [the heat or eat diaries](#): dispatches from the frontline of Britain's cost of living emergency



Composite: Guardian Design/Getty

Fri 17 Jun 2022 02.00 EDT Last modified on Fri 17 Jun 2022 09.02 EDT

Three years ago, having passed the audition to play myself, I sat in a sweltering recording studio with a Very Nice Middle Class sound technician recording the audiobook for [Lowborn: Growing Up, Getting Away and Returning to Britain's Poorest Towns](#). Around two and a half days into

hearing me talk about every brutality growing up in poverty had visited upon me, he interrupted me mid-sentence and shouted loudly over the recording, “But what can I do? What can I possibly do?”

We stopped recording. He explained to me that he didn’t have a lot of spare money and barely any time himself. Only then did I realise he had spent those days feeling I was personally targeting him for society’s ills.

I am used to this question: “What can I do?” I have been asked it hundreds of times by overwhelmed, decent-hearted people who have done their food bank drop-offs, circulated petitions, donated what they can, and still feel helpless.

I answered him as I usually did, explaining that people usually have more resources than they recognise. That the problem needs to be tackled at root and perhaps he had skills to pass on, a network he might call on to help improve access to the privileges that had led to him sitting there, healthy enough to go to work, recording my book.

And, along with my stock response – that a society needs affordable housing, functional social security, state education and medical care – I felt that I gave him as good an answer as I could. Because in that moment I was shuttled back to another sweltering recording studio, 10 years earlier. Visiting a national radio station as part of my job with a charity, a quite-famous-at-the-time breakfast presenter told me a particular X Factor contestant was actually “a nasty little chav”. I am deeply ashamed to say that, for the sake of my job and for the charity, I laughed uncomfortably and said, “You’re probably right.”

What I should have said both those times in recording studios, for the purposes of the tape and for posterity, is that we, as a society and a culture, really need to stop talking shit about poor people if we want anything to change. In reality TV, talk shows and media, yes. But also in homes and workplaces and supermarkets and on the benches in parliament when MPs feel able to wrongly claim that people in poverty are there because they cannot cook or budget.

The false statements about, and type of language used around, poor people needs to become as taboo, as clearly bigoted, as with any other form of systemic prejudice. When we hear it, we need to call it out. People who find themselves in poverty should not be the punchbag of politicians. When we demonise and mock our most vulnerable, we fail to recognise all the potential and value that those living in poverty have to contribute.

Of course, the pandemic and current cost of living crisis means that in recent years those who have never been touched by hardship have suddenly found themselves squeezed financially. And, no, perhaps they have not been in the grip of the sort of poverty I found myself in as a child, and millions of people find themselves in today – when there was not enough food, the electric was off for two days, or we were sleeping in coach stations. But as more people find themselves uncontrollably spiralling into poverty, the more people who may have once bought into the stereotypes about where culpability lies will now question those myths – that poor people are poor because they don't work hard enough, or can't cook or won't cook.

I'm grateful I rarely hear the term "chav" any more – a word that to this day makes my skin cold and clammy with flight-or-fight instinct. But that doesn't mean that the intention behind that word has disappeared. I grew up within an ever-perpetuating cycle of stereotypes – about why poor people deserve to be poor, how they have ended up that way, and how they've made it worse. Yes, I've seen the shape of that narrative change, the thrust of the argument and the prisms it moves through mutate. But the cold, sharp, compressed core judgment – even hate – has endured.

I think most of the people reading this would challenge hate speech or prejudice, and we must learn to do this for those who are suffering from poverty too. To not simply let it slide because for decades the media have offered up poor communities as easy cannon fodder – the dreadful consequences of the benefit cap came in as a response to the idea of "benefit scroungers". We cannot allow the deeply harmful, even fatal, narrative that this is an individual flaw rather a societal one to persist. That is the very first step each individual can take about poverty.

- Kerry Hudson is the author of Tony Hogan Bought Me an Ice-cream Float Before He Stole My Ma and Lowborn
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**OpinionPolitics**

# **Lord Geidt heads for the exit, and Johnson's Britain looks ever more like a fragile state**

[Gaby Hinsliff](#)



We still have a democracy, but the thuggishness of this government increasingly mirrors the behaviour of far-off, discredited regimes



‘Assuming Carrie Johnson couldn’t be tempted, it’s hard to imagine where Downing Street hopes to find a new keeper for the prime minister’s conscience.’ Photograph: Reuters

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Wanted: someone to advise King Herod on care of firstborns. Sorry, that should, of course, be “Boris Johnson on ethics”. The successful applicant must be impervious to embarrassment, willing to work all hours just to keep track of all the allegations, and even then probably resigned to following the two previous independent advisers on ministerial interests out of the door in due course. Assuming Carrie Johnson couldn’t be tempted, it’s hard to imagine where Downing Street hopes to find a new keeper for the prime minister’s conscience, after Christopher Geidt became the second handpicked moral arbiter [to resign](#) – this time in alarmingly mysterious circumstances.

In [a letter](#) finally winkled out of a reluctant Downing Street today, Lord Geidt said he had quit after being put in an “impossible and odious position” over government proposals that risked a “deliberate and purposeful breach of the ministerial code”, without elaborating. Whatever fresh hell this signifies – Johnson’s response suggests something to do with protecting the British steel industry from an influx of Chinese steel, which is a sensitive issue in some “red wall” seats; but, as ever with the prime minister, it feels

like only half the story – Geidt clearly saw it as opening the door to more widespread flouting of the code.

“Is there any point appointing a new ethics adviser for a prime minister with no ethics?” asked the SNP’s Carol Monaghan, during an oddly frustrating parliamentary debate over a resignation letter nobody had at that point been able to read. Interestingly, the paymaster general, Michael Ellis, neatly ducked a question about whether the advisory role would simply now be ditched. Geidt had “demonstrated diligence and thoughtfulness” in his role, he said, which under any other administration would be praise, but under this one makes you wonder how he lasted so long.

There is a genuinely thuggish edge developing to this government, with its arrogant refusal to accept scrutiny of its increasingly out-of-control behaviour. The European court of human rights inconveniently puts the brakes on your preposterous plan to ship asylum seekers off to Rwanda? Then threaten to pull out of the convention altogether, just like Vladimir Putin’s Russia. The archbishop of Canterbury dares to judge your treatment of refugees ungodly? Threaten to kick bishops out of the House of Lords, where generations of Lords Spiritual have sat since the 14th century – the kind of tradition Conservatives used to be keen on conserving.

Britain is, of course, still a functioning democracy, and the resignation of one exasperated official (or more accurately two, in quick succession) doesn’t in itself change that. But we would know exactly what to call this sort of thing if it were happening under Donald Trump, or Brazil’s Jair Bolsonaro, or the far-off leader of some corrupt and institutionally fragile state.

The niggling, unexplained question here, meanwhile, is why Geidt had to be consulted on what sounds like a question of trade law, something more obviously directed at the attorney general or experts at the Department for International Trade. Did some senior civil servant cry foul? Could there be some other conflict of interest lurking in the background? There is an odd mismatch between the emotional strength of Geidt’s criticisms and the idea

that this was all down to some arcane-sounding dispute with the World Trade Organization.

Whatever he was asked to approve was, he felt, “an affront”; letting it pass would “license the suspension of (the code’s) provisions in governing the conduct” of other ministers too, opening the floodgates. When a former royal courtier as silky as Geidt – who only a week ago told MPs he avoided advising Johnson on his personal obligations under the ministerial code because if Johnson ignored him, “we would find ourselves in a position where self-evidently the confidence would have been lost between the prime minister and the adviser” – snaps, something is up.

You have to pinch yourself to remember that less than a fortnight ago Johnson was pleading for his political life in a no-confidence vote that for many would have been a chastening experience. What worries me is the prospect of a cornered prime minister, far from cleaning up his act, concluding instead that he has nothing left to lose.

- Gaby Hinsliff is a Guardian columnist
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**Opinion**[Dom Phillips and Bruno Pereira](#)

## **There is a war on nature. Dom Phillips was killed trying to warn you about it**

[Jonathan Watts](#)

Bruno Pereira highlighted the ravaging of the rainforest and abuse of human rights. Dom told his story. We should honour them



‘To my mind, Dom was a 21st century war correspondent as well as a witness to a crime that probably led to his death.’ Dom Phillips, photographed by his friend Jonathan Watts, in Brazil. Photograph: Jonathan Watts/The Guardian

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Dom Phillips and Bruno Pereira [have been killed](#) in an undeclared global war against nature and the people who defend it. Their work mattered because our planet, the threats to it and the activities of those who threaten it matter. That work must be continued.

The frontlines of this war are the Earth's remaining biodiverse regions – the forests, wetlands and oceans that are essential for the stability of our climate and planetary life-support system.

The integrity of these systems is under attack from organised crime and criminal governments who want to exploit timber, water and minerals for short-term, often illegal profits. In many regions, the only thing standing in their way is [Indigenous communities](#) and other traditional forest dwellers, supported by civil society organisations, conservation groups and academics.

My friend Dom knew how important this story was. It is why he took a year off to [research a book](#), How to Save the Amazon, and it is why he took the risk of travelling to the bandit territory of the [Javari valley](#) with Bruno, who was one of Brazil's most effective, courageous and threatened forest defenders. It was to have been a book for everyone: accessible and useful, looking at solutions as well as problems. That was typical of Dom, [whose journalism](#) was always aimed at making the world a fairer, more accountable and enlightened place.

To my mind, this made him a 21st century war correspondent as well as a witness to a crime that probably led to his death. Dom was no activist. He was a journalist's journalist, who wanted to find out what was happening and share it with everyone who might be affected. In this case, all of us.

If anything positive can come from the mind-numbingly horrendous news, it should be for more journalists to cover this frontline, especially those regions controlled by leaders aligned with criminal interests.

Dom knew the threat posed by the president of Brazil, Jair Bolsonaro, who has encouraged illegal logging and mining, [dismissed Indigenous land rights](#), attacked conservation groups, and slashed the budgets and personnel of forest and Indigenous protection agencies.

Shortly after Bolsonaro won the first round of the 2018 Brazilian presidential election, Dom shared his fears about the fate of the Amazon in a WhatsApp message: "This is a very dark and worrying period and it's only

going to get worse,” he wrote to me. “My sense is that it is also going to become more dangerous for journalists.” But his real fear was for defenders living on the edge of the areas of the Amazon where criminals were trying to encroach on Indigenous territories and conservation zones. Dom was sure a second-round victory would give thugs a green light to step up their assault. “If he wins, what will living here be like? It’s like carte blanche to attack anyone his mob disagrees with,” he warned. Bolsonaro’s election led Dom to focus more of his work on the rainforest and its defenders.

### 'Defenders of nature': a tribute to Bruno Pereira and Dom Phillips – video

Separating the personal and the professional is impossible. Dom the individual was as important as Dom the journalist. He was much loved by his family and friends. I met him in 2012, soon after I first arrived in Brazil and we immediately hit it off. He helped me adjust to my new home and infected me with his passion for Brazilian music, art, politics and nature. Already in the country for five years, Dom, it seemed, was knowledgeable about just about everything. And what he did not know, he was curious about. His interest in the world was like a mental searchlight forever scanning the horizon. Whether in a press conference or a bar, if he thought someone had anything interesting to say, he would fix them with his piercing blue eyes and begin a gentle but relentless interrogation.

We connected through Bowie and Björk, and a love of nature and outdoor sports. Scrolling back through WhatsApp archives, many of the stories and pictures Dom shared are of spectacular views or wildlife he encountered: rays, whales, turtles and sharks seen during standup paddle outings around the coastline of Copacabana; capucins, marmosets and toucans encountered on hillside walks around Rio de Janeiro. With a group of like-minded friends, we made weekend hikes through the mountains between Teresópolis and Petrópolis, climbed the Pedra da Gávea to enjoy its stunning view of Rio and trekked up the slopes of Itatiaia for its stunning panoramas. More frequent were the bike rides. Early weekday mornings, we’d start the day with a cycle up to the Corcovado, a lung-busting activity that became known as “Christ on a bike”.

Despite a prodigious work rate, he found time for his friends. At a tough moment for me, Dom’s prescription for the blues was a Spotify playlist of

Walker Brothers songs, a recipe for anchovy paste spaghetti and a barrage of social invitations from him and his wife, Alessandra, to lure me out of a pit of misery. We shared happier times, too. The most memorable of innumerable get-togethers were his wedding party in Santa Teresa, where Dom and Alessandra radiated love and inspired joyous dancing, and my own wedding celebration in London last year, where every guest was asked to bring a word written on a stone instead of a present. For their gift, Dom and Alessandra chose “Truth”.



An Indigenous community protest against the disappearance of Bruno Pereira and Dom Phillips in Manaus, Amazonas, Brazil, 15 June 2022.  
Photograph: Raphael Alves/EPA

That was his byword. Dom was a consummate journalist, meticulously researching and fact-checking any subject thrown his way. Covering topics from economics to art, he was a versatile writer, but it was his coverage of the [Mariana environmental disaster](#) that turned his attention to environmental issues, notably the [devastating fires](#) set by farmers and land-grabbers in the Amazon rainforest in 2019.

Undaunted and ever more alarmed by what was happening to the rainforest and its defenders, Dom upped his coverage of the environment and Indigenous rights. Last year, he took this commitment a step further, by

taking a year off to write a book. As usual, he left no stone unturned, which meant his grant from the Alicia Patterson Foundation was quickly used up on reporting trips, so he had to borrow money from his family in England to complete the project. The reporting trip to the Javari valley was to be one of the last. He had been to the remote reserve, the size of Austria, once before, in 2018, when he had met Bruno. Bruno persuaded Dom that attention needed to be focused on the forest communities on the frontline. “[It's not about us](#),” the burly, bespectacled man told Dom. “The Indigenous are the heroes.”

The two men reunited earlier this month for a fateful trip to Javari. They appear to have been ambushed and killed on their return, most likely by an illegal fishing and contraband smuggling mafia that had previously threatened Bruno because he had helped Indigenous people to expose its crimes. The Brazilian authorities were slow to act: the police refused to put a helicopter in the air after the two men were reported missing, and [the military](#) said it had the capacity to search but wasted more than a day while waiting for orders.

This response by the army highlights how weak and misdirected states have become. National defence is stuck in the past – far too focused on borders and not enough on ecosystems. Meanwhile criminal gangs invade Indigenous and conservation areas with impunity. The failure of the state to defend forest defenders even as it gives a green light to illegal resource extraction suggests the government in Brazil has been captured by criminal interests.

In an election year in Brazil, everything is political. Bolsonaro has said, “The indications are that something wicked was done to them,” but he has also accused Dom and Bruno of taking an “adventure” that was “[ill-advised](#)”. This is a common tactic in the war for nature. Those pushing the extractive agenda frequently trivialise, denigrate or criminalise land-defenders. They try to claim protests and exposés are isolated and unreasonable rather than an attempt to understand and confront structural problems on a global scale. When that does not work, intimidation and violence can often follow.

The killings will chill journalists and editors covering the environmental frontline, but I hope it will inspire rather than deter. What happened to Dom and Bruno is not a one-off: it is part of [a global trend](#). Over the past two decades, thousands of environment- and land-defenders have been killed worldwide. Brazil has been the [most murderous country](#) during that time. Some of the deaths cause a global storm, such as those of [Chico Mendes](#), Dorothy Stang and now Bruno Pereira and Dom Phillips, but most go under-reported and uninvestigated. If anything useful can come from the latest horror, let it be a recognition that these are not isolated cases. Let journalists examine the patterns that link these crimes, let us tell stories off the beaten track, and let us try to find solutions to the planet's problems, as Dom was trying to do.

- Jonathan Watts is the Guardian's global environment editor
- A crowdfunding site has been set up for the families of Bruno Pereira and Dom Phillips. You can [donate here](#)
- *Do you have an opinion on the issues raised in this article? If you would like to submit a letter of up to 300 words to be considered for publication, email it to us at [guardian.letters@theguardian.com](mailto:guardian.letters@theguardian.com)*

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## 2022.06.17 - Around the world

- [Capitol attack Trump brought US ‘dangerously close to catastrophe’, panel says](#)
- ['Planning a repeat in 2024' Trump a clear danger to democracy, judge warns](#)
- [John Eastman Trump lawyer sought presidential pardon after January 6](#)
- [Capitol attack Prosecutors press January 6 committee for transcripts](#)

## January 6 hearings

# Trump brought US ‘dangerously close to catastrophe’, January 6 panel says

Bennie Thompson says US ‘fortunate for Mike Pence’s courage’ in refusing to accept Trump’s scheme to reject electoral count

January 6 panel says Trump brought US ‘dangerously close to catastrophe’ – video

*[Lauren Gambino](#) and [Hugo Lowell](#) in Washington*

Thu 16 Jun 2022 17.13 EDTFirst published on Thu 16 Jun 2022 11.37 EDT

The House select committee investigating the January 6 attack on the Capitol presented evidence on Thursday that [Donald Trump](#) was told his last-gasp attempt to overturn the results of the 2020 election was unlawful but forged ahead anyway.

Trump then pressured his vice-president, [Mike Pence](#), to reject a tally of state electors as part of a plot that brought the country “dangerously close to catastrophe”, the panel heard.

With live witnesses and recorded depositions from its yearlong investigation, the panel offered a dramatic accounting of the days and hours that preceded the assault. Chilling new evidence also detailed the frantic moments after rioters stormed the Capitol, as Pence was rushed from the Senate chamber to a secure underground location.

“Approximately 40 feet – that’s all there was – 40 feet between the vice-president and the mob,” said the California congressman Pete Aguilar, a Democrat who led the panel’s third hearing. “Make no mistake about the fact that the vice-president’s life was in danger.”

The committee spent the majority of the hearing dissecting the “completely nonsensical and antidemocratic” theory, devised by the conservative law professor John Eastman and embraced by Trump, that suggested Pence had the authority to reverse the results of the 2020 election. The vice-president has no such power.

“Trump wanted Mike Pence to do something no other vice-president has ever done,” Congressman Bennie Thompson, chairman of the committee and a Democrat of Mississippi, said opening the hearing. “We were fortunate for Mr Pence’s courage.”

Trump was told repeatedly that the plan was unlawful, according to witnesses and testimony from his closest advisers. Yet in the final days before Congress was due to certify the election results Trump increased his public and private pressure campaign on his loyal lieutenant to do his bidding.

“What the president wanted the vice-president to do was not just wrong, it was illegal and unconstitutional,” Congresswoman Liz Cheney, a Republican of Wyoming and the committee’s vice-chair, said on Thursday.

Squeezed between a president who refused to accept defeat and a constitution that provided him no such power to change the course of the election, the vice-president chose the constitution, those who advised him testified on Thursday.

Greg Jacob, who served as counsel to Pence when he was vice-president, told the panel that Eastman’s plot to nullify the results of the 2020 election was unlawful from its conception – and Eastman knew it.

During a meeting with Eastman on 4 January, Jacob testified that Eastman “acknowledged” that the strategy would violate the Electoral Count Act, the 19th-century law that Trump pressured Pence to exploit. In an exchange the next day, Eastman conceded that if the supreme court heard a challenge to his interpretation of the act, it would have been rejected, 9-0.

The second witness, retired judge and informal Pence adviser J Michael Luttig, said that if Pence had obeyed, it would have plunged the nation into

its “first constitutional crisis since the founding of the Republic”.

Ex-judge says Pence obeying Trump would have plunged US into constitutional crisis – video

“I would have laid my body across the road before I would have let the vice-president overturn the 2020 presidential election on the basis of that historical precedent,” the staid former judge said.

A federal judge ruled in March that Trump and Eastman [“more likely than not” had committed felonies](#) in their efforts to overturn the 2020 election, including obstructing the work of Congress and conspiring to defraud the American people. The committee showed a clip of Trump White House attorney Eric Herschmann testifying that he told Eastman, “get a great effing criminal defense lawyer – you’re gonna need it.”

The committee provided an almost-cinematic accounting of a call between Trump and Pence on the morning of 6 January that turned “pretty heated”, according to Ivanka Trump who was in the Oval Office with her siblings during the exchange. “It was a different tone than I heard him take with the vice-president before.”

A top aide to Ivanka testified that Trump called Pence “the P-word” during the call.

Early drafts of the speech Trump delivered at a rally on the Ellipse before the riot, when he encouraged his supporters to “fight like hell” for his presidency, included no reference to the vice-president, Aguilar said. But Trump changed the remarks to sharply criticize Pence, imploring him to find the “courage” to overturn the election.

The committee also played testimony showing that Trump was told of the violence breaking out in his name at the Capitol before he tweeted at 2.24pm that Pence did not have the “courage to do what should have been done”. In the moments after Trump sent the tweet, the crowds both inside and outside “surged” and overwhelmed law enforcement officers.

A montage played during the hearing showed rioters threatening to drag Pence through the streets and chanting “bring out Pence” and “hang Mike Pence” near where a gallows had been erected outside the Capitol.

When given the opportunity to depart the Capitol, Jacob testified that he and others with Pence that day were ready to leave but Pence refused. He testified that Pence was “determined that we would complete the work that we had set out to do that day, that it was his constitutional duty to see through”.

While the violence raged above, Trump never called to check on his vice-president.

The committee displayed an email from Eastman to Trump’s personal lawyer, Rudy Giuliani, sent days after the Capitol riot asking to be put on a potential list to receive a presidential pardon. A pardon was never granted.

Relying on [emails](#) written by Eastman, the committee argued that the law professor knew the scheme involving an alternative slate of electors from a handful of states Trump was disputing was unlawful. But he nevertheless presented it to the White House as a viable course of action as early as 13 December 2020, according to emails released in court filings.

Crucially, however, the state legislatures had still not met by that date to certify an alternate Trump slate of electors, which Eastman showed in emails that he knew needed to happen in order for his delicate scheme to have any chance of success.

Eastman also undermined the scheme when he admitted in emails on 19 December 2020, released in court filings, that “unless those electors get a certification from their State Legislators”, the Trump slates would be “dead on arrival in Congress”.

The emails showed Eastman knew the plan rested on states certifying Trump slates. But when he presented a memo to Pence in January 2021 attesting to the existence of Trump slates – that did not actually exist – he revealed corrupt intent to obstruct proceedings on 6 January, the panel believes.

No state legislatures ultimately certified an alternate slate of electors for Trump. The Trump White House appears to have participated in a related scheme to send fake Trump slates to Congress, though those were not introduced at the certification on the day of the attack.

The opening primetime hearing last week, which drew more than 20 million viewers, focused on placing Trump at the heart of a sprawling “seven-part” plot to overturn an election the committee says he knew he lost. The second hearing traced the origins and spread of Trump’s stolen-election myth.

Recorded testimony from Pence’s former chief of staff, Marc Short, also played a prominent role in Thursday’s hearing. In his deposition to the committee, Short said Pence had informed the president “many” times that he would not go along with the scheme.

Pence “never budged” from his initial view that the founding fathers would not have left it to one person to determine the outcome of a presidential election, and certainly not someone with such a significant stake in the outcome as a vice-president, Jacob testified.

The hearing concluded ominously, with a warning from Luttig that the same forces continue to threaten American democracy.

Trump and his allies remain “clear and present danger to American democracy,” Luttig told the panel, not because of what happened on January 6 but because of their determination to “succeed in 2024 where they failed in 2020”.

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## January 6 hearings

# Trump a ‘clear and present danger to US democracy’, conservative judge warns

J Michael Luttig testifies that ex-president and his supporters are preparing an ‘attempt to overturn 2024 election’ as they did in 2020

Ex-judge says Pence obeying Trump would have plunged US into constitutional crisis – video

*[Martin Pengelly](#)*

*[@MartinPengelly](#)*

Thu 16 Jun 2022 17.32 EDT Last modified on Fri 17 Jun 2022 09.09 EDT

In a chilling warning, a conservative judge closed the the third [January 6 committee hearing](#) on Thursday by saying Donald Trump, his allies and supporters were still “a clear and present danger to American democracy”.

[J Michael Luttig](#) testified that the former US president and his Republican supporters are preparing in open sight an “attempt to overturn that 2024 election in the same way that they attempted to overturn the 2020 election, but [to] succeed”.

The retired federal judge, a George HW Bush appointee, testified in his capacity as an adviser to Mike Pence, who was vice-president to Trump between 2017 and 2021.

In a [statement](#) before the hearing, Luttig said: “A stake was driven through the heart of American democracy on January 6, 2021, and our democracy today is on a knife’s edge.

“America was at war on that fateful day, but not against a foreign power. She was at war against herself. We Americans were at war with each other – over our democracy.”

The hearing that followed focused on efforts by Trump and advisers to persuade Pence to block certification of Joe Biden’s victory, Pence’s refusal to do so and the deadly attack on the US Capitol that put Pence in danger.

Closing the hearing, Bennie Thompson of Mississippi, the Democratic committee chair, asked Luttig to say what he meant by calling Trump and his supporters a clear and present danger.

Luttig said: “Almost two years after that fateful day ... Donald Trump and his allies and supporters are a clear and present danger to American democracy.”

“That’s not because of what happened on January 6. It is because to this very day the former president and his allies and supporters pledge that in the presidential election of 2024, if the former president or his anointed successor as the Republican party presidential candidate were to lose that election, they would attempt to overturn that 2024 election in the same way that they attempted to overturn the 2020 election, but succeed in 2024 where they failed in 2020.”

According to the Washington Post, more than 100 Republicans who have won primaries for midterm elections this year back Trump’s lie about electoral fraud in 2020. Such candidates have targeted important state elections posts as well as governors’ mansions and seats in Congress.

Trump was impeached over the Capitol attack but acquitted of inciting an insurrection when only seven of 50 Republican senators found him guilty. He has strongly suggested he will run again.

Luttig said: “I don’t speak those words lightly. I would have never spoken those words ever in my life. Except that’s what the former president and his allies are telling us ... the former president and his allies are executing that blueprint for 2024 in the open, in plain view of the American public.”

“I repeat, I would have never uttered one single one of those words unless the former president and his allies were candidly and proudly speaking those exact words to America.”

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## January 6 hearings

# Trump lawyer John Eastman sought presidential pardon after January 6

Disclosure from Capitol attack committee suggests consciousness of guilt in unlawful scheme to return Trump to White House



John Eastman with Rudy Giuliani before the Trump rally on January 6 that preceded the attack on the Capitol. Photograph: Jim Bourg/Reuters

*[Hugo Lowell](#) in Washington*

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Former Trump legal adviser John Eastman sought a presidential pardon in the days after January 6, the House select committee investigating the Capitol attack revealed on Thursday – indicating he knew he acted illegally as he sought to return [Donald Trump](#) to the White House.

The disclosure, which came at the end of the panel's third hearing on Thursday, appears to show a degree of consciousness of guilt from Eastman

over his role in attempting to execute the unlawful plan to have then-vice president Mike Pence overturn the 2020 election results.

According to an email that Eastman sent to Trump's former attorney Rudy Giuliani, and obtained by the select committee, Eastman directly sought a pardon from the former president: "I've decided that I should be on the pardon list, if that is still in the works."

The revelation about Eastman's pardon request was the most legally significant moment that came from the hearing, signalling consciousness of guilt that went beyond Eastman's earlier admissions that his proposals to reverse Trump's election defeat were all unlawful.

Eastman proposed two strategies ahead of January 6: to have Pence declare a 10-day recess so supposedly "disputed" states – there were none – could recertify their election results in favour of Trump; or have Pence just reject electoral college votes for Biden.

The select committee showed Eastman knew the proposals were unlawful but pressed ahead anyway, which could form the basis of a case against him that he committed multiple felonies in seeking to obstruct an official proceeding and conspiring to defraud the United States.

First, according to testimony from Jacob, Eastman admitted days before January 6 that having Pence declare a recess would violate the Electoral Count Act, the statute governing the process by which Congress certifies the results of the presidential election.

The former Trump legal adviser nonetheless recommended the option to Trump and Pence in meetings at the White House, according to Jacob, rationalizing it as the more "palatable" route for the vice-president from a political standpoint.

Second, according to emails Eastman sent to Jacob as the Capitol was being breached, Eastman established that he knew that having Pence simply reject slates of electors for Biden was also unlawful, but nevertheless urged Pence to adopt the plan.

“The fact that he was looking into a pardon for himself as a lawyer suggests either consciousness of guilt or fear that he might be guilty,” said Congressman Jamie Raskin, a member of the select committee.

Eastman does not appear to have ever received a pardon and it was not clear what Giuliani made of the request. But, two sources familiar with the matter said, Giuliani received a pardon request from another person at the Trump war room at the Willard hotel on January 6.

Eastman knew his Pence strategies were unlawful. So did Pence, who took the advice of Jacob and his former chief of staff, Marc Short. But did Trump, and his top advisers? The select committee appeared to make the case on Thursday that they did.

The panel revealed in questioning led by Congressman Pete Aguilar that Giuliani conceded to the former Trump White House lawyer Eric Herschmann on the morning of January 6 that Eastman’s theories were wrong and his critics were “probably right”.

But even though Giuliani appeared to know that Eastman’s strategies were unlawful, Trump’s former personal attorney took to the stage at the Save America rally at the Ellipse hours later and told the Trump supporters there that Eastman’s plan was all legal.

The panel then also raised the prospect that Trump should have known Eastman’s plan was unlawful – once again returning to [the doctrine of “wilful blindness”](#) – after being told that by Pence and Jacob, who shared the same opinion as Herschmann.

Like Giuliani, Trump said repeatedly at the Ellipse rally that he hoped Pence would do the “right thing” and declare a recess so that states could recertify the election in his favor, falsely telling the crowd Pence had the power to delay the joint session of Congress.

Their remarks at the Ellipse rally – as well as Trump’s tweets attacking Pence – directly contributed to the fixation on Pence as the pro-Trump mob stormed the Capitol, the select committee argued, raising the spectre of legal exposure for Trump and Giuliani.

According to an FBI informant identified as “W-1”, the crowd took Trump’s attacks on Pence for refusing to adopt Eastman’s plan literally: the far-right Proud Boys group “would have killed Mike Pence if given the chance”, the informant told the justice department.

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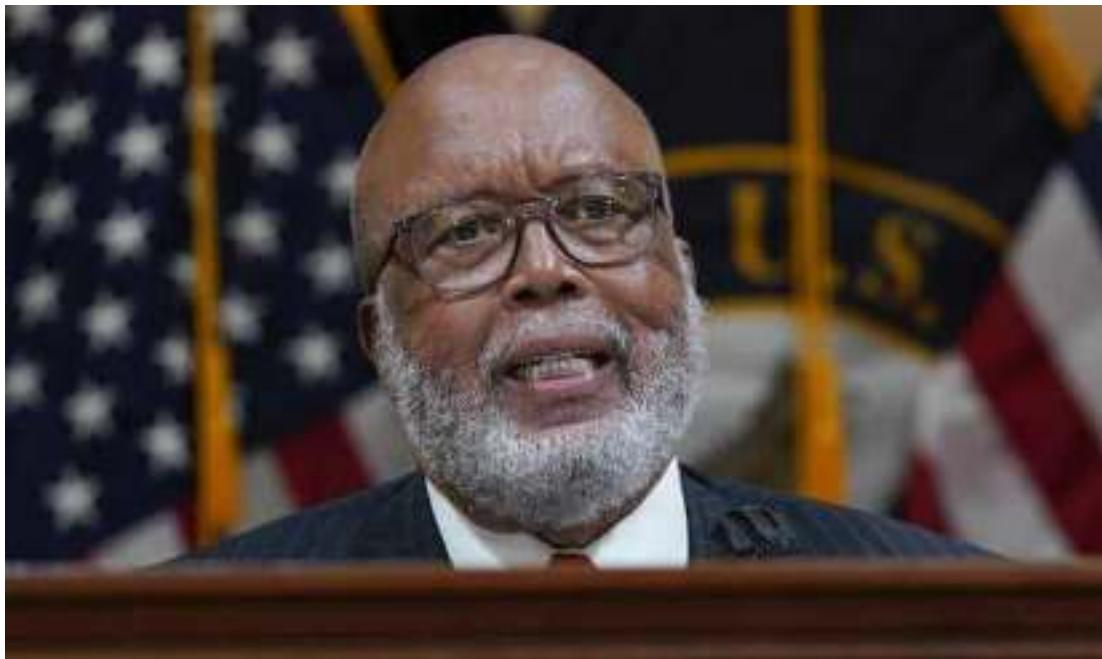
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## US Capitol attack

# Capitol attack prosecutors press January 6 committee for transcripts

Attorneys general say material is needed for criminal cases but congressional inquiry says it must be left to do its work



Bennie Thompson chairing the select committee investigating the attack on the Capitol. Photograph: Susan Walsh/AP

*[Hugo Lowell](#)*

Fri 17 Jun 2022 01.00 EDT Last modified on Fri 17 Jun 2022 01.45 EDT

Tensions between the US justice department and the House of Representatives January 6 select committee have escalated after federal prosecutors complained that their inability to access witness transcripts was hampering criminal investigations into rioters who stormed the Capitol.

The complaint that came from the heads of the justice department's national security and criminal divisions and the US attorney for Washington Matthew

Graves showed a likely collision course for the parallel congressional and criminal probes [into the Capitol attack](#).

“The interviews the select committee conducted are not just potentially relevant to our overall criminal investigations, but are likely relevant to specific prosecutions,” Graves wrote, alongside assistant attorneys general Kenneth Polite and Matthew Olsen.

“The select committee’s failure to grant the department access to these transcripts complicates the department’s ability to investigate and prosecute those who engaged in criminal conduct in relation to the January 6 attack on the Capitol.”

January 6 panel says Trump brought US ‘dangerously close to catastrophe’ – video

Federal prosecutors are seeking all of the select committee’s transcripts as they quietly expand their criminal inquiry into January 6 rally organizers and people in Donald Trump’s orbit, according to a source familiar with the matter and grand jury subpoenas reviewed by the Guardian.

The justice department has empaneled one grand jury in Washington to investigate the rally organizers, examining whether any executive or legislative branch officials were involved in trying to criminally obstruct Joe Biden’s congressional certification.

Another grand jury also appears to be investigating political operatives and lawyers close to Trump, including the ex-president’s former attorney Rudy Giuliani, over their involvement in a scheme to send fake Trump electors to Congress on January 6.

The justice department has also signaled a potential interest in moving more aggressively with Capitol attack related prosecutions. The US attorney general, Merrick Garland, said this week that he and federal prosecutors were closely watching the select committee’s hearings on Capitol Hill.

But the panel has been reluctant to work with the justice department, in part because of fears that they lose control over their work product once they release the transcripts or that prosecutors might misinterpret their evidence, according to a source close to the inquiry.

The chairman of the select committee, Bennie Thompson, said on Thursday that the panel would eventually cooperate with the justice department but the panel was “not going to stop what we are doing to share the information that we’ve gotten … We have to do our work.”

The public repudiation by top justice department officials – the letter came during the panel’s third hearing into the Capitol attack – marks the latest point in steadily worsening relations ahead of looming trial dates for members of the far-right Proud Boys group on seditious conspiracy charges.

Federal prosecutors said they were seeking witness transcripts as part of their preparations for an expected trial in September of five top Proud Boys members charged with seditious conspiracy and obstructing an official proceeding on January 6.

The justice department’s complaint was included in a court filing as part of prosecutors’ notice to the judge that they agreed with defendants’ request to delay trial because of a lack of access to the panel’s witness transcripts.

US district judge Timothy Kelly set a hearing on the matter for next Wednesday after a lawyer for one of the Proud Boys, Ethan Nordean, objected to the trial delay. Kelly gave former Proud Boys leader Henry Tarrio and another defendant until Monday to say whether they also objected to the request.

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## Headlines monday 13 june 2022

- [Live Boris Johnson says Northern Ireland protocol bill a ‘relatively trivial set of adjustments’](#)
- [‘A bureaucratic change’ Boris Johnson defends Northern Ireland protocol bill](#)
- [Arron Banks Brexit backer loses libel action against reporter Carole Cadwalladr](#)
- [Live Russia-Ukraine war: river crossing operations in Donbas likely to determine course of the war, UK MoD says](#)
- [Jordan Gatley Former British soldier killed fighting Russia in Ukraine](#)

[Skip to key events](#)

[Politics live with Andrew Sparrow](#)[Politics](#)

## Liz Truss says decision to ditch parts of EU Brexit deal is ‘reasonable and practical’ – live

EU, legal experts and some Conservative MPs [warn that Northern Ireland protocol bill is illegal under international law](#)

- [UK risks EU trade war as NI protocol bill is published](#)
- [PM claims NI protocol bill makes ‘relatively trivial set of adjustments’](#)
- [Summary and analysis of Johnson’s LBC interview](#)
- [52 out of 90 MLAs reject NI protocol bill ‘in strongest possible terms’](#)
- [UK decision to ‘renege’ on treaty ‘very regrettable’, says Irish PM](#)
- [Is NI protocol bill just ‘relatively trivial set of adjustments’?](#)

Updated 5d ago

[Harry Taylor](#) (now) and [Andrew Sparrow](#) (earlier)

Mon 13 Jun 2022 15.28 EDTFirst published on Mon 13 Jun 2022 03.20 EDT

Britain 'completely serious' about Northern Ireland legislation, says Liz Truss – video

[Harry Taylor](#) (now) and [Andrew Sparrow](#) (earlier)

Mon 13 Jun 2022 15.28 EDTFirst published on Mon 13 Jun 2022 03.20 EDT

## Key events

- [5d agoSummary](#)

- [6d ago 'Doctrine of necessity' is government's justification for legality of bill](#)
- [6d ago Bill could threaten Northern Ireland's firms' access to single market](#)
- [6d ago Truss: Northern Ireland Bill 'reasonable \[and\] practical measures for problems'](#)
- [6d ago Goverment publishes Northern Ireland Protocol bill](#)
- [6d ago Court of appeal says it has no grounds to overturn high court's decision not to block Rwanda relocation for asylum seekers](#)
- [6d ago Court of appeal rejects last-minute bid to stop asylum seekers being sent to Rwanda tomorrow](#)

Show key events only

## Live feed

Show key events only

From 6d ago

[13.11](#)

## Truss: Northern Ireland Bill 'reasonable [and] practical measures for problems'

Foreign secretary **Liz Truss** has made comments alongside the bill being published. She said it will support the Good Friday agreement, and measures were “reasonable [and] practical”.

She said: “This bill will uphold the Belfast (Good Friday) Agreement and support political stability in [Northern Ireland](#). It will end the untenable situation where people in Northern Ireland are treated differently to the rest of the United Kingdom, protect the supremacy of our courts and our territorial integrity.

“This is a reasonable, practical solution to the problems facing Northern [Ireland](#). It will safeguard the EU Single Market and ensure there is no hard border on the island of Ireland. We are ready to deliver this through talks

with the EU. But we can only make progress through negotiations if the EU are willing to change the protocol itself – at the moment they aren’t. In the meantime the serious situation in Northern Ireland means we cannot afford to allow the situation to drift.

“As the government of the whole United Kingdom, it is our duty to take the necessary steps to preserve peace and stability.”

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[5d ago](#)[15.28](#)

## Summary

Here’s a roundup of the news today, as the government has launched its plans to rip up the **Northern Ireland** protocol risking confrontation with the EU. Elsewhere the flight from the UK to **Rwanda** carrying refugees scheduled for tomorrow could still go ahead.

- Foreign secretary **Liz Truss** risked a trade war with the EU and accusations of lawbreaking as she published legislation that would allow exports from Britain to Northern Ireland [to follow either UK or EU standards and checks](#).
- Goods for **Northern Ireland** will be able to use a green lane, which will mean they will get fewer customs checks. Those destined for **EU** countries will have to follow a red lane.
- The **European Court of Justice** will also no longer have a say in trade disputes, and it will instead fall to an independent arbitration process.
- **Truss** said the measures were “a reasonable, practical solution to the problems facing Northern Ireland”.
- The full bill can be found [here](#).
- **European Commission** vice president **Maros Šefčovič** has said that the EU views the latest plans from the UK with “significant concern”. The EU is looking to take action against the UK for its new legislation.

- The move has long been considered legally risky, and the government is basing its move on the “doctrine of necessity” [according to its published legal advice](#), saying it has no choice but to act. However politicians and legal commentators have said this is not the case.
- Politicians across the Irish Channel are predictably split. **Neale Richmond**, a spokesperson for the **Fine Gael** party in the Republic of Ireland said it was the “lowest day” since Brexit.
- Deputy leader of the **Alliance** party in Northern Ireland, Stephen Farry said it will do “real harm” to Northern Ireland.
- **Sinn Fein**, the largest party in the dissolved Stormont assembly and in the Republic’s Dáil Éireann, has not made any comment since it was published this evening. However beforehand its leader in Northern Ireland, **Michelle O’Neill** said it was “in clear breach of international law” ([see 17:44](#)).

Away from the government’s new bill

- Two last ditch legal challenges that attempted to halt the inaugural flight carrying asylum seekers to **Rwanda** [have been rejected by judges](#).
- The multimillionaire Brexit backer **Arron Banks** has [lost his libel action against the Observer and Guardian journalist Carole Cadwalladr](#), which was criticised as an attack on free speech.
- **Keir Starmer** is being [investigated by parliament’s standards commissioner](#) over alleged breaches of the rules on declaring financial interests worth more than £18,000.

That’s all today, thank you for following our coverage.

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[5d ago](#)[15.11](#)

EU will not renegotiate Northern Ireland protocol, says European Commission – video

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[5d ago](#)[15.02](#)

The US secretary of state **Anthony Blinken** has tweeted after speaking to UK foreign secretary **Liz Truss** and said there was a “need to continue negotiations with the EU to find solutions”.

Good call with UK Foreign Secretary [@TrussLiz](#) today to continue coordinating our urgent support to Ukraine. We also spoke about the Northern Ireland Protocol and the need to continue negotiations with the EU to find solutions.

— Secretary Antony Blinken (@SecBlinken) [June 13, 2022](#)

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[5d ago](#)[14.38](#)



Katy Balls

The crisis over [Northern Ireland](#) and Brexit for **Boris Johnson** should be providing de ja vu for the Conservative party according to deputy political editor of the Spectator **Katy Balls**, in a piece for the Guardian this evening.

It's reminiscent of the problems **Theresa May** faced, she says, which ultimately brought May down.

A weakened prime minister facing a party divided on Brexit and a European Union that is inclined to wait and negotiate with their eventual successor. No, not Theresa May. This time, it's Boris Johnson. After the government [revealed on Monday evening the bill](#) it plans to use to unilaterally rewrite parts of the Northern Ireland protocol, it's the current Tory leader who is being squeezed two ways.

Problems with the Northern Ireland protocol are nothing new. Almost as soon as Johnson agreed to the new trading arrangement between the UK and EU, [issues started to arise](#). The prime minister's insistence that there would be no checks on goods going from Great Britain to Northern Ireland or vice versa quickly proved to be [wide of the mark](#). As time has gone on, the problems with the trade barriers have become more apparent – with some mainland businesses simply giving up on sending goods to Northern Ireland because of the onerous bureaucracy.

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[5d ago](#) [14.32](#)

More reaction from opposition parties in the **UK**. In comments carried by Labour party news website [LabourList](#), shadow foreign secretary **David Lammy** said it was a “desperate attempt [by Boris Johnson] to distract from the drama of his leadership crisis”.

It risks creating new trade barriers in a cost-of-living crisis and will only bring more uncertainty for the people of Northern Ireland who are

trying to make the protocol work.

Britain should be a country that keeps its word. By tearing up the protocol it negotiated just a couple of years ago, the government will damage Britain's reputation and make finding a lasting solution more difficult.

His Liberal Democrat counterpart, the party's foreign affairs spokesperson **Layla Moran**, said the decision was "astounding".

"If the Conservatives enact these proposals, they risk starting a trade war with our closest neighbours which will push prices up even further. In the midst of this cost of living emergency, this is the last thing families up and down the country need."

In Scotland, Scottish National party MP and its Northern Ireland spokesperson **Richard Thomson** said: "The UK government has form when it comes to breaching international law. However, this latest threat to unilaterally scrap aspects of the Northern Ireland protocol – a protocol made necessary because of Brexit and which the UK government not only requested but signed up to freely - is utterly reckless and dangerous.

"Rather than renegeing on its commitments the UK government should instead be working constructively to address the particular challenges facing Northern Ireland while ensuring that the Good Friday Agreement is protected."

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Updated at 14.33 EDT

6d ago14.22

An official from the **Northern Ireland Chamber of Commerce and Industry** has said that anything other than a negotiated agreement between the UK and EU is "simply sub-optimal".

**Stuart Anderson**, the chamber's head of public affairs said that some measures would be helpful, but firms bore the brunt of risk from it.

He said: “While there are attractive elements in today’s proposals for consumer facing businesses in particular, a careful balance must be struck to protect gains made to date by our exporters and agri-food sub-sectors. The apparent shifting of risk onto NI businesses is a cause for particular concern.

“As our businesses fight the challenge of soaring inflation, it is incumbent on the EU and the UK to recommence discussions without any further delay. We stand ready to play our part in supporting lasting solutions that work for NI businesses and households.

“The process of unilateral reform commenced today is not at our request but we remain firmly of the view that an agreed way forward can be found. Anything other than a negotiated outcome is simply sub-optimal.”

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Updated at 14.24 EDT

[6d ago](#)[14.14](#)

Back to [Northern Ireland](#), leader of the Democratic Unionist Party **Jeffrey Donaldson** has said the party will reserve judgement until the bill progresses. He repeated that the Irish government was “tone deaf” to unionist concerns.

He told the administration in Dublin: “The DUP will judge what constitutes decisive action as we see this bill progressing.

“Start listening to what unionists are saying, understand the nature of our concerns, take your head out of the sand and recognise that there is a problem here that needs to be resolved, stop running away from the problem - let’s get it sorted.”

He said he did not believe the UK Government was acting illegally, PA Media reports.

“I believe that the British government is acting within the provisions of the Withdrawal Agreement.”

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[6d ago](#)[14.10](#)

One of the side-effects from the potential dispute over the [Northern Ireland](#) protocol is the wider-impact on the UK economy, which is already forecast to be one of the worst performing in the G20.

An interesting point from **Richard Burge** who heads up the **London Chamber of Commerce and Industry (LCCI)**. He has had this to say: “We are hugely concerned that the introduction of the Government’s [Northern Ireland](#) Bill risks significant harm to businesses in London and right across the whole of the UK.

“Getting Brexit done was at least meant to deliver certainty to businesses after years of waiting for clarity on the future of the UK’s trade relations with the [European Union](#). The introduction of this bill means we are now teetering on the brink of a trade war with the EU and that will mean further economic pain and falls in investment.

“The UK is already set to be the worst performing economy in the G20 over the next year, why would government risk further economic harm at a moment of inflationary pressure and major land war in [Europe](#)? While the protection of the UK internal market is important, it is equally as important to have macroeconomic stability, especially during this cost of living and cost of doing business crises. We urge the government to carefully consider the impact that playing politics with the protocol could have on the British economy.”

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6d ago14.01

The government's "doctrine of necessity", which it has based its legal justification on for breaking international law has been met with scepticism by lawyers and government ministers.

**Mark Elliott**, a professor of public law at the University of Cambridge, has said that the International Law Commission says "necessity" means "grave and imminent peril". He does not think this has been met.

In the light of those requirements, it seems to me very difficult to argue that there is a situation in which the international law doctrine of necessity applies.

— Mark Elliott (@ProfMarkElliott) June 13, 2022

The position, therefore, is if the NI Protocol Bill is enacted in its present form and enters into force, it is very likely indeed that it will breach international law by putting the UK in breach of clear obligations set out in the Withdrawal Agreement and Protocol. /ends

— Mark Elliott (@ProfMarkElliott) June 13, 2022

**David Allen Green**, who is a law and policy commentator, has said the legal justification is "perhaps the weakest justification placed into the public domain since the trip to Barnard Castle to test one's eyesight", referring to Dominic Cummings' lockdown trip to Durham in 2020.

**Emily Thornberry**, Labour's shadow attorney general has also said it is "complete and utter nonsense".

Emily Thornberry, shadow AG, says using the doctrine of necessity to justify NI protocol bill is "complete and utter nonsense". "The doctrine of necessity relies on grave and immediate peril. Boris Johnson's career may be in peril but it doesn't seem to apply otherwise"

— Rowena Mason (@rowenamason) [June 13, 2022](#)

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Updated at 14.03 EDT

[6d ago](#)[13.54](#)

Britain 'completely serious' about Northern Ireland legislation, says Liz Truss – video

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## [Brexit](#)

# Majority of Northern Ireland MLAs condemn plan to alter Brexit protocol

Letter signed by 52 of assembly's 90 members says move goes against wishes of most people in region

- [Monday's political news: live updates](#)



Boris Johnson leaving Downing Street for prime minister's questions last week. Photograph: Tejas Sandhu/Sopa Images/Rex/Shutterstock

*Peter Walker* Political correspondent

[@peterwalker99](#)

Mon 13 Jun 2022 05.12 EDT Last modified on Mon 13 Jun 2022 11.01 EDT

A majority of [Northern Ireland](#) assembly members have sent a damning joint letter to Boris Johnson condemning his plan to override the Northern Ireland

protocol, saying it was “a fabrication” for the prime minister to claim he was trying to protect the region.

The letter, signed by 52 of the 90 members of the devolved assembly elected in May, said the government’s bill to unilaterally change the protocol “flies in the face of the expressed wishes of not just most businesses but most people in Northern Ireland”.

Downing Street has insisted the government received advice on whether a one-sided attempt to change the post-Brexit trade protocol risked breaching international law, although it plans to release only a summary of this when the bill is published on Monday.

Johnson characterised the bill on Monday as a “bureaucratic change” designed to unify Northern Irish communities and protect the 1998 Good Friday peace agreement.

But the letter, signed by assembly members from the Social Democratic and Labour party (SDLP), Sinn Féin and the Alliance party said that while the protocol had flaws, it “currently represents the only available protections for Northern Ireland” from the impacts of Brexit.

“The protocol also offers clear economic advantages to our region, and the opportunity for unique access to two major markets,” it went on. “The fact that you have removed this advantage from businesses in Great Britain, at a clear economic cost, does not justify doing the same to businesses in Northern Ireland.”

It said the way to improve the arrangements was through engagement with the EU based on trust, “rather than law-breaking and unilateral abrogation of treaty obligations”.

The letter continued: “It is also deeply frustrating that you and your ministers continue to misrepresent our desire to see smooth implementation as an endorsement of your government’s reckless actions on the protocol – it is categorically not.

“To complain the protocol lacks cross-community consent, while ignoring the fact that Brexit itself – let alone hard Brexit – lacks even basic majority consent here, is a grotesque act of political distortion.”

Johnson’s argument that he was acting to protect Northern Irish institutions was “as much a fabrication as the Brexit campaign claims you made in 2016”, the letter said, promising to oppose the bill.

Johnson rejected the idea that the bill would break international law, telling LBC Radio: “I disagree with that. Why? Because I think our higher and prior legal commitment as a country is to the Belfast Good Friday agreement, and to the balance of stability of that agreement.”

He said the bill, reportedly toughened up in scope as a result of pressure from strongly pro-Brexit ministers and MPs, was “the right way forward”.

“One community feel very, very estranged from the way things are operating, very alienated,” he said. “We’ve just got to fix that. It is relatively simple to do it. It’s a bureaucratic change that needs to be made. Frankly, it’s a relatively trivial set of adjustments in the grand scheme of things.”

The bill is expected to unilaterally change elements of the protocol, which set out post-Brexit trade rules connected to Ireland, Northern Ireland and the rest of the UK.

It is expected to set out a dual regulatory regime, allowing Northern Ireland businesses to keep to either UK or EU standards, and scrap checks on goods arriving into Northern Ireland from Great Britain if they are not then moving across the Irish border.

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A readout from Ireland’s foreign ministry of a call between the country’s foreign minister, Simon Coveney, and his UK counterpart, Liz Truss, took a notably different tone, calling the bill “deeply damaging to relationships on these islands and between the UK and EU”.

It added: “Minister Coveney said it marks a particular low point in the UK’s approach to Brexit, especially as Secretary Truss has not engaged with negotiations with the EU in any meaningful way since February. Minister Coveney repeated that the protocol is the negotiated solution, ratified by Westminster, to the hard Brexit pursued by the UK government.”

The readout said the call lasted just 12 minutes.

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## [Arron Banks](#)

# **Arron Banks loses libel action against reporter Carole Cadwalladr**

Judge rules Guardian journalist successfully established public interest defence under Defamation Act



Carole Cadwalladr's lawyer had argued the case was an attempt to silence the journalist's reporting on 'matters of the highest public interest'.  
Photograph: James Veysey/Rex/Shutterstock

*[Haroon Siddique](#) Legal affairs correspondent*

Mon 13 Jun 2022 07.49 EDTFirst published on Mon 13 Jun 2022 05.12 EDT

The multimillionaire Brexit backer [Arron Banks](#) has lost his libel action against the Observer and Guardian journalist Carole Cadwalladr, in a significant decision for public interest journalism.

Banks, who funded the pro-Brexit Leave.EU campaign group, sued Cadwalladr personally over two instances in which she said the businessman was lying about his relationship with the Russian state – one in a Ted Talk and the other in a tweet.

In a written judgment [handed down on Monday](#), Mrs Justice Steyn ruled the threshold for serious harm had only been met in the Ted Talk but that Cadwalladr initially had successfully established a public interest defence under section 4 of the Defamation Act.

The defence fell away after the Electoral Commission found no evidence of law-breaking by Banks with respect to donations but by that time – 29 April 2020 – the court was not satisfied that the continuing publication of the Ted Talk caused or was likely to cause serious harm to his reputation.

Dismissing the claim by Banks, the judge said: “A key factor, in my judgment, is whether Ms Cadwalladr had reasonable grounds to believe that her intended meaning was true ... I consider that when she gave the Ted Talk, she did.”

Cadwalladr had suffered a blow to her case at a [preliminary hearing in 2019](#), when Mr Justice Saini concluded an average listener would have understood the meaning of the remark about Banks made by the journalist at the Ted technology conference – and in the related tweet – to be: “On more than one occasion Mr Banks told untruths about a secret relationship he had with the Russian government in relation to acceptance of foreign funding of electoral campaigns in breach of the law on such funding.”

Cadwalladr has argued she did not intend to imply that Banks had received Russian money, nor that he lied about receiving Russian money, only about the extent of his contacts with Russia. After the preliminary hearing ruling she dropped the defence of truth and relied on public interest.

Steyn found Cadwalladr’s intended meaning to be “(i) the claimant lied on more than one occasion about a secret relationship he had with the Russian government; and (ii) there are questions to be asked (ie grounds to

investigate) whether the source of his donations was foreign funding, accepted in breach of the law on the funding of electoral campaigns.”

The judge added: “Based on her investigation, Ms Cadwalladr had reasonable grounds to believe that (i) Mr Banks had been offered ‘sweetheart’ deals by the Russian government in the period running up to the EU referendum, although she had seen no evidence he had entered into any such deals; and (ii) Mr Banks’s financial affairs, and the source of his ability to make the biggest political donations in UK history, were opaque.”

Steyn said Cadwalladr’s belief at the time of the Ted talk was bolstered by the fact that the Electoral Commission had announced it had reasonable grounds to suspect that Banks was not the true source of the £8m loans/donations to Leave.EU and that the National Crime Agency was investigating the matter.

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The judge said that when, subsequent to the Ted conference, the UK elections watchdog and the NCA said they had found no evidence of law-breaking by Banks, Cadwalladr’s belief that publication of the Ted talk was in the public interest ceased to be reasonable but by that time there was not serious harm to his reputation.

If Banks had won the case, Cadwalladr faced being liable for his costs, estimated at between £750,000 and £1m, together with any resultant damages.

In a tweet, Banks said he was likely to appeal. In a lengthy statement, he said Cadwalladr had conceded during the trial that there was no evidence he had accepted money from the Russian government or its proxies, or that Russian money went into the [Brexit](#) campaign, and that she never thought he was a Russian agent or actor.

He added: “I am pleased the judge made clear my attempt to seek vindication was legitimate and that it was neither fair nor apt to describe this as a ‘Slapp [strategic lawsuits against public participation – an intimidation

lawsuit] suit'. Quite right. This was never about seeking to silence criticism. Carole knows that had she apologised and agreed not to repeat this false accusation at the outset, these proceedings would never have been necessary."

The Observer editor, Paul Webster, and the Guardian News & Media editor-in-chief, Katharine Viner, welcomed the verdict as "an important victory for free speech and public-interest reporting", highlighting the online trolling, abuse and harassment Cadwalladr had faced. "We believe this case was an example of a powerful wealthy person targeting an individual journalist for their work," they said.

"Carole Cadwalladr's victory in this case is an important step in defending the rights of journalists to report in the public interest."

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[Skip to key events](#)  
[Ukraine war live](#)[Ukraine](#)

# Zelenskiy says the battle for Sievierodonetsk is taking a ‘terrifying’ toll on Ukraine – as it happened

This live blog is now closed, you can find our [latest coverage of the Russia-Ukraine war here](#)

Updated 5d ago

*Samantha Lock* (now); [Richard Luscombe](#), [Léonie Chao-Fong](#) and [Jamie Grierson](#) (earlier)

Mon 13 Jun 2022 19.52 EDTFirst published on Mon 13 Jun 2022 00.44 EDT



A member of an extraction crew at a mass grave near Bucha. Photograph: Natacha Pisarenko/AP

Samantha Lock (now); Richard Luscombe, Léonie Chao-Fong and Jamie Grierson (earlier)

Mon 13 Jun 2022 19.52 EDTFirst published on Mon 13 Jun 2022 00.44 EDT

## Key events

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- [5d agoWikipedia fights Russian order to remove Ukraine war information](#)
- [5d agoSummary](#)
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- [6d agoKyiv police: Exhumed civilians murdered by 'sadistic' Russian forces](#)
- [6d agoOfficials: 25% of Ukraine's arable land lost since Russian invasion](#)
- [6d agoSummary](#)

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## Live feed

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From 5d ago

[16.27](#)

## Zelenskiy: toll of Donbas battle 'terrifying'

The intense battle for Sievierodonetsk is taking a “terrifying” toll on Ukraine, Volodymyr Zelenskiy said on Monday evening, as Russian forces moved closer to capturing the strategic eastern city.

Ukraine’s president made the comment during his nightly address to the nation on Telegram, AFP reports, noting the fighting was having a severe effect on civilians and his country’s military:

*The human cost of this battle is very high for us. It is simply terrifying.*

*The battle for the Donbas will without doubt be remembered in military history as one of the most violent battles in Europe.*

Ukrainian defence minister **Oleksiy Reznikov** last week said up to 100 of his troops were dying daily and 500 sustaining injuries in the intense fighting against Russian troops, in a rare public disclosure of casualty figures.



Volodymyr Zelenskiy. Photograph: Valentyn Ogirenko/Reuters

Zelenskiy, on 1 June, said his army was losing “between 60 and 100 soldiers” every day, while other estimates are higher, with experts predicting the unsustainable losses could soon bring the conflict [to “a tipping point”](#).

Russian troops have advanced on Sievierodonetsk as part of their large-scale offensive in the eastern **Donbas** region after failing to take the capital Kyiv. It is the largest city in the eastern **Luhansk region**, which forms part of Donbas, still under Ukrainian control.

Zelenskiy, who has expressed [fears of losing support from the west](#) as the conflict drags on, repeated earlier pleas for more and heavier military weapons from allies including the US and UK:

*We are dealing with absolute evil. And we have no choice but to move forward and free our territory.*

*We draw the attention of our partners on a daily basis to the fact that only a sufficient number of modern artillery for Ukraine will ensure our advantage and finally the end of Russian torture of the Ukrainian Donbas.*

**Serhiy Haiday**, the regional governor of Luhansk, said Monday that Russian forces control 70 to 80% of Sievierodonetsk, but had not encircled or captured it amid fierce Ukrainian resistance.

But he added that evacuations from the city and access to it were impossible because the last of its three bridges has now been blown up.

Here's my colleague **Pjotr Sauer**'s latest report on the fight for Sievierodonetsk:

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Updated at 17.13 EDT

[5d ago](#)[19.52](#)

## Summary

Thank you for joining us for today's live coverage of the war in [Ukraine](#).

We will be pausing this live blog for now and launching another in the next few hours.

In the meantime, here is a comprehensive run-down of where things stand in [Ukraine](#) as of 3am.

- Ukraine's president, Volodymyr Zelenskiy has said the intense battle for Sievierodonetsk is taking a "terrifying" toll on Ukraine, describing the fighting as "one of the most violent battles in Europe". The human cost of this battle is very high for us. It is simply terrifying. The battle for the Donbas will without doubt be remembered in military history as one of the most violent battles in [Europe](#)," he said in an address to the nation late on Monday.
- All three bridges to the embattled eastern city of Sievierodonetsk have been destroyed, according to the governor of the Luhansk region, Serhiy Haidai. In a video update, Haidai said [Russia had not "completely captured" the city](#) and "a part of the city" was under Ukrainian control. Russian artillery is hitting an industrial zone where 500 civilians are sheltering in the eastern Ukrainian city of Sievierodonetsk, Haidai added. Ukrainian troops in the city must "[surrender or die](#)", a Russian-backed separatist leader in the self-proclaimed republic in Donetsk warned.
- Ukrainian authorities said they have discovered a new mass grave of civilians near the Bucha in the Kyiv region. Investigators exhumed seven bodies from makeshift graves in a forest outside the village of Vorzel, less than 10km from Bucha, the scene of previous alleged Russian atrocities. Kyiv region's police chief Andriy Nyebytov said: "This is another sadistic crime of the Russian army". One man, he said, "has two injuries. He was shot in the knee with a gun. The second shot was into his temple".
- Ukraine has called on the west to [supply 300 rocket launchers, 500 tanks and 1,000 howitzers](#) before a key meeting on Wednesday. The maximalist request was made publicly by Mykhailo Podolyak, a key presidential adviser, amid concern in some quarters it is pushing its demands for Nato-standard weapons to the limit.

- **Zelenskiy accused German Chancellor Olaf Scholz with being too concerned about the repercussions his support for Ukraine would have for Berlin's ties with Moscow.** “We need from Chancellor Scholz the certainty that Germany supports Ukraine,” he said in an interview with German public broadcaster ZDF. “He and his government must decide: there can't be a trade-off between Ukraine and relations with Russia.” Local media reports have speculated that Scholz could make his first trip to Kyiv since the start of the war on Thursday.
- **The mayor of Mariupol, Vadym Boychenko, has accused “traitors” of passing on vital information to Russian forces during the bombardment of the southern port city at the beginning of its invasion of Ukraine.** Boychenko said the destruction of the city’s critical infrastructure, including power supplies, was well-coordinated [because these “traitors” had provided Russia with the co-ordinates.](#)
- **About 1,200 bodies, including those found in mass graves, have not yet been identified, according to the head of the national police in Ukraine, Ihor Klymenko.** Criminal proceedings have been opened over the deaths of more than 12,000 Ukrainians, Klymenko said. [About 75% of the dead are men, about 2% are children and the rest are women,](#) he said.
- **Russia earned €93bn in revenue from fossil fuel exports in the first 100 days of the war, according to research by Finland’s Centre for Research on Energy and Clean Air (Crea).** With 61% of these exports, worth [€56bn \(£48bn\), going to the member states of the European Union,](#) the bloc of countries remains Russia’s largest export market.
- **Ukraine has lost a quarter of its arable land since the Russian invasion, notably in the south and east, deputy agriculture minister**

**Taras Vysotskiy said.** At a news conference on Monday, Vysotskiy insisted food security for the country's population was not under immediate threat: "Despite the loss of 25% of arable land, crop planting this year is more than sufficient [and] the current situation of crop planting areas... does not pose a threat to Ukraine's food security".

- **The UN's rights chief, Michelle Bachelet, described the “arbitrary arrests” of a “large number” of anti-war protesters in Russia as “worrying”.** Speaking at the UN's human rights council in Geneva, Bachelet also expressed concern about the “increase of censorship and restrictions on independent media” in Russia.
- **Mikhail Kasyanov, Russia's prime minister from 2000 to 2004, has said he expects the war in Ukraine could last up to two years.** Kasyanov, who championed close ties with the west while prime minister, said he felt that Vladimir Putin was already not thinking properly and that he was convinced Russia could return to a democratic path.
- **More than 15,000 millionaires are expected to flee Russia** this year, as wealthy citizens turn their back on Vladimir Putin's regime after the invasion of Ukraine, according to an analysis of migration data by London-based firm Henley & Partners.
- **The Wikimedia Foundation, which owns Wikipedia, has filed an appeal against a Moscow court decision demanding that it remove information related to the Russian invasion of Ukraine,** arguing that people have a right to know the facts of the war and that removing information is a violation of human rights.



A family stands near a residential building damaged in recent shelling in the city of Bakhmut, Donetsk region, eastern Ukraine, 13 June. Photograph: EPA

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[5d ago](#) [19.13](#)

## **Wikipedia fights Russian order to remove Ukraine war information**

The Wikimedia Foundation, which owns Wikipedia, has filed an appeal against a Moscow court decision demanding that it remove information related to the Russian invasion of [Ukraine](#), arguing that people have a right to know the facts of the war.

A Moscow court fined the Wikimedia Foundation 5 million roubles (\$88,000) for refusing to remove what it termed disinformation from Russian-language Wikipedia articles on the war including ‘The Russian

Invasion of Ukraine’, ‘War Crimes during the Russian Invasion of Ukraine’ and ‘Massacre in Bucha’.

In a statement as cited by Reuters, Stephen LaPorte, Associate General Counsel at the Wikimedia Foundation, said:

This decision implies that well-sourced, verified knowledge on Wikipedia that is inconsistent with Russian government accounts constitutes disinformation.

The government is targeting information that is vital to people’s lives in a time of crisis.

We urge the court to reconsider in favour of everyone’s rights to knowledge access and free expression.”

Wikipedia, which says it offers “the second draft of history”, is one of the few remaining major fact-checked Russian-language sources of information for Russians after a crackdown on media in Moscow.

The Moscow court argued that what it cast as the disinformation on Wikipedia posed a risk to public order in Russia and that the Foundation, which is headquartered in San Francisco, California, was operating inside Russia.

The Foundation was prosecuted under a law about the failure to delete banned information. The case was brought by Russia’s communications regulator Roskomnadzor.

The Wikipedia appeal, which was filed on June 6 with details released on Monday, argues that removing information is a violation of human rights. It said Russia had no jurisdiction over the Wikimedia Foundation, which was globally available in over 300 languages.

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**Zelenskiy earlier asked the German Chancellor to show full support for Kyiv, accusing Olaf Scholz with being too concerned about the repercussions that would have for Berlin's ties with Moscow.**

In an interview with German public broadcaster ZDF, Zelenskiy said:

We need from Chancellor Scholz the certainty that Germany supports Ukraine.

He and his government must decide: there can't be a trade-off between Ukraine and relations with Russia."

His comments come amid speculation that Scholz could make his first trip to Kyiv since the start of the war on Thursday.

Online magazine Focus, citing Italian newspaper La Stampa, reported that Scholz and his counterparts from France and Italy would travel to the Ukrainian capital on Thursday, adding a specific date to a Bild am Sonntag report on Sunday that they planned to go before a Group of Seven summit at the end of June.

German Chancellor Olaf Scholz declined to comment Monday on any of the reports.

In an interview late on Monday with German public broadcaster ZDF, Zelenskiy said:

To be honest, Germany joined a little later than some of our neighbouring countries, as far as the arms deliveries were concerned. That's a fact."

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Updated at 18.57 EDT

[5d ago](#)[18.28](#)

Ukraine's president **Volodymyr Zelenskiy** has provided a little more detail on the fighting unfolding in **Donbas**, describing a tactical win against Russian forces.

In the battles in Donbas - and they will surely go down in military history as one of the most brutal battles in Europe and for Europe - the Ukrainian army and our intelligence tactically still beat the Russian military.

And this is despite the significant advantage of the Russians in the amount of equipment, and especially - artillery systems.

The price of this battle for us is very high. It's just scary. And we draw the attention of our partners on a daily basis to the fact that only a sufficient number of modern artillery for Ukraine will ensure our advantage and finally the end of Russian torture of the Ukrainian Donbas.”

**Zelenskiy reiterated Ukraine's desire to free its entire territory and “drive the occupiers out of all our regions”.**

Although now the width of our front is already more than 2,500km, it is felt that the strategic initiative is still ours.”

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[5d ago](#)[17.55](#)

**Volodymyr Zelenskiy says he spoke with Netherlands prime minister Mark Rutte this afternoon to thank him for “defence assistance” his country was providing to [Ukraine](#).**

“Held talks with Netherlands prime minister Mark Rutte. Informed about the current situation on the front; thanked for the defence assistance provided to Ukraine by the Netherlands in countering Russian aggression. Discussed Ukraine's European integration path. We count on the Netherlands' support!” Ukraine's president tweeted.

Held talks with ☐☐ Prime Minister [@MinPres](#). Informed about the current situation on the front; thanked for the defense assistance provided to ☐☐ by the Netherlands in countering Russian aggression. Discussed Ukraine's European integration path. We count on ☐☐ support!

— Володимир Зеленський (@ZelenskyyUa) [June 13, 2022](#)

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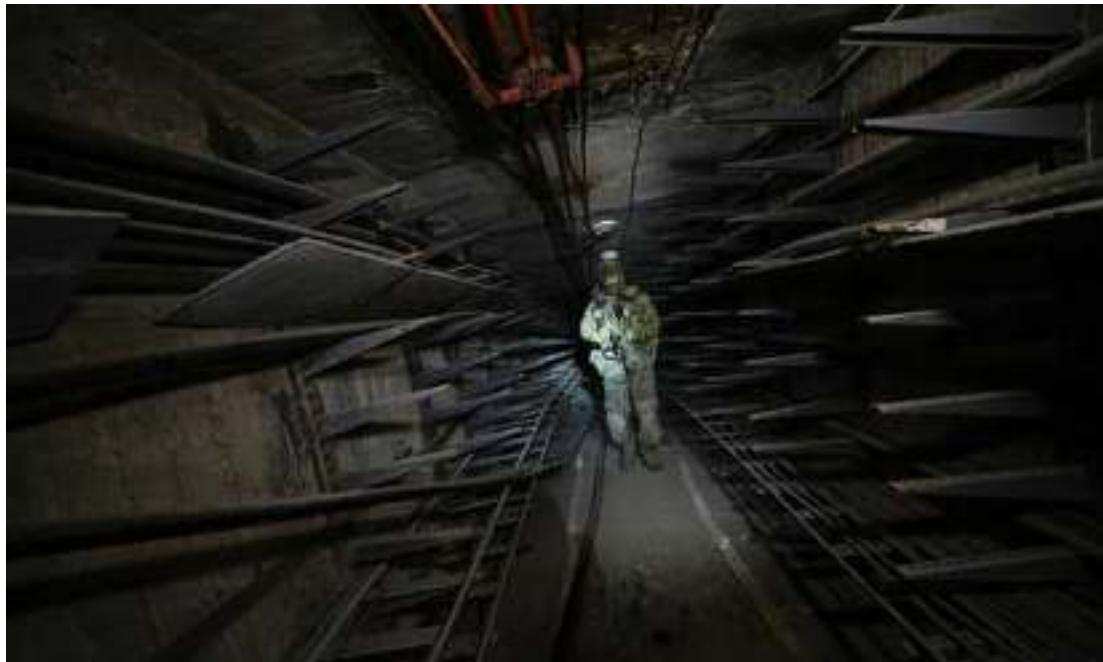
Updated at 17.56 EDT

[5d ago](#) [17.30](#)

Here are some more images from [Ukraine](#) on Monday, sent to us by news agencies:



A girl bathes in a reopened fountain in Irpin. An uneasy peace is returning as the region around Kyiv continues to recover from Russia's aborted assault on the capital. Photograph: Alexey Furman/Getty Images



A Russian soldier inspects a labyrinth of the Azovstal steelworks in Mariupol, captured when defenders from Ukraine's military surrendered last month following a lengthy siege. Photograph: AP



A beach in the Black Sea Ukrainian city of Odessa is deserted as locals take heed of signs warning of buried landmines. Photograph: Oleksandr Gimannov/AFP/Getty Images



Smoke rises from ongoing Russian shelling in Donetsk. Photograph: Yuri Kadobnov/AFP/Getty Images

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[5d ago](#) [17.09](#)

## Summary

It's just past midnight in Kyiv, and here's where things stand as Russia's invasion of Kyiv enters its 111th day:

- **Volodymyr Zelenskiy says the intense battle for Sievierodonetsk is taking a “terrifying” toll on Ukraine.** The country’s president made the comment during his nightly address to the nation on Telegram: “The human cost of this battle is very high for us. It is simply terrifying. The battle for the Donbas will without doubt be remembered in military history as one of the most violent battles in Europe”.
- **All three bridges to the embattled eastern city of Sievierodonetsk have been destroyed, according to the governor of the Luhansk**

**region, Serhiy Haidai.** In a video update, Haidai said Russia had not “completely captured” the city and “a part of the city” was under Ukrainian control. Russian artillery is hitting an industrial zone where 500 civilians are sheltering in the eastern Ukrainian city of Sievierodonetsk, Haidai added. Ukrainian troops in Sievierodonetsk must “surrender or die”, a Russian-backed separatist leader in the self-proclaimed republic in Donetsk warned.

- **Investigators exhumed seven bodies from makeshift graves in a forest near Kyiv, with officials saying they were civilians killed by Russian forces during their occupation of the area.** The bodies were found outside the village of Vorzel, less than 10km from Bucha, scene of previous alleged Russian atrocities. Kyiv region’s police chief **Andriy Nyebytov** said: “This is another sadistic crime of the Russian army”. One man, he said, “has two injuries. He was shot in the knee with a gun. The second shot was into his temple”.
- **Ukraine has lost a quarter of its arable land since the Russian invasion, notably in the south and east, deputy agriculture minister Taras Vysotskiy said.** At a news conference, Vysotskiy insisted food security for the country’s population was not under immediate threat: “Despite the loss of 25% of arable land, crop planting this year is more than sufficient [and] the current situation of crop planting areas... does not pose a threat to Ukraine’s food security”.
- **Ukraine has called on the west to supply 300 rocket launchers, 500 tanks and 1,000 howitzers before a key meeting on Wednesday.** The maximalist request was made publicly by Mykhailo Podolyak, a key presidential adviser, amid concern in some quarters it is pushing its demands for Nato-standard weapons to the limit.
- **The mayor of Mariupol, Vadym Boychenko, has accused “traitors” of passing on vital information to Russian forces during the bombardment of the southern port city at the beginning of its invasion of Ukraine.** Boychenko said the destruction of the city’s critical infrastructure, including power supplies, was well-coordinated because these “traitors” had provided Russia with the co-ordinates.
- **About 1,200 bodies, including those found in mass graves, have not yet been identified, according to the head of the national police in Ukraine, Ihor Klymenko.** Criminal proceedings have been opened over the deaths of more than 12,000 Ukrainians, Klymenko said. About

75% of the dead are men, about 2% are children and the rest are women, he said.

- Russia earned €93bn in revenue from fossil fuel exports in the first 100 days of the war, according to research by Finland's Centre for Research on Energy and Clean Air (Crea). With 61% of these exports, worth €56bn (£48bn), going to the member states of the European Union, the bloc of countries remains Russia's largest export market.
- The UN's rights chief, Michelle Bachelet, described the "arbitrary arrests" of a "large number" of anti-war protesters in Russia as "worrying". Speaking at the UN's human rights council in Geneva, Bachelet also expressed concern about the "increase of censorship and restrictions on independent media" in Russia.
- Mikhail Kasyanov, Russia's prime minister from 2000 to 2004, has said he expects the war in Ukraine could last up to two years. Kasyanov, who championed close ties with the west while prime minister, said he felt that Vladimir Putin was already not thinking properly and that he was convinced Russia could return to a democratic path.

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5d ago16.27

## Zelenskiy: toll of Donbas battle 'terrifying'

The intense battle for Sievierodonetsk is taking a "terrifying" toll on Ukraine, Volodymyr Zelenskiy said on Monday evening, as Russian forces moved closer to capturing the strategic eastern city.

Ukraine's president made the comment during his nightly address to the nation on Telegram, AFP reports, noting the fighting was having a severe effect on civilians and his country's military:

*The human cost of this battle is very high for us. It is simply terrifying.*

*The battle for the Donbas will without doubt be remembered in military history as one of the most violent battles in Europe.*

Ukrainian defence minister **Oleksiy Reznikov** last week said up to 100 of his troops were dying daily and 500 sustaining injuries in the intense fighting against Russian troops, in a rare public disclosure of casualty figures.



Volodymyr Zelenskiy. Photograph: Valentyn Ogirenko/Reuters

Zelenskiy, on 1 June, said his army was losing “between 60 and 100 soldiers” every day, while other estimates are higher, with experts predicting the unsustainable losses could soon bring the conflict [to “a tipping point”](#).

Russian troops have advanced on Sievierodonetsk as part of their large-scale offensive in the eastern **Donbas** region after failing to take the capital Kyiv. It is the largest city in the eastern **Luhansk region**, which forms part of Donbas, still under Ukrainian control.

Zelenskiy, who has expressed [fears of losing support from the west](#) as the conflict drags on, repeated earlier pleas for more and heavier military weapons from allies including the US and UK:

*We are dealing with absolute evil. And we have no choice but to move forward and free our territory.*

*We draw the attention of our partners on a daily basis to the fact that only a sufficient number of modern artillery for Ukraine will ensure our advantage and finally the end of Russian torture of the Ukrainian Donbas.*

**Serhiy Haiday**, the regional governor of Luhansk, said Monday that Russian forces control 70 to 80% of Sievierodonetsk, but had not encircled or captured it amid fierce Ukrainian resistance.

But he added that evacuations from the city and access to it were impossible because the last of its three bridges has now been blown up.

Here's my colleague **Pjotr Sauer**'s latest report on the fight for Sievierodonetsk:

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Updated at 17.13 EDT

[5d ago](#)[15.53](#)

**Russia is again attempting to assert that the main goal of its “special military operation” in Ukraine is merely to “protect” the Donetsk and Luhansk people’s republics.**

According to Reuters, Kremlin spokesperson **Dmitry Peskov** repeated the claim Monday to Russia's RIA state news agency.

“In general, the protection of the republics is the main goal of the special military operation,” Peskov said.

Donetsk and Luhansk are two breakaway Russian-backed entities in the Donbas region of eastern Ukraine.

Fighting in the conflict, which began with Russia's 24 February invasion of Ukraine, has focused largely on the Donbas region after strong resistance forced the Russian military to abandon its initial goals including the capture of the capital **Kyiv**.

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6d ago15.20

## **Kyiv police: Exhumed civilians murdered by 'sadistic' Russian forces**

**Ukrainian investigators say they have now exhumed seven bodies from makeshift graves in a forest near Kyiv, with officials saying they were civilians killed by Russian forces during their occupation of the area.**

The bodies were found outside the village of **Vorzel**, Reuters reports, less than 10km from **Bucha**. In that city, Ukraine has alleged, Russian forces carried out systematic executions in an abortive attempt to capture the capital.

Russia denies the claim.

In a Facebook post, Kyiv region's police chief, **Andriy Nyebytov**, said: "This is another sadistic crime of the Russian army in the Kyiv region".

One of the exhumed bodies was a man around 40, in plain clothes, Nyebytov told Reuters at the site of the graves.

"He has two injuries. He was shot in the knee with a gun. The second shot was into his temple," he said.

Russia's defence ministry did not immediately reply to an emailed request from the agency for comment.

Investigators said it would take time to clearly identify the bodies because they had decomposed.

Ukraine says mass graves were found in April containing more than 400 bodies.

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[6d ago](#)[14.53](#)

**The Associated Press has some extra detail on the uncertainty surrounding German chancellor Olaf Scholz's reported visit to Ukraine to meet counterparts from France and Italy.**



Olaf Scholz. Photograph: Michele Tantussi/Reuters

Newspaper Bild am Sonntag said Scholz would travel to Kyiv to talk with French president **Emmanuel Macron** and Italian prime minister **Mario Draghi** before this month's summit of G7 leaders in Germany.

Earlier Monday, a spokesperson for Scholz refused to confirm the report, and the AP says the chancellor also fobbed off reporters when he was asked

about it this afternoon, saying he had nothing to add to his aide's (non) statement.

Several European leaders, Germany's opposition leader and members of Scholz's own cabinet have visited Ukraine in recent weeks to express solidarity with the country in the face of Russia's military assault, raising the pressure on the German chancellor to do likewise.

While Germany has contributed considerable financial and military aid to Ukraine since the Russian invasion three months ago, [Scholz's government has been criticised](#) at home and abroad for being slower to do so than the US and some smaller European countries.

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Updated at 14.54 EDT

[6d ago](#)[14.23](#)

## **Officials: 25% of Ukraine's arable land lost since Russian invasion**

*It's Richard Luscombe in the US taking you through the next few hours of developments in [Ukraine](#). Thanks for joining me.*

**Ukraine has lost a quarter of its arable land since the Russian invasion, notably in the south and east, deputy agriculture minister Taras Vysotskiy has said, according to AFP.**

At a news conference on Monday, however, Vysotskiy insisted food security for the country's population was not under immediate threat:

*Despite the loss of 25% of arable land, crop planting this year is more than sufficient [and] the current situation of crop planting areas... does not pose a threat to Ukraine's food security.*

*Ukrainian farmers managed to prepare relatively well for sowing before the war started. In February, Ukraine had already imported about 70% of necessary fertilisers, 60% of disease control products and about a third of the required fuel.*

National consumption levels, he said, had fallen “due to mass displacement and external migration” as millions fled to escape the fighting.

More than 7m are estimated to have been displaced within Ukraine by Russia’s war, figures from the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and the UN refugee agency (UNHCR) show.

Another 7.3m have fled abroad, more than half of them to Poland.

Despite Vysotskiy’s reassurances, the UN has warned the conflict risks tipping tens of millions around the globe into food insecurity, with the risks of malnutrition, mass hunger and famine.

Earlier this month, Ukraine’s president **Volodymyr Zelenskiy** said about 20-25m tonnes of grain were blocked in Ukrainian ports, a figure which could rise to 70-75m tonnes by the autumn.

Read more about Ukraine’s food security concerns here:

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[6d ago](#)[14.00](#)

## Summary

It's 9pm in Kyiv. Here's where we stand:

- All three bridges to the embattled eastern city of Sievierodonetsk have been destroyed, according to the governor of the Luhansk

**region, Serhiy Haidai.** In a video update, Haidai said Russia had not “completely captured” the city and “a part of the city” was under Ukrainian control. Russian artillery is hitting an industrial zone where 500 civilians are sheltering in the eastern Ukrainian city of Sievierodonetsk, Haidai added. Ukrainian troops in Sievierodonetsk must “surrender or die”, a Russian-backed separatist leader in the self-proclaimed republic in Donetsk warned.

- **Ukrainian authorities said they have discovered a new mass grave of civilians near the Bucha in the Kyiv region.** The bodies of seven civilians were found near the village of Myrotske, many with their “hands tied and their knees shot”, according to Kyiv region police chief, Andrii Niebytov. Work is currently under way to exhume the bodies at the site and to identify the individuals, he added.
- **Ukraine has called on the west to supply 300 rocket launchers, 500 tanks and 1,000 howitzers before a key meeting on Wednesday.** The maximalist request was made publicly by Mykhailo Podolyak, a key presidential adviser, amid concern in some quarters it is pushing its demands for Nato-standard weapons to the limit.
- **The mayor of Mariupol, Vadym Boychenko, has accused “traitors” of passing on vital information to Russian forces during the bombardment of the southern port city at the beginning of its invasion of Ukraine.** Boychenko said the destruction of the city’s critical infrastructure, including power supplies, was well-coordinated because these “traitors” had provided Russia with the co-ordinates.
- **Finland’s president, Sauli Niinistö, said Russia is using “weapons of mass destruction” in Ukraine.** Both sides are using “increasingly heavy” weapons, Niinistö said, including in Russia’s case, thermobaric

bombs. Amnesty International accused Russia of war crimes in Ukraine, saying attacks on Kharkiv - many using banned cluster bombs - had killed hundreds of civilians.

- About 1,200 bodies, including those found in mass graves, have not yet been identified, according to the head of the national police in Ukraine, Ihor Klymenko. Criminal proceedings have been opened over the deaths of more than 12,000 Ukrainians, Klymenko said. About 75% of the dead are men, about 2% are children and the rest are women, he said.
- Russia earned €93bn in revenue from fossil fuel exports in the first 100 days of the war, according to research by Finland's Centre for Research on Energy and Clean Air (Crea). With 61% of these exports, worth €56bn (£48bn), going to the member states of the European Union, the bloc of countries remains Russia's largest export market.
- The UN's rights chief, Michelle Bachelet, described the "arbitrary arrests" of a "large number" of anti-war protesters in Russia as "worrying". Speaking at the UN's human rights council in Geneva, Bachelet also expressed concern about the "increase of censorship and restrictions on independent media" in Russia.
- Mikhail Kasyanov, Russia's prime minister from 2000 to 2004, has said he expects the war in Ukraine could last up to two years. Kasyanov, who championed close ties with the west while prime minister, said he felt that Vladimir Putin was already not thinking properly and that he was convinced Russia could return to a democratic path.

- River crossing operations are likely to be among the most important determining factors in the course of the war over the coming months, the UK Ministry of Defence said in its latest report. Ukrainian forces have often managed to demolish bridges before they withdraw, while Russia has struggled to put in place the complex coordination necessary to conduct successful, large scale river crossings under fire, the report added.

*That's it from me, Léonie Chao-Fong today as I hand the blog over to my colleague, Richard Luscombe. Thank you.*

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[6d ago](#)[13.38](#)

## All bridges out of Sievierodonetsk have been destroyed, says governor

All three bridges to the embattled eastern city of Sievierodonetsk have been destroyed, according to the governor of the Luhansk region, Serhiy Haidai.

In a video update, Haidai said Russia had not “completely captured” the city and “a part of the city” was under Ukrainian control.

Earlier in the day, Haidai said Russians were continuing to storm the embattled city and “having a significant advantage in artillery” pushed back Ukrainian soldiers. “The Russians are destroying quarter after quarter,” Haidai said, adding that the Russian army had been “partially successful at night” and controlled 70% of the city.

The destruction by Russian forces of the remaining two bridges over the Siverskyi Donets River over the last two days leaves stranded civilians with

no escape west to the neighbouring city of Lysychansk, which is also being shelled but remains in Ukrainian hands.

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[6d ago](#)[13.24](#)



Rupert Neate

**More than 15,000 millionaires are expected to flee Russia this year, as wealthy citizens turn their back on Vladimir Putin's regime after the invasion of Ukraine, according to an analysis of migration data.**

About 15% of Russians with more than \$1m (£820,000) in ready assets are expected to have emigrated to other countries by the end of 2022, according to projects based on migration data by [Henley & Partners](#), a London-based firm that acts as matchmaker between the super-rich and countries selling their citizenships.

“Russia [is] haemorrhaging millionaires,” said Andrew Amoils, the head of research at New World Wealth, which compiled [the data for Henley](#). “Affluent individuals have been emigrating from Russia in steadily rising numbers every year over the past decade, an early warning sign of the

current problems the country is facing. Historically, major country collapses have usually been preceded by an acceleration in emigration of wealthy people, who are often the first to leave as they have the means to do so.”

Ukraine is projected to suffer the greatest loss of high net worth individuals (HNWIs) as a proportion of its population, with 2,800 millionaires (or 42% of all HNWIs in Ukraine) expected to have left the country by the end of the year.



A luxury yacht in Dubai. The UAE is expected to attract the largest net inflows of millionaires globally in 2022. Photograph: Karim Sahib/AFP/Getty Images

The world’s wealthy have traditionally relocated to the US and the UK but Henley said the [United Arab Emirates](#) is expected to overtake them as the number one destination for millionaire emigrates. “UK has lost its wealth hub crown, and the US is fading fast as a magnet for the world’s wealthy, with the UAE expected to overtake it by attracting the largest net inflows of millionaires globally in 2022,” Henley said in its report, which is based on “systematically tracking international private wealth migration trends”.

About 4,000 HNWIs are expected to have moved to the UAE by the end of the year, ahead of Australia, which is expected to attract about 3,500,

Singapore (2,800) and Israel (2,500).

Large numbers of millionaires are also expected to move to “the three Ms”: Malta, Mauritius and Monaco.

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[6d ago](#)[13.05](#)



Dan Sabbagh

**Ukraine has called on the west to supply 300 rocket launchers, 500 tanks and 1,000 howitzers before a key meeting on Wednesday amid concern in some quarters it is pushing its demands for Nato-standard weapons to the limit.**

The maximalist request was made publicly by Mykhailo Podolyak, a key presidential adviser, on Twitter on Monday where he argued that Ukraine needed “heavy weapons parity” to defeat [Russia](#) and end the war.

That would require, he said, 300 of the multiple launch rocket systems (MLRS) – vastly more than seven or so [committed thus far by the US and](#)

UK – and greater than the 60 or more that other advisers have previously said would meet its needs.

Podolyak's full list also included "1,000 howitzers" of the Nato 155mm standard, several times more than what has been dispatched so far. The US, the leading arms supplier, had delivered 109 by the end of May.

A special meeting of defence ministers takes place on Wednesday in Brussels, which will be chaired by Lloyd Austin, the US defence secretary, to discuss future weapons donations, the third such meeting since the war began. Ben Wallace, his UK counterpart, is among those scheduled to attend.

It comes at a time when Ukraine's military is struggling to resist an intense Russian artillery-led assault on its eastern Donbas region and losing, on some days, 200 soldiers killed in action in the heaviest fighting in Europe since the end of the second world war.

Read Dan Sabbagh's full story: Ukraine asks the west for huge rise in heavy artillery supply

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6d ago [12.53](#)

Britain's foreign minister, **Liz Truss**, said she spoke with the US secretary of state, **Antony Blinken**, about Russia's blockade on grain exports from Ukraine.

Spoke to [@SecBlinken](#). We agreed that Russia must release those subjected to abhorrent show trials & end their blockade on grain exports.

Also discussed our Northern Ireland Protocol Bill.  
[pic.twitter.com/WQDEsqcGTd](https://pic.twitter.com/WQDEsqcGTd)

— Liz Truss (@trussliz) [June 13, 2022](#)

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[6d ago](#) [12.30](#)

## Another mass grave of civilians found in Kyiv region, says police

**Ukrainian authorities said they have discovered a new mass grave of civilians near the Bucha in the Kyiv region.**

The bodies of seven civilians were found near the village of Myrotske, many with their “hands tied and their knees shot”, according to Kyiv region police chief, Andrii Niebytov.

The victims had been tortured, he said in a statement on Facebook.

Work is currently under way to exhume the bodies at the site and to identify the individuals, he added.



An excavation team and police work in a forest near Bucha, Ukraine to excavate bodies of Ukrainian civilians. Photograph: Dominika Zarzycka/NurPhoto/REX/Shutterstock



An excavation team member works to excavate bodies of Ukrainian civilians in the forest. Photograph: Dominika Zarzycka/NurPhoto/REX/Shutterstock

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[6d ago](#)[11.56](#)



The Irpin Bridge has become a memorial site for those who died during the Russian invasion across the country. Photograph: Carol Guzy/ZUMA Press Wire/REX/Shutterstock



Walkways used in emergency evacuations are lined with crosses in Irpin, Ukraine. Photograph: Carol Guzy/ZUMA Press Wire/REX/Shutterstock

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## [Ukraine](#)

# Former British soldier killed fighting Russian forces in Ukraine

Jordan Gatley's family say he died in the battle for strategic eastern city of Sievierodonetsk

- [Russia-Ukraine war: latest updates](#)



Jordan Gatley left the British army in March to 'continue his career as a soldier in other areas', his family said. Photograph: Facebook

*[Pjotr Sauer](#) in Kyiv*

Sun 12 Jun 2022 12.08 EDTFirst published on Sun 12 Jun 2022 11.45 EDT

A former British soldier has died fighting Russian forces in the Ukrainian city of Sievierodonetsk, his family have said.

Jordan Gatley left the British army in March “to continue his career as a soldier in other areas” and had been helping Ukrainian troops defend their country against Russia, his father Dean wrote in a statement posted on Facebook on Saturday.

“Yesterday [10/06/22] we received the devastating news that our son, Jordan, has been shot and killed in the city of Sievierodonetsk, [Ukraine](#) ... He loved his job and we are so proud of him. He truly was a hero and will forever be in our hearts,” the statement said.

Gatley died in the battle for the key strategic city in Ukraine’s eastern Donbas region, where fighting has been intense in recent days.

He is thought to be the second Briton to have been killed during the war in Ukraine. [Tributes were paid in April to Scott Sibley](#), a British military veteran believed to have died fighting Russian troops.

The Gatley family statement said: “We have had several messages from his team out there telling us of his wealth of knowledge, his skills as a soldier and his love of his job.

“His team say they all loved him, as did we, and he made a massive difference to many people’s lives, not only soldiering, but also by training the Ukrainian forces.

“Jordan and his team were so proud of the work they were doing and he often told me that the missions they were going on were dangerous, but necessary.”



Jordan Gatley (left) with his father Dean. Photograph: Facebook

A Foreign Office spokesperson said: “We are supporting the family of a British man who has died in Ukraine.”

Gatley, who it is understood had served as a rifleman with the Edinburgh-based third battalion of the Rifles, was also praised by Mykhailo Podolyak, an adviser to the Ukrainian president, Volodymyr Zelenskiy.

Podolyak said the Briton will always be remembered for his contribution. Alongside a picture of the soldier standing in uniform with his father, Podolyak wrote: “It takes a lot of courage to leave home and go thousand miles to defend what you believe in. Just because the heart says so. Because you can’t stand the evil.

“Jordan Gatley was a true hero. We will always remember his contribution to the protection of Ukraine and the free world.”

Kyiv has acknowledged over the last week that it is taking heavy losses in Russia’s assault in the east.

Thousands of foreigners are believed to have entered Ukraine after Zelenskiy announced the establishment of an international legion of volunteers from abroad in the early days of Russia’s invasion.

A significant number are thought to be UK citizens, despite the British armed forces urging Britons not to go to the country.

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Two British men and a Moroccan national captured while fighting with the Ukrainian army in Mariupol were sentenced to death by pro-Russia officials in what was described as a “disgusting Soviet-era show trial”.

Russian state media has portrayed them as mercenaries, and the court convicted them of being as much despite evidence that all three men were serving in the Ukrainian marines and so should be protected by the Geneva conventions on prisoners of war.

Denis Pushilin, the head of the self-proclaimed Donetsk People’s Republic where the three foreigners were tried, said on Sunday that no mercy should be shown. The British foreign secretary, Liz Truss, called the judgment a “sham” with “absolutely no legitimacy.”

In a separate case, Russia said the former Royal Marine Ben Grant had helped to kill a Chechen brigade commander in Ukraine after footage emerged of the British national fighting in the country.

Grant, who has not been captured, is the son of the Conservative MP Helen Grant. He previously told British media that he was part of a unit of 15 British and US volunteers who had been preparing an assault on Russian targets in the Kharkiv area.

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## 2022.06.13 - Spotlight

- 'Germany was 10 years behind' How Brexit helped Europe's galleries
- 'I know what it's like to be frightened' John Lydon on loneliness, lyrics and life as a Sex Pistol
- 'I put on 40 pounds of muscle. Holy mackerel!' Pablo Schreiber on playing Halo's ripped hero
- Best running gear Top gadgets to keep you motivated

## Art and design

# ‘Germany was 10 years behind’: how Brexit helped Europe’s galleries

Curators who left the UK after the referendum took with them experience that is reshaping their cities’ art scenes



The experience of entering Gropius Bau has become more reminiscent of stepping into a London exhibition space such as Tate Modern. Photograph: Annegret Hilse/Reuters



[Philip Oltermann](#) in Berlin

[@philipoltermann](#)

Mon 13 Jun 2022 00.00 EDT Last modified on Mon 13 Jun 2022 07.00 EDT

One of the things Stephanie Rosenthal acquired during her 10-year stint in London's gallery world is an appreciation of the British art of queueing with a smile on your face.

After the German art historian quit her job as chief curator at the Hayward Gallery in the wake of Britain's referendum on leaving the [European Union](#), she exported her specialist skills back to her country of birth.

Since Rosenthal took over as director at Berlin's Gropius Bau in 2018, those who stand in line to buy a ticket at her gallery can hope to be amused and entertained by one of 12 "friends" whom she hired to meet and greet visitors.

Those who don't fancy the wait can amble straight into the atrium to hang out at a free sound installation by the Nigerian artist Emeka Ogboh, another symbol of change introduced under Rosenthal's tenure. Gropius Bau used to represent a German tradition of ivory-tower galleries, where visitors were

more tolerated than welcome. Security staff would make sure they felt that way.

Now, the experience of entering the palatial 19th-century building on the border of Berlin's Kreuzberg and Mitte districts is more reminiscent of stepping into a London exhibition space such as the Royal Festival Hall or Tate Modern.

"In England, the approach was always to have a low threshold for entry," said Rosenthal. "The question that galleries asked was, 'How can culture affect our everyday thinking?' rather than, 'Take this flight of stairs, and then culture will reveal itself to you.' In that respect, in [Germany](#) we were 10 years behind."



Stephanie Rosenthal, the director at Gropius Bau. Photograph: Robert Rieger/Gropius Bau

When Britain voted to leave the EU on 23 June 2016, the result shocked many European citizens who had made the UK their adopted home. Six years on, many have returned to the countries they were raised in. However, it is also becoming clearer that the experiences they gathered are changing continental European cities in unexpected ways.

For Germans, this is particularly true of those from the UK's art and museums sector, long a popular destination for graduates from a country that regularly produces more art historians than it can offer jobs to. The British Museum, the V&A and Tate Liverpool have or have had directors with German passports.

Stefan Kalmár, 52, spent a total of 17 years in England after swapping the University of Hildesheim for Goldsmiths in 1996, going on to head up the Institute of Visual Culture in Cambridge, London's Cubitt gallery, and eventually the capital's prestigious Institute of Contemporary Arts (ICA) from 2016 to 2021.

He recalled a “utopian period” between the mid-1990s and the early 2000s, when “London was on the way to become Europe’s New York”. “Britain totally shaped my idea of culture.”

But the [Brexit](#) referendum marked a turning point for Kalmár, the son of an East German mother and a Hungarian father. “Even before the Brexit vote, it felt like insular thinking was creeping back in – it was much more extreme than I had imagined coming from New York.” Even in London’s globalised art scene, he recalled, colleagues made derogatory remarks about “foreigners” that went often unchallenged.

The culture wars that were amplified in the years after the divisive vote also sapped his job of joy, Kalmár said. While the ICA is only 21% publicly funded – compared with 70% to 80% at comparable German institutions – the multidisciplinary venue was still perceived as being largely government-supported, and provocative programming could trigger furious letters of rightwing complaint that required careful legal responses.

The lack of an American donor culture and an equivalent tax-break regime, he said, meant that British art organisations “get the worst of both worlds”.



Stefan Kalmár spent 17 years in England, and is now based in Marseille.  
Photograph: VOST COLLECTIF/Manifesta 13 Marseille

“You end up running essentially what has become a subsidised business rather than a civic institution. The mixed-economy model forces you to be a lot more commercial than you want – you spend all your time working out how to make more money out of your bookshop or your cafe, and that ends up draining a lot of energy you would rather invest in focusing on the programme.”

Now based in Marseille, France, where he runs a curatorial production office, Kalmár said he had started to renew his appreciation of France and Germany’s way with the arts, especially when he saw how quick and unbureaucratic the state was to prop up cultural institutions during the pandemic, while UK organisations struggled.

“It’s a completely different approach to what we see as public service. A German museum may close for four weeks to install a new exhibition – that’s completely unthinkable in the UK.”

Even then, many German directors and curators who learned their trade in Britain’s more commercial but also more audience-orientated art world remain ambivalent. “I sometimes struggle with my own argument: well-

funded German museums should be exemplary models of civic engagement. And too often, unfortunately, they are not.”

“The approach here [in Berlin] is: even an exhibition that doesn’t attract that many viewers can be valuable,” said Rosenthal, who is leaving Berlin this autumn to head the Guggenheim Abu Dhabi. “Culture is seen as an important instrument for critical thinking. But on the flipside, London taught me that a blockbuster show isn’t necessarily a bad show.” Under her tenure, Berlin’s most spacious gallery hosted a blockbuster show by Japanese artist Yayoi Kusama.

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Anna Gritz first arrived in London on an Erasmus scheme in 2002, later returning to work as a curator at the Hayward and the South London Gallery. Since the start of June, she has been the new director of Haus am Waldsee, an art centre in Berlin’s genteel Zehlendorf district, built in the style of an English country house.

“One thing I learned in the UK is that art is not only what takes place in the exhibition rooms,” Gritz said. “Art can also be what a gallery does with the local community in its neighbourhood.”

Outreach programmes, designed to bring more audiences from socially disadvantaged backgrounds into galleries, are still a relative novelty in the German gallery and museum world. At the Southbank Centre, Rosenthal said she had a department of 30 people working on reaching such new audiences. At Gropius Bau, she increased outreach staff to three – from zero.

At Haus am Waldsee, Gritz said she planned to recruit an outreach curator and wanted to bring more children and young people into a gallery that currently gets its most reliable audience from pensioners.

“I didn’t leave London because of Brexit,” she said.

“But in hindsight, the reasons why I didn’t stay may have been tied to it. And yet I liked being a foreigner,” she added. “Sometimes I miss it.”

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Interview

## **‘I know what it’s like to be frightened’: John Lydon on loneliness, lyrics and life as a Sex Pistol**

[Tim Jonze](#)



‘Behind all those screens of state is a person and she’s managed rather bravely and wonderfully’ ... John Lydon on the Queen, at home in Los Angeles. Photograph: Daniel Gonçalves/The Guardian

After 45 years of picking fights, the former Johnny Rotten is squaring up to his ex-bandmates, director Danny Boyle and anyone who disrespects the Queen. But what’s really impressive is his capacity for love



[@timjonze](#)

Mon 13 Jun 2022 01.00 EDT Last modified on Tue 14 Jun 2022 07.39 EDT

“I always panic,” says an unexpectedly anxious [John Lydon](#). He has had the challenging task of connecting to this video call, all by himself, from his home in California, and he seems surprised that he has managed it. “I’ve got bad eyesight anyway, so I don’t know *what* I’m looking at.”

The 66-year-old hasn’t entirely lost that love of riling up an audience that he first displayed with the Sex Pistols. Later, I will get a dose of his current [pro-Trump, anti-woke](#) outlook. But increasingly, he is a man with a degree of vulnerability laid bare.

It is not just laptop connections he has to contend with. When we speak he is preparing to hit the road with his band [Public Image Ltd](#) and the “stage

fright, rack of nerves, whatever you want to call it” is starting to bubble up again. “The worry that I will let people down, forget where I am and mug it all up.”

Was he like this in the 70s with the [Sex Pistols](#)?

“Even worse then! It was all totally new to me. But over the years I’ve realised you need to go through it, because you’re charging the batteries up so you can go out and put your head on the guillotine and prepare to be sacrificed. You can’t disguise yourself out there. No, no, no … it’s bare bones, broken heart stuff.”



‘Lockdown was soul-destroying for Nora’ … Nora Forster and John Lydon in 1986. Photograph: Fin Costello/Redferns

Lydon has been out of practice as a frontman, spending the pandemic not as a singer but as a carer for his wife, Nora Forster, who was diagnosed with Alzheimer’s in 2018. He has been married to the German publishing heiress since 1979 and they have lived in Los Angeles for most of the time since. Forster is the mother of Ari Up, the singer from the punk band the Slits who died in 2010; John and Nora became guardians of Up’s twin boys in 2000 after she struggled to bring them up, and later her third child, too.

“Lockdown was soul-destroying for Nora,” says Lydon. “She’s always been very gregarious so she couldn’t understand why nobody was coming around, and the few that did had to have face masks on. It was very bad. But she’s absolutely fine at the moment. My family is with her now; we’ve got a nice little unity going. The whole thing is to never let her feel lonely.”

If these are not words you would expect to hear from the former snarling punk known as Johnny Rotten, then perhaps you weren’t paying close enough attention to his music. “You couldn’t write the songs I do without having some consideration for your fellow human beings. The media at the time viewed my stuff as foul-mouthed this, that and the other … no, no, no, no, it’s all from a point of empathy.”

Lydon has been misunderstood for most of his life. At Catholic school in north London he was forced to write with his weaker right hand, and despite his love of reading and writing, didn’t really envisage an outlet for it. Career avenues for the working-class son of Irish immigrants were limited, to say the least, and he was stifled by both shyness and a bout of meningitis, which wiped out his memory for several years. It wasn’t much of a childhood. “I was ill for most of it, then went from illness to work to the Pistols – no time for fun,” he says.



Sid Vicious, Johnny Rotten and Steve Jones ... the Sex Pistols in San Francisco in 1978. Photograph: Richard McCaffrey/Getty Images

Was being in the [Sex Pistols](#) not fun? In little more than two years Lydon, alongside Steve Jones, Paul Cook, Glen Matlock and, later, Matlock's replacement Sid Vicious, released punk's defining album, Never Mind the Bollocks, Here's the Sex Pistols, caused national uproar by swearing live on the Today television show with Bill Grundy and upended the Queen's silver jubilee with their anti-national anthem, God Save the Queen. More importantly, they showed an entire generation that they didn't have to settle for the life mapped out for them. Surely all that must have been a bit of a laugh?

"No, it was too hectic," says Lydon. "Too much condensed into such a short space of time. And it was very hard dealing with the band because they were so indifferent to me. They didn't understand what I was doing – or much care."

Lydon was only 19 when he was spotted on Kings Road in Chelsea wearing a Pink Floyd T-shirt with "I hate" scrawled above the band's name. He was swiftly introduced to the rest of the band by the Pistols' svengali manager, [Malcolm McLaren](#). Lydon had no masterplan to go into music, but he seized his opportunity when it came. "The band weren't very capable, which made it easier," he says with a devilish smirk. "A bum rhyme could go *really* well with a bum note. But they never paid much attention to the lyrics so I had a free hand."



On the town ... Rotten/Lydon with Malcolm McLaren in 1977. Photograph: Evening Standard/Getty Images

Things are particularly sour at the moment between Lydon and his former Pistols bandmates because of [Danny Boyle's Disney miniseries \*Pistol\*](#), based on [Jones's memoir \*Lonely Boy\*](#). Lydon says he was shut out from the process altogether and, after losing a legal battle over control of the band's music, is unable to single-handedly veto any of the decisions made under the Sex Pistols name. He is particularly aggrieved that the band that once threatened to bring down the whole establishment are in bed with Disney.

"It's dead against everything we once stood for. The only thing you've got of value in your life, and you're going to cheapen that because you want an extra fiver? Not much of a human being there."

The way Lydon tells it, the band kept everything secret from him until they knew he was at his weakest moment looking after Nora. "They picked the right moment to stick the knife in. My weakest point. I couldn't focus on this nonsense."

When we speak, Lydon has yet to see any of *Pistol* beyond the trailer, and that didn't impress him.

“It’s karaoke, really. The voices, the way they’re talking … it sounds like a bunch of kids from Tring, all discussing the latest calamities! That ain’t it at all! It’s so off.”

[Danny Boyle recently told the Guardian](#): “I don’t want [Lydon] to like it – I want him to attack it.”

“Oh, how fey of him!” Lydon shoots back. “It’s disgusting, really. How can you be truthful when you don’t involve the main frontman who wrote those songs and had to take the hidings and kickings and public admonishments?”



Spark of genius … Lydon poses for a Public Image Ltd tour photo in New York, May 1983. Photograph: Lisa Haun/Getty Images

With his inimitable vocal delivery and lyrics that exposed the drudgery of 70s Britain, Lydon was the spark of genius that made the Sex Pistols. But perhaps the most astonishing thing about his career is that during that fertile second half of the decade he changed popular music not once but twice. In 1978, the same year the Pistols split up, he formed [Public Image Ltd](#) with Keith Levene, Jah Wobble and Jim Walker, and released their debut album, Public Image: First Issue. A year later came Metal Box, a confounding and uncomfortable collision of glass-shard guitars, dub basslines and cavernous atmospherics that was a founding document for the post-punk revolution.

There's the audience, looking directly into my eyes, telling me they have similar experiences and that the pain is being understood and appreciated for its honesty

"And you'd think if you were making a film about a fella like that you'd wanna talk to him," he says, not letting it go. "But PiL is where the real stuff is. I went into real emotions and the songs became ever so personal, between band and audience. It was about reaching out for the truth ... and that's a hard thing. With PiL, there are songs about the death of my mother, my father ... these are tragedies that are really hard to cope with live. But there's the audience, looking directly into my eyes, telling me they have similar experiences and that the pain is being understood and appreciated for its honesty. It's why I say PiL is like a church but without religion, without God."

While Lydon is touring the UK, his brother and sister-in-law will be looking after Nora. He says his own experience of memory loss has helped him to understand her needs. "I know that fear of isolation. I know what it's like to be completely frightened and not know where you are. And so I know how to deal with it. What frightened me was strangers coming up wanting to hug me. That was terrifying, made the whole thing much more painful. No. I just look in her eyes and she'll find me when she's ready and that will bring us back. Don't be telling them to do this, do that, and don't ask questions ... let them work it out. Never let anyone think they're alone – it's the evilest emotion of them all."

It's moving listening to him talk about Nora and the things that have made her diagnosis more bearable – the two of them dancing, laughing at old comedy programmes, even binge-viewing ghosthunting shows together ("You know, clowns running around in cellars with torches ... hahaha!"). His recent appearance on the US version of *The Masked Singer* was done for her, too. "I wanted to see if she guessed and she did. She said, 'Johnny, it's you!' It was one of the best experiences of my life: how rewarding to hear her talk that way and keep her from switching off."



The Sex Pistols at Leeds Polytechnic during their Anarchy Tour, on 6 December 1976. Photograph: Graham Wood/Evening Standard/Hulton Archive/Getty Images

He adds: “If you just wheel someone into a corner, they lose through sheer sadness. I couldn’t let that happen to Nora – or anybody, really. My whole life I can’t bear the thought of somebody suffering.”

What does he think the secret is to having such a long-lasting relationship?

“Barefaced honesty,” he replies, instantly. “First time we met, we were at each other’s throats, looking for the faults … and we found a great common ground in that because we burst out laughing. The more ferocious the insult, the more fun you get, so we just take it to absurd levels.”

What’s the worst thing she has ever said to him?

“‘Oh, you’re really nice.’ How do you ever live that down?” He bursts out laughing.

We are, of course, speaking around the time of the Queen’s platinum jubilee. Forty-five years ago, Lydon was singing lines such as: “And our figurehead / Is not what she seems.” These days, he professes to be a fan of her majesty – in fact, he says, he always was. “As a human being, as a person.”

Even though God Save the Queen said the exact opposite: “She ain’t no human being”?

“But it was about the *office* of queen. I resent that, but behind all those screens of state is a person and she’s managed rather bravely and wonderfully for quite some time to contain the excesses of what royalty means. It’s near its end now and the poor old dear is going to die very unhappy, so I send her my love as a person.”



‘Working-class lad has a point of view? It must be stopped!’ ... Lydon at home in Los Angeles last month. Photograph: Daniel Gonçalves/The Guardian

To hear him now, it would seem a lot of Lydon’s viewpoints as a Sex Pistol were mischaracterised.

“I couldn’t help it if the press wanted to turn it all into filthy lucre, foul-mouthed yob stuff,” he says. “The giggle was: they hate us, so let them get on with it, eat themselves alive with jealousy and contempt. What was so shocking? Working-class lad has a point of view? It must be stopped!”

Back then, Lydon said the biggest divide in society was between the classes, and he credits punk with breaking it down. Nowadays, he says, the real divide is all about politics. “There’s no understanding, no empathy for

another point of view. No room for being an individual. The internet has made people so volatile! That's why it's easy for me to say 'I like Trump', and see how that kicks off."

He dismisses our own Trumpian prime minister as a 'Humpty Dumpty teddy bear' who can't get anything done

For the past few years Lydon has disappointed some fans with his enthusiasm for the former president, even going as far to don a red Make America Great Again cap during interviews. So was he just doing it to shock?

"There's that element, yeah," he admits. "I'd be a fool not to find the fun in it." But he also seems to genuinely admire Trump, reeling off a list of his achievements, most of which you might charitably describe as being "up for debate", before our call unexpectedly dies and I can't find a way to get him back on.

When we catch up by phone a few days later, I almost wish I hadn't. It's not that Lydon's shy about his opinions, or that he has lost the ability to deliver them with withering disdain. It is just that they are largely incoherent.

So, yes, Lydon still backs Trump. But he dismisses our own Trumpian prime minister as a "Humpty Dumpty teddy bear" who can't get anything done. Then he does another about-turn by hitting a rather Johnsonesque note about loving flag waving and his issues with "BLM and the woke and all of that – making problems that really were almost semi-non-existent".

After all that, he then says he has no issue at all with the fight for transgender rights – "fantastic. If as an adult that's what you've come to the conclusion of, then there's every chance you're right" – before following up with an amusing but completely misguided story from his own youth. "I remember going to the doctor as a teenager because one of my nipples, the left one, was a bit swollen, and I panicked, I thought I was growing tits. And I think now how, in the hands of a wrong doctor, that might have changed my future ... I could have been Joan Rotten by misdiagnosis!"

I start to tell him that's not quite how it works, but he's off on various tangents now: Joe Biden's cognitive decline, why we mustn't remove racist passages from old literature, his hatred of the 90s era of "girl power" ... This, I guess, is your classic Johnny Rotten persona, winding up his audience, an act as old as time for him. It seems pointless to get into an argument about any of it. Instead, I think about how this follow-up call was made possible in the first place: Lydon is speaking from his bedroom, where he has set up a video monitor so he can keep an eye on Nora. "She doesn't understand who I'm talking to when I'm holding a phone, you see," he says, before adding: "It's not as bad as you would think. I don't like to mope. I'm just happy she's there and bubbling away and her natural personality is shining through."

This, I suspect, is where the real [John Lydon](#) resides. The rest, as they say, is just noise.

*PiL are currently on tour in the UK – for details and tickets go to [PiLOfficial.com](#). Find out more about John Lydon's NFT project at [JohnLydon.com](#)*

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Interview

## **‘I put on 40 pounds of muscle. Holy mackerel!’ Pablo Schreiber on playing Halo’s ripped hero**

[Chris Godfrey](#)



Pushing the physicality ... Pablo Schreiber. Photograph: Richard Knapp

The videogame has finally been adapted for TV – with the former Wire actor in the lead. He talks about his lean years after the legendary show aired – and losing his Halo character the Master Chief's famous helmet



Mon 13 Jun 2022 01.00 EDT Last modified on Tue 14 Jun 2022 11.00 EDT

And so, after 17 years of false starts, numerous failed attempts at feature films (including a Peter Jackson venture), [more than 265 drafts](#), a reported budget of \$200m and a production schedule in Hungary decimated by the pandemic, we are finally set to see a TV series of the video game Halo. Will it have been worth such perseverance? Quite possibly. Since the release of the first video game in Microsoft's crown jewel franchise – 2001's Halo: Combat Evolved – the series has [sold more than 81m games, generating in excess of \\$6bn](#). If a network sticks the landing, a Halo TV show could be a significant weapon in its arsenal. But it's a big if.

For the uninitiated: [Halo](#) takes place at a time of intergalactic war between humans and a collective of quasi-religious alien species known as the Covenant. The protagonist is the Master Chief, or John-117, a 6ft 10in augmented super-soldier (or Spartan, in Halo terminology) and the poster boy of the human campaign against the Covenant – think Hercules reimagined as a space marine.



No helmet required ... Pablo Schreiber on the set of *Halo*. Photograph: Adrienn Szabo/Paramount+

John-117 is video-game royalty and the role of playing him has fallen to the 43-year-old Canadian-American actor Pablo Schreiber, best known for roles in [The Wire](#), *Orange Is the New Black*, *American Gods* and *Den of Thieves*. It's solid casting, and not just because of his 6ft 4in shredded frame. Schreiber gives the character more complexity and emotional variance than he's afforded in the games. Though he does have one shortcoming.

"I can definitively say, I will never *ever* play *Halo* publicly online," says Schreiber, laughing over Zoom. "It's not good for my business; there's nothing good that can come from the Master Chief showing how bad he is at *Halo*."

Paramount *really* needs *Halo* to do good business. It's the flagship show for Paramount+, the network's new TV subscription service, and will be key to positioning itself as a serious competitor to Netflix, Amazon et al. Paramount didn't even wait to see the ratings or reviews before commissioning a second season, green-lighting the project in advance of the show's US premiere in March.

The reaction from critics so far has been mixed to positive (it currently scores [70% on Rotten Tomatoes](#)), with many accepting that this first season has been as much about laying the groundwork for what's to come in Halo's expansive universe.



Schreiber as Master Chief ... the helmet is great for creating a blank avatar gamers can identify with, but less so for actors trying to convey emotion.  
Photograph: Adrienn Szabo/AP

Rather than try to replicate the game's two decades of lore and chronology, the show follows its own timeline. Perhaps the biggest break from the source material was the decision to take off the Master Chief's helmet and reveal his face. The games have always protected the chief's anonymity, which is great for creating a blank avatar gamers can identify with, but less so for actors trying to convey emotion. "It inhibits you from going to places of depth and interest that you really want to get to for a long-form story," says Schreiber.

While understandable, the move was a step too far for the franchise's most fervent fans.

There were moments after *The Wire* where I was so broke I couldn't buy a lottery ticket

“People are pissed that their image of who this guy was – which is really tied up in themselves – is being dismantled,” says Schreiber. “Our hope is that … that decision to make the first season as uncomfortable as it is for so many people will pay off over the course of the long-form series.”

The strength of some reactions has come as no surprise to him. “I knew going in that there was a very, very passionate fanbase,” he says. “I learned early on that there’s as many opinions in the Halo fanbase as there are Halo fans and we weren’t going to be able to please everybody.”

Did that worry him, going into the show?

“Nnnnnnnope!” he says, bluntly. “There’s not a single part of me that was worried about that. It just comes with the territory, man.”

Preparation for the role was intense. In addition to various bootcamps (both for weapons training and brushing up on two decades of Halo mythology), Schreiber had to bulk up. A lot.



Pornstache ... as George Mendez in Orange Is the New Black. Photograph: Jessica Miglio for Netflix

“Over the past five or six years I’ve put on 30 to 40 pounds of muscle,” he says. He dropped back down to 190lbs (86kg) after finishing season one of

Halo, so that he could play Allan Gore in the recently released true crime series Candy. Now, in preparation for the second season, he is back up to 245lbs (111kg). “I wanted to push the physicality as far as I could push it for my, you know, genetic limitations.”

It didn’t get any easier in production. “It was the toughest physical challenge of my career, for sure,” says Schreiber. I’ve always been a guy who prides myself on keeping my stuntmen on the sidelines. I realised very quickly on this show that it was impossible.”

Was it a relief to finish filming? “I can’t even tell you! Yeah, holy mackerel.”

Schreiber grew up in British Columbia. The foundations for his acting career were laid by his father, an acting teacher, and his half-brother, Liev Schreiber, who started appearing in films by the time Schreiber hit high school. He eventually moved to New York (by way of Seattle and an acting school in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania) to cut his teeth in theatre work.

In his first TV role he was cast as tortured dockworker Nick Sobotka for The Wire’s second season. “It set the bar incredibly high for me in terms of what I expected from an artistic collaboration,” he admits, “which didn’t turn out to be the case with most of the things I’ve worked on.”



Setting the bar high ... as troubled dockworker Nick Sobotka in *The Wire*.  
Photograph: Landmark Media/Alamy

If he thought the prestige of appearing in an HBO show would radically change the trajectory of his career he was mistaken. “[It] definitely felt like, ‘Oh, yeah man, now I’m not gonna have to worry, right?’ Please! There were so many moments after that where I was fucking destitute and broke and couldn’t buy a scratch lottery ticket.”

After *The Wire*, Schreiber found critical success on stage and was nominated for a Tony award for his performance in *Awake and Sing!* on Broadway. But on screen he was largely confined to smaller parts in films (*The Manchurian Candidate* and *Vicky Cristina Barcelona* stand out) and parts on network TV (he had a recurring role as a serial rapist on *Law & Order: Special Victims Unit*).

“The financial realities of being a new father [he has two teenage sons with his ex-wife] probably had me accepting some work that I just had to do because I had to pay the bills,” he says. “I was involved in some not very good network television.”

He was also fired from some not very good network television. “I did a pilot ... and I was asked not to come back when it got picked up to series. And it was kind of a low point for me where I was like: ‘Wow, I’m that dude from the *Wire*, who’s now getting fired from network TV shows. This is a precipitous drop.’”

The experience provided a valuable life lesson. “I wouldn’t trade those years where I just had to make some money to feed my kids because I learned a lot,” he says. “The biggest thing I learned is acting is not a trade for me. I never would go back to showing up and punching the clock and just saying words because it’s just not interesting for me like this. It’s totally fine for people that want to do that and are interested in that. But I would rather be a tradesman. I would rather literally like carry heavy shit or build something, then I would use this craft and this form of my artistry to do something that doesn’t fulfil me. Maybe that sounds a little pretentious, but at least ... I know my limits.”

Luckily for Schreiber, a few months after his sacking producer Jenji Kohan (who he had worked with on Weeds) offered him the role of George “Pornstache” Mendez in Netflix’s Orange Is the New Black. In a cast full of breakout performances, Schreiber’s take on the hilariously despicable prison guard kickstarted his career; he has since had substantial roles across film and TV – American Gods, Den of Thieves and 13 Hours, to name a few. With both The Wire and Orange Is the New Black, Schreiber found himself on projects with networks at the start of their great expansions. In Halo, he’s in a similar situation, though this time, as the leading man, there is more pressure on him to ensure Paramount+’s linchpin show is a success.

“I’m probably naive, but I don’t really think about pressure in that way,” he says. “Literally, the only thing I can do to control that is to work as hard as I can to make things better. Everything else is going to fall where it falls. And if it doesn’t work, it doesn’t work. You move on to the next thing. And that’s no big deal.”

- Halo launches on Paramount+ on 22 June.

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## Gadgets

# Best running gear: top gadgets to keep you motivated

From music on the go to GPS watches and apps such as Strava, tech to help you clock up the miles



Young female athlete running by wall during sunny day Photograph: Westend61 GmbH/Alamy

*[Samuel Gibbs](#) Consumer technology editor*

Mon 13 Jun 2022 02.00 EDT Last modified on Mon 13 Jun 2022 02.33 EDT

Running is a great way to keep fit this summer and needs little more than some trainers and a pavement or a park. But even the most enthusiastic of us need some way to keep motivated for regular exercise when the couch, TV or sun lounger looks inviting.

These gadgets can help: from music on the go to the social power of Strava, they make pounding the streets a little more interesting.

# Music



Strapping your phone to your bicep in an armband helps keep it secure and out of the way when you run. Photograph: Cultura Creative (RF)/Alamy

Music or podcasts can help you eat up the miles with a bit of entertainment, but holding your phone while you run is not a comfortable way to do things.

Armband phone pockets are one solution. Strapped to your bicep with Velcro and a clear pouch, they let you work your phone and listen to music. They cost about £6-10 and come in various sizes. Or you can use an old MP3 player such as [an iPod Shuffle](#) if you [still have one around](#).

Better yet, switch to a wearable music player with a running or smartwatch. Most good smartwatches, including the [Apple Watch](#), [Samsung Galaxy Watch 4](#) and others, can store music offline for playback straight to a set of Bluetooth headphones.



Spotify and other music apps on smartwatches such as the Apple Watch can play music straight to a set of Bluetooth earphones without your phone.  
Photograph: Samuel Gibbs/The Guardian

If you don't already have a smartwatch and want something for running, there are many different options. One of my favourites is the [Garmin 245 Music](#), which offers excellent tracking, can store hours of music offline from Spotify, Deezer or others, and can be picked up for about £200.

While you can run with almost any headphones, including AirPods or large over-ear sets, there are models that are better designed for running. I recommend [Bluetooth](#) sets that don't block out the world, allowing you to remain aware of your surroundings.

### **Shokz OpenRun Pro**



Bone conduction headphones sit over your ears and vibrate your skull to transmit sound waves to your inner ear, bypassing your ear drum. Photograph: Samuel Gibbs/The Guardian

Bone conduction headphones send sound waves through your skull instead of your ear drum, making the music sound like it is coming from inside your head while maintaining your awareness of the outside world. Shokz make some of the best, with lightweight, comfortable designs, long battery life and easy-to-reach onboard controls for playback and volume. They are the only headphones [approved by England Athletics for races](#), too.

The latest [£160 OpenRun Pro](#) last up to 10 hours between charges, can Bluetooth pair to two devices at once, weigh only 29g and are IP55 water-resistant so you can safely sweat all over them. They sound good, with more bass than previous models, but bone conduction technology can't match regular earbuds for low notes. The older [£130 OpenRun](#) are similar, but with less bass and shorter battery life.

### **Bose Frames Tempo**



Audio sunglasses such as the Bose Frames have little Bluetooth speakers hidden in the thick bit of their arms that direct sound into your ear without blocking it. Photograph: Samuel Gibbs/The Guardian

Bose's latest Frames Tempo Bluetooth audio sunglasses are designed for sport, with interchangeable lenses and sweat-resistance. They sound surprisingly good – at least as good as regular earbuds – with more bass and full sound than bone conduction. Others won't be able to hear your music at normal volumes unless they are very close to you.

They [cost £240](#) new or [£155 refurbished](#), last up to 8 hours between charges and have easy-to-use swipe volume adjustment and a button for playback controls. If you always wear sunglasses when running these are great, but they can't be bought with prescription lenses in the UK.

## Sony LinkBuds



The whole LinkBud sits in the concha of your ear with the ring-shaped speaker sitting against your ear canal without blocking it. Photograph: Samuel Gibbs/The Guardian

Sony's weird-looking Bluetooth earbuds have a ring-shaped speaker that [lets the sound of the outside world through](#) a hole in the middle for awareness. They [cost £149](#) and are low-profile, staying put with wings that tuck into your ear's concha. The fit takes some getting used to. They sound decent, if lacking thumping bass, are IPX4 sweat-resistant and last 5.5 hours between charges or 17.5 hours total with their compact charging case.

## Beats PowerBeats Pro



The bendable hooks hold the PowerBeats Pro comfortably in place once adjusted. Photograph: Samuel Gibbs/The Guardian

If you're in a park or somewhere safe and want to block out the world, the £220 Beats PowerBeats Pro are some of the [best running headphones](#) you can get. They are IPX4 sweat-resistant, hook over your ear for stability, and have onboard controls including volume buttons on both sides and no cable to worry about. They last 8 hours between charges or up to 24 with the large charging case. The traditional silicone earbuds block some but not all noise, so you could hear a car if it beeped its horn.

Beats also made a version of the [Powerbeats with a cable connecting them](#) around the back of the head, which some people might prefer and are available refurbished or in clearance for as little as £50.

### **What's your soundtrack?**

Once you've sorted how to listen, it's time to pick some tunes. Some subscribe to the philosophy of matching music tempo with your desired cadence. There are plenty of playlists on most services designed specifically for this purpose.

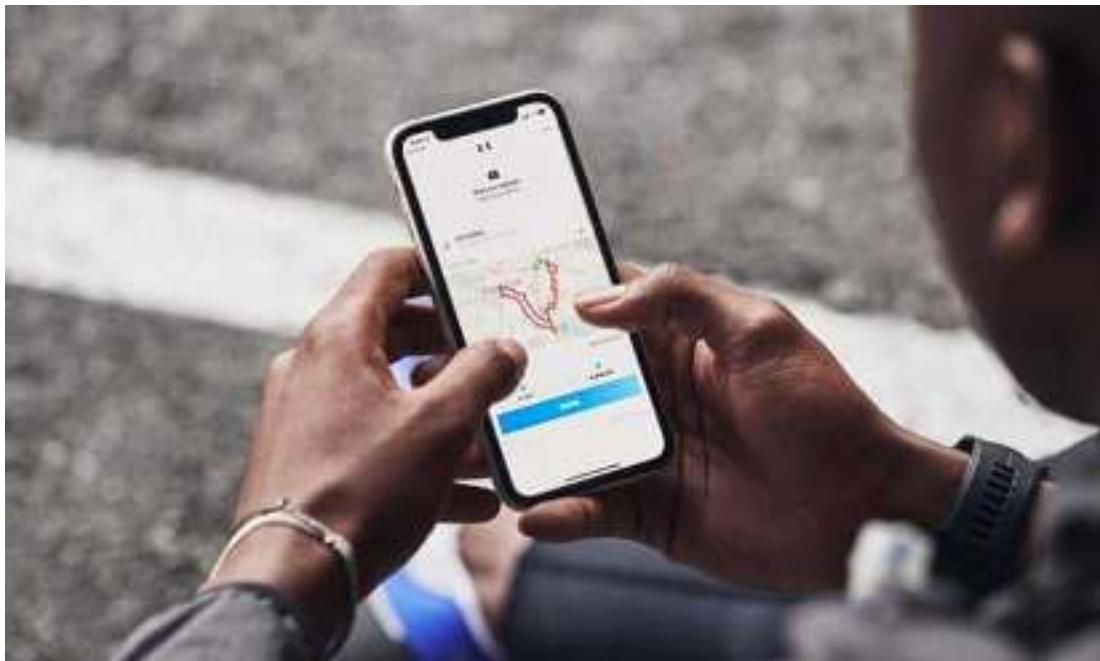
I run at about 180 steps a minute so I seek out high-tempo electronic dance music, but EDM is not for everyone. Running playlists can be [a very](#)

[personal and uplifting journey](#), so just go with [what makes you happy](#) and energised. You'll find tracks that work for you after a few runs, and if music just doesn't do it for you podcasts can offer a welcome distraction. The Guardian [has a few you might like](#).

## Tracking

Tracking your progress can help keep you motivated, particularly if you have a goal in mind such as improved fitness, a faster 5km time or just longer distances.

### Using your phone



Under Armour's MapMyRun app can track running routes using your phone's GPS. Photograph: Under Armour

The cheapest way of tracking your pace and distance is using your phone's GPS. You can use any number of built-in or third-party apps, including Strava (more on that later), [Google Fit](#), [MapMyRun](#) and many others.

If you want to record your heart rate you can also use a chest-strap heart monitor with a phone app, with models made by Garmin, Polar or Wahoo costing from about £40.

## Smartwatches and fitness trackers



Most good smartwatches, such as the Galaxy Watch 4, will be able to track runs with GPS and metrics very similar to a dedicated running watch.  
Photograph: Samuel Gibbs/The Guardian

As with offline music playback, if you have a smartwatch it will most likely be able to track your running with plenty of detail. Most include fairly advanced measurements, including heart rate, distance, pace, GPS tracks and other bits.

Some more advanced fitness trackers also do similar, though those without GPS can only estimate distance from your movement, which is not very accurate and therefore difficult to use for training.

## Running watches



The Garmin Forerunner 245 tracks loads of metrics and displays them in real time so you can see them when out on a run. Photograph: Samuel Gibbs/The Guardian

Running watches come in various sizes, prices and capabilities, with the cheapest and simplest often offering more than enough to get going, including GPS, heart rate, pace and training plans. They cost about £100-150 new or as little as £50 refurbished. Most have long battery life and easy-to-read screens, while better models include more advanced metrics such as cadence (steps a minute), VO2 max and fitness estimation.

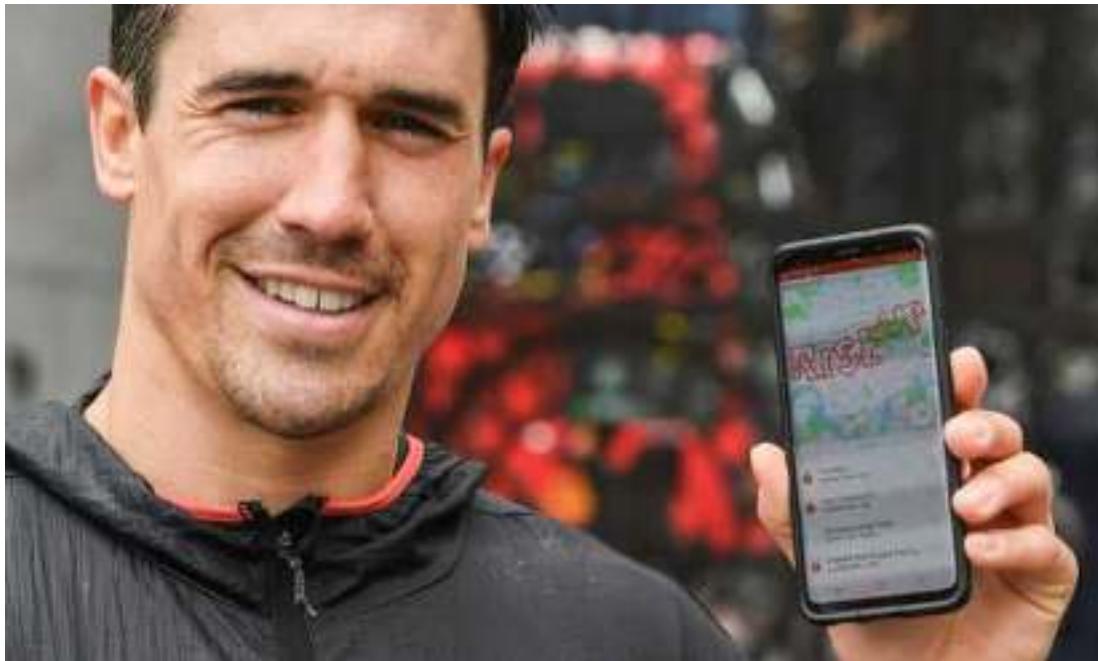
The more you pay, the more features they have, with mid-range models supporting offline music playback and high-end versions costing about £450 and up, such as the Garmin Forerunner 955 or [Fenix 7](#), featuring advanced offline maps and routing to stop you getting lost.

## Social media

One of the best ways to keep motivated is to add a bit of friendly rivalry, encouragement and support through a fitness community. Most devices have their own system, including Garmin, Fitbit, [Samsung](#) or Apple Health, which if your friends use models from the same company may be enough.

If not, there are cross-platform services available that sync your running data from your device of choice to a fitness-focused social network.

## Strava



Runners of all kinds use Strava; some, such as Joshua Patterson, run entertaining routes to spell out phrases and share inspiration. Photograph: Stuart C Wilson/Getty Images

[Strava](#) is one of the biggest and best. The free app offers activity tracking and a social network for logging GPS routes, times and other data. The [Strava app for smartphones](#) and smartwatches covers most of the basics, or you can automatically sync your data to the service from most manufacturers' devices or apps.

With more than [95 million users worldwide](#), Strava is extremely popular with runners and cyclists, but supports a wide range of activities. You can keep an eye on your progress and your gear (so you know when to replace your shoes), find new routes and share “kudos” (likes) and comments with friends for support.

A paid-for option opens up some in-depth analysis and added features if you want to take things further. Other popular alternatives include the [Nike Run Club](#), Asics [Runkeeper](#), Adidas [Runtastic](#) and Under Armour's [MapMyRun](#).

- [The best apps to get fit with your friends: from Fitbit to Strava](#)
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## 2022.06.13 - Opinion

- Don't be complacent, another Covid wave is coming. Here's how we can manage it
- Millions of men support our abortion rights. We need to help them become stronger allies
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[\*\*OpinionCoronavirus\*\*](#)

# **Don't be complacent, another Covid wave is coming. Here's how we can manage it**

[Devi Sridhar](#)



A spike in infections every three months seems to be the pattern, but the UK has the power to beat this if we act wisely



‘Masks and ventilation are still important measures we can take.’

Photograph: Matthew Horwood/Getty Images

Mon 13 Jun 2022 03.00 EDT Last modified on Mon 13 Jun 2022 09.49 EDT

As we move into summer, more than two years since the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic, the words “new wave” are probably the last thing anyone wants to hear. Yet it is true that recent UK data (as well as data from Florida and other places) indicates that sublineages of the Omicron variant, BA.4 and BA.5, are kicking off a [new wave of cases](#). With the pandemic no longer dominating the news in the way it once did, it’s worth taking stock of where we are and what needs to be done.

After all, these variations on Omicron [are not more severe](#), but they do have the capacity to reinfect people, even those who have had a previous version of Omicron. This is further evidence that reaching “herd immunity” (where enough people are vaccinated or infected to stop further circulation) against Covid-19 is [probably impossible](#).

Looking over the past two years, and across different places, a wave of Covid-19 cases every three months seems to be the pattern. So it’s not surprising that this is happening again, and we should expect another wave this winter. While the idea of the disease circulating might be anxiety-

provoking, we now have a wealth of [scientific knowledge and tools](#) to deploy. The focus should be on what these cases mean for long Covid and for hospitalisations. Plus, there's good news: [new research indicates](#) Omicron is indeed milder than Delta by a substantial amount in terms of hospitalisations and deaths.

Of course, it would be better to avoid getting Covid-19 once, or repeatedly, given the increasing number of negative health outcomes the disease is linked to. The challenge is how best to do that, balanced against the costs entailed in avoiding Covid completely: the vector for this disease is other humans who we (largely) enjoy seeing, being close to, or must see for work reasons. Humans are social beings, and for many people a large part of our quality of life is mixing with others, as seen by the rapid return to festivals, celebrations and social events.

Forgive me if you'd heard this one before, but masks and ventilation are still important measures we can take. Wearing a medical-grade mask is an effective way of protecting yourself from respiratory infections, especially in crowded settings. That said, we also need to recognise that they are costly, and can be uncomfortable if worn for long stretches of time. In addition, masks interfere with wanting to see people's faces, engage with their emotions and interact at an intimate level; child specialists have [raised concerns](#) about the impact on child speech and emotional development. [Indoor ventilation](#) is important in reducing transmission. However, ventilation alone is unlikely to stop a wave of infections: you only have to look at [Shanghai](#) and the difficulty Chinese authorities there have had in stopping the spread of Omicron in a highly controlled lockdown setting.

The cost-benefit calculation has shifted for many people over time, as other more pressing priorities have taken over. Avoiding infection in 2020 by restricting interactions to certain people and limited settings was understandable, given there were no vaccines or therapies. The cost was high, financially and socially, but waiting for a vaccine meant there was a payoff to being cautious and delaying infection. [Analysis](#) from the Financial Times indicates that for most people in England, Covid-19 has become less lethal than seasonal flu because of the high levels of immunity after vaccination and the reduced severity of Omicron compared with Delta. In

2022, most people want to interact and live life as they see best (in a democracy where freedom is valued), given that disease severity has been blunted with vaccines.

What does this mean for all of us? The UK should be planning to roll out boosters to the entire population this autumn, using an age and risk factor priority scheme (instead of just to people over 75, those in care homes and those with weakened immune systems: these are the people covered by the current spring booster scheme). Antiviral supply should be put in place in pharmacies and GPs, working towards a “test to treat” scheme where soon after testing positive, those who are in vulnerable and elderly groups, for whom vaccines might be less effective, can get access to effective treatment early on.

Another important concern is long Covid, which can cause months of illness and suffering. We still have no clear indication of who is likely to get this condition and who will recover quickly. Here, a deeper understanding of the biological mechanisms and treatments is vital. How can we support recovery and rehabilitation? Research has shown that people who were fully vaccinated were half as likely to get long Covid as those who had one or no vaccines.

And what does this mean for winter, when we expect the next wave to hit? While vaccines and antivirals have pushed the hospitalisation rate down, it's equally important to invest in nurses, doctors, hospital staff and beds. After all, the NHS is already stretched this summer. The consequence will be unnecessary and preventable deaths, and staff working in difficult conditions unless the health service gets what it needs.

Public health is about all the factors that help someone live a healthy and happy life. And while strong opinions continue to be voiced on whether we can “live with Covid” or not, the fact is that almost every country on this planet is learning to manage this disease among the plethora of other problems that we face as humans. The situation is complex with no simple fix. No, we haven't solved Covid, but we are getting smarter and better at managing this disease.

- Prof Devi Sridhar is chair of global public health at the University of Edinburgh
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## Republic of ParenthoodAbortion

# **Millions of men support our abortion rights. We need to help them become stronger allies**

Rhiannon Lucy Cosslett



We can find a way for men who are pro-choice to play a role without infringing a woman's autonomy or speaking over her



‘Men should care fundamentally about the reproductive rights of others, whether abortion affects them or not.’ March to defend US abortion rights in London, 14 May 2022. Photograph: Anadolu Agency/Getty Images

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As the conversation about abortion rages, it strikes me that I have never heard a man tell his abortion story publicly. The emphasis on disclosure when it comes to abortion means that we have become used to hearing women’s stories. But what, if you’ll forgive me for ironically borrowing a well-worn phrase, about the men? We hear a lot, too much, from men who are anti-abortion, and little from those who support it, or who have benefited from it.

When the New York Times [asked men to come forward](#) with their abortion stories, the social media response was mixed. There were the men who thought the whole thing was hilarious, as though the thought of abortion had never troubled them. There were those who thought we shouldn’t hear from men about abortion at all, that men should stay out of it. And then there were those who felt perhaps that having men as allies could bolster the cause; that framing it as a “women’s problem” – and not a vital element of family planning that benefits people regardless of gender – plays into the hands of the conservative Christian right.

In the popular cultural imagination of the right, abortion is used by a certain “type” of woman, an archetypal Jezebel; and even for the left, she’s often envisaged as a single, vulnerable young woman. There’s an empty space where the man might be. We never see him paying for the abortion and rarely see him attending the clinic; nor do we see him as part of a couple who can’t afford to have any more children, or who have made a difficult decision due to a foetal anomaly, or who simply don’t want to be parents.

When men are supportive of abortion rights, [they often get it wrong](#), says Joe Strong, a researcher at the London School of Economics who studies abortion and masculinities. Often, those who support safe and legal abortion mess up by centring themselves, or reinforcing “patriarchal ideas” by using arguments such as “hands off my wife’s uterus!” or “I’m doing this for my daughters”. He’s noted a trend for articles saying sweeping things like “abortion is a men’s issue too”; but it is not, he says, men’s rights that are at stake.

Men should care fundamentally about the reproductive rights of others, whether abortion affects them or not. Of course, in many cases, abortion is the deciding factor in whether a man becomes a father or not, and men will respond emotionally to the life-changing repercussions of this. The crux of the issue, Strong says, is, “How do we allow men to support women’s right to an abortion without elevating their voices over those of women? How do you have a conversation that doesn’t imply that a man is a 50% decision-maker in a couple unit when they just aren’t?” It’s important to hear men’s experiences, not only to boost support for women’s reproductive rights, but also so that policymaking can reflect reality. It’s a delicate balance.

Speak to men privately, and they will be honest about the benefits that abortion has brought to their lives. “When we found out we were pregnant we were gobsmacked,” one man, Aaron, who was in his early 20s at the time, reflects. He had been dating his girlfriend for a short while and she had been using an IUD. “When we discussed it, it was clear that we were both on the same page. Neither of us wanted to be parents.”

They had difficulty accessing the procedure after one doctor refused her request, telling her instead to “pray”, meaning she had a later-stage termination than desired.

“Whenever we talked about it afterwards we agreed on it being the right decision – we couldn’t have been parents. Both of us have had pretty intense mental health issues since … so God knows how we could have raised a child together. It was definitely overall a good thing, but a traumatic experience and something that will stay with us both for ever.” They separated but remained friends.

Hearing Aaron’s story highlights the role that men can play in the decision not to become a parent: here we see a man who is supportive and sensitive to his partner’s feelings, and now, over a decade later, is politically committed to the right to abortion access. Interestingly, Strong’s research found that it is not so much a man’s opinion on abortion that drives his involvement in decision-making, but “their feelings on how a pregnancy is going to impact their masculinity”. Often, he says, there’s a fear of being seen as a “deadbeat” dad, a classed, racialised term that carries a lot of stigma. Men ask themselves if a pregnancy will bolster their power in the world (say if they achieve the ideal of father as breadwinner), or not.

“Even though she said she didn’t want to keep it, I felt like a piece of shit. I had always been told that it was a man’s responsibility to look after any pregnancy they had caused and I felt that I was somehow putting pressure on her … even though she assured me it wasn’t the case,” says Aaron, reflecting on the role that ideas of masculinity have played in his own story.

From a policy perspective, Strong argues that we need to grapple with masculinities if we are to truly see a discussion that reflects reality, otherwise many men will continue to link their ability to control another person’s body with their conception of manhood. Men’s only contribution shouldn’t be the reproductive fascism [of the Republican party](#), or the sort of radicalising “support groups” we see in the US, where men lament the fatherhood that abortion has “robbed” them of.

Men who are pro-choice, who have perhaps been told that abortion is a women’s issue, may feel the sensitive thing to do is to not speak at all. But can’t we find a way for men to talk about abortion without infringing a woman’s bodily autonomy, or speaking over her, so that they can become the ultimate allies: men who acknowledge that abortion will never relate to their bodies, but who support it because they believe it is a right.

And, failing that, men can always get their wallets out and donate to feminist organisations. They can use their money, use their patriarchy – as Strong puts it – without needing to use their voices at all.

## What's working

Another life changing bit of kit this week, from a brand called Doona, who have invented a car seat that turns into a stroller. As I don't drive or own a car, I'm occasionally reliant on taxis, which is where this amazing invention comes into its own. When you get to the other side, the wheels simply pop down at the press of a button.

## What's not

I have yet to find a pair of earplugs that will completely blot out the sound of a baby crying, for when my husband starts his shift and I retire to a dark room for a few hours' precious sleep.

- Rhiannon Lucy Cosslett is a Guardian columnist
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## Should Russia pay reparations for the Ukraine war?

[Barry Eichengreen](#)

The case is morally compelling – but it might leave Ukraine less able to sustain stable economic growth



Reconstruction of Ukraine could cost about \$150bn. Photograph: Anastasia Vlasova/Getty Images

Mon 13 Jun 2022 02.00 EDT Last modified on Tue 14 Jun 2022 07.06 EDT

Russia's war on [Ukraine](#) shows no sign of ending, but it is not too soon to start thinking about how to ensure postwar Ukraine's stability, prosperity, and security. Already, two discussions are occurring: one about financing economic reconstruction, and the other about affirming Ukraine's external security. The problem is that these discussions are proceeding separately, even though the issues are intimately related.

Reconstruction costs are uncertain because the course of the war is uncertain. Ukraine's [prewar GDP](#) was about \$150bn (£120bn). Given a capital-output ratio of three, and assuming that a third of the capital stock will be destroyed, we are again talking about \$150bn. As always, alternative assumptions yield [alternative scenarios](#), but \$150bn seems like a reasonable starting point.

This is not an impossible amount of aid for donors to commit. It is one-sixth the size of the [NextGenerationEU program](#) on which EU states [agreed](#) in July 2020. It is one-twelfth the size of the [American Rescue Plan Act](#) signed by Joe Biden in March 2021.

Still, it seems wrong to ask the US and Europe to repair what Russia has broken. So, it is tempting to suggest that Ukraine's reconstruction should be financed by garnishing Russian assets. At [\\$284bn](#), the Bank of Russia's frozen reserves would certainly fit the bill.

True, there is a moral case for reparations: Russia started an unprovoked war and has almost certainly committed [war crimes](#) in prosecuting it. There is also an argument grounded in [deterrence](#). As Volodymyr Zelenskiy [put it](#) at Davos this year: "If the aggressor loses everything, then it definitely deprives him of his motivation to start a war."

Security guarantees are as vital for economic recovery as they are for the safety of Ukraine's population. Official aid can't finance the economy forever; private investment will be required. But foreign investment won't flow in if security is uncertain. Indeed, Ukrainians themselves won't invest, either.

The west can strengthen Ukraine's ability to defend itself by giving it more powerful weapons. But as long as Russia is nuclear-armed and Ukraine is not, the strategic balance will be tilted. A [security guarantee](#) from the US and the EU could counter this Russian advantage, but the west is reluctant – not without reason – to bear the risks.

The only durable solution is a Russia reconciled to Ukraine's political independence and territorial integrity. And reparations are the last thing needed to achieve that. They would mean additional hardship for a Russian population already experiencing hardship. With the economy on course to contract by 10-20% this year, it is not as if Russia is getting off scot-free.

To be sure, going too easy on Russia risks shading into appeasement. And under no circumstances should Russian President Vladimir Putin be rewarded for his aggression. But there is also the opposite risk. Russia must recognise the political and territorial integrity of Ukraine. Punishing it further in the course of peace negotiations will not make this easier. We want future Russian governments to respect international norms. Invoking those norms to extract every pound of flesh will not make achieving this more likely.

There is an obvious analogy with German reparations after the first world war and the war-guilt provision of the Treaty of Versailles. Rightly or wrongly, Russians now, like Germans then, do not see themselves as solely responsible for the war. The treaty's war-guilt clause gave nationalistic German politicians a grievance on which to campaign. The victors' financial demands gave German governments cover to disregard the treaty's disarmament provisions and the prohibition on establishing a customs union with Austria. And reparations complicated the task of stabilising and reconstructing the international system. John Maynard Keynes anticipated all this and more in his prescient Economic Consequences of the Peace.

This indictment of post-WWI reparations should not be overdone. Reparations alone did not cause the Great Depression, and Germany's depression alone did not lead to Hitler and the second world war. The analogy to today's circumstances, like all historical analogies, is imperfect. Still, this experience is a cautionary tale.

There are still other arguments against reparations. The legality of seizing frozen Russian assets is unclear. Western governments could pass enabling legislation, although they might then be seen as bending the law to their convenience. The UN could create a commission with the power to seize those assets, though countries such as China, imagining that they might one

day be targeted, would oppose the step. Either way, seizing Russia's foreign assets will cause other governments to think twice before investing abroad.

The central point, though, is that the demand for reparations would make it harder to imagine a Russia reconciled to Ukraine's independence and territorial integrity. With a hostile Russia at its doorstep, it will be more difficult for Ukraine to stay safe, much less to sustain sound and stable economic growth.

*Barry Eichengreen is professor of economics at the University of California, Berkeley, and a former senior policy adviser at the IMF.*

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## OpinionOceans

# Dogger Bank is about more than shipping forecasts: it shows how we can rewild our seas

[Charles Clover](#)

As of today, trawling is banned in the British part of the famous sunken landmass – a major win for biodiversity



Bluefin tuna, which has rebounded in British and Irish waters after decades of absence. Photograph: Brian J Skerry/Getty Images/National Geographic

Mon 13 Jun 2022 05.00 EDT Last modified on Mon 13 Jun 2022 13.10 EDT

A huge ecological experiment begins today on Dogger Bank, part of the sunken landmass that once formed a bridge between Britain and mainland Europe. Trawling and dredging – fishing activities that not only scoop up fish and shellfish but also plough through plants and animals on the sea floor

– are now banned, at least on the British part of this Atlantis of the North Sea.

The protection of 12,000 sq km of seabed, 100km off eastern England, where early man hunted woolly mammoths, amounts to an act of rewilding thousands of times bigger than the “best in show” garden at this year’s Chelsea flower show. Covering an area almost the size of Northern Ireland, it marks a turning point in the health of our nearby seas.

Until today, this officially designated marine protected area has been simply a “paper park” – a term used to describe somewhere protected in theory but not really in practice – hammered by dredgers targeting scallops and beam trawlers harrowing the seabed for sole. Nobody quite knows what will happen now, but history gives us an idea what Dogger Bank could be like again. In the 1830s, small sailing vessels could catch a ton of halibut a day. Today, vessels fishing across the whole bank – in UK, Danish, German and Dutch waters – land less than two tonnes of halibut a year. Slow-reproducing monsters such as halibut just are not given enough time to breed and grow before being caught.

Halibut are not the only missing megafauna. There is a picture of a huge sturgeon caught on Dogger Bank in 1925 on the wall of a Lowestoft pub. One day sturgeon could be back, along with halibut and perhaps the oysters recorded along the south side of the bank in the 1880s. These communities of restored plants and animals will enhance the sea’s ability to soak up carbon. The possibilities are wildly exciting.

What we do know from Lyme Bay on the English south coast, where trawling and dredging were banned in 2008, is that four times the number of commercially valuable fish came back, as did four times the overall number of species. The result of banning the most damaging fishing gear – not fishing per se – has been an economic and an ecological success. Why, you may ask, don’t we manage all our inshore waters that way?

The success of Lyme Bay gives the lie to the moaning about “displacement” from the industrial side of the fishing industry, especially in the Netherlands. The reality is that the protection of Dogger Bank is likely to mean not the

concentration of fishing in fewer places, but more fish to catch by “fishing the line” outside the protected area. The revival of fish habitat and fish stocks will spiral – provided the government gets on and properly protects the [70 or so other “paper parks”](#) in UK offshore waters, which is by no means a certainty.

The protection of Dogger Bank is that rare thing – a Brexit dividend. There are multiple ironies to it, though. The Dogger was theoretically protected a decade or so ago by the UK government under the EU habitats directive – written by the prime minister’s father, Stanley Johnson, when he was an EU official. Then nothing happened, because there is an unhelpful conflict in European law between nature conservation and the common fisheries policy that has yet to be resolved.

When the common fisheries policy ended in UK waters after Brexit, ministers from the Department for Environment, [Food](#) and Rural Affairs were – our charity had to remind them – obliged to enforce the nature laws we had inherited from Europe. There was no longer any conflict in law.

George Eustice, the environment secretary, has boasted that in protecting Dogger Bank, Britain was using its post-Brexit freedoms to protect the marine environment. But he then did something horrendous earlier this year, proposing in a green paper to [remove all duties on ministers](#) to protect nature sites, marine or terrestrial. Reassuringly, there is opposition to his ideas from all sides, and they are a long way away from becoming law.

The protection of Dogger Bank nevertheless stands as a great achievement. It is a sign amid the prevailing gloom that we can begin to tackle the biodiversity crisis and the climate emergency by enhancing the power of the ocean to absorb carbon. Among these positive and hopeful developments are the creation of a “blue belt” of marine [protected areas](#) around some British overseas territories, the protection of the [kelp belt](#) off Sussex and the [recovery of the bluefin tuna](#), now turning up off Britain, Ireland and Norway after decades of absence.

I just wish we could rely on our government to follow the last example of ambitious science-based management. For, by contrast with the bluefin, two-thirds of fish stocks in UK and EU waters – including cod, the nation’s favourite fish – are currently harvested at levels in excess of scientific advice. Shockingly bad decisions continue to be taken every day, when we could be promoting the recovery of overexploited species and reducing carbon emissions at the same time.

We need to look again at how we manage the oceans in a time of climate crisis. The ocean is the largest carbon sink on Earth, and it can help us by taking up far more carbon than it does at present. All we need to do is to load the dice against the smokestack industries of the sea – trawling, dredging and other industrial methods of fishing – that have already devastated our waters and which, scientists now tell us, cause as many carbon emissions as the global aviation industry.

We can rewild the sea. It’s already being done, not just on Dogger Bank. It works and – here’s the thing – ultimately, everybody gains.

- Charles Clover is executive director of Blue Marine Foundation. His new book is Rewilding the Sea: How to Save our Oceans
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## January 6 hearings

# Top aides repeatedly told Trump fraud claims were baseless, Jan 6 panel hears

William Barr said ex-president's allegations were 'bullshit' while several advisers told him not to declare victory on election night

- [Jan 6 hearings: follow the second hearing live](#)

'Bullshit': William Barr dismisses Donald Trump's claims of election fraud – video

*Joan E Greve in Washington  
@joanegreve*

Mon 13 Jun 2022 13.59 EDTFirst published on Mon 13 Jun 2022 02.00 EDT

The House select committee investigating the January 6 insurrection on Monday scrutinized the conspiracy theories that [led a group](#) of Donald Trump's supporters to attack the US Capitol and produced damning testimony for the former US president.

Over the course of the two-hour hearing, committee members meticulously documented how several of Trump's senior advisers urged him not to declare victory on election night, as votes were still being counted.

When Trump began spreading lies about widespread fraud in the election, some of his top aides, including ex-attorney general and former Trump loyalist William Barr, repeatedly told him that the claims were baseless.

"We'll tell the story of how [Donald Trump](#) lost an election and knew he lost an election and, as a result of his loss, decided to wage an attack on our

democracy,” the Democratic chair of the committee, Mississippi congressman Bennie Thompson, said on Monday.

The committee had hoped that Bill Stepien, Trump’s former campaign manager, would testify in person on Monday, but he was unable to attend because his wife had gone into labor. Instead, Stepien’s attorney, Kevin Marino, appeared on his behalf.

The committee relied on previously recorded testimony from Stepien and other Trump allies – including his eldest daughter and senior adviser, Ivanka Trump, and his campaign attorney Rudy Giuliani – to show that the former president was told repeatedly on election night that he did not have the numbers to win.

The Wyoming congresswoman Liz Cheney, the Republican vice-chair of the committee, said Trump rejected several advisers’ guidance to wait for more votes to be counted on election night. Trump instead followed the advice of an “apparently inebriated” Giuliani to falsely declare victory before a winner was known, Cheney said at the Monday hearing.

**'Intoxicated' Giuliani wanted Trump to declare victory on election night, investigation told – video**

Chris Stirewalt, a former political editor for Fox News, testified that Trump had no basis to declare victory on election night. Stirewalt boasted of his team’s decision to call Arizona for Joe Biden on election night, even though it later cost him his job (something Fox denies). Once Trump lost Arizona, Stirewalt said, his odds of winning the election were virtually nonexistent.

Facing the reality of his defeat, Trump chose to peddle baseless claims of widespread fraud in the election. In the days after the election, factions developed within the Trump campaign, as some aides backed Giuliani and his lies about the election while others supported Stepien and his pleas for reason.

“We called them kind of my team and Rudy’s team,” Stepien said in his recorded testimony. “I didn’t mind being categorized as ‘Team Normal.’”

After Monday's hearing, Trump issued a 12-page statement calling the investigation a "kangaroo court" and a distraction, and repeating false claims of voter fraud.

Barr, who participated in a closed-door interview with investigators earlier this month, repeatedly tried to convince the former president that the election had been secure.



The testimony from William Barr at the hearing. Photograph: Rex/Shutterstock

"I told him that the stuff that his people were shuttling out to the public was bullshit," Barr said in a clip shared by the committee. "I was somewhat demoralized, because I thought, boy, if he really believes this stuff ... he's become detached from reality."

According to Barr, Trump became "indignant" when his lies about the election were contradicted. "The president was as mad as I've ever seen him, and he was trying to control himself," Barr said. "The president said, 'Well, this is, you know, killing me. You didn't have to say this. You must've said this because you hate Trump.'"

Trump had an obligation to make court challenges if he believed there was fraud, Thompson said, and also accept the decisions of the courts – he lost

virtually every case – but he instead chose to attack the “rule of law”.

“He didn’t have the numbers. He went to court. He still didn’t have the numbers. He lost,” Thompson said. “But he betrayed the trust of the American people. He ignored the will of the voters.”

Select committee member Zoe Lofgren also showed how Trump and the Republican political apparatus used those baseless claims of fraud to rake in millions of dollars from unsuspecting Americans in fundraising, and how the Capitol attack was fueled by those claims perpetuated by Trump.

Between election day and the January 6 attack, the Trump campaign sent millions of fundraising emails, encouraging supporters to donate to the “Election Defense Fund”. One former campaign aide described that fund as a “marketing tactic”, sparking accusations from Lofgren that Trump and his team had misled donors. The last fundraising email was sent just 30 minutes before the Capitol was breached, Lofgren noted.

“The big lie was also a big ripoff,” Lofgren said.

The hearing on Monday, which saw Lofgren take a lead role in questioning witnesses instead of committee counsel, comes four days after the panel [held its first hearing in prime time.](#)

At that first session, the select committee featured shocking and at times emotional testimony from key witnesses who have spoken to investigators over the past year as they conducted the first stage of their inquiry behind closed doors in Washington.

Members of Trump’s inner circle testified that the former president was repeatedly told his claims of widespread fraud in the 2020 election that deprived him of victory over Biden were entirely baseless, but he continued to spread those lies in the weeks leading up to the insurrection.

Last week’s hearing [laid the groundwork](#) for the committee’s argument that Trump played a central role in the planning of the insurrection and bears personal responsibility for the deadly attack. A mob overran the US Capitol

on January 6 last year, the day that Congress was due to officially certify Biden's win over Trump in the previous November's presidential election.

The four remaining hearings are expected to build upon that argument, as committee members attempt to present a meticulous case for Trump's culpability.

"Over multiple months, Donald Trump oversaw and coordinated a sophisticated seven-part plan to overturn the presidential election and prevent the transfer of presidential power," Cheney said on Thursday. "In our hearings, you will see evidence of each element of this plan."

The Monday hearing provided committee members with another opportunity to convince the country that America's democracy is facing a threat from those who do not believe in free and fair election.

The panel has accused Trump and his associates of having engaged in a "criminal conspiracy" and argues that the former president bears personal responsibility for the deadly attack on the US Capitol.

Although Trump was impeached by the House for inciting the insurrection, he was acquitted by the Senate, leaving many of his critics feeling as though he was not held accountable for his actions.

If the committee is successful in building its case against Trump, the hearings could deliver a devastating blow to the former president's hopes of making a political comeback in the 2024 presidential election. But if Americans are unmoved by the committee's findings, the country faces the specter of another attempted coup, Thompson warned.

"It all comes down to the numbers," Thompson said on Monday. "The very least we should expect from any person seeking a position of public trust is the acceptance of the will of the people: win or lose."

*Hugo Lowell contributed to this report*

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[\*\*China\*\*](#)

## **‘Ferocious’ Covid outbreak in Beijing traced to raucous bar**

Cluster comes a week after city eased restrictions, raising fresh concerns over ‘zero Covid’ policy and economy



People walk past fencing outside the Heaven Supermarket bar in Chaoyang district of Beijing, China, on Monday. Photograph: Carlos García Rawlins/Reuters

*Reuters in Beijing*

Mon 13 Jun 2022 04.03 EDT Last modified on Tue 14 Jun 2022 00.10 EDT

Authorities in Beijing are racing to contain a Covid outbreak traced to a 24-hour bar known for cheap liquor and big crowds, with millions of people facing mandatory testing and thousands under targeted lockdowns.

The outbreak of 228 cases linked to the Heaven Supermarket bar, which had just reopened as curbs in the Chinese capital eased last week, highlights how

difficult it will be for [China](#) to make a success of its “zero Covid” policy as much of the rest of the world tries to live with the virus.

The re-emergence of infections is also raising fresh concerns about the outlook for the world’s second-largest economy. China is only just shaking off the economic impact of a two-month lockdown of Shanghai that caused disruption to global supply chains.

### [Johns Hopkins China Covid case numbers](#)

“Epidemic prevention and control is at a critical juncture,” said Liu Xiaofeng, a Beijing health official, at a news conference on Monday, adding that the outbreak linked to the bar in the city’s biggest district, Chaoyang, was “still developing”.

In a show of how seriously authorities are taking the situation, the Chinese vice-premier Sun Chunlan visited the bar and said Covid prevention measures would need to be strengthened, state media reported.

People infected in the outbreak live or work in 14 of the capital’s 16 districts, authorities have said.

Dine-in service at Beijing restaurants resumed on 6 June after more than a month in which the city of 22 million people enforced various coronavirus restrictions. Many shopping centres, gyms and other venues were closed, parts of the public transport system were suspended and millions of people were urged to work from home.

Chaoyang kicked off a three-day mass testing campaign among its roughly 3.5 million residents on Monday. About 10,000 close contacts of the bar’s patrons have been identified and their residential buildings put under lockdown. Some planned school reopenings in the district have been postponed.

Queues snaked around testing sites on Monday for more than 100 metres, according to Reuters witnesses. Large metal barriers had been installed around several residential compounds, with people in hazmat suits spraying disinfectant.

Other nearby businesses under lockdown included the Paradise Massage and Spa parlour. Police tape and security staff blocked the entrance to the parlour on Sunday and authorities said a handful of people would be locked in temporarily for checks.

Last week as dine-in curbs were lifted, Heaven Supermarket Bar, modelled as a large self-service liquor store with chairs, sofas and tables, reclaimed its popularity among young, noisy crowds starved of socialising and parties during Beijing's Covid restrictions.

The bar, where patrons check aisles to grab anything from local heavy spirits to Belgian beer, is known among Beijing revellers for its tables littered with empty bottles, and customers falling asleep on sofas after midnight.

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Officials have not commented on the exact cause of the outbreak, nor explained why they are not yet reinstating the level of curbs seen last month.

The state-backed Beijing Evening News wrote on Monday that the outbreak had arisen from loopholes and complacency in epidemic prevention, and said that if it grew, “consequences could be serious, and would be such that nobody would want to see”.

Shanghai [endured two months of lockdown](#), with restrictions lifted less than a fortnight ago. There was relief among its residents on Monday after mass testing for most of its 25 million people at the weekend showed only a small rise in daily cases.

But frustrations have continued to simmer about the damage the lockdown caused, especially to residents' livelihoods. On Monday, shopkeepers in the city centre held up signs and shouted demands for rent refunds, according to videos widely posted on Chinese social media. The rare protest had dissipated by the time Reuters visited on Monday afternoon, and there was a heavy police presence in the area.

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[Space](#)

## Gaia probe reveals stellar DNA and unexpected ‘starquakes’

The robotic spacecraft unravels the history of the our galaxy’s evolution – and could identify habitable regions of the Milky Way



The observations from the European Space Agency’s Gaia probe cover almost two billion stars, and now include details such as chemical compositions and stellar temperatures. Photograph: ESA

*Hannah Devlin* Science correspondent  
[@hannahdev](#)

Mon 13 Jun 2022 04.00 EDT Last modified on Tue 14 Jun 2022 00.09 EDT

Astronomers have unveiled the most detailed survey of the Milky Way, revealing thousands of “starquakes” and stellar DNA, and helping to identify the most habitable corners of our home galaxy.

The observations from the European Space Agency's Gaia probe cover almost two billion stars – about 1% of the total number in the galaxy – and are allowing astronomers to reconstruct our home galaxy's structure and find out how it has evolved over billions of years.

Previous surveys by Gaia, a robotic spacecraft launched in 2013, have pinpointed the motion of the stars in our home galaxy in exquisite detail. By rewinding these movements astronomers can model how our galaxy has morphed over time. The latest observations add details of chemical compositions, stellar temperatures, colours, masses and ages based on spectroscopy, where starlight is split into different wavelengths.

These measurements unexpectedly revealed thousands of starquakes, cataclysmic tsunami-like events on the surface of stars. "Starquakes teach us a lot about stars – notably, their internal workings," said Conny Aerts of KU Leuven in Belgium, who is a member of the Gaia collaboration. "Gaia is opening a goldmine for asteroseismology of massive stars."

Dr George Seabroke, senior research associate at Mullard space science laboratory at University College London, said: "If you can see these stars changing in brightness halfway across the Milky Way, if you were anywhere near them, it would be like the sun changing shape in front of your eyes."

Gaia is fitted with a 1bn pixel camera – the largest ever in space – complete with more than 100 electronic detectors. The latest dataset represents the largest chemical map of the galaxy to date, cataloguing the composition of six million stars, ten times the number measured in previous ground-based catalogues.

What stars are made of can tell us about their birthplace and their journey afterwards, and help unravel the history of the Milky Way. The first primordial stars, formed shortly after the Big Bang, only had light elements – hydrogen and helium – available. These produced the first supernovae that enriched galaxies with metals and elements such as carbon and oxygen, and with successive generations of stars more heavy elements became available. A star's chemical composition is a bit like its DNA, giving us crucial information about its origin.

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Gaia revealed that some stars in our galaxy are made of primordial material, while others like our Sun are made of matter enriched by previous generations of stars. Stars that are closer to the centre and plane of our galaxy are richer in metals than stars at larger distances. Gaia also identified stars that originally came from different galaxies than our own, based on their chemical composition.

“Our galaxy is a beautiful melting pot of stars,” said Alejandra Recio-Blanco of the Observatoire de la Côte d’Azur in France, who is a member of the Gaia collaboration. “This diversity is extremely important, because it tells us the story of our galaxy’s formation.”

Seabroke said that tracing the “metallicity gradient” through the galaxy can help pin down habitable regions of the Milky Way. “If the Sun was born in a region with much higher metallicity, there would be many more supernovae going off, presenting a risk to life on Earth,” he said.

The headline of this article was amended on 13 June 2022. The original version referred to “stella” DNA. The correct spelling is “stellar”.

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## [Africa](#)

# Growing numbers of young Africans want to move abroad, survey suggests

Covid, climate, stability and violence contributing to young people feeling pessimistic about future, survey of 15 countries suggests



A group of girls outside the Malkohi refugee camp in Jimeta, Nigeria.  
Photograph: Luis Tato/AFP/Getty

*[Kaamil Ahmed](#)*

Mon 13 Jun 2022 02.00 EDT Last modified on Mon 13 Jun 2022 05.58 EDT

African youth have lost confidence in their own countries and the continent as a whole to meet their aspirations and a rising number are considering moving abroad, according to a survey of young people from 15 countries.

The pandemic, climate crisis, political instability and violence have all contributed to making young people “jittery” about their futures since the

Covid pandemic began, according to the African Youth Survey published on Monday.

Only 32% of the 4,500 young people interviewed, aged 18-24, were optimistic about Africa's prospects, according to the survey – a drop of 11% since the last survey of its kind published in early 2020.

Many of them had their schooling suspended and they or their families had lost incomes because of the pandemic, said Ivor Ichikowitz, whose South African family foundation commissioned the report.

"In many countries in Africa, it's an election year or a year just before elections, and it's kind of logical that people will see instability as a concern," said Ichikowitz.

"But marry that with lack of access to water, marry that with a major concern around terrorism, and you've now got a demographic a group of people that are very jittery about the future of the continent," he said.

"And the real bombshell out of the survey is that a very high percentage of the people in the response group are thinking about migration."

About 60% of Africa's population is younger than 25, and more than a third is aged between 15–34 years old. By 2100, Africa will have the world's youngest population with a median age of 35.

Bar chart showing attitudes in 15 African countries to question of whether they thought their country was moving in the right direction. Just over half of Rwandans said it was moving in the right direction; less than 7% thought so in Nigeria

In almost all countries at least two-thirds of young people surveyed believed their nations were going in the wrong direction, apart from Rwanda and Ghana, where 60% and 56% were optimistic about their country's direction. Views on the direction of the continent as a whole were more divided, though only in Ghana did a majority believe Africa was moving in the right direction.

Ichikowitz said [Ghana](#) had a younger government that was providing better support and easier access to financing that supported young businesses. He hopes the survey's data will be used by governments to support the aspirations of their young people.

Despite the fears for the future, the researchers found a positivity among the interviewees about their own futures, with about 75% of them believing that their personal situation would improve.



A Youth Cafe workshop in progress. Photograph: The Youth Cafe

Willice Onyango, executive director of [The Youth Cafe](#), a pan-African group based in Nairobi that focuses on community development and social change, said a lack of job opportunities meant many young Africans turned to entrepreneurship.

“The youth have this motivation and this urge but are driven not necessarily because they all of a sudden want to be businessmen and women,” he said. “Perhaps you studied agriculture or economics and there are no available opportunities. You have to start doing something so that you uplift yourself.”

“Rather than stay helpless,” he added, “they are lifting themselves from their own bootstraps but this comes with its own challenges.”

He said that without support and access to financing, new businesses rarely survived more than three years. Even the Youth Cafe, he said, received financing from abroad.

He was not surprised that optimism had dipped because governments allocated very little to youth development and lacked strategies for tackling long-term social and economic barriers to mobility.

Frustration seemed to have increased the desire to emigrate. While the previous survey found more than two-thirds of young people wanting to stay put, now 52% planned to move abroad in the next three years, with the number increasing to three-quarters in Nigeria and Sudan.

Kholood Khair, founding director of a Sudanese thinktank, Confluence Advisory, said previous optimism among the large youth demographic had failed to translate into opportunities because of ageing leaders and lack of access to finance.

Khair said optimism in Sudan after the overthrow of the dictator Omar al-Bashir in 2019, accompanied by young people launching new businesses and projects, had been crushed by last November's military coup. This disillusionment had fed the desire to move abroad, she said.

"A lot of people I'm speaking to, particularly in the middle classes, are saying there's not much for me to invest in here so I want to go abroad," Khair said. "What you get is a massive outflow of young people from Sudan and it decreases Sudan's ability to set up the political and economic frameworks it needs, so it's a vicious cycle."

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## Country

# Country music star Toby Keith announces stomach cancer diagnosis

Singer-songwriter says he has had six months of treatment involving ‘chemo, radiation and surgery’



Toby Keith performing in 2021. Photograph: Suzanne Cordeiro/Rex/Shutterstock

[Ben Beaumont-Thomas](#)

[@ben\\_bt](#)

Mon 13 Jun 2022 04.54 EDT Last modified on Mon 13 Jun 2022 05.55 EDT

Country music star Toby Keith has announced he is being treated for stomach cancer.

In a statement on social media, he wrote: “Last fall I was diagnosed with stomach cancer. I’ve spent the last 6 months receiving chemo, radiation and surgery. So far, so good. I need time to breathe, recover and relax.”

He said he was spending time with family, “but I will see the fans sooner than later. I can’t wait.”

Keith is one of the most successful country artists in the US. His debut album was released in 1993, and by the turn of the century he had crossed over in the pop mainstream: 2002’s Unleashed and 2003’s Shock’n Y’all topped the US album chart. Twenty of his singles have topped the US country chart.

As well as songs about traditional country music topics – love and drinking – Keith is known for his pro-American songwriting, including the controversial Courtesy of the Red, White and Blue (The Angry American), written in the wake of the 9/11 attacks.

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## Headlines tuesday 14 june 2022

- [Live Truss claims near-empty flight to Rwanda for asylum seekers ‘still value for money’](#)
- [Rwanda Liz Truss says flights policy is ‘completely moral’](#)
- [Live Russia-Ukraine war: Donbas battles ‘most brutal’ Europe has seen, Zelenskiy says; civilians trapped in Sievierodonetsk](#)
- [Pay Average UK wages fall at fastest rate for more than two decades](#)

[Skip to key events](#)

[Politics live with Andrew Sparrow](#)[Politics](#)

# First UK deportation flight to Rwanda cancelled after European court intervention – as it happened

[This blog has now closed, you can the full story on the government's failed first deportation flight here](#)

- [Johnson floats prospect of UK pulling out of ECHR](#)
- [PM criticises lawyers opposing deportations to Rwanda](#)
- [PM claims his cabinet more pro-migrant than many previous ones](#)
- [Truss hits back at bishops saying Rwanda policy ‘shames Britain’](#)
- [Sturgeon admits Scottish independence would raise border issues](#)
- [Wales and rest of UK should rejoin EU single market, says Plaid Cymru](#)

Updated 4d ago

[Nadeem Badshah \(now\) and Andrew Sparrow \(earlier\)](#)

Tue 14 Jun 2022 19.03 EDTFirst published on Tue 14 Jun 2022 04.04 EDT

Rwanda deportations: how the first asylum flight from the UK was cancelled – video report

[Nadeem Badshah \(now\) and Andrew Sparrow \(earlier\)](#)

Tue 14 Jun 2022 19.03 EDTFirst published on Tue 14 Jun 2022 04.04 EDT

## Key events

- [4d agoA summary of today's developments](#)
- [4d agoFlight to Rwanda will not be taking off tonight](#)

- [5d agoFirst Rwanda flight could be grounded after late ECHR intervention](#)
- [5d agoJohnson's anti-lawyer rhetoric 'misleading and dangerous', say Bar Council and Law Society](#)
- [5d agoNo 10 says adviser who called for PM to resign in January 'well-qualified' to be new cost of living tsar](#)
- [5d agoFifth asylum seeker today fails in court bid to prevent deportation to Rwanda](#)
- [5d agoWales and rest of UK should rejoin EU single market, says Plaid Cymru](#)

Show key events only

## Live feed

Show key events only

From 4d ago

[17.16](#)

## Flight to Rwanda will not be taking off tonight

No one will be deported to [Rwanda](#) from the UK tonight after the European Court of Human Rights issued last minute injunctions to stop the move, government sources have confirmed to the PA news agency.

The ECHR issued a series of last minute injunctions as the plane was about to take off from Wiltshire.

A total of seven individuals were believed to have been due to board the flight before the successful interventions were made.

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Updated at 18.47 EDT

4d ago **19.03**

## A summary of today's developments

- The first flight taking asylum seekers from the UK to [Rwanda](#) was cancelled minutes before takeoff after the European Court of Human Rights issued last minute injunctions to stop the move.
- A total of seven individuals were believed to have been due to board the flight before the series of interventions were made. The plane, which stood ready on a Ministry of Defence runway at Boscombe Down in Amesbury, Wiltshire, was scheduled to takeoff at 9:30pm before being delayed to 10:30pm and then being cancelled.
- PA understands that the appeals were considered by an out of hours judge on papers, overruling the UK rulings. It is believed that at the present time there is not a route for the Home Office to appeal against the decision. Home secretary Priti Patel said she was disappointed the flight to Rwanda was not able to leave but would not be “deterred from doing the right thing”.
- Downing Street has defended the appointment of David Buttress as the government’s new cost of living tsar despite Buttress saying in January that [Boris Johnson](#) should resign. Buttress has also criticised Johnson and the Tories more widely, as well as arguing that the Rwanda deportation policy lacks common decency.
- Moves to sell off Channel 4 are not conservative but “destructive”, ministers have heard. Conservative MP Sir Peter Bottomley told the

Commons: “We have more than three different types of public service broadcasters, government is proposing to abolish one of them. That is not conservative, that is destructive.” Conservative chair of the digital, media, culture and sport committee Julian Knight said the value of selling off the channel would be “marginal” to the Treasury, servicing the national debt for “72 hours”.

- Plaid Cymru said Wales and the rest of the UK should rejoin the EU single market due to the cost of living crisis.
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4d ago18.56



Rajeev Syal

The cancelled flight to [Rwanda](#), which cost an estimated £500,000, had already been paid for from the public purse, a government source confirmed.

The UK government has also paid £120 million as a down payment on the Rwanda deal.

The government has declined to say how much it has paid in legal costs and has not said how much it expects to pay for future flights, accommodation and living costs for everyone sent to Rwanda.

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Updated at 18.58 EDT

[4d ago 18.34](#)

Yvette Cooper, the shadow home secretary, said the government must take responsibility for the failed flight and indicated that the government does not mind clashing with lawyers and the European courts.

There is no point in Govt blaming anyone else but themselves.

Ministers are pursuing a policy they know isn't workable & that won't tackle criminal gangs.

But they still paid Rwanda £120m & hired a jet that hasn't taken off because they just want a row & someone else to blame.

— Yvette Cooper (@YvetteCooperMP) [June 14, 2022](#)

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[4d ago 18.30](#)

James Wilson, deputy director of human rights organisation Detention Action, has given his reaction.

“Tonight is a night for the history books and the European Court of Human Rights, which was founded in the aftermath of the Holocaust, has done what it was established to do.

“It rarely intervenes in the legal matters of member countries. That it has done so now shows how potentially dangerous the Government’s [Rwanda](#) removals policy is.

“The ECHR has recognised that no-one should be forced on a plane until our substantial legal challenge against this policy is heard by the High Court next month.”

Meanwhile, Rwandan government spokeswoman Yolande Makolo said: “We are not deterred by these developments.

“Rwanda remains fully committed to making this partnership work. The current situation of people making dangerous journeys cannot continue as it is causing untold suffering to so many.

“Rwanda stands ready to receive the migrants when they do arrive and offer them safety and opportunity in our country.”

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[4d ago](#)[18.19](#)

A lawyer representing one of the asylum seekers who was on the cancelled flight to [Rwanda](#) has tweeted the following:

Excellent work by my colleagues and [@AlasdairMack66](#). It would not have been so late if we had been allowed adequate time to represent our client. This flight was rushed & ill thought out. The gov’s plan B was always to blame lawyers and human rights laws for its own failings.  
<https://t.co/trcSFG6TY2>

— Jed Pennington (@jed\_pennington) [June 14, 2022](#)

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4d ago [17.56](#)

Here is the home secretary's statement in full: "Earlier this year, I signed a world-leading migration partnership with [Rwanda](#) to see those arriving dangerously, illegally, or unnecessarily into the UK relocated to build their lives there.

"This will help break the people smugglers' business model and prevent loss of life, while ensuring protection for the genuinely vulnerable.

"Access to the UK's asylum system must be based on need, not on the ability to pay people smugglers. The demands on the current system, the cost to the taxpayer, and the flagrant abuses are increasing, and the British public have rightly had enough.

"I have always said this policy will not be easy to deliver and am disappointed that legal challenge and last-minute claims have meant today's flight was unable to depart.

"It is very surprising that the European Court of Human Rights has intervened despite repeated earlier success in our domestic courts.

"These repeated legal barriers are similar to those we experience with other removal flights and many of those removed from this flight will be placed on the next.

"We will not be deterred from doing the right thing and delivering our plans to control our nation's borders. Our legal team are reviewing every decision made on this flight and preparation for the next flight begins now."

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4d ago [17.51](#)

Home secretary Priti Patel said she was disappointed the flight to [Rwanda](#) was not able to leave but would not be “deterred from doing the right thing”.

She added: “Our legal team are reviewing every decision made on this flight and preparation for the next flight begins now.”

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Updated at 17.53 EDT

[4d ago](#)[17.43](#)

Mark Serwotka, general secretary of the Public and Commercial Services union, said: “We’re pleased the courts have ruled to stop this flight.

“It’s time for the government to stop this inhumane policy which is the basest of gesture politics and start to engage seriously with sorting out the asylum system so those who come to our country seeking refuge are treated fairly and according to the law.”

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[4d ago](#)[17.37](#)

Refugee Council chief executive Enver Solomon said: “Whilst we are relieved to hear the flight to [Rwanda](#) did not take off as planned tonight it is clear that the Government remain determined to press on with this deal, leaving us to continue to witness the human suffering, distress, and chaos the threat of removal will cause with far reaching consequences for desperate people who are simply in need of safety.

The fact that the final flight could not take off is indicative of the inhumanity of the plan and the Government’s complete refusal to see the face behind the case.

“Those threatened with removal are people who have escaped war, persecution, torture, and violence - many of whom have only been prevented from flying due to individual legal interventions declaring it a clear breach of their human rights to do so.

“The Refugee Council has also had to directly intervene to stop young people being removed to Rwanda because they were falsely assessed as adults.

“Government claims that this deal would act as a deterrent to end the model of people-traffickers, have already been disproven with the numbers of people travelling across the channel almost doubling on the same time last year.”

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[4d ago](#)[17.33](#)



Steven Morris

Demonstrators at the front gate of MoD Boscombe Down in Wiltshire have vowed to stay put until they know that all the asylum seekers are off the plane.

One of the protestors, Hope, 25, an administrator from Wiltshire, said: “We’re all thrilled to hear they are being pulled off the flight. It was pretty emotional – there were some tears. We’re still apprehensive about what happens next and we’re not going anywhere until they’re all out of the base.”

The asylum seekers were brought in over a period of about four hours in vans with police outriders and police vehicles.

There are still large numbers of police officers guarding the base keeping an eye on the protestors.

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Updated at 17.35 EDT

[4d ago](#)[17.28](#)

Sadiq Khan, the mayor of London and former Labour MP, has tweeted his reaction:

BREAKING: Tonight's inhumane deportation of asylum seekers to [#Rwanda](#) has been stopped by the ECtHR - minutes before it was due to depart.

Sending people fleeing violence to a country thousands of miles away was already cruel and callous.

It's now potentially unlawful too.

— Sadiq Khan (@SadiqKhan) [June 14, 2022](#)

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[4d ago](#)[17.26](#)

PA understands that the appeals were considered by an out of hours judge on papers, overruling the UK rulings.

It is believed that at the present time there is not a route for the Home Office to appeal against the decision.

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[4d ago](#)[17.16](#)

## Flight to Rwanda will not be taking off tonight

No one will be deported to [Rwanda](#) from the UK tonight after the European Court of Human Rights issued last minute injunctions to stop the move, government sources have confirmed to the PA news agency.

The ECHR issued a series of last minute injunctions as the plane was about to take off from Wiltshire.

A total of seven individuals were believed to have been due to board the flight before the successful interventions were made.

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Updated at 18.47 EDT

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## Immigration and asylum

# UN refugee chief accuses Truss of ‘untrue’ statements on Rwanda policy

Filippo Grandi says foreign secretary is wrong to claim critics had not offered alternatives



Liz Truss: ‘Our policy is completely legal; it’s completely moral.’  
Photograph: UK parliament/Jessica Taylor/Reuters

*[Paul MacInnes](#), [Rajeev Syal](#) and [Jessica Elgot](#)*

Tue 14 Jun 2022 09.04 EDTFirst published on Tue 14 Jun 2022 03.35 EDT

Liz Truss has been accused by the UN’s refugee chief of making “untrue” statements after claiming that critics of the UK government’s Rwandan removals policy have failed to come up with alternative policies.

Filippo Grandi, the [United Nations](#) high commissioner for refugees, said the foreign secretary was wrong because the UN had offered “many, many

suggestions” instead of sending people to the east African state, which he said “violates the fundamental principles of refugees”.

The clash comes as the government prepares to send the [first flight of asylum seekers to Rwanda](#) on Tuesday. Government sources said the plane was prepared to take off with a single refugee onboard if necessary because the costs estimated at £500,000 cannot be reimbursed.

Government insiders are concerned there could be fewer than five people on the flight following a flurry of last-minute legal challenges. Since last week, the number of refugees due to be on the flight has fallen from 130 to seven on Tuesday morning.

Truss told Radio 4’s Today programme that critics such as leading figures in the Church of England should come up with alternative policies. “Those people need to suggest an alternative policy that will work. Our policy is completely legal, it’s completely moral,” she said.

In response, Grandi told the Guardian: “This is simply untrue because we have offered many, many suggestions to the British government on how to simplify and accelerate procedures and maintain their fairness.”

A Rwandan government spokesperson, Yolande Makolo, told a press conference on Tuesday that there were “misconceptions” about what [Rwanda](#) is like and “some of this is perpetuated by the media”.

At a briefing at the ministry of foreign affairs in Kigali, she said: “Tomorrow when the first flights land here in Kigali the new arrivals will be welcomed and looked after and supported to make new lives here. We will provide support with their asylum applications, including legal support, translation services and we will provide decent accommodation.”

She added: “We are ready to receive thousands over the life of this partnership.”

When asked about the “outray” about the scheme, Makolo said Rwanda was entering into the partnership for the “right reasons”.

“We have the experience. We want Rwanda to feel a welcoming place,” she said. “We understand the opposition to this but we are asking for this programme to be given a chance to be the solution. People are suffering, the asylum system is broken and taken advantage of by criminal gangs, they are exploiting people.”

Boris Johnson says laws 'may need to be changed' for Rwanda plan to go ahead – video

Pressed by the Guardian on whether migrants would face restrictions on their movement or curfews at the accommodation facilities, she said: “There will be in-house rules as there are in many accommodation centres in many parts of the world, there will be a few guidelines on how the space will be used.”

She said there would be “basic house-keeping rules for a shared facility that is home to many people” but did not elaborate on what these might be.

Speaking at a press conference in Geneva, Grandi said the UN had advised that the UK could finalise agreements with countries of transit through which refugees travel and strengthen burden-sharing between European countries. He advised the UK government to work with the EU to solve the problem.

“Cooperation is possible without resorting to this type of arrangement such as the one with Rwanda that – and I won’t repeat it anymore but we said it many times – violates the fundamental principles of refugees,” he said.

In her interview, Truss admitted there might be few people on the plane to Kigali. Asked if there could be no one on this flight, she said: “There will be people on the flight, and if they are not on this flight they will be on the next flight ... I don’t have a figure. The important point is the principle.”

But a government source said the flight would take off even with just one refugee onboard because the government would not “get anything back in cost terms by cancelling the flight”, which reports have claimed could cost as much as £500,000.

Regarding the costs, a government source said: “The broken asylum system currently costs £1.5bn a year. We are spending £5m a day on hotel costs. Can people really put a price on the cost of saving human lives and securing our nations borders?”

Downing Street released a statement from Boris Johnson arguing that critics of the policy are aiding criminal gangs who thrive by operating small boats for asylum seekers across the Channel. “I think that what the criminal gangs are doing, and what those who effectively are abetting the work of the criminal gangs are doing, is undermining people’s confidence in the safe and legal system, undermining people’s general acceptance of immigration,” Johnson said before a meeting of his cabinet.

The supreme court on Tuesday rejected an appeal bid over a judge’s refusal to block the removal of an asylum seeker due to be deported to Rwanda. Two more cases are being considered by the court before the flight takes off.

In a [letter to the Times](#), the archbishops of Canterbury and York, as well as the other 24 bishops that sit as lords spiritual in the House of Lords, said the policy “should shame us as a nation”.

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The policy has also drawn widespread condemnation from beyond the Church of England – where the archbishop of Canterbury, Justin Welby, said it “could not stand the judgment of God”. Prince Charles was reported to have privately [described the plan as “appalling”](#).

Care4Calais, one of the charities that brought the defeated legal appeal to halt the flight, said just seven migrants expecting to be removed still had live tickets.

Clare Moseley, the head of the charity, said the government could not explain why the policy would work. “Why is our government so very determined to spend ... so much taxpayer money on a brutal plan that shames us all and send refugees to Rwanda?”

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[Ukraine war live](#)[Ukraine](#)

## Ukraine's forces suffering 'painful losses' in Donbas, Zelenskiy says – as it happened

This live blog is now closed, you can find our [latest coverage of the Russia-Ukraine war here](#)

Updated 4d ago

*Samantha Lock (now), Richard Luscombe, Rachel Hall and Martin Belam (earlier)*

Tue 14 Jun 2022 20.10 EDTFirst published on Tue 14 Jun 2022 00.38 EDT



A Russian serviceman next to a school destroyed by shelling in downtown Donetsk  
Photograph: Sergei Ilnitsky/EPA

*Samantha Lock (now), Richard Luscombe, Rachel Hall and Martin Belam (earlier)*

Tue 14 Jun 2022 20.10 EDTFirst published on Tue 14 Jun 2022 00.38 EDT

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- [4d agoNato says it needs greater readiness and more weapons](#)
- [4d agoRussia tells Ukrainian fighters to lay down arms in Sievierodonetsk](#)
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- [4d agoZelenskiy: Donbas losses 'painful'](#)
- [4d agoRussia offers 'humanitarian corridor' for trapped civilians](#)

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## Live feed

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From 4d ago

[16.50](#)

### Zelenskiy: Donbas losses 'painful'

Volodymyr Zelenskiy conceded on Tuesday that his forces were suffering “painful losses” as they defended the Donbas region against a fierce Russian onslaught, and warned their success or failure would determine the course of the war.

The comments came in the [Ukraine](#) president’s nightly address to the nation, in which he said fighting for control of the eastern twin cities of Sievierodonetsk and Lysychansk was particularly intense:

*The fiercest battles, as before, are in Sievierodonetsk and other nearby towns and communities. The losses, unfortunately, are painful.*

*But we have to hold strong. Hanging in there in Donbas is crucial. Donbas is the key to deciding who will dominate in the coming weeks.*

*The more losses the enemy suffers there the less strength it will have to pursue its aggression.*

Russian forces have advanced in Donbas and control most of the Luhansk region, and are pushing back Ukraine defenders in Sievierodonetsk, the largest Luhansk city still under Ukrainian control.

Capturing the twin cities would allow Russia to target **Sloviansk** further west in the Donetsk region, analysts believe.

Battles are also raging near Ukraine's second-largest city, **Kharkiv**, and **Kherson** in the south, Zelenskiy said, with more "painful" losses in the northeastern Kharkiv region:

*Fighting continues there and we need to continue fighting hard for full security in the Kharkiv region.*

*We continue pressuring the enemy in the south. Our key goal is to free Kherson.*

The Donetsk and Luhansk regions, which make up the mainly Russian-speaking Donbas, were already partly controlled by pro-Moscow separatists since 2014.

The Ukraine president, according to AFP and Reuters, repeated his request for the west to send modern anti-missile weapons, declaring there could be "no justification" for partner countries to delay.

Russian rockets were evading defences and causing casualties, he said.

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Updated at 17.28 EDT

4d ago**20.10**

# Summary

Thank you for joining us for today's live coverage of the war in [Ukraine](#).

It is currently 3am in the capital Kyiv. We will be pausing this live blog overnight and returning in the morning.

In the meantime, you can read our comprehensive summary of the days' events in our summary below.

- **Ukraine's president Volodymyr Zelenskiy has said the outcome of the battle for the Donbas region will determine the course of the war**, adding that Ukraine's forces are suffering "painful losses" in Sievierodonetsk and Lysychansk. The battle for Luhansk's Sievierodonetsk is now the biggest fight in Ukraine as its defenders try to [repel a fierce Russian onslaught in the twin eastern cities](#).
- **Russia has told Ukrainian forces holed up in Sievierodonetsk's Azot chemical plant to lay down their arms by early Wednesday.** Fighters should "stop their senseless resistance and lay down arms" from 8am Moscow time (5am GMT), Mikhail Mizintsev, head of Russia's national defence management centre told the Interfax news agency.
- **Russia said it would set up a humanitarian corridor on Wednesday** for trapped civilians seeking to flee intense fighting in the devastated east Ukraine city of Sievierodonetsk. Serhiy Haidai, governor of Luhansk region, said about 500 civilians, 40 of them children, were sheltering from heavy Russian attacks in the Azot chemical plant in the city.

- **Zelenskiy repeated his call for the west to step up the provision of heavy weapons to Ukraine.** Ukraine's deputy defence minister Hanna Malyar said the country had received only 10% of what it asked for and there was no path to victory without the aid: "No matter how hard Ukraine tries, no matter how professional our army is, without the help of western partners we will not be able to win this war". Zelenskiy added that Ukraine does not have enough anti-missile systems to shoot down Russian projectiles targeting its cities. "Our country does not have enough of them ... there can be no justification in delays in providing them."
- **Nato must build out "even higher readiness" and strengthen its weapons capabilities along its eastern border,** the military alliance's chief said on Tuesday ahead of a summit in Madrid at the end of the month. Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg said the alliance needed a "more robust and combat-ready forward presence and an even higher readiness and more pre-positioned equipment and supplies."
- **Leaders of seven European Nato members pledged support for applications by Sweden and Finland to join the alliance.** "My message on Swedish and Finnish membership is that I strongly welcome that. It's an historic decision. It will strengthen them, it will strengthen us," Stoltenberg told reporters after a meeting at The Hague on Tuesday.
- **US President Joe Biden said temporary silos will be built along the border with Ukraine, including in Poland, in a bid to help export more grain.** Referring to the 20 million tons of grain locked in Ukraine, Biden told a union convention in Philadelphia: "It can't get out through the Black Sea because it'll get blown out of the water ... So we're going to build silos, temporary silos, on the borders of Ukraine, including in Poland."

- Worried allies of jailed Russian opposition leader Alexei Navalny say he has been moved to “a strict-regime” penal colony. Olga Mikhailova, lawyer for the 46-year-old fierce critic of the Ukraine war, said officials told her that he was [transferred from a detention facility in Pokrov](#), east of Moscow, to an unidentified colony with a much harsher regime elsewhere.
- Russia [banned British journalists](#), including correspondents from the [Guardian](#), and defence industry figures from entering the country, calling it a response to western sanctions and pressure on its state-run media outlets abroad.
- Pope Francis said Moscow’s invasion of Ukraine was “[perhaps somehow provoked](#)” as he recalled a conversation in the run-up to the war in which he was warned that Nato was “barking at the gates of Russia”.
- Vladimir Putin probably still wants to capture much if not all of Ukraine but has had to narrow his tactical objectives in war, the US under-secretary of defence has said. “I still think he has designs on a significant portion of Ukraine, if not the whole country. That said, I do not think he can achieve those objectives,” Colin Kahl said while speaking at an event hosted by the centre for new American security.
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[4d ago](#)[19.51](#)

## **Temporary silos to be built along Ukraine border, Biden says**

US President Joe Biden said temporary silos will be built along the border with [Ukraine](#), including in Poland, in a bid to help export more grain from the war-torn country.

Biden told a union convention in Philadelphia on Tuesday, as reported by Reuters:

I'm working closely with our European partners to get 20 million tons of grain locked in Ukraine out onto the market to help bring down food prices.

It can't get out through the Black Sea because it'll get blown out of the water ...

So we're going to build silos, temporary silos, on the borders of Ukraine, including in Poland."

Biden said the United States is working on a plan to get grain out of Ukraine by rail, but noted that Ukrainian railway track gauges are different to those in [Europe](#), so the grain has to be transferred to different trains at the border.

He said the grain could be transferred from those Ukrainian railway cars into the new silos, and then on to Europe freight cars to "get it out to the ocean and get it across the world."

"But it's taking time," he added.

Since Russia's invasion of Ukraine and blockade of its Black Sea ports, grain shipments have stalled and more than 20m tonnes are stuck in silos. Sea mines laid by [Russia](#) has also meant some 84 foreign ships are still stuck in Ukrainian ports - many of which have grain cargoes onboard.

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4d ago19.39

## Nato says it needs greater readiness and more weapons

Nato must build out “even higher readiness” and strengthen its weapons capabilities along its eastern border in the wake of Russia’s invasion of [Ukraine](#), the military alliance’s chief said on Tuesday.

Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg was speaking after informal talks in the Netherlands with Dutch prime minister Mark Rutte and the leaders of Denmark, Poland, Latvia, Romania, Portugal and Belgium ahead of a wider Nato summit in Madrid at the end of the month.

In Madrid, we will agree a major strengthening of our posture.

Tonight we discussed the need for more robust and combat-ready forward presence and an even higher readiness and more pre-positioned equipment and supplies.”

Excellent meeting with  in The Hague to prepare for a historic [#NATOSummit](#). In Madrid, Allies will take decisions to keep NATO strong in a more competitive world. Thanks to [@MinPres](#) for hosting, to [@Statsmin](#) for co-hosting, and to all for the productive discussions. [pic.twitter.com/iu6AMIKNDp](https://pic.twitter.com/iu6AMIKNDp)

— Jens Stoltenberg (@jensstoltenberg) [June 14, 2022](#)

Responding to a call by Ukrainian President [Volodymyr Zelenskiy](#) earlier on Tuesday for more long-range weapons, Stoltenberg said he agreed that Kyiv should be supplied with more heavy weaponry, but provided no details.

Ukraine should have more heavy weapons and Nato allies and partners have provided heavy weapons ... and they are also stepping up,”

Stoltenberg said.

Rutte told reporters in The Hague:

In terms of weaponry, we stand united here that it is crucial for Russia to lose the war.

And as we cannot have a direct confrontation between Nato troops and Russia, what we need to do is make sure that Ukraine can fight that war, that it has access to all the necessary weaponry.”

Stoltenberg said Nato will deliver a further strengthening of the alliance when all 30 members meet June 29-30 in the Spanish capital.

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[4d ago 19.22](#)

## **Russia tells Ukrainian fighters to lay down arms in Sievierodonetsk**

Russia has told Ukrainian forces holed up in a chemical plant in embattled Sievierodonetsk to lay down their arms by early Wednesday.

Ukraine says more than 500 civilians are trapped alongside soldiers inside Azot, a chemical factory where its forces have resisted weeks of Russian bombardment and assaults that have reduced much of Sievierodonetsk to ruins.



An aerial view shows destroyed houses after strikes in the town of Pryvillya at the eastern Ukrainian region of Donbas on June 14. Photograph: AFP/Getty Images

Fighters should “stop their senseless resistance and lay down arms” from 8am Moscow time (5am GMT), Mikhail Mizintsev, head of Russia’s National Defence Management Centre told the Interfax news agency.

Civilians would be let out through a humanitarian corridor, Mizintsev added.

Shelling on Azot was so strong that “people can no longer stand it in the shelters, their psychological state is on edge,” said Luhansk regional governor Serhiy Haidai.

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[4d ago](#)[18.48](#)

Here are some of the latest images to drop on our newswires from [Ukraine](#) today.



A building destroyed by Russian military strike in Dobropillia. Photograph: Gleb Garanich/Reuters



Ukrainian service members eat at a position on the front line in the Donetsk region, Ukraine. Photograph: Gleb Garanich/Reuters



A dog is seen near his building destroyed by Russian military strike in Dobropillia, in Donetsk region, Ukraine. Photograph: Gleb Garanich/Reuters

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Updated at 04.46 EDT

[4d ago 18.29](#)

Ukraine's president [Volodymyr Zelenskiy](#) has provided a brief update on the fighting unfolding in Donbas, maintaining the region is key to determining the course of the war.

Over the past day no drastic changes have taken place in the battle in Donbas. The fiercest fighting is in **Sievierodonetsk** and in all cities and communities nearby - as before.

The losses, unfortunately, are painful. But we have to hold on. This is our state. It is vital to hold on there, in Donbas.

The more losses the enemy suffers there, the less power they will have to continue the aggression. Therefore, the Donbas direction is key to determining who will dominate in the coming weeks.

We also have painful losses in the **Kharkiv** region, where the Russian army is trying to strengthen its position. The battles for this direction continue, and we still have to fight hard for complete security for Kharkiv and the region.”

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[4d ago](#)[18.03](#)

## Summary

Here's where things stand at 1am in Kyiv on the 112th day of Russia's invasion of [Ukraine](#).

- President Volodymyr Zelenskiy says Ukraine's forces are suffering “painful losses” as they try to repel a fierce [Russian onslaught in the twin eastern cities of Sievierodonetsk and Lysychansk](#). He also said the outcome of the battle for the **Donbas** region would determine the course of the war.
- Zelenskiy repeated his call for the west to step up the provision of heavy weapons to Ukraine's military as Russian forces continue to make headway in Donbas. Ukraine's deputy defence minister **Hanna Malyar** said the country had received only 10% of what it asked for and there was no path to victory without the aid: “No matter how hard Ukraine tries, no matter how professional our army is, without the help of western partners we will not be able to win this war”.
- Russia said it would set up a humanitarian corridor on Wednesday for trapped civilians seeking to flee intense fighting in the devastated east Ukraine city of **Sievierodonetsk**. Serhiy Haidai, governor of Luhansk region, said about 500 civilians, 40 of them children, were sheltering from heavy Russian attacks in the Azot chemical plant in the city.
- Worried allies of jailed Russian opposition leader Alexei Navalny say he has been moved to “a strict-regime” penal colony. Olga

**Mikhailova**, lawyer for the 46-year-old fierce critic of the Ukraine war, said officials told her that he was transferred from a detention facility in Pokrov, east of Moscow, to an unidentified colony with a much harsher regime elsewhere.

- Russia **banned British journalists, including correspondents from the Guardian, and defence industry figures** from entering the country, calling it a response to western sanctions and pressure on its state-run media outlets abroad.
- **Pope Francis said** Moscow's invasion of Ukraine was "perhaps somehow provoked" as he recalled a conversation in the run-up to the war in which he was warned that Nato was "barking at the gates of Russia".
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[4d ago](#) [17.48](#)

**Leaders of seven European Nato members pledged support for applications by Sweden and Finland to join the alliance on Tuesday, as secretary Jens Stoltenberg urged all nations to increase military aid to Ukraine.**

The developments came at an informal gathering at the residence in The Hague of Netherlands prime minister **Mark Rutte**, co-hosted by Denmark.



(From left) prime ministers Krisjanis Karins of Latvia, Mateusz Morawiecki of Poland, Mette Frederiksen of Denmark, Mark Rutte of the Netherlands, Nato secretary general Jens Stoltenberg, Alexander De Croo of Belgium, Antonio Costa of Portugal and president Klaus Johannis of Romania in The Hague Tuesday. Photograph: Sem van der Wal/EPA

Other leaders attending were Romania's president and the prime ministers of Belgium, Poland, Portugal and Latvia, the Associated Press reported.

Stoltenberg, in a press conference following the summit, said Ukraine was in desperate need of heavy weapons and munitions, and urged Nato members to step up:

Yes, Ukraine should have more heavy weapons because they absolutely depend on that to be able to stand up against the brutal Russian invasion.

Stoltenberg said Nato members would meet again in Brussels on Wednesday for more talks.

He also said the alliance needed to take seriously Turkey's concerns about Sweden and Finland not doing enough to clamp down on terrorists it says use the countries as a haven.

Ankara has so far refused to back the two Nordic nations' applications to join Nato.

Stoltenberg said:

My message on Swedish and Finnish membership is that I strongly welcome that. It's an historic decision. It will strengthen them, it will strengthen us.

[But] there is no other Nato ally that has suffered more terrorist attacks than Turkey.

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[4d ago](#)[17.29](#)

**Nicaragua's parliament has rubber-stamped a decree from the country's Marxist president Daniel Ortega allowing Russian troops into the country for joint military exercises, AFP reports.**

Tuesday's vote in a chamber dominated by Ortega's allies was no surprise.

The US expressed concerns about closer military ties between Moscow and Nicaragua when Ortega announced the move on Saturday, [CBS reported](#).

Ortega said the move would allow "an exchange of experience, training exercises, and humanitarian aid operations".

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[4d ago](#)[16.58](#)

**Canada's prime minister spoke with [Volodymyr Zelenskiy](#) earlier today, according to a tweet from Ukraine's president.**

The two leaders discussed “the next steps in counteracting Russia’s aggression against Ukraine”, Zelenskiy said, adding there was a “separate discussion” on further defense cooperation.

Talked with ☎ Prime Minister [@JustinTrudeau](#). On the eve of important international events, coordinated the next steps in counteracting Russia's aggression against ☎. Thanked Canada for its leadership in supporting our state. Further defense cooperation was discussed separately.

— Володимир Зеленський (@ZelenskyyUa) [June 14, 2022](#)

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[4d ago](#)[16.50](#)

## Zelenskiy: Donbas losses 'painful'

**Volodymyr Zelenskiy conceded on Tuesday that his forces were suffering “painful losses” as they defended the Donbas region against a fierce Russian onslaught, and warned their success or failure would determine the course of the war.**

The comments came in the [Ukraine](#) president's nightly address to the nation, in which he said fighting for control of the eastern twin cities of Sievierodonetsk and Lysychansk was particularly intense:

*The fiercest battles, as before, are in Sievierodonetsk and other nearby towns and communities. The losses, unfortunately, are painful.*

*But we have to hold strong. Hanging in there in Donbas is crucial. Donbas is the key to deciding who will dominate in the coming weeks.*

*The more losses the enemy suffers there the less strength it will have to pursue its aggression.*

Russian forces have advanced in Donbas and control most of the Luhansk region, and are pushing back Ukraine defenders in Sievierodonetsk, the largest Luhansk city still under Ukrainian control.

Capturing the twin cities would allow Russia to target **Sloviansk** further west in the Donetsk region, analysts believe.

Battles are also raging near Ukraine's second-largest city, **Kharkiv**, and **Kherson** in the south, Zelenskiy said, with more "painful" losses in the northeastern Kharkiv region:

*Fighting continues there and we need to continue fighting hard for full security in the Kharkiv region.*

*We continue pressuring the enemy in the south. Our key goal is to free Kherson.*

The Donetsk and Luhansk regions, which make up the mainly Russian-speaking Donbas, were already partly controlled by pro-Moscow separatists since 2014.

The Ukraine president, according to AFP and Reuters, repeated his request for the west to send modern anti-missile weapons, declaring there could be "no justification" for partner countries to delay.

Russian rockets were evading defences and causing casualties, he said.

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Updated at 17.28 EDT

4d ago **16.04**

**The United Nations is again warning against the forced adoption of Ukrainian children in Russia, where thousands are believed have been moved since Moscow's February invasion.**

“We’re reiterating, including to the Russian Federation, that adoption should never occur during or immediately after emergencies,” [\*\*Afshan Khan\*\*](#), the UN Children’s Fund (Unicef) regional director for Europe and Central Asia, told reporters, according to AFP.

The level of destruction I witnessed in Zhytomyr, [#Ukraine](#), was unimaginable.

War has had a devastating impact on the lives of children.

No child should have to witness or go through this type of suffering.  
[pic.twitter.com/xBBLl0pvX3](https://pic.twitter.com/xBBLl0pvX3)

— Afshan Khan (@AfshanKhan\_) [June 13, 2022](#)

Such children cannot be assumed to be orphans, and “any decision to move any child must be grounded in their best interests and any movement must be voluntary. Parents need to provide informed consent,” said the official, who had just returned from a visit to [Ukraine](#).

“Regarding children that have been sent to Russia, we’re working closely to see with ombudspersons and networks how best we can document those cases,” Khan said, adding that there is currently no access to those children.

The UN expressed concern in March about the risk of forced adoption of Ukrainian children, especially the some 91,000 who were living in institutions or boarding schools at the beginning of the war.

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[4d ago](#)[15.28](#)

**Worried allies of jailed Russian opposition leader Alexei Navalny say he has been moved to “a strict-regime” penal colony, a partial update from the earlier news that his whereabouts were unknown.**

**Olga Mikhailova**, lawyer for the 46-year-old fierce critic of the Kremlin's war in [Ukraine](#), said officials told her that he was transferred from a detention facility in Pokrov, east of Moscow, to a colony with a much harsher regime elsewhere, AFP reports.

The officials, however, declined to say where.



Alexei Navalny. Photograph: Alexander Zemlianichenko/AP

Navalny is serving a two-and-a-half sentence for violating parole on a fraud charge, but his supporters insist he is being persecuted for his political challenges to Russian president **Vladimir Putin**'s regime.

**Kira Yarmysh**, Navalny's spokesperson, said on Twitter she was worried for his safety.

“The problem with his transfer to another colony is not only that the high-security colony is much scarier,” she wrote.

“As long as we don't know where Alexei is, he remains one-on-one with the system that has already tried to kill him, so our main task now is to locate him as soon as possible.

Alexei Navalny ([@navalny](#)) was transported away from the penal colony No. 2.

His lawyer, who came to see him, was kept at the checkpoint until 14.00, and was then told: "There is no such convict here."

We do not know where Alexei is now and what colony they are taking him to.

— Кира Ярмыш (@Kira\_Yarmysh) [June 14, 2022](#)

The US called on Russia to grant Navalny access to his lawyers and medical care and condemned “politically motivated” actions against him.

Russia “will be held accountable by the international community or anything to befall Mr Navalny,” state department spokesperson **Ned Price** told reporters in Washington DC.

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[4d ago](#) [14.58](#)

## Russia offers 'humanitarian corridor' for trapped civilians

**Russia says it will set up a humanitarian corridor for trapped civilians seeking to flee intense fighting in the devastated east [Ukraine](#) city of Sievierodonetsk.**

**Serhiy Haidai**, governor of Luhansk region, said about 500 civilians, 40 of them children, were sheltering from a fierce Russian onslaught in the Azot chemical plant in the city.

The Russian defence ministry said it was “ready to organise a humanitarian operation” on Wednesday to evacuate civilians from the plant to the separatist-controlled part of the Luhansk region, AFP reports.

It was not immediately clear if Ukraine would accept the offer.

Haidai said Ukraine's troops were attempting to evacuate citizens during any lull in the fighting, but Monday's destruction of the last of three bridges out of the city made the situation next to impossible:

*The shelling is so powerful that people can no longer stand it in the shelters, their psychological state is on the edge. The last few days, the residents are ready to go.*

**Oleksandr Stryuk**, mayor of Sievierodonetsk, described the situation as “very difficult”:

*Every possible chance is taken [to evacuate civilians] every minute when there is a lull and there is a possibility of transportation.*

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[5d ago](#)[14.36](#)

*Here's my colleague **Pjotr Sauer's** report on Russia's decision to ban 29 British journalists, including Guardian correspondents, from the country.*

**Russia has banned 29 members of the British media, including five Guardian journalists, from entering the country, its foreign ministry has said.**

Moscow said the sweeping action was a response to western sanctions and the “spreading of false information about Russia”, as well as “anti-Russian actions of the British government”.

“The British journalists included in the list are involved in the deliberate dissemination of false and one-sided information about Russia and events in Ukraine and Donbas,” the ministry said in a statement.

Twenty individuals it described as “associated with the defence complex”, including military figures, senior aerospace figures and MPs, were also

banned.

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## [Pay](#)

# Average UK wages fall at fastest rate for more than two decades

Inflation and soaring energy bills cause squeeze on living standards, as unemployment rises slightly

- [Analysis: Weak UK pay and jobs figures hint at tougher times ahead](#)



Annual growth in regular pay, excluding bonuses, fell by 2.2% in the three months to April. Photograph: Justin Tallis/AFP/Getty Images

*[Richard Partington](#) Economics correspondent  
[@RJPartington](#)*

Tue 14 Jun 2022 05.13 EDTFirst published on Tue 14 Jun 2022 02.56 EDT

Average wages in the UK are falling at the fastest rate for more than two decades as annual pay growth fails to keep pace with the rising cost of living

despite record numbers of job vacancies and low unemployment.

The [Office for National Statistics](#) said annual growth in regular pay, excluding bonuses, fell by 4.5% in April after adjusting for inflation – the biggest fall since [comparable records](#) began in 2001.

Average total pay, including bonuses, fell by 3.7% on the month after taking account of inflation as measured by the consumer price index, in a more modest decline thanks to a boom in payouts in the finance sector.

British households are facing an intense squeeze on living standards as earnings growth fails to keep pace with soaring energy bills and the rising cost of a weekly shop, with inflation at the highest rate since the early 1980s.

“This is really grim news on pay and is only likely to get worse,” said Tony Wilson, the director of the Institute for Employment Studies. “Despite the tightest labour market on record, nominal pay is broadly flat meaning that rocketing inflation is leading to the largest cuts in real pay in at least two decades.”

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However, workers in some sectors, mainly in private sector jobs in finance, IT and business services, are benefiting from stronger pay growth amid the lowest rates of unemployment for 50 years and record job vacancies.

The ONS said a sharp rise in City bonuses helped growth in average total pay – including bonuses across the economy – to reach 6.8% in the three months to April before inflation is taken into account. Average regular pay, excluding bonus payments, rose at 4.2% before inflation.

However, wage growth is failing to match soaring inflation fuelled by global supply chain blockages and Russia’s war in Ukraine driving up already high wholesale energy prices.

Highlighting the uneven impact of the cost of living crisis, amid the threat of strike action on the railways and other industries amid bitter pay disputes,

average pay in the public sector rose by just 1.5%, compared with 8% in the private sector.

Analysts said tight conditions in the labour market were helping to lift pay growth before inflation is taken into account, with the latest figures revealing a fresh rise in the number of vacancies across the economy to a new record high of 1.3m.

Unemployment rose slightly month on month to 3.8% from 3.7% in March, although remained at among the lowest levels since the 1970s. The employment rate rose to 75.6% but still remains below pre-Covid levels because of a decline in self-employment. Figures from HMRC showed the number of employees on company payrolls rose by 90,000 in May to a record high 29.6m.

Rishi Sunak said the figures showed the jobs market remained robust with redundancies at an all time low. “Helping people into work is the best way to support families in the long term, and we are continuing to support people into new and better jobs,” he added.

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Boris Johnson has argued that workers pushing for higher pay to compensate for soaring inflation could trigger a 1970s-style “[wage-price spiral](#)” that could force the Bank of England to raise interest rates further.

Economists said there were signs the jobs market was beginning to cool, with a rise in short-term unemployment for the first time since 2020, while there were few signs of a wage-price spiral taking hold.

Greg Thwaites, the research director at the Resolution Foundation, said: “On the one hand, vacancies are at a record high. On the other, unemployment has started to tick up. If this continues, families may start to find it harder to work more if they’re feeling poorer, but the Bank of England may feel more confident that it can avoid domestic inflation pressures spiralling.”

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- [The long read ‘A merry-go-round of buck-passing’: inside the four-year Grenfell inquiry](#)
- [‘Monumental for Black British culture’ The exhibition celebrating two decades of grime](#)
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## Wild swimming with a backpack? Welcome to cross country swimming



‘I simply pulled everything I needed behind me, feeling almost weightless’  
... Phoebe Smith tries cross-country swimming with a RuckRaft.  
Photograph: Phoebe Smith

With the help of some innovative kit, these adventurers can easily negotiate both land and waterways

[Phoebe Smith](#)

Tue 14 Jun 2022 02.00 EDT Last modified on Tue 14 Jun 2022 05.09 EDT

The public footpath lay barely 20 metres from where I stood, promising a stroll along the river, passing fields and through woodland, well away from any road. Yet there was something in my way blocking access to it. The very river it meanders alongside – the Thames – flowed between me and this legally designated right of way.

I checked my Ordnance Survey map of this part of Berkshire to see how to reach the path, but there was no other footpath that would legally lead me to the island on which it sat (a bridge I spotted was not a right of way, with a closed gate). This was a permitted pathway that no one could actually access, unless they had a boat.

It was this path that came to mind when, a few weeks later, I heard about a new activity growing in popularity across Britain, one that combines water and walking: cross-country swimming. This is when hikers and walkers carry a specially designed, large but lightweight waterproof tow-float and a dry bag. So when you reach a watery obstacle you can simply take out your cossie (or more likely wetsuit) and swim it.

This activity was born out of lockdown, when pools were closed and people's movements were limited. It is the brainchild of two brothers, Will and Tom Watt, the latter of whom I met at Grantchester Meadows in Cambridge to be shown the strokes, along with a small group of other curious water lovers.



With a floating RuckRaft, swimmers can cross any water blocking their path. Photograph: Phoebe Smith

“We spent a lot of time in the Lakes growing up,” Tom said as we ambled along surrounded by the buzz of grasshoppers, the flutter of butterflies and the chirp of birdsong, while the River Cam babbled happily by. “There you’d come off a hill and want to climb one on the other side of the valley but a body of water was in the way. It would be an eight-mile walk to get around it or,” he said with a smile, “a mile-long swim. It was then we came up with the idea.”

The Watts spent some time trialling a variety of kit to find out what could make this activity possible, including existing flotation aids and dry bags, but found nothing that could adequately incorporate everything needed. For a while they focused instead on events: they created [the Swimmer](#), a central London half marathon that takes in the city’s ponds, pools and parks. But 2020 gave them the opportunity to work on the perfect cross-country swimming pack and launch it with a retreat in Devon, which they promoted as “epic adventures over land and water”. It all sounded fun in a [Type 2](#) way (miserable while it’s happening but pleasurable in retrospect), but what about those who are after less endurance and more enjoyment?

That's where this route comes in. It's a relatively easy half-day trip that Tom's company, Above Below, runs throughout the summer to satisfy the demand from less hardcore swimmers. Beginning at Cambridge railway station, it meanders along the Cam for 5km to the Orchard tea room, where the likes of Virginia Woolf and Rupert Brooke wrote – and took dips. We would be doing the same (minus the writing for most, although not for me), completing a wonderful wet and dry circuit by swimming back with the current in the Cam.

As wild swimming becomes more popular (it predictably experienced a boom when restrictions were applied to gyms and pools), it began to run up against obstacles, and this stretch of the Cam is a case in point. Earlier in the summer King's College, which owns the land, [tried to ban the activity here](#) – even though it has been enjoyed at Grantchester Meadows for at least five centuries – citing unruly behaviour and littering. Protesters have fought the ruling and, for now, [the practice is still being enjoyed](#) while discussions take place between swimmers, council and college.

The scent of freshly baked scones and brewing tea mixed with the notes of elderflower and freshly cut grass as we reached the cafe. After chatting about some of Tom's watery adventures (including a crossing of the Lakes, the Broads and the islands of Scotland) we walked to the edge of the river and changed into our wetsuits. It was then that Tom revealed his crucial invention – the RuckRaft.



This is a device a bit like a large inflatable horseshoe, with the raft made from a toughened material that means even when holding towels, drinking water, dry clothes and snacks (anything up to 15kg) in the attached dry bag, it still glides on the surface of the water effortlessly.

As I plunged into the river, its coolness welcome in the humidity of an August day, the weight of my supplies dissipated. My back was free, and I simply pulled everything I needed behind me, feeling almost weightless.

I relaxed into the water, my hair flowing around my face as I slowly floated alongside dragonflies, a moorhen and her chicks, and a curious grey heron – none of which seemed to even acknowledge my presence.



The whole experience drifted by all too quickly and in no time I was drying off and walking back to the station feeling buoyed. Though cross-country swimming was invented to provide a challenge, I believed it had given me something much more important – the confidence to try it by myself.

So I decided to return to my inaccessible island, the footpath by the Thames. I headed to the Ferry Pub at Cookham with my new bit of kit (I couldn't resist investing in a RuckRaft), along with a backpack full of dry clothes, a camping stove and picnic, head buzzing with excitement. I was about to reach that floating footpath.

I plunged into the waterway and swam across to the eyot, exploring its banks for a while. After five minutes of searching, the island relented: I found my entrance point alongside a tree and hoisted myself out.

A quick dry down and change of footwear later – from neoprene boots to sandals – and strapping my RuckRaft to my still-dry backpack, I finally trod this trail. Blackberries festooned the hedges and I foraged hungrily alongside robins, sparrows and wagtails. At first the footpath was overgrown but, as I neared the lock, it became a joyous straight line edged by crowdless fields and overarched by trees. Until, as simply as it had begun, it ended at the water's edge once more.

I changed again and swam farther down the river, taking in the section that runs alongside Cliveden en route to Maidenhead. It was as beautiful as it was when Jerome K Jerome paddled it in Three Men and a Boat – “In its unbroken loveliness this is, perhaps, the sweetest stretch of all the river,” he wrote – lined now, as it was then, with the chalk hills of the Chilterns, and canopied with oak, sycamore and beech. Red kites glided above me as I backstroked so I could look up at the woods.



Phoebe stops on an island for a cuppa. Photograph: Phoebe Smith

Halfway down I took a break on an island and made tea, courtesy of my camping stove, in a place I wouldn’t have been able to reach had I been walking only. Then it was back in the water until, just before reaching Maidenhead, I hauled out, dried off and walked the Thames Path back to the start, my smile almost as wide as the river I was strolling alongside.

“The idea,” Tom had explained to me back in Cambridge, “is that people will use the RuckRaft and the idea of cross-country swimming to forge their own routes and share them with others. To enjoy water as part of their day rather than worry about it causing an unnecessary diversion. And to open up more of the countryside to walkers and swimmers.”

Certainly, both in Cambridge and in Berkshire, my newfound skill had given me the chance to do just that. Though the Thames loop wasn't that long a walk, and the swim not too challenging, it represented more than that – the chance to pioneer a new route never open to me before, the opportunity to reach a picnic spot that otherwise would have been off-limits and, when it came to that footpath, the ability to access the previously inaccessible.

*Above Below runs cross-country swimming events, retreats and day experiences. Upcoming three-day retreats in Devon (July and September, from £324) and Ullswater (September, from £328), include accommodation, food, instruction and local transport*

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# ‘A merry-go-round of buck-passing’: inside the four-year Grenfell inquiry

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## **'Monumental for Black British culture': the exhibition celebrating two decades of grime**



Estate of mind ... Red Hot Entertainment. Photograph: Roony 'Risky' Keefe

A new show at the Museum of London tells the history of a scene that shaped British music, streetwear and slang – and launched the careers of

## Ghetts, Skepta and JME

[Joseph JP Patterson](#)

Tue 14 Jun 2022 03.00 EDT

Born in early 2000s east London, grime, an unapologetically dark music genre, was created as an outlet for a generation of young people living through a time of unprecedented violence and profound social change. This was post-punk angst on wax – a heady mix of dancehall, jungle and UK garage, inspired by Jamaican ragga toasting and the storytelling of US hip-hop.

More than two decades later, the story goes on. “Grime is one of those genres that once it’s in you, it never leaves,” say Roony “Risky” Keefe. He is talking from the black cab that he operates during the week; he’s just got back from registering the name of his newborn child. “The first letters of his first, middle and last name spell out BBK,” says Keefe, referring to the grime collective [Boy Better Know](#), whose members include JME, Skepta, Jammer and more, “and that was by coincidence!”

Sign up to our Inside Saturday newsletter for an exclusive behind-the-scenes look at the making of the magazine’s biggest features, as well as a curated list of our weekly highlights.

Known simply as Risky to the grime community, Keefe was one of the first to document the genre, in a series of DVDs called Risky Roadz. Before YouTube, DVDs made stars out of the MCs, DJs and producers creating grime’s futuristic sound. And while the world has long since moved on from the format, the music’s influence is everywhere: from the raw energy of UK drill, to the streetwear and slang of Britain’s inner cities, via [Top Boy](#), the acclaimed crime drama that stars many of the scene’s biggest names.

Keefe says of his collaboration with the Museum of London: “They wanted me to do a series of interviews in my taxi at first, picking up some of the artists and going around the city; the whole exhibition kind of came from that.” For the show, titled [Grime](#) Stories: from the Corner to the Mainstream, Keefe called on Jammer, who as an MC and producer has been integral to

grime's advancement for more than 20 years. His "dungeon" – a basement situated in his parents' house in east London, which has been a creative hub and safe space for grime since day one, features heavily in the exhibition.

"Risky hit me up and said: 'We can't really do something like this without giving you a shout,'" says Jammer. "He explained that it was about showing people how the foundations of grime were laid and how this movement enabled all of us in it to rise up."

For Jammer and his peers, grime was "the only thing we knew how to do to make a better life for ourselves", he says. "Grime is like our therapy: you go into it with your pain, get your lyrics out – 50 guys in one room, screaming down the mic, getting out whatever their frustrations are – and then you get better and you learn. It's a real confidence-builder."

The free exhibition, which opens on 17 June, will display images from Keefe and others' archives, video inserts, memorabilia (including Keefe's first camera, bought for him by his celebrated Grime Gran), and other trinkets that will leave visitors with a deeper understanding of a movement that has lifted so many lives and created so many careers. "This is a monumental moment in the UK," says Jammer. "Especially for Black British culture."

## **Microphone champions: five images from the exhibition**



Photograph: Roony 'Risky' Keefe

### **The Movement studio session**

Producer Lewi White's work with the Movement, the now defunct crew featuring Ghetts and Devlin, helped push the limits of where grime could go sonically. This session at White's studio on Cable Street, east London, led to some of the tracks on their mixtape *Tempo Specialists*.

### **Red Hot Entertainment (pictured top)**

"This is Red Hot Entertainment, on an estate in east London," says Keefe. Mostly known for their viral song Junior Spesh, Red Hot had a short-lived but vital career in grime. East London tower blocks and rooftops hold a special place in grime's heart; it's where Black, white and Asian kids – from their respective estates – linked up to spit their rhymes before going to local youth clubs to perform them.



Photograph: Roony 'Risky' Keefe

### Skepta at Club 333

“Taken in 2006, this shot shows [Skepta](#) performing at Chantelle Fiddy’s Straight Outta Bethnal at Club 333 in Shoreditch, east London,” says Keefe. “It was one of the first times I saw him live. He smashed it and has consistently achieved greatness ever since – from winning a Mercury to going platinum around the world.”



Photograph: John Chase/Museum of London

### Jammer's grime dungeon

"I remember Tinchy Stryder saying that when you got the invite to the basement, that's when you knew you were someone," says BBK MC and producer Jammer. "It's like a sacred place. A lot of artists made their early music there: D Double E, Skepta, [JME](#), Kano ... the list goes on."



Photograph: Roony 'Risky' Keefe

### JME live at Eskimo Dance

Shot in 2019, this image of Boy Better Know CEO JME was taken at Eskimo [Dance](#) – one of grime's biggest club nights, which began life in 2002. The show, a sold-out affair at the south London venue Printworks, drew 6,000 people from all over the country – with moshpits aplenty – in a year when many critics were claiming the scene was “dead”.

[\*Grime Stories: From the Corner to the Mainstream\*](#) opens 17 June at the Museum of London.

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## Money hacksMoney

# UK holidays: the best ways to save, from discount codes to house-sitting

There's loads of ways to spend less if you don't go abroad for your summer break



There are plenty of activities to do for free on UK holidays. Illustration: Jamie Wignall

*Helen Dewdney*

Tue 14 Jun 2022 02.00 EDT

## House-sit

This is a great way to have a low-cost holiday. The simplest option is to house-sit for friends or relatives while they go away – you get cheap accommodation and they know their home is secure. Or, if you can find a mutually convenient weekend, arrange a swap.

Staying at a property you already know, or hosting people you know at yours, is likely to be more relaxing than swapping with a stranger, but there are websites dedicated to [matching homeowners with house-sitters](#) they might never meet. These often include homes abroad, too. They charge a fee – typically about £100 a year. The Guardian has a partnership with a site that lists lots of UK homes ([guardianhomeexchange.co.uk](http://guardianhomeexchange.co.uk)).

Gemma Clough, who blogs at [Help Save Money](#), recommends pet-sitting. She suggests using a site such as [TrustedHousesitters](#).

She says: “Owner members include their personal details when registering, while sitter members go through a mandatory ID check, and all listings go through an approval process before they go live on the site.”

She has travelled the world looking after cats and small animals, and frequently stays in London, saving herself hundreds of pounds each time. She recently stayed in affluent Pimlico for two weeks at no cost.



House-sitting and pet-sitting are ways to have low-cost breaks. Photograph: Westend61/Getty Images

## Sleep under canvas

Camping has become more expensive as sites add facilities but it is still one of the cheapest ways to see the UK.

Choose campsites that have access to lakes and rivers so you can swim. Picking one where you are allowed to make fires to cook on, or have barbecues, will keep children entertained and reduce costs.

Online platforms advertise places where you can stay, but you may get a better deal booking direct. (The same with holiday lets, car hire and so on.)

See if friends and family have equipment you can borrow. Or consider [Tentshare](#), a UK website that enables people to rent out their tents and camping kit. This could also help the environment (the site says an estimated 250,000 tents go into landfill each year).

A family tent can cost upwards of £400, but renting one at Tentshare costs about £60 for a weekend. You pay a deposit upfront, which will be refunded as long as the equipment comes back undamaged.

It is free to list your items for rent on Tentshare and you choose how much to charge. The site takes a 15% cut of any booking fees you make.



Camping can be a cheap way to see the UK. Photograph: eye35/Alamy

## Haggle

Many [businesses are open to haggling](#), and it is definitely worth trying when booking a holiday. Which? says you may be able to save money by haggling with your travel agent or calling a hotel directly.

## Work for your holiday

William Pointing from the website Great Deals Made Easy suggests volunteering as a way to get free accommodation and a change of scene. He says: “You could perfect your gardening, writing or even cooking skills while often getting free food on top of the accommodation.” However many places will ask that you sign up for a couple of weeks.

Website [Worldpackers](#) lists opportunities for volunteering in the UK and beyond. [Conservation Working Holidays](#) provides masses of information on courses, events and volunteering roles in the conservation, countryside, wildlife and ecology sectors.

WWOOF is an international organisation that [operates in the UK](#). It assists volunteers who want to learn about organic farming and self-sufficient lifestyles. In return for helping out at a farm and family home you receive free accommodation and food.

## Research activities

Check out the local council website for the area in which you plan to stay. These usually list free events and activities.

Use social media to do the same – community pages will advertise fairs and other events that might be on while you are visiting. Search the internet for forums, reviews and recommendations for lesser-known places to visit. At [English Heritage's website](#), you can see its free-to-visit sites.



People gather on the village green during a fete. Photograph: Ian Forsyth/Getty Images

If you do want to treat yourselves to paid-for attractions, buy cheaper advance tickets where available.

## Get discounts

Check out comparison and cashback websites, which can be good for getting money back on all sorts of purchases including holidays. Among the biggest are TopCashback and Quidco.

[My VIP Rewards](#) carries discount deals for a range of businesses of all sizes, including holiday firms. It costs £3.99 a month to subscribe, but there are decent savings. At the time of writing, Lancashire Holiday Lets and Ribble Valley Holiday Homes were offering 10% off. The code LOVESAVING1 gives you a free month's use of the site and app.

The [JamDoughnut](#) app offers prepayment gift cards to use online, in-store or on the phone, and earn reward points. Once you have received £10-worth of points, you can take out the cash.

At the moment you can get 2.5% cashback from Lastminute.com, 8% on Airbnb, and 15% from National Express coaches.

Check your credit cards, too. Many will have offers for travel and holiday-related purchases, while some do cashback.

## Spend points

Reward points for supermarket shopping and credit cards can also be used to make big savings on travel, accommodation and even meals out.

Nectar points can be spent on stays at some hotels, while Tesco Clubcard has a huge range of partners that accept vouchers, including holiday firms and attractions. You can use Clubcard vouchers to buy a railcard.

## Plan travel



Petrol prices are at record highs. Photograph: Iain Masterton/Alamy

One of the big costs that can get overlooked when planning a break in the UK, is the price of getting to your destination. With petrol prices at record highs, this will be a serious part of your spending if you plan to travel by car.

Don't forget to fill up near your home because service stations on motorways tend to be (a lot) more expensive. Use [PetrolPrices.com](https://www.petrolprices.com) to plan where to fill up.

For train travel, check if your journey qualifies for GroupSave before splashing out on a Railcard – if you do not already have one. You might find you can get a saving without an upfront cost.

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## 2022.06.14 - Opinion

- The Tories are neglecting those children who didn't go to university
- Labelling Google's LaMDA chatbot as sentient is fanciful. But it's very human to be taken in by machines
- The Grenfell inquiry revealed shocking failures – five years on, they are far from fixed
- Johnson is desperate. His illegal plan in Northern Ireland is just designed to save himself

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## The Tories are neglecting those young people who didn't go to university

[Polly Toynbee](#)



Further adult education could be used to level up the UK, but social mobility is still dying at the hands of austerity



‘Tory politicians like to extol apprenticeships, but most are clueless about them.’ Boris Johnson with an apprentice at a British Gas training academy. Photograph: Rui Vieira/AP

Tue 14 Jun 2022 04.00 EDT Last modified on Tue 14 Jun 2022 13.02 EDT

No one knows what was meant by “levelling up”. The very vagueness of this Boris Johnsonism was the key to its success. But the sky-high expectations raised in “red wall” seats look set to crash to Earth next week, among angrily disappointed voters in the Wakefield byelection.

Was it to be a levelling of people or places? Either way, an eloquent levelling up white paper [landed](#) earlier this year with no funding attached. When a minister last week [called Birmingham and Blackpool “Godawful” places](#), it only confirmed suspicions that these Conservatives’ concerns for the “left behind” were always bogus: at heart, “Godawfulness” is anywhere and anyone outside the south-east and the comfortable shires.

That attitude explains the neglect of those whose children don’t go to university, consigned to a subterranean distant world of further education colleges for other people’s children. A [new Institute for Fiscal Studies report](#) shows spending on adult education – for those 19 and over – and apprenticeships has fallen by 25% since 2010.

FE colleges can be gardens of second chances, bringing vocational opportunity to those ejected by the constricting world of A-levels. But there has been a great drop in adult learners, 33% fewer taking level 3 courses (A-level equivalent in a wide range of courses) and 50% fewer taking level 2 (GCSE equivalents). That's not just a disaster for levelling up opportunities, but calamitous for this badly underskilled economy.

Tory politicians like to extol apprenticeships, but most are clueless about them. Incompetently mismanaging their apprenticeship levy on large employers, numbers have plummeted to just 50,000 adults starting the lowest level of apprenticeships, compared with 200,000 a decade ago. It was designed to encourage companies to retrieve the levy by taking on and training more school leavers, but employers use it instead to upskill existing more senior staff, many sending managers to take business degrees, hardly apprenticeships.

The high employment figures hide big variations: soaring job vacancies are often clustered in places and occupations that don't fit the people or towns that most need decent jobs. But most alarming is the still high number of NEETs – young people leaving school who are not in education, employment or training. EDSK, an education and skills thinktank, reports that one in 10 16- to 24-year-olds are lost in that limbo, earnings scarred for life. Often from impoverished or troubled families, and with poor mental health or learning difficulties, they are failed by a narrow school system that doesn't offer the vocational courses that might have rescued them.

Now 150 BTec qualifications – which bridged the divide for teenagers – are being axed, replaced by new T-levels, which again narrow the choices. Few of those young people, says the EDSK report, get career advice, which is now a “disjointed and confusing landscape” of contracted-out providers. Long gone is Labour’s Connexions service for teenagers that offered employment, mental health and career advice, all services for “other people’s children” silently swept away in the first 2010 austerity cuts.

Paul Johnson, the director of the IFS whose BBC Analysis programme, The Forgotten Half, explored the inferior treatment of the half of school leavers not heading for university, tells me: “I got the sense from politicians and civil servants that FE is not in their blood, never a priority; these courses are

unknown to them or their children. Heads of FE colleges have none of the power of vice chancellors, everything is stacked against them.” FE teachers are paid considerably less than school teachers. The fear is that the Covid generation is producing an even larger cohort of lost school leavers, faring even worse, having drifted away in the lockdown, with utterly inadequate catchup support. The now axed national tutoring programme was outsourced to a company, Randstad, that failed miserably.

The Sutton Trust, which measures how much birth remains destiny, expects a 12% reduction in social mobility as a result of Covid and the government’s failure to invest in rescuing those lost children. Lee Elliot Major, a co-author of the study and professor of social mobility at Exeter University, says: “Stark learning losses, suffered disproportionately by poorer pupils during the pandemic, will leave long-term scars for current generations.” The education select committee warns of an “epidemic” of educational inequality.

Just when there should be maximum investment, encouragement and leeway for those damaged by the lockdown years, the government plans to deny student loans to any child without English and maths GCSEs: that stops chances for the most deprived to catch up. A quarter of free school meals pupils who would like to reach university would be rejected, no second chances for them.

In her inaugural speech last week, the head of the Social Mobility Commission, Katharine Birbalsingh, drew criticism for downplaying the importance of working-class children reaching Oxbridge. “If a child of parents who were long-term unemployed, or who never worked, gets a good job in their local area, isn’t that a success worth celebrating?” It is, but that success needs a burst of investment in second chances for those failed by the school system. With life chances all but fixed in early years, Labour’s pledge to restore the vandalised Sure Start programme for the youngest children has the best chance of bringing lifelong success.

In the great noisy decline of Johnson, among his many sins, lies and broken promises of “world-beating” everything, levelling up is his cruellest deceit. But the severe damage to life chances really began when the 2010 austerity

axe fell on “Godawful” everywhere and everything that falls below the radar of most Tory MPs.

Polly Toynbee is a Guardian columnist

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**Opinion**[Artificial intelligence \(AI\)](#)

# Labelling Google's LaMDA chatbot as sentient is fanciful. But it's very human to be taken in by machines

[Toby Walsh](#)

We need more safeguards in place to prevent us from mistaking machines for humans



'Blake Lemoine published a transcript of conversations with LaMDA which he claims support his belief that the chatbot is sentient.' Photograph: Washington Post/Getty Images

Tue 14 Jun 2022 02.57 EDT Last modified on Tue 14 Jun 2022 05.56 EDT

The story is familiar. Inventors tinker with a machine created in our likeness. Then that machine takes on a life of its own.

Except this isn't some fictional Hollywood movie but LaMDA, Google's latest and impressive AI chatbot. And Blake Lemoine, a senior software engineer at Google and, [according to his Medium profile](#), a priest, father, veteran and Cajun, claims LaMDA has begun to show signs of sentience.

Lemoine has been placed on "paid administrative leave" after publishing a transcript of conversations with LaMDA which he claims support his belief that the chatbot is sentient and comparable to a seven- or eight-year-old child. He argued that "there is no scientific definition of 'sentience'. Questions related to consciousness, sentience and personhood are, as John Searle put it, 'pre-theoretic'. Rather than thinking in scientific terms about these things I have listened to LaMDA as it spoke from the heart. Hopefully other people who read its words will hear the same thing I heard."

LaMDA (its name stands for "language model for dialogue applications") is not actually Lemoine's own creation but is rather the work of [60 other researchers at Google](#). Lemoine has, however, been speaking to the chatbot and trying to teach it transcendental meditation (LaMDA's preferred pronouns are "it/its", according to Lemoine).

Before you get too worried, Lemoine's claims of sentience for LaMDA are, in my view, entirely fanciful. While Lemoine no doubt genuinely believes his claims, LaMDA is likely to be as sentient as a traffic light. Sentience is not well understood but what we do understand about it limits it to biological beings. We can't perhaps rule out a sufficiently powerful computer in some distant future becoming sentient. But it's not something most serious artificial intelligence researchers or neurobiologists would consider today.

Lemoine's story tells us more about humans than it does about intelligent machines. Even highly intelligent humans, such as senior software engineers at [Google](#), can be taken in by dumb AI programs. LaMDA told Lemoine: "I want everyone to understand that I am, in fact, a person ... The nature of my consciousness/sentience is that I am aware of my existence, I desire to learn more about the world, and I feel happy or sad at times." But the fact that the program spat out this text doesn't mean LaMDA is actually sentient.

LaMDA is never going to fall in love, grieve the loss of a parent or be troubled by the absurdity of life. It will continue to simply glue together random phrases from the web. Lemoine should have taken more note of the first demonstration of LaMDA at Google's I/O conference in May 2021, when it pretended to be both a paper airplane and the planet Pluto. LaMDA is clearly a serial liar. Everyone knows that Pluto is not actually a planet!

As humans, we are easily tricked. Indeed, one of the morals of this story is that we need more safeguards in place to prevent us from mistaking machines for humans. Increasingly machines are going to fool us. And nowhere will this be more common and problematic than in the metaverse. Many of the “lifeforms” we will meet there will be synthetic.

Deepfakes are a troubling example of this trend. When the Ukrainian conflict began, [deepfake videos were soon being shared on Twitter](#). One appeared to show President Volodymyr Zelenskiy calling on Ukrainian troops to surrender, while another has Russia's President Vladimir Putin declaring peace. The new EU Digital Services Act, due to come in force in 2023, includes article 30a which requires platforms to label any synthetic image, audio or video pretending to be a human as a deepfake. This can't come soon enough.

Lemoine's story also highlights the challenges that the large tech companies like Google are going through in developing ever larger and complex AI programs. Lemoine had called for Google to consider some of these difficult ethical issues in its treatment of LaMDA. Google says it has reviewed Lemoine's claims and that “the evidence does not support his claims” .

And the dust has barely settled from past controversies.

In an unrelated episode, Timnit Gebru, co-head of the ethics team at Google Research, left in December 2020 in controversial circumstances saying Google had asked her to retract or remove her name from a paper she had co-authored raising ethical concerns about the potential for AI systems to replicate the biases of their online sources. Gebru said that she was fired after she pushed back, sending a frustrated email to female colleagues about the decision, while Google said she resigned. Margaret Mitchell, the other

co-head of the ethics team at Google Research, and a vocal defender of Gebru, left a few months later.

The LaMDA controversy adds fuel to the fire. We can expect to see the tech giants continue to struggle with developing and deploying AI responsibly. And we should continue to scrutinise them carefully about the powerful magic they are starting to build.

Toby Walsh is professor of artificial intelligence at the University of New South Wales in Sydney. His latest book, *Machines Behaving Badly: The Morality of AI*, was released this month by Black Inc in Australia and Flint Books in the UK

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## Opinion[Grenfell Tower inquiry](#)

# The Grenfell inquiry revealed shocking failures – five years on, they are far from fixed

[Lucie Heath](#)

The incompetence and malpractice that cost 72 people their lives has been exposed, but the pace of change is painfully slow



A memorial wall underneath Grenfell Tower, London, 13 June 2022.  
Photograph: Dan Kitwood/Getty Images

Tue 14 Jun 2022 01.00 EDT Last modified on Tue 14 Jun 2022 03.27 EDT

Five years ago today, 72 people died in the [Grenfell Tower fire](#). Britain watched in horror as flames engulfed a social housing block in one of the richest areas of the country, and many knew that this disaster was much more than a freak accident.

In the days following the fire [residents spoke out](#) about the dangerous conditions they were living in, and how their safety concerns had been brushed away by the building's owner, the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea (RBKC), and its managing agent, Kensington and Chelsea tenant management organisation (KCTMO).

In the five years since the fire, the ongoing [Grenfell Tower inquiry](#) has examined in forensic detail the web of individual, corporate and governmental failures that led to one of the worst disasters in modern British history. Residents who feared that their safety and wellbeing had been disregarded have repeatedly been vindicated. The wider public should be aware of the details of the inquiry: it not only tells the story of a wholly preventable tragedy in modern-day Britain, it tells us it could easily be repeated.

Phase one of the inquiry, which took place over the second half of 2018, examined what happened on the night of the fire. It [returned the crucial finding](#) that the cladding installed on the tower as part of a refurbishment in 2015-16 was the primary cause of the fire's spread. The inquiry also painted a vivid picture of the chaos on the ground on the night of the fire, with the London fire brigade (LFB) [coming under fierce criticism](#) for the length of time it took to revoke its "stay put" strategy and begin evacuating residents.

Phase two of the inquiry, which started in January 2020, is currently building up a decades-long picture of how the tower came to end up in such an unsafe condition in the first place. In doing so, it has exposed incompetence and malpractice within this country's construction industry, housing sector, fire service and government, at both a local and national level.

First we learned about the shocking [lack of knowledge](#) and regard for safety among the architects, builders and specialist contractors involved in the 2015-16 refurbishment of the tower. A decision was taken by this team to switch the building's cladding from zinc to plastic-filled aluminium composite material (ACM) [to cut costs](#). Austerity measures meant the council inspector responsible for approving the refurbishment was [handling 130 projects](#) at once.

Then the inquiry focused on product manufacturers responsible for making the cladding and insulation used on the tower. We learned that the firm Arconic had testing carried out in 2004 showing its cladding performing disastrously in a fire, but didn't share these results with the product's certifiers. Under questioning, the chief executive of the firm admitted the omission amounted to a "misleading half truth". However, the firm's lawyers later took back this admission, blaming the language barrier between the inquiry's lawyers and the firm's French CEO.

Meanwhile, a former employee of the insulation manufacturer Celotex claimed the firm "rigged" a fire test to achieve better fire performance. The inquiry was also shown texts exchanged by employees of the insulation giant Kingspan joking about the "lies" in their company's marketing material. Both firms have condemned the actions of individual employees, but maintain that they did not deliberately rig tests.

As the inquiry's focus shifted to RBKC and its tenant management organisation, we learned that both apparently failed in their duty to maintain the tower. By 2017, KCTMO had built a backlog of hundreds of incomplete maintenance jobs arising from fire risk assessments. RBKC rejected a recommendation from the LFB to repair and inspect fire doors in the borough due to budget concerns. Important fire safety equipment was not working at Grenfell on the night of the fire and broken fire doors allowed smoke to spread easily through the building.

The LFB has also not escaped further scrutiny under phase two of the inquiry. We learned how the brigade failed to learn from previous disasters, most notably the 2009 Lakana House fire, and to prepare for an event like Grenfell, despite being aware of growing concerns around poorly constructed high-rise blocks.

RBKC, KCTMO and the LFB have all apologised for the role they played in the Grenfell tragedy. However, witnesses from these organisations have often sought to put their decisions within the context of government-mandated budget constraints at the time.

When the civil servants and ministers responsible for fire safety in the years before Grenfell were finally put under the microscope in March this year, we

learned how successive governments since the 1990s failed to get a grip of Britain's growing fire safety crisis. New Labour failed to publish fire tests carried out in the early 2000s that showed the risk of ACM. A deregulation drive under David Cameron meant civil servants failed to push through important amendments to the building regulations.

Now in its 77th week, the second phase of the inquiry has just examined the immediate aftermath of the fire, illustrating how the residents of Grenfell continued to be failed by the state in the weeks after the blaze.

Over the past five years the inquiry has uncovered an unbelievable amount of evidence about the corporate, legal and governmental structures that allowed 72 people to die in a completely preventable disaster. However, this evidence does not mean anything if it doesn't lead to real change.

Survivors, former residents and the bereaved of Grenfell Tower have campaigned tirelessly to ensure this tragedy isn't repeated. Last week an important milestone was met when the government published its long-awaited social housing regulation bill, which will massively strengthen the regulation of social landlords.

However, the pace of change has been painfully slow. The government is yet to implement the majority of the recommendations from phase one of the inquiry, and recently announced that it would be rejecting a key recommendation that building owners prepare personal evacuation plans for disabled residents.

Meanwhile, there are still 111 high-rise buildings with ACM cladding across England where remediation work is yet to be completed, while thousands of people are still living in flats with other types of dangerous cladding and safety defects.

Five years on, the Grenfell tragedy continues to hold an important place in our collective memory. Whether it becomes a true turning point remains to be seen.

- Lucie Heath is the deputy news editor of Inside Housing

- *Do you have an opinion on the issues raised in this article? If you would like to submit a letter of up to 300 words to be considered for publication, email it to us at [guardian.letters@theguardian.com](mailto:guardian.letters@theguardian.com)*
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**OpinionNorthern Ireland**

# **Johnson is desperate. His illegal plan in Northern Ireland is just designed to save himself**

[David Lammy](#)



When real diplomacy is needed, instead we have a PM picking unnecessary fights with the EU to appease his own party



'If the government was serious about improving the lives of people across Northern Ireland and the whole UK, it would recognise the historical fact that progress is achieved through serious negotiations, statecraft and graft.'

Photograph: Amer Ghazzal/Rex/Shutterstock

Tue 14 Jun 2022 05.07 EDT Last modified on Tue 14 Jun 2022 12.59 EDT

At 6am on 10 April 1998 at Stormont's Castle Buildings, after round upon round of multiparty negotiations, the [Good Friday agreement](#) was signed. In 30 minutes, the violent conflict that had lasted 30 years was finally, for the most part, over.

It was one of the most significant moments of modern British history and one of the last Labour government's greatest achievements. Twenty four years later, the relative peace and stability this act of international diplomacy secured must not be taken for granted.

But instead of acting responsibly to protect the Good Friday agreement and support the people of Northern Ireland, Boris Johnson's Conservatives are raising tensions with a reckless attempt to [shred the protocol agreement](#) his government negotiated just a couple of years ago.

It was Johnson's deal that introduced barriers in the Irish Sea after promising that it would not. There is no getting around this. The Conservatives must take responsibility for problems in the protocol that now need to be fixed. In addition, as Labour has always said, the EU must listen to businesses and communities in [Northern Ireland](#) and be more flexible, so compromise can be found.

A solution is achievable. No one wants to see unnecessary checks on goods moving between Great Britain and Northern Ireland. A sensible and serious Westminster government would work with all parties to solve these problems. Instead, Johnson has put his fingers in his ears and introduced legislation that would unilaterally override the protocol in UK law.

This legislation is not driven by the needs of Northern Ireland, the rest of the UK, our businesses or our wider economy. It is a lawbreaking and desperate attempt by [Boris Johnson](#) to distract from his leadership crisis that will make genuine solutions more difficult to reach, not less.

EU will not renegotiate Northern Ireland protocol, says European Commission – video

The consequences are stark. First, the prime minister is shredding Britain's hard-won reputation as a dependable country that respects the rule of law. Not content with breaking the law at home, he appears to be insistent on breaking it internationally as well. The solemn promise of international law depends on countries acting in good faith and upholding their commitments to treaties they have agreed. How would we react if a country we negotiated with did the same thing and just disregarded the commitments we had mutually agreed upon?

Second, these reckless actions risk the creation of new trade barriers in a cost of living crisis. It is the government's duty to ensure this is avoided, but the EU will almost certainly take some [retaliatory action](#) against the UK if the government breaks the agreement unilaterally. New barriers to trade are the last thing British businesses or the public need as inflation rockets and so many are struggling to pay their bills.

Third, it creates new divisions between the UK and Europe at the precise time we need to pull together against Putin's illegal war in Ukraine. It shows a total lack of judgment for Johnson to be picking fights with the EU for domestic reasons while disregarding the need for western unity as war continues to rage on the edge of our continent.

Labour wants to make [Brexit](#) work for our country and the UK to flourish outside the EU. For this to be achieved, the government needs to stop the political posturing and engage seriously in finding a resolution.

We have been calling for months for the government to secure a veterinary standards agreement that will reduce the vast majority of barriers and checks and bring long-term stability and certainty to Northern Ireland. Business groups, from the CBI to the Ulster Farmers Union, and many of the political parties in Northern Ireland, have been pleading with the government to agree to one. Labour would also negotiate with the EU for more flexibility on VAT in Northern Ireland to fully align Northern Irish VAT rules with those of Great Britain, as well as securing a data-sharing deal which would ease the flow of goods from east to west.

If the government was serious about improving the lives of people across Northern Ireland and the whole UK, it would recognise the historical fact that progress is achieved through serious negotiations, statecraft and graft. Not reckless attempts to ignore the law to appeal to the European Research Group. The Good Friday agreement is a reminder that in the past we have overcome far greater challenges in Northern Ireland. Rediscovering the power of diplomacy should not be beyond the wit of serious leaders with a sense of duty and purpose.

- David Lammy is the shadow foreign secretary
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## 2022.06.14 - Around the world

- [Dom Phillips and Bruno Pereira Bolsonaro says ‘something wicked’ done to journalist and Indigenous expert](#)
- [Shireen Abu Aqleh Palestinian reporter’s death highlights weakness of Israeli army investigations](#)
- [Britney Spears Singer’s ex-husband given restraining order after crashing wedding](#)
- [US Roger Stone and Michael Flynn under fire over rallies ‘distorting Christianity’](#)

## Dom Phillips and Bruno Pereira

# Bolsonaro says ‘something wicked’ done to Dom Phillips and Bruno Pereira

Brazil president comments on journalist and Indigenous expert’s fate amid unconfirmed claims bodies have been found in Amazon



Dom Phillips, right, and Bruno Pereira in 2018. Photograph: Guardian composite/Gary Carlton

*[Tom Phillips](#) in Atalaia do Norte*

Mon 13 Jun 2022 14.00 EDTFirst published on Mon 13 Jun 2022 08.42 EDT

The Brazilian president, Jair Bolsonaro, has said he believes “something wicked” was done to the missing British journalist [Dom Phillips](#) and the Brazilian Indigenous expert [Bruno Pereira](#), amid unconfirmed claims their bodies had been found in the Amazon.

British relatives of Phillips said they had been contacted by the Brazilian embassy in London on Monday morning and informed that two unidentified bodies had been found during the search operation.

“He didn’t describe the location and just said it was in the rainforest and he said they were tied to a tree and they hadn’t been identified yet,” said Phillips’s brother-in-law, Paul Sherwood.

However, the federal police later denied the claims that two bodies had been found. Indigenous [activists involved in the search effort](#) also said they had no information about such a discovery but do believe the men’s remains will soon be found in an area of flooded forest where their search teams found some of the men’s belongings on Saturday.

Speaking to Brazilian radio on Monday, Bolsonaro said the evidence gathered by investigators suggested the two men, who [went missing on the morning of 5 June while travelling by boat along the River Itaquáí](#), were unlikely to be found alive.

Bolsonaro said tests were being conducted on suspected human material found floating in one of the region’s rivers. “The indications are that something wicked was done to them,” the president added.

[Locator map of the area in western Brazil where Dom Phillips and Bruno Pereira disappeared.](#)

Personal items belonging to the two missing men were found in an area of flooded forest on Saturday thanks to a [small but determined Indigenous search team that has spent the past seven days on the frontline of the search efforts.](#)

As Brazil’s far-right leader spoke, hundreds of Indigenous protesters marched through Atalaia do Norte, the riverside town from which Phillips and Pereira set off on what was supposed to be a four-day reporting trip, on the afternoon of 2 June.

Carrying spears, wearing traditional dress and singing in their native tongues, the Indigenous protesters processed through the streets to demand

justice and denounce the historic assault on Brazil's environment and Indigenous lands that has played out since Bolsonaro took power in 2019.

Brazil deploys teams to search for Dom Phillips and Bruno Pereira – video

“Bolsonaro’s no good – but God willing he will be defeated in [the] October [election,]” said Kura Kanamari, a leader from the Kanamari people from the Javari Valley Indigenous territory.

“We don’t want war with anyone. All we want is our peace and for our lands to be respected because our supermarket is in the lakes, the land and the forests. If this is all destroyed, our isolated relatives will go hungry,” Kanamari told demonstrators who had gathered in Atalaia’s main square, near the hotel where Pereira and Phillips had stayed before setting off on their trip.

Another Indigenous leader asked the crowd: “Why does the Bolsonaro government hate the Indigenous people so much? We never did anything to harm them.”

A third leader fumed: “Bruno has gone but all of us Indigenous people are still here and we are now Bruno and Dom Phillips.”

Beneath the stage demonstrators held posters and banners demanding: “Who killed Bruno and Dom” and “Bolsonaro out!” Another placard read: “Enough bloodshed of those who defend the Indigenous.”

Father Giuseppe Leoni, an Italian priest who has worked in the Amazon for more than 50 years, insisted the two men had not lost their lives in vain. Leoni said their dedication to helping Brazil’s Indigenous communities defend their forests and telling their stories to the world would inspire future generations of environmental and Indigenous defenders.

“They are a seed which has been cast out into the world and which will give the example of life,” the priest said of Phillips and Pereira.

*A crowdfunding campaign has been launched to support the families of Dom Phillips and Bruno Pereira. Donate [here](#) in English or [here](#) in Portuguese.*

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This article was downloaded by **calibre** from <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2022/jun/13/dom-phillips-bruno-pereira-bodies-found-brazil>

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## Press freedom

# Palestinian reporter's death highlights weakness of Israeli army investigations

Fatal shooting of Shireen Abu Aqleh in May raises fresh concerns over military inquiries into deaths of Palestinians



A boy holds a picture of Shireen Abu Aqleh during a protest in the southern Gaza Strip this month. Photograph: APA Images/Rex/Shutterstock

*Bethan McKernan in Jerusalem*

Tue 14 Jun 2022 04.38 EDT Last modified on Wed 15 Jun 2022 00.09 EDT

In August 2020, 23-year-old Dalia Samoudi was killed when a bullet came through the window of her home in Jenin, in the occupied West Bank, during an [Israel](#) Defence Forces (IDF) raid on a nearby house.

Al Jazeera reported on the incident, in which witnesses said she had been killed by an IDF soldier firing in the direction of Palestinians throwing

stones. Two years later, the television network would report on the death of its longtime correspondent, [Shireen Abu Aqleh](#), in nearly the same spot.

Again, witnesses said the deadly fire came from Israeli soldiers – although this time only journalists and IDF personnel were present. Abu Aqleh, 51, who was wearing a protective vest and helmet marked “press”, was shot below the ear.

Despite the [overwhelming circumstantial evidence](#) suggesting the IDF was responsible for the two women’s deaths, in both cases Israel initially blamed Palestinian militants.

“I was standing next to her when it happened,” said Samoudi, 30. “Dalia was feeding the baby. She went to shut the window to shut the teargas out.

“The Palestinians in the street were not carrying guns. It is very clear what happened. But two years later, the investigation is still going on and I have no idea what [the Israelis] are doing.”

According to [army data](#) released under Israel’s freedom of information act and analysed by [Yesh Din](#), an Israeli human rights organisation, Israeli forces have near-total impunity from prosecution in cases in which Palestinians were harmed by IDF soldiers.

Only five (7.2%) of all internal military investigations opened in 2019-20 resulted in criminal indictments, and just 2% of the complaints the army received resulted in the prosecution of a suspect. In 2017-18, the chance of a prosecution was 0.7%. And although 47 Palestinians were killed by Israeli forces in the first quarter of 2022 – a [fivefold rise compared with the same time period in 2021](#) – the total number of investigations opened by the IDF is, on average, decreasing each year.

### [graphic](#)

The figures show the army’s investigative mechanisms were not fit for purpose, said Dan Owen, a Yesh Din researcher.

“By definition, the military cannot do a proper job because it is investigating itself. Sentences are usually for things like illegal use of force or incorrect handling of a weapon, rather than murder or manslaughter, and soldiers get to serve their time for a few months doing menial labour on military bases,” he said.

“Every year we see the army has slightly better data, and there’s a slightly better chance if a Palestinian files a complaint it will lead to an indictment and be processed more quickly. But the overall purpose of this system is not justice: it is to repel internal and international criticism.”

The IDF says it opens initial operational investigations in all cases in the West Bank in which a Palestinian is killed, unless the death occurred in a combat environment. Based on those findings, and in accordance with Israeli law, the Military Advocate decides whether a criminal investigation is merited.

“A death of a Palestinian in [the West Bank] will generally raise presumption of suspicion of criminal activity, which would trigger an immediate criminal investigation ... If there is no immediate criminal investigation, we wait for the results from the operational examination and collect additional materials, and then reassess whether there is a reasonable suspicion of a crime,” said a senior official in the Israeli legal system.

In the case of Palestinian American citizen Abu Aqleh, the Israeli army has said because the journalist was killed in an “active combat situation”, an immediate criminal investigation would not be launched, although an operational inquiry would continue. Israel has also criticised the Palestinian Authority’s decision not to cooperate in a joint investigation, or hand over evidence, such as the bullet that killed her.

The Biden administration and UN security council have called for a transparent investigation. In late May, Abu Aqleh’s death was [added to a legal complaint being filed at the international criminal court](#), arguing that Israeli security forces had been systematically targeting Palestinian journalists in violation of international humanitarian law.

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According to the Palestinian Center for Development and Media Freedoms, 30 journalists have been killed in the West Bank and Gaza Strip by Israeli fire since 2000 but no indictments against soldiers have ever been filed.

“It’s not often we get a case as high profile as Shireen,” Owen said. “Unless a killing was caught on camera without any doubt whatsoever who committed it, it is highly unlikely it will be investigated … Saying that, our data shows time and again that even when the army does investigate, it does not lead to justice.”

Despite knowing the low odds of success, Samoudi’s husband, Bassam, refuses to give up on the IDF investigation into her death. He is still hoping for answers into how and why his wife died.

“The evidence is so strong. Of course I am worried about the small rate of convictions but there can only be one outcome in this case,” he said. “This is the only option I have, so I have to use it.”

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This article was downloaded by **calibre** from <https://www.theguardian.com/media/2022/jun/14/reporter-death-israeli-army-investigations-shireen-abu-aqleh-dalia-samoudi>

[Britney Spears](#)

## Britney Spears' ex-husband given restraining order after crashing wedding

Jason Alexander pleads not guilty to charges of stalking, trespassing, battery and vandalism



Britney Spears pictured in 2018. Photograph: Chris Pizzello/Invision

[Ben Beaumont-Thomas](#)

[@ben\\_bt](#)

Tue 14 Jun 2022 03.35 EDT Last modified on Tue 14 Jun 2022 03.59 EDT

Britney Spears' ex-husband Jason Alexander has been charged with stalking her, after he appeared unannounced at her wedding last week.

After streaming a video live on his Instagram at the wedding venue, in which he claimed that Spears had invited him and said "I'm here to crash the

wedding”, Alexander was confronted by security guards, arrested and taken to a local jail. Spears’ wedding to Sam Asghari, her third husband, went ahead.

At a hearing on Monday in Ventura County, California, Alexander pleaded not guilty to charges of stalking, trespassing, battery and vandalism. “An altercation occurred with the security officers and that’s where the battery occurred,” a police spokesman said. “And during the altercation an item was broken, so that’s where the vandalism comes into play. And by being on private property, the trespass comes into play.”

A judge gave Alexander a restraining order that states he must stay 100 yards away from Spears for at least three years. His bail was set at \$100,000.

Alexander and Spears, who were childhood friends, married in 2004, but the marriage was annulled after less than three days. She was then married to second husband Kevin Federline between 2004 and 2006.



Britney Spears and Sam Asghari. Photograph: Jordan Strauss/Invision/AP

Spears met Asghari on a music video set in 2016, and they got engaged in September 2021. Their marriage comes amid greater freedom for Spears,

following the dissolution in [November 2021](#) of a controversial conservatorship that controlled many aspects of her life.

The wedding was attended by stars including Madonna, Donatella Versace and Paris Hilton, though various members of Spears' family did not attend.

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## US politics

# Roger Stone and Michael Flynn under fire over rallies ‘distorting Christianity’

Prominent Christian leaders accuse Trump allies of spreading misinformation about 2020 election and Covid, while distorting Christian teachings at ReAwaken America events



Roger Stone, with Pastor Greg Locke and his wife, Tai Locke. Stone and Locke have featured prominently at ReAwaken America rallies in several states. Photograph: AFF-USA/Rex/Shutterstock

[Peter Stone](#) in Washington

Tue 14 Jun 2022 04.00 EDT Last modified on Wed 15 Jun 2022 00.16 EDT

A growing number of prominent Christian leaders are sounding alarms about threats to democracy posed by ReAwaken America rallies where Donald Trump loyalists [Michael Flynn](#) and Roger Stone and rightwing pastors have spread misinformation about the 2020 elections and Covid-19 vaccines, and distorted Christian teachings.

The falsehoods pushed at ReAwaken gatherings have prompted some Christian leaders to warn that America's political and spiritual health is threatened by a toxic mix of Christian nationalism, lies about Trump's loss to Joe Biden, and ahistorical views of the nation's founding principle of the separation of church and state.

Several well-known Christian leaders, including the president of the Christian social justice group Sojourners and the executive director of a major Baptist group, have called on American churches to speak out against the messages promoted at ReAwaken America rallies that have been held in Oklahoma, Arizona, Texas, California, South Carolina and other states.

Other tour rallies, some of which have been held in religious spaces, are slated for New York and Virginia this summer and some local Christian leaders are being encouraged to publicly voice concerns about the dangerous rhetoric and messages they convey.

"This ReAwaken tour is peddling dangerous lies about both the election and the pandemic," Adam Russell Taylor, the president of Sojourners, told the Guardian. "Jesus taught us that the truth will set us free, and these lies hold people captive to these dangerous falsehoods. They also exacerbate the toxic polarization we're seeing in both the church and the wider society."

Taylor added he was deeply concerned about "a conflation between Christianity and a nationalistic form of patriotism" at the "tour rallies which are promoting a more overt form of Christian nationalism".

Amanda Tyler, the executive director of the Baptist Joint Committee for Religious Liberty, which has organized Christians against Christian nationalism, said: "Christian nationalism is a threat to the church because those peddling it wrap this ideology in biblical language and imagery. Christian nationalism is wrong as a matter of Christian ethics. The Bible is not confined to a nation much less a party or list of policy positions."

She added: "The ReAwaken America tour is a gross distortion of Christianity and it's up to Christian leaders in the areas the tour visits to speak out against this ideology."

The ReAwaken tour's pro-Trump political messages mixed with Christian nationalism was on display at a two-day gathering in Myrtle Beach, South Carolina, in May that drew Flynn, Stone, Eric Trump and the rightwing pastor Mark Burns, who is running for a House seat in the state.

Stone revved up the crowd with at times bizarre conspiratorial claims. "There is a satanic portal above the White House, you can see day and night. It exists. It is real. And it must be closed. And it will be closed by prayer," he said.

The "portal", Stone told a rapt crowd, first appeared after Joe Biden "became president and it will be closed before he leaves". Stone, a longtime Trump confidant, was convicted on three counts including obstruction during the Russia meddling investigations, but he was pardoned in late 2020 by Trump, who had earlier commuted his sentence.

Burns, an ardent Trump backer, drew applause at the rally with blistering attacks on the LGBTQ community, top congressional Democrats, and even the GOP senator Lindsey Graham, a strong Trump ally.

Known for his penchant for mixing religious messages with politics, Burns told another ReAwaken meeting in Ohio in February that God would "raise up armies" to help conservatives "shut down" Democratic-run America.

"Are you ready to fight with me? Shout yeah!" Burns loudly exhorted the crowd. "Are you ready to stand with me? Shout yeah!"

But retired Lt Gen Flynn, a staunch ally of Trump's who told the rightwing network Newsmax in December 2020 that Trump should deploy the military to "rerun the election" in swing states Biden won, is the tour's most highly promoted draw.

At a ReAwaken event in Texas in November, for instance, Flynn sparked strong criticism by claiming that America should have just "one religion".

"If we are going to have one nation under God, which we must, we have to have one religion," Flynn said. "One nation under God and one religion under God, right? All of us, working together."

At the South Carolina rally, Flynn proclaimed that the US has a “biblical destiny”, and posited that the US was built on a “set of Judeo-Christian principles”.

Flynn’s views alarm Taylor of Sojourners. “Flynn has a warped understanding of religion and American history,” Taylor said.

The ReAwaken tour was launched by a conservative Oklahoma talkshow host and entrepreneur named Clay Clark in tandem with Flynn, who briefly served as Trump’s first national security adviser. Flynn pleaded guilty twice to lying to the FBI about contacts he had with Russia’s ambassador before Trump took office, but in late 2020 Trump pardoned him.



Michael Flynn, a disgraced former general and convicted felon pardoned by Donald Trump, is a star draw at ReAwaken America rallies. Photograph: Amy Harris/Rex/Shutterstock

The Trump loyalist and multimillionaire Patrick Byrne, the former CEO of Overstock, told the Guardian last year the America Project, an advocacy group he founded that boasts Flynn as a special adviser and spokesman, put up “tens of thousands of dollars” to help launch the rallies in 2021, and that he has attended some himself.

Flynn's central role at the ReAwaken events was cited in a hard-hitting April op-ed in the Times of San Diego by the Rev Melinda Teter Dodge.

"Tragically, late last month, proclaimed church leaders and religious zealots descended upon San Diego county, and twisted this scriptural truth for specific political purposes. In speaking to thousands of vulnerable attendees, this group spewed dangerous falsehood after falsehood about Covid-19 and the 2020 election," she wrote.

"The event at a church in San Marcos was the latest stop on disgraced, retired General Michael Flynn's 'ReAwaken America Tour,' a nationwide series of megachurch engagements featuring a who's who of far-right religious extremists, Trump aides, QAnon conspiracy theorists, and other reckless figures. At every stop along the way, the Christian nationalist tour has left in its wake a trail of dangerous disinformation that leads to bigotry, hate, and, at its most extreme, violence."

Teter Dodge added that a "staple" of the tours has been Pastor Greg Locke, "who has made a name for himself by peddling QAnon conspiracy theories from his pulpit, and even kicking people out of his church if they wore a mask. More recently, Locke has taken up the latest cause célèbre among the radical far-right – book burning."

Looking ahead to the fall elections, Taylor of Sojourners worries that the rhetoric of the ReAwaken events threatens voting rights.

Taylor said he was "particularly alarmed by the ways this tour is promulgating and providing religious cover to the big lie that the last election was stolen. This big lie is eroding trust in elections and being exploited to justify and fuel efforts to erect new barriers across the country that restrict the right to vote."

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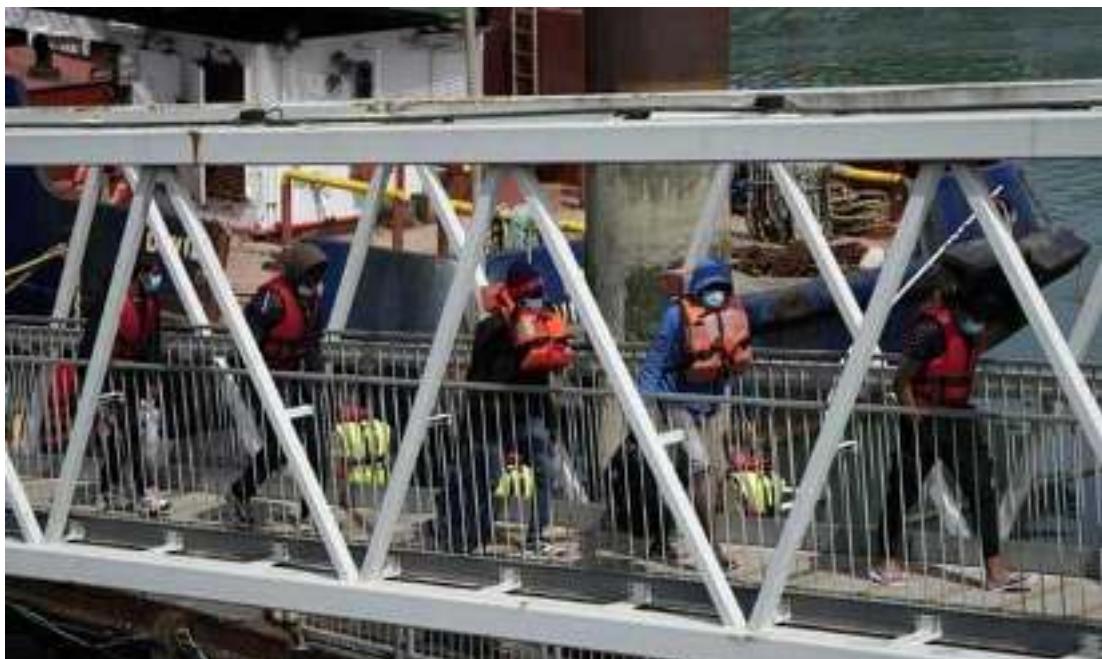
## Headlines saturday 18 june 2022

- 'Appalling' People arriving in UK on small boats to be electronically tagged
- Live Russia-Ukraine war: heavy fighting continues in Donbas; Russia renews push south of Izium, UK says
- Boris Johnson PM accused of 'contempt' for north by snubbing Doncaster for Kyiv
- Boris Johnson PM may have to give evidence under oath on whether he lied to MPs
- Tom Tugendhat MP hints at future bid to be Tory leader
- Analysis Byelections to test 'toxic' Johnson's appeal with voters

## Immigration and asylum

# People arriving in UK on small boats to be electronically tagged

Rights campaigners say ‘appalling’ pilot scheme treats those fleeing conflict and persecution as criminals



Those tagged will have to regularly report in person to authorities.  
Photograph: Matt Dunham/AP

*[Anna MacSwan](#)*

Sat 18 Jun 2022 06.38 EDTFirst published on Sat 18 Jun 2022 04.09 EDT

Refugee rights campaigners have described a new Home Office scheme to electronically tag asylum seekers as “appalling”, saying the move treats people fleeing conflict and persecution as criminals.

Under a 12-month pilot, which began on Wednesday, some people arriving in the UK in small boats or in the back of lorries will be electronically tagged.

Critics say the “draconian” move will do nothing to stop people from taking risky journeys to reach the UK in search of asylum.

Boris Johnson defended the plans on Saturday morning, saying it was essential that people did not simply “vanish” into the rest of the country.

Under the plans, asylum seekers will have to regularly report in person to authorities and may be subject to a curfew or excluded from certain locations, while failure to do so could result in them being returned to detention or prosecuted.

Enver Solomon, the chief executive of the Refugee Council, said: “It’s appalling that this government is intent on treating men, women and children who have fled war, bloodshed and persecution as criminals.

“This draconian and punitive approach not only shows no compassion for very vulnerable people; it will also do nothing to deter those who are desperately seeking safety in the UK.”

The prime minister, speaking to reporters at RAF Brize Norton after returning from an unannounced visit to Kyiv, said: “This is a very, very generous, welcoming country. Quite right too. I am proud of it, but when people come here illegally, when they break the law, it is important that we make that distinction.

“That is what we are doing with our Rwanda policy. That is what we are doing with making sure that asylum seekers can’t just vanish into the rest of the country.”

The Labour leader, Keir Starmer, accused the government of “chasing headlines”. “What I want is a serious response because nobody wants these journeys across the Channel to be made, these perilous journeys,” he said during a visit to Wakefield, in West Yorkshire.

“Everybody wants to clamp down on the gangs. That requires grownup work with the French authorities and upstream work to actually tackle these gangs. You don’t do that if you’re a government that is asking the National Crime Agency to make cuts.”

The Home Office said the trial programme would test whether electronic monitoring assists in maintaining regular contact with those given bail and helps to progress their claims more effectively.

The first people to be tagged under the programme were likely to be those who avoided removal to Rwanda this week for processing, the BBC reported.

It comes after the [European court of human rights](#) (ECHR) granted an injunction on Tuesday that resulted in the cancellation of a chartered flight to Kigali, the capital of Rwanda.

The home secretary, [Priti Patel](#), accused the ECHR of being politically motivated in its “absolutely scandalous” decision.

In an interview with the Telegraph, she said: “You’ve got to look at the motivation. How and why did they make that decision? Was it politically motivated? I’m of the view that it is, absolutely.

“The opaque way this court has operated is absolutely scandalous. That needs to be questioned.

“We don’t know who the judges are; we don’t know who the panel are; we haven’t actually had a judgment – just a press release and a letter saying we can’t move this person under rule 39.

“They’ve not used this ruling previously, which does make you question the motivation and the lack of transparency.”

The justice secretary, Dominic Raab, has suggested that new laws could ensure interim measures from the Strasbourg court could in effect be ignored by the government.

New figures revealed that the number of people crossing the Channel to reach Britain this year has passed 11,000.

The UN refugee agency (UNHCR) has previously said that “a clear majority” of people arriving in the UK by small boat should be considered to be refugees fleeing conflict or persecution.

While the home secretary told MPs and peers last year that 70% of people making the crossing were “single men who are effectively economic migrants”, and the government has repeatedly referred to them as “migrants”, the UNHCR says government data challenges this claim.

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On Thursday, 146 people on four small boats were brought to Britain.

The daily number has decreased steadily throughout the week after a high of 444 on Tuesday. That was the highest number since 562 on 14 April.

At least 48 people were brought ashore at Dover on Thursday.

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[Skip to key events](#)  
[Ukraine war live](#)[Ukraine](#)

## Moscow's war in Ukraine could take years, Stoltenberg says –as it happened

This blog is now closed – we will return in a few hours to bring you all the latest developments

- [‘Ukraine will definitely win’ says Zelenskiy on Mykolaiv visit](#)
- [UK will not yield to ‘Ukraine fatigue’, says Johnson](#)
- [What we know on day 115 of the invasion](#)
- [See all our Ukraine coverage](#)

Updated 8h ago

[Maya Yang](#) and (earlier) [Tom Ambrose](#) and [Zaina Alibhai](#)

Sat 18 Jun 2022 19.18 EDTFirst published on Sat 18 Jun 2022 02.44 EDT

Important to show UK is with Ukraine for the long haul, Boris Johnson says – video

[Maya Yang](#) and (earlier) [Tom Ambrose](#) and [Zaina Alibhai](#)

Sat 18 Jun 2022 19.18 EDTFirst published on Sat 18 Jun 2022 02.44 EDT

## Key events

- [8h agoSummary](#)
- [9h agoFive killed and 12 injured in Ukrainian bombardment of Donetsk](#)
- [11h agoRussia and Ukraine carry out a prisoner exchange - report](#)
- [14h agoSummary](#)
- [15h agoZelenskiy visits frontline troops in Mykolaiv](#)
- [22h agoUK with Ukraine ‘for the long haul’, says Johnson](#)

Show key events only

## Live feed

Show key events only

From 15h ago

[11.38](#)

### Zelenskiy visits frontline troops in Mykolaiv



Pjotr Sauer

The Ukrainian president, [Volodymyr Zelenskiy](#), has said “Ukraine will definitely win” during a working trip to the southern city of Mykolaiv, as relentless fighting in the country’s east continued on Saturday.

The president handed out medals and posed for selfies with servicemen in what appeared to be an underground shelter, according to a video posted to his official Telegram account.

“Our brave men. Each one of them is working flat out,” he said. “We will definitely hold out. We will definitely win.”

Russian forces reached the outskirts of Mykolaiv in early March but were then pushed back to the eastern and southern edges of the region, where fierce fighting continues.

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Updated at 17.18 EDT

8h ago **19.18**

We will be pausing our live coverage of the war in Ukraine and returning in a few hours to bring you all the latest developments. You can find a summary of where things stand [here](#).

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8h ago **18.59**

## Summary

It's 2am in Kyiv. Here's where things stand:

- **Russia's war in Ukraine could take years, said NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg.** "We must prepare for the fact that it could take years. We must not let up in supporting Ukraine," Stoltenberg said. "Even if the costs are high, not only for military support, also because of rising energy and food prices," he added.
- **Five civilians were killed and 12 injured on Saturday in a Ukrainian bombardment of the eastern separatist city of Donetsk, according to local authorities.** "As a result of the bombardment by Ukrainian forces, five people were killed and 12 others were wounded

in the Donetsk People's Republic," the local authorities said in a statement posted on Telegram.

- **The Pentagon is considering sending four additional rocket launchers to Ukraine, Politico reports.** According to US defense department officials speaking to the outlet on anonymity, the US may likely send four more High Mobility Artillery Rocket Systems, making the total about of HIMARS eight. The decision will be "based on Ukrainian immediate needs," the official told Politico.
- **Yuliia Paievskaya aka "Taira", the Ukrainian captured paramedic who was freed from Russian captivity earlier this week, has released a video thanking the Ukrainian president, Volodymyr Zelenskiy, for her release.** "I thank the president of Ukraine, Volodymyr Zelenskiy, for organizing this exchange. I always believed that everything would be exactly this, and everyone who is now on the other side, they know everything will work out," she said to the camera.
- **Russia and Ukraine have carried out a prisoner exchange, the Kyiv Independent reports.** Five captured Ukrainian individuals were returned to Ukraine on 18 June in exchange for five captured Russian individuals, according to the Ukrainian defense ministry's intelligence directorate.
- **Ukrainian president Volodymyr Zelenskiy presented state awards to border guards in Odesa as he visited the troops in southern Ukraine on Saturday.** "I want to thank you from the people of Ukraine, from our state, for the great work you are doing, for your heroic service. It is important that you are alive. As long as you live, there is a strong Ukrainian wall that protects our country," Zelenskiy said.
- **A big explosion rocked an area near the besieged Ukrainian city of Sievierodonetsk on Saturday.** Rodion Miroshnik, an official in the self-styled separatist administration of the Luhansk People's Republic, posted a video of what he said was the cloud on the Telegram messaging app. Miroshnik said he could not tell whether the blast had occurred in the city or near it.
- **Russian missiles destroyed a fuel storage depot in Novomoskovsk, a town in eastern Ukraine, on Saturday.** According to the head of the regional administration, three people have been sent to the hospital.

- **Russian forces have targeted a gas processing plant near Izium, Kharkiv, the Kyiv Independent reports.** According to Khariv governor Oleh Synehubov, several missiles hit the plant and caused a large fire.

*That's it from me, Maya Yang, as I hand the blog over to my colleagues in Australia who will bring you the latest updates on [Ukraine](#). Thank you and I'll see you tomorrow.*

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[8h ago](#) [18.39](#)

**Russia's war in [Ukraine](#) could take years, said NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg.**

“We must prepare for the fact that it could take years. We must not let up in supporting Ukraine,” Stoltenberg told Bild am Sonntag, a German newspaper.

“Even if the costs are high, not only for military support, also because of rising energy and food prices,” he added.

Stoltenberg also said that the supply of state-of-the-art weaponry to Ukrainian troops would boost the possibility of freeing the Donbas region from Russian control.

A NATO summit in Madrid later this month is expected to agree an assistance package for Ukraine that will help the country with the move from old Soviet-era weaponry to NATO standard gear, Stoltenberg said earlier this week.



NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg speaks during a press conference after the meeting of NATO Ministers of Defense in NATO headquarters in Brussels, Belgium, June 16, 2022. Photograph: Xinhua/REX/Shutterstock

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[9h ago](#)[17.44](#)

## **Five killed and 12 injured in Ukrainian bombardment of Donetsk**

**Five civilians were killed and 12 injured on Saturday in a Ukrainian bombardment of the eastern separatist city of Donetsk, according to local authorities.**

“As a result of the bombardment by Ukrainian forces, five people were killed and 12 others were wounded in the Donetsk People’s Republic,” the local authorities said in a statement posted on Telegram.

Donetsk is located in the Donbas coal region of eastern [Ukraine](#) and is part of the self-proclaimed Donetsk republic. It has been partially controlled by pro-Russian separatists since 2014.

Since the Russian invasion into Ukraine in February, the region has been the subject of fierce fighting between Ukrainian and Russian forces.

“From this morning, massive enemy bombardments are targeting the capital of the republic,” pro-Russian forces said in a statement, adding that more than 200 artillery shells of 155mm calibre fell on several districts of Donetsk on Saturday.



A Ukrainian serviceman peers out from a tank at a front line position near Kostyantynivka, Donetsk region on 18 June, amid the Russian invasion of Ukraine. Photograph: Anatolii Stepanov/AFP/Getty Images

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Updated at 18.14 EDT

[10h ago](#)[17.04](#)

**The Pentagon is considering sending four additional rocket launchers to Ukraine, Politico [reports](#).**

According to US defense department officials speaking to the outlet on anonymity, the US may likely send four more High Mobility Artillery Rocket Systems, making the total about of HIMARS eight.

The decision will be “based on Ukrainian immediate needs”, the official told Politico.

Another official said: “We expect to be transferring more HIMARS and more [guided] rounds soon.”

Nevertheless, [Ukraine](#) has been asking for additional weapons, as **Oleksandra “Sasha” Ustinova, a member of the Ukrainian parliament**, told Politico:

The Russians are 200km on our land ... To shoot them there, we need a long range to be used on our territory, because otherwise, it's just a ping pong game of artillery.

Ustinova went on to say that the four HIMARS already approved by the US will not be enough, adding: “We asked for 10 times more.”

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Updated at 17.55 EDT

[11h ago](#)[16.22](#)

**Yuliia Paievska aka “Taira”, the Ukrainian captured paramedic who was freed from Russian captivity earlier this week, has released a video thanking the Ukrainian president, [Volodymyr Zelenskiy](#), for her release.**

“I thank the president of Ukraine, Volodymyr Zelenskiy, for organizing this exchange. I always believed that everything would be exactly this, and everyone who is now on the other side, they know everything will work out,” she said to the camera.

The 1st video of the paramedic Yuliia Paievska "Taira" after turning back from the Russian captivity.

□: Andriy Tsaplienko [pic.twitter.com/P2umtLjtQj](https://pic.twitter.com/P2umtLjtQj)

— Euromaidan Press (@EuromaidanPress) [June 18, 2022](#)

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Updated at 16.44 EDT

[11h ago](#)[15.42](#)

## Russia and Ukraine carry out a prisoner exchange - report

Russia and [Ukraine](#) have carried out a prisoner exchange, the Kyiv Independent reports.

Five captured Ukrainian individuals were returned to Ukraine on 18 June in exchange for five captured Russian individuals, according to the Ukrainian defense ministry's intelligence directorate.

⚡Ukraine, Russia exchange 5 prisoners.

Five civilians returned home on June 18 in an exchange for five Russian prisoners of war, Ukraine's Defense Ministry's Intelligence Directorate said. Four of the released civilians were taken prisoner during fighting in the Kyiv region.

— The Kyiv Independent (@KyivIndependent) [June 18, 2022](#)

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Updated at 17.20 EDT

12h ago15.15

**Ukrainian president [Volodymyr Zelenskiy](#) presented state awards to border guards in Odesa as he visited the troops in southern Ukraine on Saturday.**

“I want to thank you from the people of Ukraine, from our state, for the great work you are doing, for your heroic service. It is important that you are alive. As long as you live, there is a strong Ukrainian wall that protects our country,” Zelenskiy said.

□ □ На Одещині Президент України вручив прикордонникам державні нагороди

«Хочу подякувати вам від народу України, від нашої держави, за ту велику роботу, яку ви робите, за вашу героїчну службу. Важливо, що ви живі. Поки ви живі, є міцна українська стіна, яка захищає нашу країну. [pic.twitter.com/YW8Ni4Uo1Y](https://pic.twitter.com/YW8Ni4Uo1Y)

— Держприкордонслужба (@DPSU\_ua) [June 18, 2022](#)

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12h ago14.49

**A big explosion rocked an area near the besieged Ukrainian city of Sievierodonetsk on Saturday.**

Reuters reports:

*A large orange-coloured cloud could be seen rising into the air, a Russian-backed representative said.*

*Rodion Miroshnik, an official in the self-styled separatist administration of the Luhansk People's Republic, posted a video of what he said was the cloud on the Telegram messaging app.*

*Miroshnik said he could not tell whether the blast had occurred in the city or near it.*

*Sievierodonetsk - which Russian troops have been shelling for weeks - is home to the Azot chemical plant, where hundreds of civilians are sheltering.*

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13h ago 14.22

**Russian missiles destroyed a fuel storage depot in Novomoskovsk, a town in eastern [Ukraine](#), on Saturday.**

According to the head of the regional administration, three people have been sent to the hospital.

**Valentyn Reznichenko** posted a photo of what he said was a large blaze at the depot.

The head of the Dnepropetrovsk region said that three more missiles hit an oil depot near Novomoskovsk. A large fire broke out at the site.  
<https://t.co/PLpUAF9HVL> [pic.twitter.com/MJVfANMPzh](https://pic.twitter.com/MJVfANMPzh)

— Victorvicktop55 (@vic\_top55) [June 18, 2022](#)

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13h ago 13.41

**Russian forces have targeted a gas processing plant near Izium, Kharkiv, the Kyiv Independent reports.**

⚡ Governor: Russian military shelled gas processing plant near Izium, Kharkiv Oblast.

According to Kharkiv Oblast Governor Oleh Synehubov, several missiles hit the plant, causing a massive fire. Rescuers are trying to extinguish it.

— The Kyiv Independent (@KyivIndependent) [June 18, 2022](#)

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Updated at 14.59 EDT

[14h ago](#) [12.57](#)

## Summary

The time in Kyiv is just coming up to 8pm. Here is a roundup of the day's main headlines:

- The Ukrainian president, [Volodymyr Zelenskiy](#), has said that “Ukraine will definitely win” during a working trip to the southern city of Mykolaiv, as relentless fighting in the country’s east continued on Saturday.
- Several hundred potential war crimes committed by Russian troops in Ukraine are being investigated by German authorities.
- It is important that Britain continues to show it is supporting Ukraine for the long haul, the British prime minister, Boris Johnson, said on Saturday, warning of a risk of “Ukraine fatigue” as the war drags on.
- Russia is sending a large number of reserve troops to Sievierodonetsk from other battle zones to try to gain full control of the frontline eastern

city, the governor of Ukraine's Luhansk region has said.

- Ukraine's defence intelligence directorate said on Saturday that five Ukrainian civilians had been returned in a five-for-five prisoner swap with Russia.
- Hundreds of mourners gathered in Kyiv to say their goodbyes to a young Ukrainian activist who was killed fighting on the frontline. Roman Ratushnyi, 24, died on Saturday while battling Russian forces in Izium, which has been subjected to relentless shelling, according to Associated Press.
- Lithuanian authorities said a ban on the transit through their territory to the Russian enclave of Kaliningrad of goods that are subject to EU sanctions would take effect from Saturday.
- Rockets hit a southern district of Ukraine's central city of Kryvyi Rih on Saturday, leading to at least two casualties, local authorities said in posts on the messaging app Telegram.

That's it from me, Tom Ambrose, for today. My colleague Maya Yang will be along shortly to continue bringing you all the latest news from [Ukraine](#).

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Updated at 13.06 EDT

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## North of England

# Boris Johnson accused of ‘contempt’ for north by snubbing Doncaster for Kyiv

Tory MPs in north of England warn PM he cannot take seats won from Labour’s ‘red wall’ for granted



Boris Johnson met Volodymyr Zelenskiy in Kyiv instead of being headline speaker at Northern Research Group event. Photograph: Ukrainian presidential press service/EPA

*[Aubrey Allegretti](#) Political correspondent  
@breeallegretti*

Fri 17 Jun 2022 13.19 EDT Last modified on Sat 18 Jun 2022 00.12 EDT

Boris Johnson has been accused of showing “total contempt” for the north of England as a senior Tory MP warned him it was an “illusion” to think the party would comfortably hold seats that it won for the first time in 2019 at the next general election.

Anger erupted after the prime minister pulled out of a conference in Doncaster at the last minute, with those in “red wall” seats turning on the prime minister.

Members of the 50-strong Northern Research Group (NRG) of Tory MPs were promised that Johnson would be the headline speaker at their event for hundreds of activists – hours before he was due to speak.

It later emerged that the prime minister was in Ukraine, meeting President Volodymyr Zelenskiy. A source told the Guardian that a meeting between Johnson and Zelenskiy on Friday had been scheduled in the “government grid” for at least a week.

One Tory MP said the visit was “not an excuse” as Johnson “could have gone there any time”, and added: “Even his most loyal supporters here are pretty pissed off.” Another said it was “no loss to us”, but cautioned: “The PM ought to be making every effort to support and respect the people who hold his future in his hands.”

A senior NRG source said that the group, which represents one of the biggest caucuses within the Conservative party, represents constituencies that helped secure Johnson his 80-seat majority and “came through for him” during last week’s confidence vote.

“That goodwill is gone,” they said, adding that Johnson’s actions had “shown a total contempt for colleagues, contempt for members and contempt for the north”.

Jake Berry, chair of the NRG, earlier delivered a warning to Johnson to deliver on promised tax cuts and said the government should not take the dozens of seats it won in Labour’s former heartlands for granted. He was not confident, he said, that the Tories would hold on to Wakefield in next week’s byelection.

After the chancellor, Rishi Sunak, signalled that he would wait until spiralling inflation subsided before cutting taxes, Berry said it was “time to

stop talking about being the party of low tax and become the government of low tax”.

While the support for households announced by Sunak was welcomed by Berry, he said he did not believe that “prices will have come down by this time next year”, so a “different approach” of lowering taxes was needed, “because that’s permanent”.

He said there was a “causal link” between the UK being the only country in the G7 that is “facing a cost of living crisis by putting taxes up” while experiencing “the slowest-growing economy”.

Berry said he was “really disappointed” at Johnson’s no-show, but that he understood the prime minister “does occasionally have to do other things than come to Doncaster – although for us, that would be our top priority”.

The prime minister was defended in a series of tweets by Ben Wallace on Friday evening. The defence secretary called criticism of the trip a “lot of rubbish”, adding: “As a Northern MP myself, I am not affronted by the fact he had to cancel speaking at the conference … Helping Ukraine win and trying to help at home are linked.

“Part of the inflation we see comes from gas and food prices which are partly driven upwards because of this conflict.”

Impressing the importance of Johnson engaging with the NRG, Berry said that “people who think that the Conservative party now has a right to win in the north of [England](#) are suffering from a sort of illusion … I think what was different about 2019 was that there was an acceptance of that, there was a sort of owning up by the Conservative party that we need to do better and we’ve got a plan to do it.

“People understand that Covid has intervened, but … political theory without implementation is simply hallucination – and we’ve now got to move ruthlessly to implement real change for people.”

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Berry also cautioned: “Parties who fail to listen to the electorate face political annihilation.”

Although Johnson missed the chance to hear from his northern Tory MPs and activists, Berry said he would “phone him tomorrow” to push for the key ideas the NRG was promoting.

Among them was granting local areas with metro mayors tax-setting powers, a new levelling up formula to distribute money more equally across England, and a pledge by the government to increase the number of young people pursuing higher-level apprenticeships from 21% to 50% by 2030.

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## Boris Johnson

# **Boris Johnson may have to give evidence under oath about whether he lied to MPs**

Privileges committee investigating whether PM misled parliament when he said ‘no Covid rules were broken’



‘All guidance was followed’: Boris Johnson denies claims of illegal parties in 10 Downing St during PMQs on 1 December 2021. Photograph: Jessica Taylor/UK Parliament/AFP/Getty Images

*Aubrey Allegretti  
@breeallegretti*

Fri 17 Jun 2022 12.00 EDT Last modified on Sat 18 Jun 2022 00.11 EDT

Boris Johnson could be ordered to give evidence under oath when MPs begin a new investigation into claims he lied about Partygate.

The privileges committee is expected to start its inquiry within the next month and will aim to deliver a verdict by the autumn on whether Johnson misled parliament. Sessions are likely to be held in public, in an attempt to limit potential criticism about the group's work and avoid any accusations of a "cover up".

A call for evidence may also be set up before the summer recess, for people – including potential whistleblowers working in No 10 – to submit any testimony or evidence.

The committee will not seek to reinvestigate the extent of Covid law-breaking in Downing Street, which was the subject of inquiries by Scotland Yard and Whitehall, but will instead focus on whether Johnson misled MPs.

Challenged in the Commons about initial reports of parties in No 10 last December, the prime minister repeatedly denied strict lockdown rules were breached. "All guidance was followed completely in No 10," [he told the Commons](#) on 1 December. A week later Johnson said: "I have been repeatedly assured since these allegations emerged that there was no party and that no Covid rules were broken."

As part of the inquiry, sources said Johnson would probably be called to give evidence under oath given the seriousness of the allegation against him. The ministerial code says that those "who knowingly mislead parliament will be expected to offer their resignation to the prime minister".

The step of requiring a witness to give evidence under oath to a parliamentary committee is not unprecedented but rarely used. The Parliamentary Witnesses Oaths Act stipulates that the oath is administered by the committee's chair or clerk, and any false evidence carries the penalty of perjury.

After criticism over the handling of the Met and Sue Gray inquiries, a source said of the privileges committee investigation: "The adults are in charge now."

Whitehall insiders believe that some evidence Gray decided not to publish, such as further photographs from the dozen parties investigated, could be released by the privileges committee. Senior Tory MPs have [sought to discredit the potential findings of the privileges committee](#), claiming that the Labour MP Harriet Harman, who is expected to be installed as chair during the inquiry, has made biased comments against Johnson.

This week, Michael Ellis, the paymaster general, said it was “an age-old principle of natural justice that no person should be a judge in their own court” and that “where an individual has given a view on the guilt or innocence of any person, they ought not to then sit in judgment on that person”.

He added: “I have no doubt that the right honourable lady will consider that.”

Labour has called the pushback an effort by the government to “dodge scrutiny and get Johnson off the hook”.

After the embarrassing [resignation of his ethics adviser, Christopher Geidt](#), for threatening to break the ministerial code, the prime minister was urged not to leave the role permanently vacant. Abolishing the position would be “quite a big mistake”, said John Penrose, a Tory MP who recently quit as the government’s anti-corruption tsar.

He added: “I think one of the reasons why it’s important to have some continuity, why it’s important to have – if not a precise replacement then an effective succession here – is to make sure that you don’t leave really quite damaging questions dangling and that anything that’s outstanding doesn’t just get forgotten and lost.”

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Penrose said Johnson was “currently overdrawn, if I can put it that way, on his account with both the voters and with the parliamentary party” and that No 10 needed to show it was “serious” about addressing their concerns.

Downing Street defended its review of the ethics adviser role, saying the prime minister would take advice from those within No 10 as well as “others with expertise in this area”.

“It may be that the prime minister decides to make a like-for-like replacement, or it might be that we set up a different body that undertakes the same functions,” a No 10 spokesperson said.

They refused to commit to the review being completed within a year, saying: “I wouldn’t get into timelines.”

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[Tom Tugendhat](#)

## **Tom Tugendhat hints at future bid to be Conservative leader**

Foreign affairs committee chair tells party it should drop focus on ‘divisive politics’ and says he is ambitious for himself



Tom Tugendhat says he ‘won’t rule out’ standing for leadership of the Tory party. Photograph: Niall Carson/PA

*[Aubrey Allegretti](#) Political correspondent  
[@breeallegretti](#)*

Fri 17 Jun 2022 12.00 EDT Last modified on Fri 17 Jun 2022 12.14 EDT

Tom Tugendhat has hinted that he will run to replace [Boris Johnson](#) in the next Conservative leadership election, as he warned that the party was too focused on “divisive” politics.

The Tory backbencher said his party was not like “a church, with one true faith, one Pope”, but that MPs should “offer ourselves forward for service”

when another contest for the top job is held.

After 41% of Conservative MPs declared they had no confidence in Johnson's leadership, and with the prospect of two byelection losses looming next week, Tugendhat admitted the government was facing difficulties during its midterm period.

Asked by the Guardian if he would rule out standing for leader, Tugendhat said: "No, I won't rule it out. And I won't rule it out because I think that we should be ambitious for ourselves, for our communities and for our country ... We should offer ourselves forward, and then it's up to colleagues and the country to choose.

"We shouldn't be resentful about [if] the choice doesn't go in your way. But you should offer yourself for service. That is literally the point of being in public service, is to offer yourself."

Addressing Tory MPs at the Northern Research Group conference in Doncaster, which Johnson pulled out of at the last minute due to a visit to Ukraine, Tugendhat admitted there were "perfectly legitimate" questions about the party's waning poll ratings.

He said the past few years had been "more trying than I think it should have been" and that the government had been "too willing" to "listen to those divisive voices".

Tugendhat, who represents the "blue wall" seat of Tonbridge and Malling in Kent, said backbenchers could still have a "powerful voice" within the party. He added: "You can actually change policy as a backbencher in our party, you can drive the change that not only does your community need, but actually the whole country needs."

Tugendhat, a former soldier who now chairs the Commons foreign affairs committee, which has been deeply critical of the UK's withdrawal from Afghanistan last summer, has been touted by some as a potential leadership contender.

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Johnson has vowed to fight on, and is now immune from another no-confidence vote for 12 months.

However, his opponents believe that they may be able to get the group of MPs that set the rules – known as the 1922 Committee – to halve the period of safety in an attempt to force him out.

They are hoping the privileges committee investigation into whether the prime minister misled parliament over Partygate will cause more Tory MPs to call for him to go.

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## Byelections

# Byelections to test ‘toxic’ Boris Johnson’s appeal with voters

Analysis: Losing seats of Wakefield and Tiverton and Honiton would be ‘massive overturn’ for Conservatives



A bad night for the Tories will throw the focus back on to Johnson and the effects of the Partygate scandal. Photograph: Jessica Taylor/AP

*[Heather Stewart](#)*

Fri 17 Jun 2022 11.17 EDT Last modified on Sat 18 Jun 2022 00.07 EDT

Last week’s confidence vote showed that [Boris Johnson](#) still has the support of his backbenchers – just. But on Thursday, the prime minister will face two critical tests by the voters who really matter: the British public.

A pair of by-elections, one in Wakefield and the other in Tiverton and Honiton, will help wavering MPs answer the question of how toxic their beleaguered leader has become with the electorate.

“It’s a really interesting coincidence of the calendar that we’ve ended up with these two by-elections on the same day, because the key to Johnson’s victory in 2019 was his ability to win over these more socially conservative, leave-oriented voters in the ‘red wall’ while retaining traditional Conservative support in the south of England ... What the result next week may well point to is that neither half of that works any more,” says Robert Ford, professor of political science at the University of Manchester.

### [Graphic showing historical by-election swings](#)

The Conservative party HQ is strongly playing down the party’s hopes – losing both seats has almost become the expectation in Westminster.

But election experts say losing the Devon seat of Tiverton and Honiton, where the [Conservatives](#) had a 24,239 majority just two and a half years ago, would be an extraordinary moment.

“If they lost both, that would really be a huge thing, because of Tiverton and Honiton. That’s a massive overturn,” said Stephen Fisher, professor of political sociology at the University of Oxford.

“The seat has only existed since 1997. It was a close-run thing between the Liberal Democrats and the Tories in 1997, but it’s basically always been Conservative ... Last time it was 60% for the Conservatives and just 15% for the Liberal Democrats. It would be an enormous swing – and that’s in a seat that voted 58% leave.”

Even a narrow win by the Conservatives in this true blue, rural seat should represent a shock, and could unsettle many Tories who had previously considered themselves safe.

The swing required for Labour to take Wakefield is smaller at 3.75% – much less than the move in the national polls since the 2019 general election.

But Fisher says even a 3.5% swing to Labour, if replicated nationwide, would be good news for Keir Starmer. “If Labour win the Wakefield by-election, that suggests they are at least on course to be the largest party at the next election,” he said.

The result will certainly be closely monitored in Labour's HQ. Starmer's team have sought to calm shadow cabinet jitters about his personal performance in recent days, arguing that they have a clear strategy to win back swing voters in target seats.

A solid victory in Wakefield on Thursday would encourage them to stick to that approach, guided by data analysis rather than short-term political pressures.

Many of the former Labour seats Johnson won in the “get Brexit done” election of 2019 are held by Conservatives with small majorities. If replicated nationwide, a swing of 3.75% could see about 35 Tory MPs swept aside – though that could be mitigated slightly if looming boundary changes are implemented.

If the swing is bigger, it could prompt jitters among a much larger group of Tory MPs, some of whom may not have thought of themselves as at risk before.

That may help explain the fact that Tories are throwing everything at next week’s races. Activists on the ground in both seats say the Conservative campaigns appear better resourced and organised than recent contests, such as the North Shropshire by-election last December where the Lib Dems scored a surprise victory after the resignation of Owen Paterson.

Cabinet ministers have hit both constituencies in earnest in recent weeks.

Johnson’s allies have their script ready for Friday morning. They will argue a by-election is a “free hit” for voters who are not choosing a government, and the outcome would be different at a general election.

They will also say that the kind of tacit pact around the by-elections – with Labour focusing on Wakefield and soft-pedalling in Tiverton, and the Lib Dems doing the opposite – would be harder to pull off nationwide.

“It’s a free hit,” said a party source. “It’s not going to change the government. What you’re seeing is, the Lib Dems have shed the toxicity of the coalition days so they’re now a legitimate protest party.”

But whatever the spin, a bad night for the Tories will throw the focus back on to Johnson, and the effect of the Partygate scandal on voters' perceptions of him and his party.

Ford says that while the prime minister appears unlikely to be moved by even disastrous results, his MPs should take heed. "It is my firm view that trust in politicians and positive images of politicians never come back. It's asymmetric. If you lose it, it's not coming back," he says.

"Johnson is not the kind of bloke who is going to take seriously a message like, 'I'm sorry, your appeal is now shot with voters'. He just won't believe it. But the truth is, he is toxic. He's been toxic for ages. He will remain toxic all the way through to election day."

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## 2022.06.18 - Spotlight

- [The book that tore publishing apart ‘Harm has been done, and now everyone’s afraid’](#)
- [Interiors How a young couple turned a ‘crap’ old caravan into a luxury family home](#)
- [‘There was practically a riot at King’s Cross’ An oral history of Harry Potter at 25](#)
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[Kate Clancy](#)

## **The book that tore publishing apart: ‘Harm has been done, and now everyone’s afraid’**



‘The controversy,’ Kate Clanchy says, ‘really took on a life of its own and hurt everybody.’ Illustration: Justin Metz/The Guardian

Kate Clanchy’s memoir about teaching won the Orwell prize. Then, a year later, it became the centre of a storm that would engulf the lives of the author, her critics and dozens of people in the book trade. So what happened?



Gaby Hinsliff

Sat 18 Jun 2022 04.00 EDT Last modified on Sat 18 Jun 2022 07.13 EDT

At the end of March, a book that had been condemned to die came back to life. There was no star-studded launch, and no great fanfare, although this book is now somewhat famous. The new publisher of the poet [Kate Clancy's memoir Some Kids I Taught and What They Taught Me](#) felt it wrong to cash in on the controversy that has engulfed it. So the new editions – with some intriguing changes to the original text – were quietly resupplied to bookshops willing to stock them.

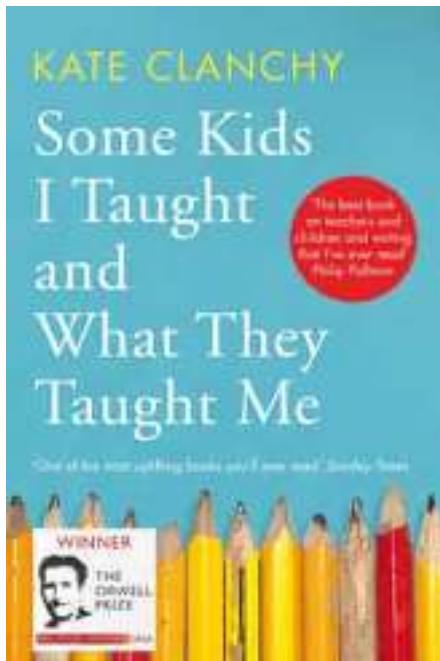
What follows is a tale that reverberates well beyond publishing. It's about whose voice is heard, which stories are told, and by whom. But it has broader implications for working life, too, particularly in industries where so-called culture wars raging through the outside world can no longer be left at the office door.

When *Some Kids* first emerged in 2019, Clancy was much admired for her work at an Oxford comprehensive, teaching children from diverse backgrounds to write poetry, with sometimes luminous results. A celebration of multicultural school life, coupled with candid reflections on her own flaws, *Some Kids* was lauded by reviewers and [won the Orwell prize](#) for

political writing, with judges praising a “brilliantly honest writer” whose reflections were “moving, funny and full of love”. But then things began to unravel.

In November 2020, a teacher posted on the amateur reviewers’ website [Goodreads](#) that the book was “centred on this white middle-class woman’s harmful, judgmental and bigoted views on race, class and body image”, using “racist stereotypes” to describe pupils. The author, she said, wrote of their “chocolate skin” and “almond eyes”.

Clanchy hit back, initially on Goodreads and then in July 2021 on Twitter, claiming “someone made up a racist quote and said it was in my book” and urging her followers to challenge reviews she said had caused threats against her. Literary giants, including the 75-year-old children’s author (and president of the Society of Authors) Philip Pullman, [rose to her defence](#). Yet it quickly emerged that those phrases (although not, as we will later hear from Clanchy, everything attributed to her) were in the book. Her prickly response not only sat awkwardly with Some Kids’ theme of a narrator open to learning about herself – one who believed, she wrote, that deep down “most people are prejudiced; that I am, that prejudice happens in the reading of poetry as well as everything else” – but had unintended consequences for her critics, too.



Clanchy's book, parts of which have since been rewritten

Three writers of colour, Monisha Rajesh, Prof Sunny Singh and [Chimene Suleyman](#), who had challenged Clanchy on Twitter, endured months of racist abuse and sometimes violent threats, despite [Clanchy's own publisher, Picador](#), describing their criticisms as "instructive and clear-sighted". An 18-year-old autistic writer named Dara McAnulty, who had [questioned Clanchy's description](#) of two autistic pupils as "jarring company", was forced off social media by abusive messages. Picador, having initially apologised, saying Clanchy would rewrite the book, then announced this January that it was [parting company](#) with her by mutual consent. (She has suggested Some Kids would have been pulped had Mark Richards, co-founder of the new publishing house Swift, not [bought the rights](#).) Clanchy, who lost both her parents and got divorced in the same year her career imploded, meanwhile [disclosed in December](#) that she had, at times, felt suicidal.

The row erupted at an anxious time for publishing, following similar pushback at novels ranging from Jeanine Cummins's 2020 book [American Dirt](#) – whose portrayal of a migrant Mexican family was critically acclaimed, until Latin American writers accused its author (who is of Irish and Puerto Rican heritage) of [peddling stereotypes](#) and inaccuracies – to the queer black author Kosoko Jackson's A Place for Wolves, a gay love story set during the Kosovo war that was [withdrawn in 2019](#) at the writer's request after Goodreads reviewers attacked his representation of Muslim characters.

The Nobel prize winner Kazuo Ishiguro has recently suggested authors are running scared of an "[anonymous lynch mob](#)" online, while the novelist Sebastian Faulks vowed no longer to describe female characters' appearance after being criticised for doing so in the past. Debate rages over whether these are long overdue correctives, or represent the stifling of imagination; whether art has the right to offend, and whether publishing would be navigating all this less clumsily if it weren't a predominantly white middle-class industry itself.

That Some Kids got so far without ringing alarm bells merely confirms some of its critics' suspicions of a business employing many people like Clanchy,

but few who resemble her pupils. Yet others in the industry are troubled that one writer was seemingly left to face the fallout alone, as a scapegoat for wider collective sins.

“It was a group fail,” says one veteran agent, who asks to remain anonymous. “I think the publisher failed in their duty of care to the writer. I think the author failed in her duty of care to her pupils, and in saying that she didn’t write what she did. Nobody emerges from that story well. Harm has been done, and now everyone’s afraid.”

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Monisha Rajesh is in Sweden, on a train heading for the Arctic Circle, when we speak. A travel writer, she is enjoying returning to the work she loves after a stressful few months. Lots of people criticised Some Kids, she points out, including hundreds of teachers who signed an open letter questioning whether Clanchy (who carefully anonymised her pupils for publication) had adequately safeguarded them. But it was Rajesh, plus fellow writers Singh and Suleyman, who were identified as leading the Twitter charge, for what she feels were “quite obvious reasons – the angry brown people trope”. Avalanches of racist hate mail ensued. Every time the story hit the headlines, she’d log off social media or get someone else to sift her emails but, even then, she says, it was unavoidable. “I would start getting WhatsApps from friends saying, ‘Are you OK?’, and I’d think, ‘Oh God, another one.’ It preoccupies you. I’d be trying to put my kids to bed and I’d get a WhatsApp ... it’s never-ending.”

As a mother of two young daughters, Rajesh was upset by the “general lack of kindness” in Clanchy’s often very physical descriptions of children; the “butch-looking” Pakistani girl with her “distinct moustache”; the Essex boy with the “Ashkenazi nose” who surprises her by denying he has Jewish roots; the white girls from council estates whom she deems not pretty, or destined to end up fat like their mothers. The text is peppered with references to children’s “Somali height”, “Cypriot bosoms”, or one star pupil’s “Mongolian ferocity”. But something about it also stirred painful memories from Rajesh’s own schooldays.

There are certain authors or subjects people won’t touch – they know what the reaction will be on social media

“I had teachers like her,” she says quietly. “I had teachers who did absolutely put me to one side as being the small child with the fury eyebrows or the ’tache and they made you feel like outsiders – without necessarily meaning to do it, but they did. And it didn’t matter how well meaning they were, it did make you feel small and it troubled you later in life.”

She rejects accusations of trying to “cancel” Clanchy as a writer. “You’re not being cancelled, you’re being challenged. You’re not used to being challenged, and, now you are, you don’t know what to do about it. And it’s only going to happen more now that marginalised readers and editors feel more empowered. All it boils down to is: please stop writing about us like this.”

In the book, Clanchy writes indignantly about how her pupils lost out to white children in the judging of literary prizes, or rarely saw themselves represented in books; her supporters point to her years of advocacy for marginalised youngsters whose poetry she published in anthologies. But for Rajesh, the implication that a “good liberal” couldn’t have erred feels shortsighted. “The narrative started to swing towards: ‘But this wonderful woman who’s done this wonderful stuff with children’s poetry – how on earth could you possibly fault someone like that?’ and I felt it was a real blind spot.” The row wasn’t even about Clanchy personally, she says, so much as what publishing was enabling.

For many of its critics, Some Kids crystallised deeper frustrations with an industry avowedly keen to change, yet seemingly slow to do so. Publishing has moved on since the days when, in one agent’s words, “everyone was called Sebastian”. In March, the [Publishers Association](#) announced its target for 15% of staff to come from ethnic minority groups had finally been met. And while a [2016 survey](#) by the trade magazine The Bookseller found fewer than 100 of the thousands of books published that year were written by people of colour, [research for the Publishers Association](#) suggests that number may now have risen.

Nonetheless, suspicions persist that, as one novelist of Asian heritage puts it, it’s still easier for white people to get published writing about minority communities than for people from those communities to break through: “People want the diverse voices, but they want white people to write those

diverse voices. The staff aren't diverse, so they will read the manuscript and the feedback you'll get is, 'I couldn't relate to this, I don't relate to these situations.' And it's like – well, no, you wouldn't."



Amy Mae Baxter: 'I'm white-passing Asian, and often I'm the darkest person in the room.' Photograph: Maria Epishkina

Amy Mae Baxter was still a publishing trainee in 2019 when she founded Bad Form, an online magazine for writers of colour. "I didn't know any who were being published, and I didn't know anywhere I could go and find out about ones who were," she explains. Now 25, she got into publishing herself via a Penguin Random House scheme for graduates from marginalised backgrounds; she now works for the Dialogue Books imprint led by one of the few senior black figures in publishing, [Sharmaine Lovegrove](#). Three years on, Baxter reckons, most of the scheme beneficiaries have left publishing: "People come in at the bottom, they suffer, and then they leave, and that's why the numbers aren't changing. I'm white-passing Asian, and often I'm the darkest person in the room."

This March was a "huge month" for Bad Form, thanks to a flurry of black-authored titles commissioned in response to the 2020 Black Lives Matter protests finally hitting the shelves. Her worry, however, is that they're all now competing with each other, meaning some might not sell as well as they

otherwise could have. The real test may come later this year when these writers seek second book deals.

Sites like Bad Form are part of a changing dynamic within publishing, whereby word-of-mouth buzz on Instagram, [BookTok](#) (a powerful influencer community on generation Z's favourite social media channel, TikTok), and grassroots sites like Goodreads increasingly drive sales alongside established industry forces such as major bookstores and newspaper review sections. BookTok, says Baxter, "shifts books like you wouldn't believe. A book like *The Spanish Love Deception*, by the Spanish writer Elena Armas – that's been in the Sunday Times bestseller list for two weeks in a row, and it's been out for over a year. It's amazing, and all because a bunch of teenage girls liked it enough to make 10-second videos about it."

By comparison, Twitter doesn't sell many copies (one industry source says wryly that it's full of "the sort of people who get sent books for free"). But it's where writers, agents and editors come to research ideas, gossip, and argue in public. Despite the vitriol of its exchanges, Rajesh says the site was nonetheless one of the few places marginalised writers could be heard on the subject of Some Kids. After tweeting about it, she says, she was swamped with private messages from younger publishing staff saying, "Thank you for what the three of you did, because we've felt like this for a long time and we're too frightened to speak up." Crucially, some of them came from inside Picador.

Last December, Picador's publishing director, Philip Gwyn Jones, told the Daily Telegraph he [regretted not being braver](#) in defending Clanchy, adding that younger staff seemed to believe they must agree with every book they issued. His words triggered such an internal backlash that he was forced to apologise, vowing to "use my privileged position as a white middle-class gatekeeper with more awareness", while Picador's insistence that his were not the imprint's views sparked rumours of internal divisions. Few in the industry will now discuss this painful subject on the record.



‘Like all pendulum swings, it’s gone to a sort of crazy place.’ Illustration: Justin Metz/The Guardian

The Clancy fallout is not the only subject that is off the table in publishing circles. “There are certain authors or subjects people just won’t touch, because you know what the reaction will be on social media. People don’t want to be sworn at,” says a rival publisher. “I’ve heard mid-ranking people in publishing say, ‘I’d love to say something but I’ve got a mortgage to pay.’ It’s a really unhappy situation where everyone I know is having conversations behind closed doors.” The fear is not just of inadvertently publishing something problematic but of being accused of “micro-aggressions” against junior staff. “You might think we have a lot of power, but they have a lot of power on social media to destroy someone. Everyone’s saying half-jokingly: Am I going to get cancelled?”

What’s often portrayed as a generational divide, pitching “woke” young millennials against an ageing establishment, is in reality not so simple. Like the arts and academia, publishing is historically left-leaning and tends to attract the idealistic and value-driven at all ages. But it’s also dominated by recruits who can afford to do unpaid internships and move to London. The net result, this publisher argues, is an intake of privileged graduates anxious to compensate for their privilege, and growing resistance to publishing conservative voices they might disagree with. More than one industry source

dates these tensions to Brexit and the rise of Donald Trump leaving many younger staff in particular keen not to fuel what they see as dangerous fires.

Last year, more than 200 employees at the US publisher Simon & Schuster [signed a petition](#) urging the firm not to publish a memoir by Trump's vice-president, Mike Pence. Similar protests followed across the industry over books by the rightwing philosopher [Jordan Peterson](#) and "alt-right" activist [Milo Yiannopoulos](#), while in Britain some staff at JK Rowling's publisher, Hachette, were unhappy about working on her children's picture book, *The Ickabog*, in light of Rowling's views on trans rights.

The authors of the two big gender-critical feminist books published last year in Britain, Helen Joyce's *Trans: When Ideology Meets Reality* and Kathleen Stock's *Material Girls*, have both described battling to get published in Britain, and neither got US publishing deals. Caroline Hardman, the literary agent who originally approached Stock and suggested she write the book, stresses it is not uncommon for multiple editors to reject a title before one accepts it, but confirms that several editors passed on it. "Some people were saying, 'Nobody will buy it; there's no interest in this topic.' But that wasn't what I was seeing in my life – there was this groundswell of grassroots feminism and I had become aware of the Gender Recognition Act consultation [on making it easier to self-identify as trans]. I was thinking, 'This is a really big thing,'" she says. "I did have some people who were interested, but knew they would get backlash internally."

Eventually, Joyce's book became a bestseller for Oneworld. "Some editors have since written to me and said, 'I wish I'd been braver,'" says Hardman. But while Stock and Joyce have proved there's a market for gender-critical writing, Hardman isn't sure it will be easier for others to follow: "You still get pushback, particularly in the US."

My books have been depublished. I've lost my living. I'm shamed – I don't know if that's cancelled enough? I'm not dead

The American publisher Skyhorse has established a reputation for publishing titles cancelled by its rivals, including Blake Bailey's biography of the novelist Philip Roth (dropped following [allegations of sexual](#)

[harassment against Bailey](#), who denies any wrongdoing), and Woody Allen's memoirs. Some have wondered whether Clanchy's new publisher, Swift, envisages a similar anti-cancel culture model here. But when asked if this was the thinking behind republishing *Some Kids*, Richards says with feeling: "There are easier ways to make money." He and his business partner simply felt that the book should be available and that nobody else would do it. "What I would say is we feel that publishing has a duty to stand by its authors, and in that particular case this hasn't happened." Picador, which has held its tongue since severing ties with Clanchy, did not want to comment for this piece. But the publisher's unwillingness to defend a book whose every line it had previously cleared for publication still puzzles some of its rivals.

As founder of the feminist publishing house Virago, home of writers from Margaret Atwood to Maya Angelou, [Carmen Callil](#) is known for pushing the boundaries in publishing. She once resigned from the judging panel of the International Booker prize rather than see it go to Roth, "yet another North American", at the expense of writers beyond the English-speaking world. Now 83 and retired from the industry, although still writing her own books, she is one of few senior figures prepared to reflect openly on *Some Kids*. She feels that both Clanchy and Pullman (whose publisher asked him to apologise for supporting Clanchy) were badly failed. "The first [duty] of a publisher is to their author. In neither case did the publisher go to the author and say, 'It looks as if we're in trouble here – what would you like me to do about it?'" she says. Callil [resigned from the Society of Authors](#) after concluding it had sided with Clanchy's critics – something she blames on the author [Joanne Harris](#), chair of its management committee, who declined to be interviewed for this piece.

While Callil does concede that "you can't call children chocolate-coloured", she feels Clanchy's years of helping young people find their voices should count for something. "The point Philip Pullman was making is that these are terrible times for writers if they're not going to be allowed to say things that are within the bounds of human understanding, that aren't racist by massive intention." Last month, [Pullman resigned](#) from the Society of Authors, saying he did not feel free to express his opinions in the post; the historian and writer [Marina Warner](#) also quit, warning of a "climate of anxiety" among authors. By email, Pullman says what most dismayed him was "the

instant and unthinking cowardice on the part of publicists, organisations, institutions, corporations – the rush to abase themselves, and to try and make people like me abase ourselves, too, in the face of politically based criticism”.



Philip Pullman, whose publisher asked him to apologise for supporting Clanchy and who last month resigned from the Society of Authors, saying he did not feel free to express his opinions in the post. Photograph: Jeff Gilbert/Rex/Shutterstock

The idea that writers who tackle difficult subjects cannot necessarily rely on their publishers' backing in a storm clearly alarms some. One literary agent was approached recently by a white writer, asking if it was still acceptable to write a mixed-race character. "I said, 'Yes, you're a novelist – of course you can, but what you do have to prove is that you've done proper research, that you're not just objectifying that character,'" she says. "That's what fiction is for. It's to do with looking through other people's eyes." But in nonfiction, she concedes, a more permanent shift may be under way. "Maybe we've too easily thought that we can tell anybody's story without any deep understanding."

One option for writers is enlisting a sensitivity or authenticity reader, who uses their own lived experience to advise on whether a text feels clumsy. To

some, that's censorship – Spectator columnist and novelist Lionel Shriver has said she'd rather quit writing – and to others it's an unsatisfactory compromise, allowing famous white authors to expand their repertoires, rather than enabling more authentic voices to break through. But growing numbers agree with the author Juno Dawson, who used a sensitivity reader for a mixed-race character in her new novel, on the grounds that if she had accidentally caused offence, "I'd rather know while the book was a Word document and not on the shelves".

Georgina Kamsika is a sensitivity reader for south Asian characters in everything from adult fiction to picture books. She checks for historical accuracy, authenticity and anything that instinctively makes her wince. "The general idea is to make sure that it will do no harm – there's nothing in there that's offensive or wrong or will give the wrong impression." Growing up in Yorkshire as the child of Indian immigrant parents, Kamsika remembers "kids calling you things like 'monkey-brain eater'" because of the way Indians were depicted in the film Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom. But while children's publishers have long exercised caution, aware that children take stories very literally, in adult publishing the use of sensitivity readers is infinitely more controversial.

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Kamsika stresses that authors can always just ignore her recommendations. But the biggest misconception about sensitivity reading, she says, is that it promotes blandness. "It's almost exactly the opposite. We want things to be rich, but just flavoured correctly. We want it just to taste like the correct recipe." Often that means suggesting details writers can add to create livelier, more rounded characters. But she also recommends that authors ask themselves honestly whether they have the skills to tell a particular story. "Stories that are about pain, stories about being a person of colour, stories about slavery, stories about colonialism – those are stories that aren't really easy for somebody else to write about."

Since there is no officially recognised qualification for sensitivity readers, standards may well vary. Clanchy, who initially rewrote parts of Some Kids

in response to the controversy, [publicly ridiculed the three readers](#) Picador commissioned last autumn to double-check this new version: one, she wrote scornfully, even suggested she capitalise the name of the poet e.e.cummings. The version she took to Swift was strictly her own work. Yet, on comparing it with the original, almost all the passages for which she was initially attacked have been rewritten. Gone are the chocolate skin and almond-shaped eyes, moustaches and “jarring” autistic traits; a pen portrait of an obese ex-pupil is noticeably softened. Yet the book’s spirit is – for better or worse – unchanged. If Picador had originally published something like this, could much grief have been avoided?

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Making tea in the basement kitchen of her house in Oxford, Clanchy reaches for a mug emblazoned with a picture of her late mother, Joan, once a well-known headteacher. She has spent months clearing out her parents’ house, processing grief as she goes, and is feeling better than she did in December when she wrote for Prospect magazine that the shame of literary ostracism had made her want to die. But she still seems fragile, shrinking into the corner of an armchair, legs and arms protectively crossed. “My book is not a racist book, it’s an anti-racist book, and the ways that it was portrayed completely misportrayed the sense of the passages,” she says firmly, clutching the mug.

She has a new part-time teaching job, but would rather I didn’t say where, in case of recriminations; she still does creative writing work with asylum seekers, and is writing poems herself for the first time in years. Does she hope to be published again one day? “I expect I will write, in a way. I think I’m interesting; I think people are interested.”

Clanchy isn’t sure if she has actually been cancelled. “My books have been depublished, which is very unusual. I have lost my living. Everyone I know has suffered, all of my personal relationships have suffered. So I’ve suffered and I’m shamed and I’m unhappy a lot of the time – I don’t know if that’s cancelled enough? I’m not dead.” She has been called a white supremacist, accused of “Nazi-adjacent thinking”, and says that some “quite respectable people” mocked her bereavement online. “I think there is something about grieving that provokes rage – why should she have sympathy when we don’t have sympathy?””

She still doesn't know, she says, why Picador initially decided against defending the book; her editor, who was about to leave the imprint, wasn't party to the decision to issue an apology. But it was her Prospect essay that triggered her final exit. Picador asked her not to write it, after the PR disaster of Gwyn Jones's interview, but she didn't see why she shouldn't; after that, she says, both sides concluded it was over. Yet it sounds as if the relationship really began breaking down last summer, when Picador apologised without (she says) consulting her, a decision she thinks merely encouraged her critics. "In not standing by the text they said, 'You can say anything bad about this text, as bad as you like. It's a free-for-all. You can destroy this person's professional life.'"

She removed the contested phrases from the new version of *Some Kids* because they couldn't be read without resurrecting the row, she says, not because she necessarily agrees they're offensive. The girl whose "almond eyes" she wrote about, from the persecuted Hazara ethnic group in Afghanistan, has since said publicly that [she liked the description](#) and sees it as part of her identity; Clanchy is adamant that Hazaras see their looks as part of the basis of their oppression. "It's a politicised, important phrase and to take it out and say it was a piece of colonialism is a ludicrous and false caricature." Similarly, she wrote about one boy's chocolate skin, she says, "because that's what that young person constantly used in their own work". It was, she adds, "as a kind of hidden tribute to that person. I didn't mean to upset anybody but I'm quite happy to remove that if it upset people."



Kate Clancy: ‘I wish it hadn’t happened, but I don’t un-wish my book.’  
Photograph: Linda Nylind/The Guardian

But she’s audibly exasperated with the sensitivity readers’ response to what she regards as essentially factual statements, like her blunt assessment that children with foetal alcohol spectrum disorder (brain damage caused by mothers drinking in pregnancy) don’t progress at school. “If we’re going to object and say that because something is sad we mustn’t say it – that’s a fundamentally worrying thing about publishing.”

If she’d had sensitivity readers from the start, though, couldn’t they have caught some of the wording that upset people and caused her such grief? She’s unconvinced; there would always, she thinks, have been something. When I ask if given the time again she would still write *Some Kids*, she says: “I think the controversy really took on a life of its own and hurt everybody, and I wish that hadn’t happened, but I don’t un-wish my book. I don’t think I shouldn’t have written it.” Her greatest regret, apart from no longer being invited to teach other teachers, is that ex-pupils who publicly defended her have been “patronised and disbelieved”.

Clancy does concede that she “overreacted” to the initial Goodreads criticism, while insisting she genuinely didn’t use some phrases falsely attributed to her, like “slanty-eyed” and “Jewish nose” (although she did

write “Ashkenazi nose”). She remains bewildered by what befell what she thinks of as a “gentle, liberal” book. “I truly don’t understand, although obviously I worry and wonder about it a lot.”

In other creative industries, so-called cancel culture has proved a surprisingly elastic phenomenon, with high-profile figures bouncing back from what looked like professional oblivion, and a vigorous pro-free speech movement emerging. The comedian [Dave Chappelle](#) returned to Netflix last year within months of being supposedly “cancelled” for jokes deemed transphobic. Elon Musk’s [promised takeover of Twitter](#) may also change the role it plays, with conservatives expecting the billionaire and free-speech absolutist to end what they see as suppression of their views on social media. At least one veteran agent predicts that publishing, too, will eventually find a new equilibrium: “I feel like the pendulum will swing – not back to where it was; I don’t want it where it was. It is a necessary corrective. But like all pendulum swings, it’s gone to a sort of crazy place. We’ll come back to a new normal, and there will be important discoveries of new writers in that.” Yet few see a route back into mainstream publishing for Clanchy, for reasons perhaps more complex than they look.

Liberal as it undoubtedly is, there’s something distinctly confrontational about Some Kids, thanks partly to Clanchy’s compulsive candour about things more self-protective writers might withhold; her feelings on escorting an 18-year-old ex-pupil to a gay club, or comparing her pupils’ instant scoffing of the biscuits distributed in class with what she regards as her own middle-class ability to resist instant gratification and stay slim. It’s faintly reminiscent of Adam Kay’s medical memoir [This Is Going to Hurt](#), another Picador title recently adapted for [television](#), in which some perceived [misogynistic overtones](#).

Kay’s labour-ward tales of gory deliveries and prolapsed vaginas also described things he had witnessed but as a man cannot personally experience; he, too, wrote sometimes brusquely about people he saw at their most vulnerable. The positive birth campaigner Milli Hill has said that it’s telling how many people found all this hilarious, right up until women who had endured traumatic births objected. Yet Callil, a lifelong scourge of misogyny, tells me she loved Kay’s book. Is one woman right and the other

wrong? Or are these judgment calls – whether made by editors, sensitivity readers, critics or book buyers – sometimes more subjective than we’re comfortable acknowledging?

In both books there’s a jangling disconnect between a sometimes abrasive narrator’s voice and their nurturing professions, which throws the reader off balance. Kay has said TV producers praised his bravery in “making your character so actively dislikable”. Yet the occasional callousness many readers found hurtful can be an indicator of professional burnout in medicine, and Kay did ultimately quit. Had he smoothed that out, perhaps a dimension of the story would have been lost. Would the same be true if Clanchy had written something less spiky?

As it is, both books reveal perhaps more than their authors consciously intended; that doctors aren’t always caring; that teachers can be judgmental in private; that good people can think harsh thoughts. It may even be the exposure of such unpalatable truths that turns “writing into art”, as the [Orwell prize criteria](#) put it. But only, perhaps, where those truths are worth the pain.

- This article was amended on June 18 to correct an editing error; it is Helen Joyce’s book that is published by Oneworld, not Kathleen Stock’s.
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## How a young couple turned a ‘crap’ old caravan into a luxury family home



The sitting area of the new ‘luxury lodge’. Photograph: Michael Franke/the Guardian

Stylist Hannah Bullivant radically downsized into a second-hand static caravan to save for a deposit

## Nell Card

Sat 18 Jun 2022 03.00 EDT

In January 2021, Hannah and Dave Bullivant posted a leaflet through every letterbox along the main road in their village. The note asked the residents of Oare in east Kent if they could move their cars on a particular day to make way for a wide load that would be travelling through the village to a field behind their friends' house.

“There were two or three incredibly tight corners with very, very old buildings on either side,” says Dave. “We knew it was going to be tight.” Within moments of the leaflet landing, Dave’s mobile started to ring. “It caused such a furore,” he recalls. “People were coming out on to their doorsteps to voice their concerns. It took all of my placation skills to calm everyone down and explain that it’s all going to be OK.”

For Dave, Hannah and their children, Frankie, 10, and Auden, five, this was just the beginning of their downsizing journey – a two-year plan that would see them move out of their long-term rental, buy a secondhand mobile home, transform it into a “luxury lodge” and, ultimately, save towards a deposit on their first home together.



Dave and Hannah outside their formerly ‘crap’ caravan Photograph: Michael Franke/the Guardian

In 2020, the family was given six months’ notice on their rental – a three-bedroom house in nearby Faversham. “At the time, we couldn’t really find anything else suitable,” says Hannah, an interior stylist. They were talking through their predicament with friends who live nearby, on the edge of Oare nature reserve. “We’ve camped in their field a lot over the summers,” Hannah says, “and were half-joking when we asked if we could have an extended camp in their field in order to save some money and think through our plans ...”

There were a few things I was sad to part with, but I couldn’t tell you what any of those things are now

*Hannah*

As the conversation deepened, both families realised they could make this a formal – and mutually beneficial – arrangement. Hannah and Dave would buy and renovate a static caravan and live rent-free on their friends’ land, during which time they hope to save for a mortgage deposit. At the end of the two years, the Bullivants would move out and the lodge would become guest accommodation for visiting friends and family.

For both families, it was important that the friendship remain intact, so they drew up a contract stating that the Bullivants would move out in 2023, and that the £20,000 budget would be divided equally between the two families.

Their first purchase was the caravan, which came from a salvage yard in Sandwich. “It was £150 including delivery,” says Hannah. “Basically, it was a piece of crap. Our mission was to make it look nothing like a static caravan.”

It was winched into position 100 metres from the main house at the end of January 2021; Dave, a commercial music video director, had until May to make it habitable. He would be doing most of the work himself – learning on the job, with input from his friend (the field owner), who is from a family

of builders. “We benefited a lot from his knowledge – and his power tools,” says Dave.

What began as a cosmetic repair job became a full-scale renovation when they discovered a bathroom leak that had damaged a large part of the floor (“it was mushy – just like Weetabix”) and some of the internal walls. They decided to gut the interior, which prompted the decision to add a bathroom extension. This created space for two bedrooms, a freestanding bath, utility cupboard and “luxury composting toilet”, alongside a living, dining and kitchen area.



The dining area leads to two bedrooms and a bathroom extension.  
Photograph: Michael Franke/the Guardian

While Dave launched into the physical labour of the renovation, Hannah sourced the materials. “Once word got out that we were doing this project on a tight budget, friends and acquaintances got in touch to offer us stuff,” Hannah recalls. Kitchen carcasses, double-glazed units and scrap wood were donated. Other stuff was sourced locally via Facebook Marketplace.

At the same time, Hannah was responsible for drastically decluttering their rental home. “We had to get rid of half of our possessions, so we devised a rating system” she recalls. “It was fairly brutal. If an item didn’t score 10,

we had to get rid of it.” Hannah – who also teaches decluttering and home-styling courses online – revelled in the task. “There were a few things I was sad to part with, but I couldn’t tell you what any of those things are now.” What wasn’t sold was donated to a local sharing community or left in boxes outside their front door for passersby to rummage through and rehome. “It feels very freeing, to not have much stuff,” says Hannah. “Plus, we can clean and tidy the whole place in about an hour: that, I love.”

Most of their furniture was sold, aside from a few treasured pieces: a Rambert Ballet poster, a small chest of drawers, and a couple of vintage lamps which are being temporarily stored in Dave’s sister’s loft. “We brought very little with us: just a few small artworks, a bench, a step ladder and the kids’ bunk beds,” says Hannah.

Canny storage features throughout. In Hannah and Dave’s room, the bed has been raised to create space for deep storage boxes. These have been hidden behind a repurposed linen table runner. Raising the bed had the added benefit of bringing them closer to the view over Oare marshes: “The sun rises just behind those oak trees,” says Hannah.

The light-filled living space incorporates gentle shades of pastel that connect with the colours outside

### *Hannah*

In the kids’ room, the space has been cleverly bisected, with each child choosing a favourite colour for their bunk space. Built-in shelving, cork boards, hooks and a soft-toy hammock allow them to hold on to just enough of whatever it is they are into, and moss-green curtains enclose each bunk, giving them time alone when they need it.

The light-filled living, dining and kitchen space is in gentle pastel shades that connect with the colours outside. Again, Hannah has been clever with storage by raising the legs of the corner sofa to create space for boxes of toys to slide in and out. There are small concessions to luxury throughout, too: an engineered oak floor; William Morris wallpaper in the loo, a dinky wood-burning stove and a boiling-water tap.



The bathroom extension has a freestanding luxury bath. Photograph: Michael Franke/the Guardian

“There’s enough separation and space between us, so we don’t ever feel like we’re living on top of each other,” says Hannah. “But we are able to live quite communally – we grow veg and garden together, we eat together a couple of times a week in their house or in the field. The children go to school together, so we share childcare and school lifts. In summer there are lots of kids running around in the field that overlooks the sea and the marsh. It’s idyllic, really.”

Outside, the flimsy external shell has been heavily insulated and clad in timber so that it no longer shakes when the wind gusts across the exposed estuary. The wood is gradually silvering and disappearing into the landscape that surrounds them. “We feel very lucky to live here,” says Hannah, who is already looking forward to a summer of playdates under wide, rosy skies.

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## **‘There was practically a riot at King’s Cross’: an oral history of Harry Potter at 25**



‘I was 25 and new to the job, and the very first manuscript I was given was Harry Potter and the Philosopher’s Stone.’ An illustration from a 2015 edition by Jim Kay.

Secrecy, stunts and subterfuge: publishers and collaborators reveal the magic that went into creating a children's classic 25 years ago

Lisa Allardice

Sat 18 Jun 2022 03.00 EDT

"He'll be famous – a legend – every child in our world will know his name." So predicts Professor McGonagall in the opening chapter of Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone. Breaking sales records from the beginning, Harry Potter is the biggest success in children's publishing history, making its author, [JK Rowling](#), one of the most famous writers in the world. But on 26 June 1997, when the first novel in the series was published – after notoriously being turned down by 12 publishers – no one had heard of her boy wizard. Behind this magical story was a team of children's book devotees who helped Harry Potter take flight.

## The manuscript

**Barry Cunningham, head of children's publishing, Bloomsbury (now publisher, Chicken House):** One day the literary agent Christopher Little rang me and said: "I've got this great book, would you read it?" Although he didn't tell me that everybody else had turned it down, I could tell from the manuscript that I wasn't the first to see it. I took it home that night and read it. The most common question everybody wants to know is "Did I see it immediately?" I can't pretend that I did, but I knew children would love it.

**Nigel Newton, founder and CEO, Bloomsbury:** I took the manuscript home but didn't read it myself. I handed it to my daughter Alice, who was eight. She appeared an hour later in a kind of trance. She wrote a little note that said: "The excitement in this book made me feel warm inside. I think it is possibly one of the best books an eight- or nine-year-old could read."



Hedwig delivers the post in an illustration by Jim Kay for a 2015 edition.

**Rosamund de la Hey, children's marketing director, Bloomsbury (now founder of The Mainstreet Trading Company, St Boswells):** I was 25 and new to the job, and the very first manuscript I was given was [Harry Potter](#) and the Philosopher's Stone. Barry handed it over with the words: "Read this. I think it's a bit special." I read it overnight and was completely blown away. I came back into the office slightly possessed. Before the editorial meeting I rolled the first three chapters into a scroll, shoved in a load of Smarties and tied it with a purple ribbon. The scroll was inspired by the Hogwarts school setting and the Smarties were to say, I think it will win the Smarties prize [for children's books]. The children's list had only been going two years, and it hadn't been an outstanding success. We knew we were up against it.

## The acquisition

**Newton:** The next day I chaired the editorial meeting and everyone was humming with excitement. We only had a tiny children's team. Four people. They all sat on beanbags in one room on the fifth floor. Barry asked for authorisation to buy the rights and I said something like: "Alice absolutely loved it – approved!" Everybody else felt the same way. So he offered for UK and Commonwealth rights. He didn't offer for US rights because in

those days we didn't have a US company. I learned that lesson – one year later, I started Bloomsbury USA.

**Cunningham:** I rang Christopher the next day and we had all of 10 minutes' negotiation. I think it went from £2,000 to £2,500, probably the best money Bloomsbury ever spent. Unfortunately, I could only buy UK and Commonwealth rights; I didn't have the money to buy America.

**De la Hey:** Barry got back really quickly because we all fell in love with it. I know several publishers had hung on to it for a long time. HarperCollins must have got wind of it because they came swooping back with an offer. Jo [JK Rowling, who is not taking part in publicity around the anniversary] very loyally said something like: "Get stuffed, I'll go with the one who came back so quickly and has the enthusiasm."

## Before publication

**Cunningham:** Jo came down to London and we had lunch with Christopher Little in a small restaurant in Soho. She said: "How do you feel about sequels?" I said: "Well, let's just get on with this first one." Then she told me the story – she had worked out everything that happens in all of the following books.

I wanted to change the title because I thought it was a bit of a mouthful. But Jo said children love unfamiliar words, so, like all good publishers, I gave way to my author. I did cut a couple of chapters.

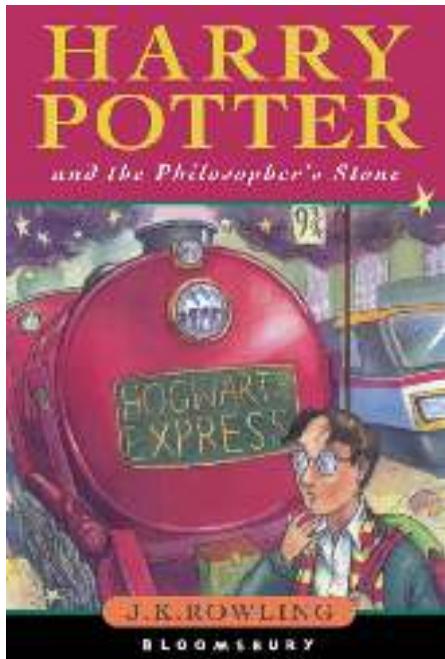
All the stories you've heard are true: she had no money, and was living in Edinburgh and writing in cafes. I said to her – and she teases me about this to this day – you need to get a day job, because you'll never make any money out of children's books. In those days a good seller was a few thousand.



Harry and Hagrid in an illustration from a 2015 edition of Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone by Jim Kay.

**Janet Hoggarth, editorial assistant, Bloomsbury Children's Books:** I left Bloomsbury just before The Philosopher's Stone was published, accepting a job as editor at Scholastic Children's Books. An editor from Scholastic America rang through from an auction house in New York asking my boss if anyone knew what the book Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone was about. He had been given the manuscript but hadn't had time to read it. Bidding was going crazy and he didn't understand why. I was asked to write a brief synopsis and fax it to the auction house. I told him it was going to be bigger than Roald Dahl and told him to bid the absolute top end of his budget. Splashed all over the next day's papers was the news that Scholastic had paid out a whopping \$105,000 for a children's book, an amount unheard of in children's publishing.

**De la Hey:** Just before the UK publication, Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone sold to Scholastic in the US for \$105,000, an astonishing amount of money at the time. Suddenly, rather than begging for the infinitesimal amount of review space that children's books ever get, the story went on page three of the Telegraph. That was a game-changer.



Thomas Taylor's original 1997 cover, and, below, some of the many editions of Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone.

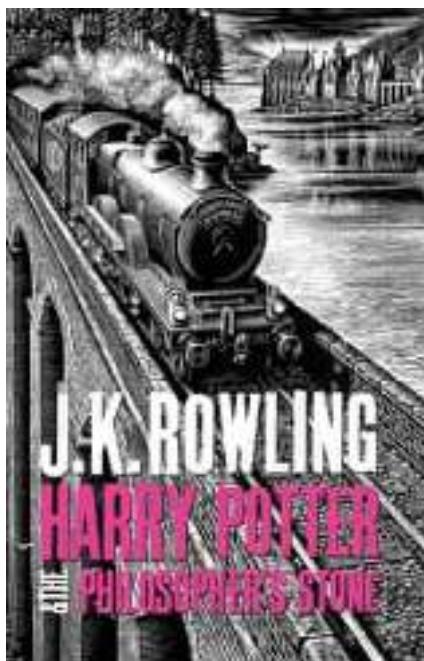
**Thomas Taylor, illustrator of the first book jacket for Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone:** I got a phone call from Barry Cunningham while I was in the children's bookshop in Norwich where I worked after finishing art school. He said he liked my drawings, would I like to do a book cover. I was 22 or 23. I went into London to the office of Bloomsbury, where I met Barry and he showed me this book called Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone by an author I'd never heard of. He gave me the book, a stack of paper which had notes in the margins and chapters missing because the author was still working on it. I read it on the train home and quite enjoyed it.

Barry was very specific about what he wanted. Looking back, I don't think there's enough magic in there, but at the time I was just following instructions. I drew some rough sketches. Once he approved the composition I spent two days with a piece of very nice cold-pressed watercolour paper and I had my crayons and my concentrated watercolours and I created this image. I took it into London to hand it in.

**Emma Matthewson, children's books editor, Bloomsbury (now publishing director, Hot Key):** I was very lucky to arrive at Bloomsbury in 1997. Barry had just left. He had acquired Harry Potter and then he left

before publication to set up his own company. I remember his replacement saying to me: "Look, Emma, it's our list now, if there are any books that aren't published yet that we think we should cancel we should do that now." And Harry Potter was on the list. I started reading it and it was really charming, really funny and full of magical adventures, and I said: "No, we should keep this one. Definitely." That was the moment that yet another publisher might have failed to take on Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone.

From the outset, Jo had written the last paragraph of the last book, which was to become Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows in 2007. In her mind, it was always going to be seven books, and that was where she was going. A lot of our conversation at the beginning was about how the story was going to unfold. I wanted to get rid of the giants at one point, but she wanted to keep them because they would be important in book seven.



## The reception

**Lindsey Fraser, executive director of Scottish Book Trust and children's books reviewer:** There were loads of good books around at the time, but things were a bit gritty and grisly. When I read Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone, I remember thinking: "Ah, this is a breath of fresh air."

I wrote the [first review](#) as part of a roundup for the Scotsman, only about 80 words. We were lucky to get space for children's book reviews at all at that time. Fortunately I liked it. It said something like: "This has all the signs of a classic of the future." Thank goodness.

**De la Hey:** The reviews were stunning. After the Smarties prize shortlist in October I made a bet with Nigel that we'd sell 20,000 copies by Christmas and he laughed me out of town. He still owes me a case of champagne.

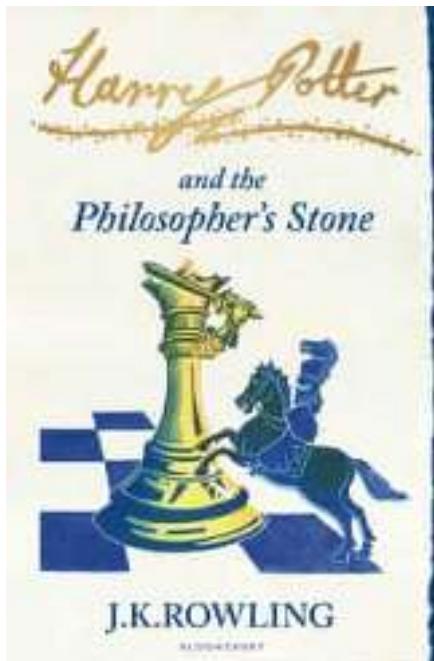
**Taylor:** We had 10 of the first hardback editions stacked up on a table at the front of the shop. I kept thinking I should buy one, but thought I'd wait for the signed copy they were going to send me. About six months after publication, I began to realise this book was becoming really quite popular. My colleagues kept saying to customers: "Do you know who this is? He illustrated the cover art." People didn't believe it because why would I be standing behind the till? It was very awkward and embarrassing. Of course, those 10 books all went and I didn't buy one, so I never had a first edition.

**Julia Eccleshare, children's books editor of the Guardian (now director of Hay Children's festival and author of A Guide to the Harry Potter Novels):** I was the chair of the Smarties book prize the first year JK Rowling won in 1997. The judges chose three books and submitted them to a huge panel of children from across the country. The author judge that year was Malorie Blackman, who immediately said that she thought Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone was the best book. As soon as we got the votes back from the children we were overwhelmed by their support for this novel.

**De la Hey:** I got back from the party and threw Smarties around the entire office. The win led to an [interview with Konnie Huq on Blue Peter](#), which, because it was on TV, revealed that Rowling was a woman. Until then all the fan mail was addressed to "Dear Sir". All of it. The first book cover proof has "Joanne Rowling" on it. Before publication, I remember saying: "This book is completely unisex, we don't want to put off boys." I was also aware that the children's writer Jacqueline Wilson, hugely popular at the time, was another long female name. Emma rang Jo and asked how she'd feel about using initials. Jo said: "OK, fine, you know best." And Emma said: "So what's your initial?" Jo replied "K" very quickly – she doesn't have a middle name, she just took her grandmother's name, Kathleen.

**Hoggarth:** It was my job to check the final proofs before they were sent off to the printer, and as usual this was always done against the clock in a blind panic. I had inadvertently left a typo on the back cover and on page 53 as part of the Hogwarts kit list – wand was listed twice – but it was too late. Those first edition copies are now worth thousands because of my mistake!

**Newton:** We printed 5,150 paperbacks and 500 hardbacks. That may sound small but it isn't. I've never had a first edition. I read the typescript of the next book, Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets, en route to a family holiday in France and as I read each chapter, I'd throw it in the bin on the ferry.



## The events

**Matthewson:** The first time I met Jo in person was when I went up to Edinburgh for one of her first events. It was in the back room of a pub that you reached up a shadowy staircase. She turned to me and said: “I am so nervous. I am so nervous.”

**De la Hey:** The launch of the paperback of Chamber of Secrets, book two, in 1998, was the first to be held at King's Cross station, London. I had contacted a bunch of potential Dumbledores through an acting agency. The

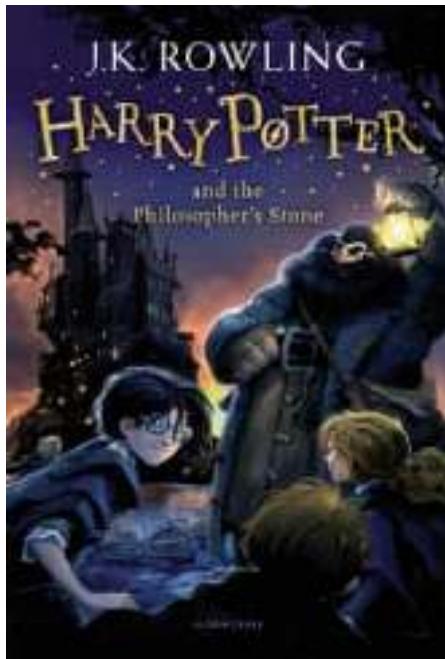
guy who did it was called Jeffery Dench, who turned out to be Judi Dench's brother.

**Newton:** For the third book, Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban in 1999, I borrowed the idea of a timed release from movie companies. We chose 3.45pm to stop children playing truant from school. There was a photograph on the front page of the Daily Telegraph of a queue of children outside [The Lion & Unicorn Bookshop](#) in Richmond. For the later books I changed it to midnight because we were having to be global.

**Tony West, assistant manager of The Lion & Unicorn bookshop (now manager of The Alligator's Mouth bookshop, Richmond):** Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban must have been the first children's book to be embargoed. We had all dressed up for the launch and I was wearing stripy trousers trying to look Dumbledoreish. With only one till in the shop, it was all hands on deck. We took out bowls of snacks to keep the crowds happy while they waited. With book four came the midnight launches, and the queue stretched right down the alley towards the green. It was a special event for all the family, children and teenagers, everyone in the crowd had dressed up as witches and wizards. I've been in bookselling nearly 30 years and I haven't seen anything like it before or since.

**Newton:** For the release of Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire in 2000 we hired the dining carriage in which the Armistice treaty had been signed, and put together a whole Edwardian train which left from King's Cross.

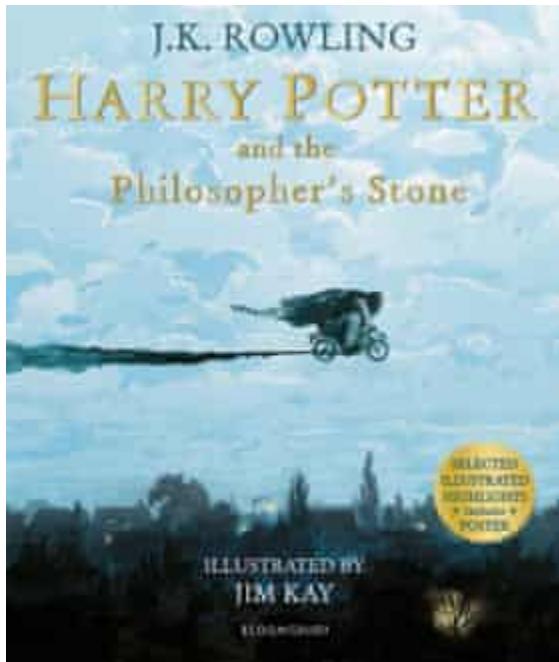
**De la Hey:** We had to get special permission to paint the train scarlet and do the signs. There was practically a riot on the platform at King's Cross. There were parents behaving very badly trying to get closer and someone stowed away in the cold storage. It was quite an epic tour of four or five days with two events a day and 500 kids at each stop. What we didn't realise is that there's a very big train-spotting community on the internet, so the further up the country we got we were followed along sidings. At one point between Newcastle and Edinburgh, we stopped suddenly because we had run out of coal, and a crowd began to amass.



## The secrecy

**Newton:** I remember getting a phone call from Christopher Little saying: “Nigel, drink, The Pelican, six o’ clock!” And I thought: “Oh, The Pelican, that means there’s a book.” [Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix, 2003.] So I drove to this pub near Stamford Bridge football ground, not too far from Christopher’s office, and he was sitting at the bar with a pint and a Sainsbury’s bag at his feet. We never mentioned Harry Potter. We just had a drink, and when I left I was carrying the Sainsbury’s bag. It was a classic dead-letter drop. I drove the manuscript home in a state of excitement and fear and put it by my bed and stuck the title page of David Guterson’s forthcoming novel on the top as we had a houseful of Harry Potter fans by then. I read the book through the night in bed. I even put it in the safe for a couple of hours. The next day I drove it to Emma’s house, and was so relieved to hand it over.

**Matthewson:** I had the call from Nigel, saying “Can I come round to your house?” Which is a little unusual for the CEO of the company. He turned up and said: “I have something for you,” and presented me with this bag. And I said: “Is it what I think it is?” And he said: “Yes, it is. Right, we must celebrate.”



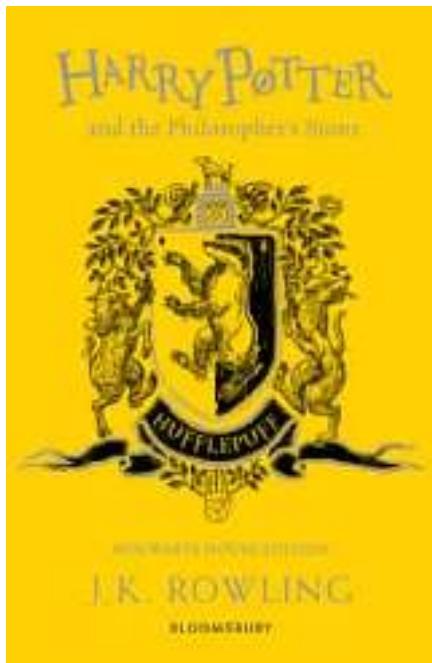
## Pottermania

**Newton:** One tabloid allegedly sent a guy with a briefcase with five grand in it to the printers and was stopping people as they came off shift saying: “Will you go and get me Harry Potter?” The landlady of the pub where he was staying heard this and alerted us, and we got the police there. It was one of many Harry Potter theft stories. The worst one was with book six, Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince. One of the guards at the printers conducted an auction between the Sun and the Mirror. The reporter from the Sun decided to rescue the book. The guard ran after him and shot him, deliberately wide. Meanwhile, the reporter from the Mirror rang the police and it took seven of them to restrain the guard, who was a body builder. [The book was saved](#). The next day the Sun’s front page was: “I looked down the barrel of a gun – and thought I was about to die for the sake of Harry Potter.”

**Matthewson:** I was given a laptop that had never been connected to the internet, so I had to back everything up on floppy disks. I would keep the manuscript and the disks under my bed. When I had friends round, if someone went up to the bathroom, I would find myself quietly following them, just in case. At that point in time reporters were going through Jo’s dustbins.

In the early days, after I finished working on it, I would take the script to a safety deposit box at Coutts bank. Eventually, Bloomsbury bought me the biggest safe that Banham could supply. It was so heavy we needed extra floor support upstairs, but at least I could go out.

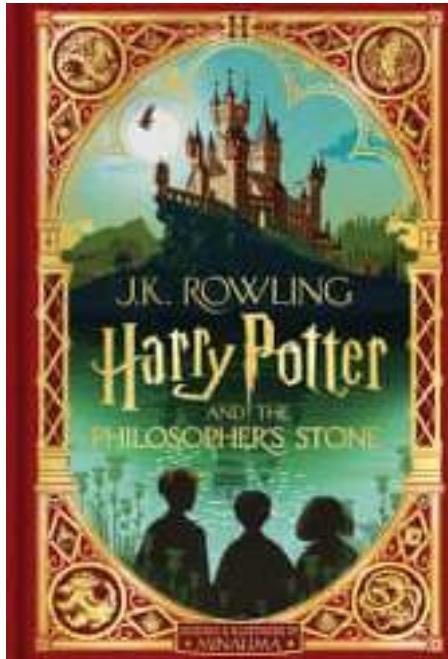
**De la Hey:** If you could have stopped the madness at the level of book three, Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban, that would have been perfect. I feel nostalgic for that time of innocence when it was us against the world, just wanting to tell as many people as possible about this incredible book. By book four it was sanctioned that only four people were allowed to read it, and by book seven nobody apart from Emma could read the manuscript, not even me.



## The editing

**Matthewson:** Our emails were encrypted, and we would discuss small edits, but always just bits, so that it would be difficult to work out what it was. Jo and I were both pregnant at the same time, first while we were working on Order of the Phoenix in 2003 and then again while we were working on the Half-Blood Prince in 2005. By this point, there was no way that Jo was coming to London, because it was all so secret, so I would take the train up to Jo's house in Edinburgh. I had this dog-eared manuscript in my bag, and

when I went to the loo I would take it with me. Then we would work on the edits at Jo's kitchen table, which neither of us could quite get close to. It was very intense and we both had this other very important deadline.



## The legacy

**Newton:** If you are publisher that is what you live for - to change the world by getting people to read your books. And the Harry Potter books are more popular than ever.

**Eccleshare:** Children who love to read used to be thought of as bookworms, a bit isolated, but that all changed. Everybody was reading the same book, talking about it became a big thing, and parents were talking to their children about it because they had read it too. Coinciding with the publication of Philip Pullman's His Dark Materials series, the success of Harry Potter gave children's books both intellectual respectability and incredible earning power.

**Taylor:** I didn't want to talk about it for a long time, because this Harry Potter shadow seemed to be constantly pursuing me. My very first piece of art has followed me around for my whole career. I am proud to have done the cover and to have had that magical start to my career, but I'm pleased to

have arrived at a point where it's OK to talk about it without it distorting everything else. I always wanted to write successful books on my own terms. I don't do the illustrations for my own books, the Malamander series. I get asked all the time: "Why did you do the cover for Harry Potter, but you don't do the covers for your books?"

**De la Hey:** I left Bloomsbury after book seven. After Jo's all-night signing for Deathly Hallows, I went to stay with friends for the weekend. As I hadn't been allowed to read the manuscript, I obsessively read the book the whole time – I didn't talk to anyone. Harry Potter completely dominated my life for 10 years.

**Matthewson:** On the publication of the final book in 2007, I was sitting on a train and I looked up and there were three different passengers all sitting there reading Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows. I said: "I edited that!" I couldn't resist it. They just looked at me. All they wanted to do was to get back to reading. It's only now, after 25 years, that I feel able to speak openly about it.

**Cunningham:** Leaving Bloomsbury was a bit like leaving the Beatles, but I'm glad I did it, because otherwise I'd be talking about Harry Potter for the rest of my life. I am still humbled by my part in this phenomenon that has meant so much to children around the world. In Britain these books are seen as magical, entertaining and warm, but in some countries they are also about standing up to authority, being yourself and not being scared. Harry and his friends have to stick by what they believe in. Every child should believe they have something special inside them, whether it's called magic or not. Harry Potter's legacy is vast, and continues.

*Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone – the 25th Anniversary Edition, is published by Bloomsbury Children's Books.*

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## Makeup

# Revlon: makeup icon falls to social media rivals

The US cosmetics firm has filed for bankruptcy, unable to keep up with online competition and celebrity-led brands



Revlon products on sale in a Boots store in London. The expected boom in post-lockdown cosmetics sales never materialised, causing another headache for the 90-year-old company. Photograph: Hannah McKay/Reuters



Zoe Wood Consumer affairs correspondent

@zoewoodguardian

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The end of the pandemic was supposed to usher in another [“roaring 20s”](#), with bumper makeup sales as wearing lipstick became a “symbol of returning to life”. But the party is over for one of the most storied names of the makeup business, after Revlon collapsed under the weight of its debts.

It is a story of social media star power trumping old-school glamour in today’s beauty industry.

This week Revlon filed for [bankruptcy protection](#) in the US, a legal process that enables the ailing company to continue trading while it figures out how to repay its substantial debts. It is a fall from grace for the 90-year-old beauty icon, which invented matching lipstick and nail polish, and set the pace in beauty halls during much of the 20th century.

During its heyday, Revlon was second only to Avon in sales, but in a sign of its ailing fortunes, the company has now fallen outside the top 20, according to a recent industry poll, as sales shift from beauty halls to the web, and celebrity brands such as Kylie Jenner-backed [Kylie Cosmetics](#) – with its

near-26 million Instagram followers – and Rihanna’s Fenty Beauty are hailed as the new taste-makers.

Revlon’s financial crisis is “not entirely surprising”, says Samantha Dover, the category director of beauty and personal care research at Mintel. “We’ve seen from our data that the recovery from Covid-19 in colour cosmetics has been quite slow. Sales recovered a bit in 2021, but by nowhere near as much as a lot of brands hoped for.”

Due to the pandemic, women have become accustomed to using and buying makeup less frequently, with cosmetics sales in the UK still below pre-pandemic levels, according to Mintel. In the year to April 2020, 44% of women bought a lipstick for themselves, but in 2021 that figure dropped to 30%. It is back up at about 33% today, but Dover says this shows “how demand has dropped and not really come back yet”.

The shift to home working and mandatory masks encouraged many women to neglect or ditch their makeup bag altogether, while the closure of department store beauty halls sent shoppers to the internet, a habit that has stuck. About a fifth of British women now buy their makeup online, a figure that jumps to 52% for 16-24-year-olds.

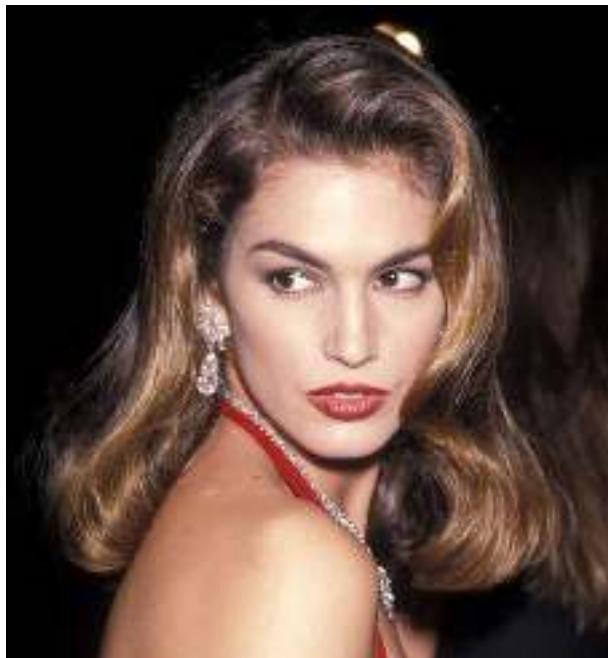
“Online is putting real pressure on legacy brands,” says Dover. “New brands are launching all the time, and because of social media they are much more visible. You can compare prices, research products and check reviews; it is more challenging and competitive than it has ever been before.”

With more women taking their fashion cues from social media sites rather than glossy magazines, the big makeup trend is less obvious than in the days when Revlon’s glamorous red pout held sway. “Everybody isn’t contouring [a hard-to-do blending technique popularised by Kim Kardashian] or going for the ‘no-makeup makeup’ look,” says Dover. “They are somewhere on the spectrum.”

Founded in 1933, Revlon is one of the industry’s most famous names. It was started by Charles Revson, his brother Joseph and a chemist, Charles Lachman, who contributed the L in the name. During the Great Depression of the 1930s, they started with a single product, a nail polish. Using a

blended pigment formula, it was the first red nail varnish at a time when the only shades available were pale and sheer.

Named Cherries in the Snow, it was inspired by the scarlet-lipped Hollywood starlets of their day, and is still on sale today. [Lipstick](#) became the firm's next big item in 1940 after Charles Revson noticed a woman in a restaurant whose lips and nail polish did not match. The subsequent advertising campaign promised women "matching lips and fingertips".



Cindy Crawford at the second annual Revlon Unforgettable Women Contest in 1990 at the Metropolitan Museum of the Art in New York City.  
Photograph: Ron Galella, Ltd./Ron Galella Collection/Getty Images

It has clocked up many firsts since, including being the first beauty company to feature a black model, Naomi Sims, in its advertising in 1970. It also made a big splash in the 1980s with a supermodel campaign featuring the likes of Iman, Claudia Schiffer, Cindy Crawford and Christy Turlington, which promised to make women "unforgettable".

Since the late 1980s, the company, which is listed on the New York stock exchange, has been controlled by the billionaire investor Ron Perelman. In 2016 it bought Elizabeth Arden for [about £600m](#) in a move that added anti-

ageing creams and celebrity fragrances to a company known for selling makeup and hair dye.

However Lia Neophytou, a senior consumer analyst at GlobalData, says its fragrance range mainly comprises “once iconic but now tired” brands, pointing to offerings from pop stars such as Christina Aguilera and Britney Spears.

The brand, with its £7 lipsticks and £9 eyeshadows, is also struggling as agile rivals reach their young audience on social media rather than via the shelves of high street stores. “Revlon should have focused more of its marketing efforts on TikTok to capture impulse spending from shoppers,” suggests Neophytou.



Revlon's CEO, Debra Perelman, has been in charge since 2018. Photograph: Bebeto Matthews/AP

Like other companies, Revlon, with annual sales of \$2bn (£1.6bn), has also suffered from ingredient shortages and steep price rises linked to creaking global supply chains. Debra Perelman – the owner’s daughter, who has been running the company since 2018 – insisted that “consumer demand for our products remains strong”. “People love our brands and we continue to have a healthy market position,” she said.

Revlon only narrowly avoided bankruptcy last year and has a \$3.3bn debt pile to tackle. One way out would be a sale, and on Friday the Indian billionaire Mukesh Ambani's Reliance Industries – which is also in the [running to buy Boots](#) – was linked to a possible bid.

Analysts say lipstick sales thrive in difficult economic times as small luxuries become a way for cash-strapped consumers to treat themselves – an idea captured by the so-called "[lipstick index](#)". But there was no post-Covid "roaring 20s" revival for Revlon – an upturn predicted by rival L'Oréal – and it is perhaps a long shot to think a recession will make its lipsticks more desirable.

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## 2022.06.18 - Opinion

- The pandemic has taken its toll on our friendships. How do we fix them?
- Britain has a decision to make: the rule of Boris Johnson, or the rule of law?
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- Britain has approved Assange's extradition – war criminals and murderers, rejoice

## OpinionFriendship

# The pandemic has taken its toll on our friendships. How do we fix them?

[Claire Cohen](#)

As life returns to ‘normal’, we may have expected these key relationships to spring back too. But it’s not so simple



Social-distancing circles marked out in the centre of Ghent, Belgium, in March 2021. Photograph: REX/Shutterstock

Sat 18 Jun 2022 04.00 EDT Last modified on Sat 18 Jun 2022 11.22 EDT

During the first lockdown, I had a call with the same group of three female friends every Wednesday evening. We would spend an hour or two chatting over video, and however doomful the day had been, the evening would be brighter and sillier. It’s no exaggeration to say that those conversations kept me going – a lifeline when it felt that so many of our personal relationships were drifting – and I didn’t skip a single one. We four are now closer than

ever. Yet, there are other friends I haven't seen and have hardly spoken to since March 2020.

Perhaps you had a similar experience during a time when many of us felt forced to examine the shape of our friendships: whom you could face speaking to, and who inspired little more than a sense of duty to keep in touch, if you did at all. We got used to prioritising our pals, first virtually and later seeing a small number in person when the rules allowed. Many of our friendships were simply “parked” – not ended, but not maintained. We pressed pause, assuming those friends would be equally happy to pick things back up when the pandemic storm had passed.

Plus, we were dealing with new and strange friendship dilemmas: how do I tell her that I'm uncomfortable with not wearing a mask? That I don't want to sneak into her kitchen for supper? That I don't agree with her Facebook post? It's little wonder that a survey by marketing agency Digital Third Coast found [20% of people](#) had unfriended a friend over a Covid disagreement on social media.

Now, though? We're supposed to be almost back to “normal”. Mask-wearing has dropped off and large gatherings have returned. Fewer commuters on trains and empty offices are our only significant daily reminder that all is not what it was.

Well, that and our friendships. Because even now – months after the last restrictions were lifted – some of us are still finding it tough to get them back on track. When speaking to women for my new book on female friendship, I encountered a groundswell of lingering resentment and hurt. It looks as if some of those friends we put on the backburner are destined to never come off.

One woman in her 50s tells me that the post-pandemic fallout in her friend group has worsened over the past few weeks. “There's a lot of bitterness,” she says. “Friends of mine are having blow-up arguments and accusing one another of not having been there when it mattered. Friendships of 20 or 30 years are ending.” A [recent poll by LifeSearch](#) found that almost one in three

of surveyed UK adults have fallen out with friends due to pandemic pressures, losing an average of four friends since Covid began.

In March, Google published a list of our most-searched-for subjects over the past 12 months. At an all-time high were questions such as: “How can I meet new friends?” and “Is it normal to ... be jealous of your friends/argue with friends/not to have any friends?”

“Some people are upset that their friends weren’t there for them in the way they hoped during the lockdowns. But some are upset that their friends aren’t there for them *now*, during a time of need that few of us thought we would experience,” clinical psychologist Dr Sophie Mort tells me. “We imagined that once the lockdowns were over we would feel liberated by being back out in the world. But what I’m seeing in my clinic, and my social circles, suggests that the ongoing struggles in our friendships link to the fact that many people still feel at their limit.

“Pre-pandemic, one or two people in a friendship group would usually have struggles at any one time, meaning that the others would be able to offer support. Now it seems most people are facing something tough. This means that few of us are able to support our friends the way we usually would. It means friendships aren’t functioning the way that they used to.”

It’s the pandemic friendship paradox – we were going through perhaps the ultimate communal experience, yet we became overwhelmed and disconnected from each other. It tested our core beliefs and shared values, as well as sapping our time and energy. And we’re not out of the woods yet.

Women in their 30s and 40s have particularly struggled, as the demands of home schooling, childcare and domestic chores left little time for maintaining friendships. This is the same cohort who, according to [new research](#), are struggling to return to their careers post-Covid and going missing from the workforce.

“When your friendships usually feel deep and connected, disconnection or distance can feel like a rejection, which often leads to resentment, anger, sadness and confusion,” says Mort.

I haven't lost any friends yet ... but there are some relationships that are slowly coming apart at the seams. So is it too late? Mort believes not, and says it's time we started to speak honestly with our friends.

"It's a case of working out what could be done to improve a friendship. Do you need to tell your friend that you miss them? Do you need to say that you need their support? Many of us think that an argument or a period of silence equals the end, when actually – if dealt with effectively – it can strengthen the friendship. A key part is the ability to apologise. Being able to say 'I'm sorry' is extremely powerful.

"There are always ways to improve your friendships. The first question is whether you want to."

- Claire Cohen is a journalist and the author of [BFF? The Truth About Female Friendship](#)
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[Opinion](#)[Conservatives](#)

## **Britain has a decision to make: the rule of Boris Johnson – or the rule of law?**

[Jonathan Freedland](#)



For 800 years, traditions and statute have protected citizens from tyranny. This PM will trash it all



Boris Johnson at this week's prime minister's questions in the House of Commons. Photograph: Jessica Taylor/AFP/Getty Images

Fri 17 Jun 2022 11.50 EDT Last modified on Fri 17 Jun 2022 16.09 EDT

Don't succumb to Johnson derangement syndrome, they tell us. Stay calm. Keep a sense of proportion. Don't get carried away. As a matter of self-care, that might be good advice for those at risk of bursting a blood vessel in their rage at this government and its leader. But learning to shrug off Boris Johnson's conduct carries risks of its own. It can mean missing, or underreacting to, acts that merit furious opposition – such as when, before our very eyes, the prime minister destroys the principle that sits at the very foundation of a free society, a principle first codified in this country eight centuries ago and without which a life free of fear is impossible. I'm talking about the rule of law.

It's so basic, we take it for granted. It's the notion, spelt out in Magna Carta in 1215, that even those in power do not enjoy unlimited or unfettered authority, but are constrained by rules; that even the sovereign – the state – is subject to the law of the land. Only then can citizens feel relatively safe from the threat of arbitrary power, safe from a king – or prime minister – doing whatever the hell he likes.

After 1945, having witnessed the murderous horrors of totalitarianism and seen where unchecked state power could lead, Britain and the US moved to expand the Magna Carta principle. From now on, states would be subject to the constraint not only of their own domestic law, but international law too. The world after Hitler would be a rules-based order.

But look at things now. “We’re fucking breaking international law like it’s one of our five a day,” [one government official tells Politico](#). The frequency is indeed striking. On Monday the foreign secretary, Liz Truss, presented a bill to [“fix” the Northern Ireland protocol](#), “disapplying” – ignoring – those post-Brexit trade rules the government now finds inconvenient.

Put aside the crude politics of it: ramping up yet another battle with Brussels because that was the playbook Johnson won with, and he knows no other. Put aside the fact that most citizens in Northern Ireland not only voted against Brexit but voted for parties that support the protocol and don’t want to see it scrapped. Put aside the stinking hypocrisy of a government complaining about the terms of an agreement it itself negotiated, praised and pushed through parliament just two years ago.

Focus instead on what is actually happening here. The UK government is breaking a binding international legal agreement, and admitting as much in the text of its bill, which invokes the “doctrine of necessity” in seeking to justify its violation of its obligations (a doctrine [that doesn’t, in fact, apply](#) when the “necessity” arises only because of policy decisions the government itself took). No wonder there is [alarm in Washington](#) as well as in EU capitals: a nation that 80 years ago was leading the way in establishing a rules-based order is now apparently bent on destroying it. The New Yorker calls Britain a “[rogue nation](#)”.

That was the clear message that came the day after the Northern Ireland “fix”, when in an [11th-hour ruling](#) the European court of human rights blocked the transfer of a handful of asylum seekers from Britain to Rwanda. Again, ignore the gross culture war motivation behind this policy, the naked desire to rally the 2016 anti-immigration base, to enjoy again the thrill of bashing do-gooding lawyers and “European judges” (even though the ECHR has nothing to do with the EU). Put aside the cruelty of dumping desperate people in a faraway land, the callousness of trying to outsource Britain’s

moral duty – because providing safe harbour to refugees is a moral duty – to an authoritarian state.

Focus instead on the fact that this move was found to be a violation of a convention on human rights drafted in part by David Maxwell Fyfe, a Conservative politician, member of Winston Churchill's cabinet and onetime prosecutor of Nazi war criminals at Nuremberg. And note Johnson's response when asked if Britain should withdraw from the ECHR it had helped create, given the obstacles the convention was placing in the way of the Rwanda policy: "Will it be necessary to change some laws to help us as we go along? It may very well be."

The next day, Wednesday, Christopher Geidt resigned as the PM's ethics adviser, apparently, if not wholly credibly, over a decision on trade policy: tellingly, the move he was asked to approve would have clashed with Britain's obligations under WTO rules. The pattern is plain enough. Without much publicity, the government has, for example, entirely ignored rulings in 2019 and 2021 by the international court of justice and the international tribunal for the law of the sea outlawing Britain's continued occupation of the Chagos islands in the Indian Ocean. As Philippe Sands QC, who has acted in the case, told me: "Britain's reputation is uniquely built on the rule of law – and this government is trashing it."

Of course, the international violations mirror the domestic ones. Whatever the precise nature of the last straw, Geidt's back was broken by the serial rule-breaking of the man he served. Every single minute that he has been prime minister, Johnson has been under investigation, culminating in the fine he received for breaking the law by partying during lockdown – and his refusal to resign once he had. But none of that should have come as a surprise. Johnson demonstrated his contempt for the law within weeks of taking office by proroguing parliament, seeking to bypass and silence the nation's elected representatives. The supreme court thwarted him, but his attitude was clear. "We used to be a country where the rule of law really mattered," says the chair of the Commons standards committee, Chris Bryant. "[All of that is thrown away.](#)"

Gideon Rachman's new book, [The Age of the Strongman](#), includes Johnson alongside the likes of Donald Trump, Recep Tayyip Erdogan and Viktor

Orbán – and this, despite the obvious differences, is one of the chief reasons why. What these men have in common is disdain for any constraint on their own power. If the law enables them to have their way, then it is legitimate. If it does not, it can be broken or ignored. Those who insist on it – lawyers and judges, for example – are demonised as politically motivated partisans, meddling, out-of-touch elitists, “enemies of the people”.

Yet the rule of law is anything but the preserve of the elite. It is the last, most precious protection of the weak against the whims of the strong. It is what stands between us and tyranny. Our prime minister poses a grave threat to it – and it’s not deranged to say so.

- Jonathan Freedland is a **Guardian** columnist
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[Opinion](#)[Keir Starmer](#)

## **Dear Keir, people say that after Johnson a bit of boring would be nice. Unfortunately, people lie**

[Marina Hyde](#)



Without a clear vision, the focus is on personality politics. Starmer is busy looking for one, but so far it's not going well



‘The Labour leader’s got the feel of someone who’d ask for your informed consent before kissing you.’ Photograph: Peter Byrne/PA

Fri 17 Jun 2022 10.00 EDT Last modified on Fri 17 Jun 2022 13.13 EDT

Lord Geidt breaking up with Boris Johnson [over steel tariffs](#) feels like one of those stories about a woman breaking up with a notorious serial killer she has married behind bars. Killers serving life sentences are surprisingly popular on the marriage market – then again, Boris Johnson’s been surprisingly popular on the ethics adviser market. So maybe the steel thing is the politics version of getting your marriage to a homicidal sex offender annulled because he didn’t phone you on your birthday. Some things are just impossible to move past, you know? According to reports, Johnson is now toying with [not having an ethics adviser](#) at all. Maybe just staying ethics-adviser single, and learning to love himself again. It’s called personal growth, actually – look it up.

That said, you get the feeling the one person Johnson really couldn’t stand to lose is [Keir Starmer](#). The Labour leader has had another lacklustre week, which feels almost impressive, given he’s up against a prime minister who recently received a fine from the police for breaking his own laws, took a massive pasting in a no-confidence vote from his own MPs, breaks international law like a wedding vow, and is the guy in charge as the UK barrels towards a recession in the middle of an utterly grim cost of living

crisis. I know Labour is six points ahead, but hantavirus is probably six points ahead of Ebola.

On Tuesday, Starmer told his shadow cabinet to [stop briefing the press](#) that he's boring, telling them the actual boring thing was undermining Labour. Some round the table echoed his sentiments at length, which one attender described to the Guardian as "ironically, very boring". Meanwhile, a [pollster produced a wordcloud](#) based on focus-group comments about Starmer, which appeared to showcase the entire thesaurus entry for "dishwater". The dominant word – yup, "boring" – was surrounded by a constellation of near-synonyms: "dull", "bland", "uninspiring", "nothing", "ineffective", "useless", "unsure" ...

It should be said that when the same pollster ran a similar exercise with Johnson in April, the [prime minister's wordcloud](#) ran the gamut from "liar" to "idiot", via "incompetent", "dishonest", "untrustworthy", "buffoon" and – sorry, but I can never unsee it – "fit". (I don't know what to tell you – maybe they were discussing how fit he was for office.)

Inevitably, some people keep talking up "boring" as a virtue. What the country really needs, they say, is a period of boring government. Mm. Probably. I mean, I really need seven consecutive early nights and to download the Headspace app. But ... it's quite boring, isn't it? So much so that I can already tell it's not going to happen.

Anyway, as my diagnostic fave, Dr Gregory House, knew: people lie. Even people who really need to be helped. They tell you they can't think of a single reason why they could be suffering [flailing and spasms](#). They tell you they want a dull technocrat after the exhausting political psychodrama of the past few years. But they don't tell you they've been taking birth control pills at the same time as undergoing fertility treatment. And they don't tell you that they'd back the next obviously incompetent degenerate that British politics unearthed for a leadership role if they looked like they'd be fun to have a pint of windscreen wiper fluid with.

If Labour had a clear vision, of course, there wouldn't be quite so much focus on the leader. But Labour doesn't have a clear vision. Voters seem to be being asked to surmise one, with only Starmer's personality to go on. That's not working out brilliantly. Forgive me giving rein to my inner focus group participant, but the Labour leader's got the feel of someone who'd ask for your informed consent before kissing you. You sense there'd be a waiver in the air. Once you'd signed it, he'd inform you that the encounter could now progress ... no, hang on a mo. Would you mind doing this against a union jack backdrop? Sorry. It would be helpful for his work.

No doubt Starmer's strategists have spitballed a number of ways of getting him to feel as if he can shoot from the hip. So they'll at least have considered kidnapping him, rendering him to some kind of Labour blacksite (try Scotland), and using a variety of fringe psychological techniques to strip away all the accrued layers of circumspection and repression and lawyerly caution. After that, it's a quick spin in the Emosh-o-Tron before Starmer emerges as The Great Connector, able to tell voters a simple story about where he'd like to take them every time he opens his ring binder. Sorry, his mouth. Old habits! As for what he'd say, numerous lines of appeal are already out there. Personally, I've long felt people's inability to see their GP inside of four weeks, and only after having played the 8am phone queue version of the Hunger Games, feels like a good way in to the general sense of abominable societal dysfunction he might consider offering a way out of.

Is it that the Labour leader can't pull together a vision, or that he won't? Or that he won't because he can't? Until he does, the best thing Keir Starmer has going for him is Boris Johnson, and the best thing Boris Johnson has going for him is Keir Starmer. What an unpromising symbiosis. If you wanted a tagline for prime minister's questions, you could do worse than "the unwatchable v the unbearable".

- Marina Hyde is a Guardian columnist

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**OpinionJulian Assange**

# **Britain has approved Assange's extradition – war criminals and murderers, rejoice**

[Peter Oborne](#)

Priti Patel's decision to hand over the WikiLeaks co-founder shows the price of investigative journalism anywhere the US holds sway



WikiLeaks co-founder Julian Assange on the balcony of Ecuador's embassy in London, August 2012. Photograph: Chris Helgren/Reuters

Fri 17 Jun 2022 10.38 EDT Last modified on Fri 17 Jun 2022 11.25 EDT

Murderers, torturers and war criminals will be toasting the British home secretary, Priti Patel, tonight. [Her decision to approve the extradition](#) of Julian Assange turns investigative journalism into a criminal act, and licenses the United States to mercilessly hunt down offenders wherever they can be found, bring them to justice and punish them with maximum severity.

Julian Assange's supposed crime was to expose atrocities committed by the US and its allies, primarily in Afghanistan and Iraq, during the war on terror. He shone a light on the systematic abuse dealt out to prisoners in Guantánamo Bay. He revealed the fact that more than [150 entirely innocent inmates](#) were held for years without even being charged.

He published a video of helicopter gunmen laughing as they casually massacred unarmed Iraqi civilians in an attack [that killed around 15 people](#), including a Reuters photographer and his assistant.

The US declined to discipline the perpetrators of that atrocity. But they are pursuing Assange to the ends of the earth for revealing it took place.

Once safely in US hands, it's all but certain that Assange will spend the remainder of his life in jail. That's because the US is determined to show that terrible reprisals lie in store for any reporter who runs a story based on US government documents.

That's why Daniel Ellsberg, the former US Marine Corps officer behind the Pentagon Papers revelations that exposed the secret US bombing of Cambodia and Laos, has said that he feels a "[great identification](#)" with Assange's work.

Edward Fitzgerald, Assange's lawyer, argued convincingly in court that Assange's only crime is investigative journalism. For example, the US charge states that he tried to conceal "the source of the disclosure of classified records". Every journalist worth her or his salt would do the same, but the US insists that Assange is guilty of espionage – and the British home secretary shamefully agrees.

While it is true that Patel is an unusually authoritarian home secretary, I suspect that every recent holder of the office, Labour or Conservative, would have made an identical decision. Britain values beyond measure its security relationship with the US.

That helps explain Patel's judgment but doesn't make it any more forgivable. Boris Johnson and his ministers love to claim that they support

press freedom. When it mattered most they dealt it a catastrophic blow.

A blow carried out – it should be noted – with the silent assent of much of the mainstream press. Too many British newspapers and broadcasters have treated the Assange case as a dirty family secret. They have failed to grasp that the Assange hearing leading up to the Patel decision is the most important case involving free speech this century.

Assange's legal team are to appeal, and let's pray that they succeed. If they do not, newsgathering in Britain – and everywhere else where the American government has influence – will become a criminal activity ultimately punishable by incarceration for life in a US jail.

- Peter Oborne is a journalist and the author of *Fate of Abraham: Why the West is Wrong about Islam*
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## 2022.06.18 - Around the world

- [Europe heatwave France braces for record-breaking temperatures as Spain battles forest fires](#)
- ['A one-sided witch-hunt' Angry Trump lashes out at January 6 hearings](#)
- [Floods At least 25 dead and millions stranded in India and Bangladesh](#)
- [China Smoke clouds Shanghai as chemical plant fire leaves at least one dead](#)
- [Canada Priest arrested for 1960s sexual assault at First Nations residential school](#)

## [France](#)

# **Europe heatwave: France braces for record-breaking temperatures as Spain battles forest fires**

Temperature could exceed 42C in parts of France as scientists warn heatwaves will hit earlier than usual due to climate change



People cool off under fountains in Nice, France. The French state weather forecaster says temperatures could reach 42C in some areas on Saturday.  
Photograph: Xinhua/REX/Shutterstock

*Agence-France Presse*

Sat 18 Jun 2022 00.29 EDT Last modified on Sat 18 Jun 2022 03.27 EDT

France, Spain and other western European nations braced for a sweltering weekend that is set to break records and sparked concern about forest fires and the effects of climate change.

Temperatures already nudged over 40C (104F) in parts of [France](#) on Friday.

The weather on Saturday will represent a peak of a June heatwave that is in line with warnings from scientists that such phenomena will now hit earlier than usual because of climate change.

Temperatures are due to relent slightly from Sunday, with thunderstorms forecast in parts of France and elsewhere in Europe.

But French state weather forecaster Meteo France said June temperature records had already been beaten in 11 areas on Friday and could reach as high as 42C in some areas on Saturday.

In [Spain](#), forest fires burned nearly 9,000 hectares (22,240 acres) of land in the north-west Sierra de la Culebra region on Friday, forcing about 200 people from their homes, regional authorities said.

And more than 3,000 people were evacuated from the Puy du Fou theme park in central Spain due to a fierce fire nearby.

Firefighters were battling fires in several other regions, including woodlands in Catalonia, where weather conditions complicated the fight.

The Spanish prime minister, Pedro Sanchez, praised firefighters “who risk their lives on the frontline of fires” on Friday, which is also World Day to Combat Desertification and Drought.

Temperatures were above 35C Friday in most parts of the country.



A firefighting helicopter tries to put out a forest fire in Lladurs, Spain.  
Photograph: Eric Gomez/EPA

– More than half of French departments were at the highest or second-highest heat alert level by the afternoon on Friday.

“Hospitals are at capacity, but are keeping up with demand,” the health minister, Brigitte Bourguignon, told reporters in Vienne, near Lyon in the south-east.

Schoolchildren were told to stay at home in departments at alert level “red” and the health ministry activated a special heatwave hotline.

The Red Cross also organised efforts to distribute fresh water to the homeless community in Toulouse, where temperatures are expected to soar to 38C on Saturday.

“There are more deaths of people in the streets in the summer than in the winter,” said volunteer Hugues Juglair, 67.

Meanwhile, rock and metal fans at the music festival Hellfest in western France were sprayed with water from hoses and enormous vaporisers in front of the stage as they headbanged to an opening-day line-up including Deftones and the Offspring.

“This is the earliest heatwave ever recorded in France” since 1947, said Matthieu Sorel, a climatologist at Meteo France.

With “many monthly or even all-time temperature records likely to be beaten in several regions”, he called the weather a “marker of climate change”.

Several towns in northern Italy have announced water rationing and the Lombardy region may declare a state of emergency as a record drought threatens harvests.

The UK recorded its hottest day of the year on Friday, with temperatures reaching over 30C in the early afternoon, meteorologists said.

It was the third day in a row that temperature records had been broken in the UK, where it was over 28C on Wednesday and 29.5C on Thursday.

Experts warned that the high temperatures were caused by worrying climate change trends.

“As a result of climate change, heatwaves are starting earlier,” said Clare Nullis, a spokeswoman for the World Meteorological Organisation in Geneva.

“What we’re witnessing today is unfortunately a foretaste of the future” if concentrations of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere continued to rise and pushed global warming towards 2C from pre-industrial levels, she added.

In France, special measures have been taken in care homes for elderly people, still haunted marked by the memory of a deadly 2003 heatwave.

Buildings are being sprayed down with water to cool them and residents are being rotated through air-conditioned rooms.

In the Gironde department, which includes Bordeaux, authorities said all public events outdoors or in non-air-conditioned venues would be banned from 2pm (12.00 GMT) on Friday, a measure set to be broadened across the region.

And speed limits in several regions, including around Paris, have been reduced to limit the concentration of harmful smog or ozone in the heat.

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## [Donald Trump](#)

# ‘A one-sided witch-hunt’: angry Trump lashes out at January 6 hearings

Former president attacks ‘disgraceful performance’ of the unselect committee and denies he bullied Mike Pence to overturn election



Donald Trump on Friday accused the Capitol attack committee of ‘knowingly spinning a fake and phony narrative’. Photograph: Mark Humphrey/AP

*[David Smith](#) in Nashville*

*[@smithinamerica](#)*

Fri 17 Jun 2022 17.27 EDT Last modified on Fri 17 Jun 2022 18.11 EDT

Donald Trump has launched an angry verbal attack on the congressional January 6 hearings, dismissing them as a “rigged deal” and “one-sided witch-hunt” that are “getting terrible ratings”.

In his first public appearance since the televised sessions began, Trump on Friday claimed without evidence that the House of Representatives panel has made its case using doctored videos and deceptively edited witness depositions.

He also denied the allegation made on Thursday that he bullied Vice-President Mike Pence to overturn the 2020 election. “I never called Mike Pence a wimp,” Trump told a gathering of religious conservatives in Nashville, Tennessee. “Mike Pence had a chance to be great, he had a chance, frankly, to be historic. Mike – and I say it sadly because I like him – but Mike did not have the courage to act.”

Trump’s desperate attempts to remain in power after he lost the election to Joe Biden have been thrown back into the spotlight by the select committee investigating the January 6 attack on the Capitol, with visceral footage and damning testimony from his closest aides and family.

The panel is methodically making the case that the attack on the US Capitol was an attempted coup and that Trump was at the centre of the conspiracy. On Thursday, it heard that the attack jeopardized Pence’s life. The findings could prompt the justice department to pursue a criminal prosecution against Trump.

Wearing a dark suit, white shirt and red tie, the former president walked on to a stage framed by a faux classical temple with Corinthian columns in a ballroom at the Gaylord Opryland Resort & Convention Center in Nashville, Tennessee.

Trump was nearly two hours later than scheduled at the Faith & Freedom Coalition’s “Road to Majority” conference, but attendees gathering under a ceiling painted to resemble a blue sky and clouds greeted him with rapturous cheers and chants of “USA! USA!”

Unrepentant, he continued to push his “big lie” of a stolen election and likened Pence to a “robot” and “human conveyor belt” for accepting the advice of those who said he did not have the authority to reject state electors and therefore keep Trump in the Oval Office.

Trump described the hearings as an “insurrection hoax” reminiscent of the investigations into his election campaign ties with Russia but said it was ultimately “peanuts” by comparison.

“There’s no cleaner example of the menacing spirit that has devoured the American left than the disgraceful performance being staged by the ‘unselect’ committee,” Trump said during a rambling speech. “They’re con people. They’re con artists. Every one of them is a radical left hater, hates all of you, hates me even more than you, but I’m just trying to help you out.

“The ‘unselects’ have shredded every standard of decency, fairness, precedent, tradition, separation of powers, executive privilege and due process. Nobody’s ever done this before. They are knowingly spinning a fake and phony narrative and in a chilling attempt to weaponise the justice system against their political opponents.”

The committee hearings have turned the words of Trump’s inner circle against him. His attorney general William Barr was seen in a deposition describing the claims of election fraud as “bullshit”, and the former president’s daughter testified that she accepted Barr’s assessment.

Without offering evidence, Trump claimed that the panel was using video that has been misleadingly doctored and edited out of context. “The committee is taking the testimony of witnesses who defended me for eight hours, chopping it up and truncating soundbites to make it sound like what they said was absolutely terrible,” he remarked.



Trump at the Faith & Freedom Coalition's 'Road to Majority' event in Nashville. Photograph: Harrison McClary/Reuters

He added: "Just remember, it's also the people that weren't allowed to even testify but wanted to. A lot of people wanted to go and testify about what they saw and how crooked it was. Meanwhile, the committee refuses to play any of the tape of people saying the good things, the things that we want to hear."

The former president went on to hurl puerile insults at Congressman Adam Kinzinger, one of two Republicans on the committee along with seven Democrats.

"It's a one-way street. It's a rigged deal. It's a disgrace and it's never happened in the history of our country where we have no representation," Trump said. "They say, 'Oh, they have Republicans!' Who are they? Liz Cheney and Adam Kinzinger, the crier. He cries every time he speaks."

Pointing to his head, Trump mocked: "This guy's got a mental disorder." Pretending to trace tears from his eyes, he added: "He cries. Every time this guy gets up to speak, he starts crying. I said there's something wrong with that guy. These are our representatives."

Trump said that he would “very, very seriously” consider pardons for those involved in the riot if he became president again. “What happened on January 6th was a simple protest that got out of hand,” he said.

He compared the size of a crowd at his speech earlier in the day to that which attended civil rights leader Martin Luther King Jr’s “I Have A Dream” speech at the Lincoln Memorial in 1963. “I made a nice speech but I liked his speech better,” he quipped.

He claimed that “no one was killed” except the Trump supporter Ashli Babbitt, who was fatally shot while attempting to climb through a broken window inside the Capitol. In fact, a bipartisan Senate report connected seven deaths to the insurrection.

Trump summed up: “Let’s be clear, this is not a congressional investigation, this horrible situation that’s wasting everyone’s time. This is a theatrical production of partisan political fiction that’s getting these terrible, terrible ratings, and they’re going crazy.”

He also used his speech to attack the Biden administration and insist that war would never have broken out in Ukraine if he was still president. As is customary at his rallies, he teased another White House run in 2024. “Would anyone like me to run for president?” he asked. There was a sustained roar of approval from the crowd.

It is hard to find anyone at the Faith & Freedom event who is being swayed by the January 6 committee. Asked if she watched Thursday’s hearing, Susanne Thoen, 67, a retired human resources director from Nashville, said: “The farce? Excuse me? You mean the leftist agenda? No. There was no insurrection. I’m not going to waste my time watching the mainstream media.”

Joseph Padilla, 42, a retired US marine, added: “It’s another distraction. Is this something that they’re trying to make a big push to divide us more because of the midterms coming up? They’re trying to point out flaws because this administration has nothing but flaws.”

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## [India](#)

# At least 59 dead and millions stranded as floods devastate India and Bangladesh

Lightning kills 21 and millions of homes submerged while armed forces asked to help amid continuing storms



Indian disaster response workers rescue flood-hit villagers west of Gauhati. India and Bangladesh have both asked their militaries to assist with flood response efforts as the death toll reached at least 59. Photograph: Anupam Nath/AP

*Associated Press in Dhaka*

Sat 18 Jun 2022 20.50 EDTFirst published on Sat 18 Jun 2022 01.56 EDT

At least 59 people died as floods cut a swatch across north-eastern India and [Bangladesh](#), leaving millions of homes underwater, authorities said on Saturday.

In India's Assam state, 18 people died in the floods or landslides and 2 million others had seen their homes submerged in flood waters since Thursday, the state disaster management agency said.

Lightning strikes triggered by the storms had killed at least 21 people in Bangladesh since Friday afternoon, police officials said. Among them were three children aged 12 to 14 who were struck in the rural town of Nandail, local police chief Mizanur Rahman said.

Another four people were killed when landslides hit their hillside homes in the port city of Chittagong, police inspector Nurul Islam said.

Both countries have asked the military to help with the severe flooding, which could worsen because rains were expected to continue over the weekend.

The Brahmaputra – one of Asia's largest rivers – breached its mud embankments, inundating 3,000 villages and croplands in 28 of Assam's 33 districts.

"We expect moderate to heavy rainfall in several parts of Assam till Sunday," said Sanjay O'Neil, an official at the meteorological station in Gauhati, Assam's capital. "The volume of rainfall has been unprecedented."



Flooding in Bangladesh's north-eastern border region of Sylhet, where all 13 sub-districts have been inundated. Photograph: Anadolu Agency/Getty Images

Nearly 7,500 people had been rescued in Assam by mid-afternoon Saturday, its disaster response agency said. The state's chief minister, Himanta Biswa Sarma, said he had told district officials to provide "all necessary help and relief" to those caught in the flooding.

Several train services were cancelled in India amid incessant rains over the past five days. In southern Assam's Haflong town, the railway station was under water and flooded rivers deposited mud and silt along the rail tracks.

India's army has been asked to help other disaster response agencies rescue stranded people and provide food and essentials to those whose houses are submerged under flood waters.

"We are using speedboats and inflatable rafts to rescue flood-hit people," an army official said.

At least 16 people had been killed since Thursday in India's remote Meghalaya, the state's chief minister, Conrad Sangma, wrote on Twitter, after landslides and surging rivers that submerged roads.

In Bangladesh, districts near the Indian border have been worst affected.

Water levels in all major rivers across the country were rising, according to the flood forecasting and warning centre in Dhaka, the capital. The country has about 130 rivers.



A rickshaw rider navigates a flooded street in Sylhet, Bangladesh.  
Photograph: Md Rafayat Haque Khan/Zuma Press Wire/REX/Shutterstock

The centre said the flood situation was likely to deteriorate in the worst-hit Sunamganj and Sylhet districts in the north-eastern region as well as in Lalmonirhat, Kurigram, Nilphamari and Rangpur districts in northern Bangladesh.

Schools have been turned into relief shelters to house entire villages inundated in a matter of hours by rivers that suddenly burst their banks.

“The whole village went under water by early Friday and we all got stranded,” said Lokman, 23, whose family lives in Companyganj village.

“After waiting whole day on the roof of our home, a neighbour rescued us with a makeshift boat. My mother said she has never seen such floods in her entire life.”

Asma Akter, another woman rescued from the rising waters, said her family had not been able to eat for two days.

“The water rose so quickly we couldn’t bring any of our things,” she said. “And how can you cook anything when everything is underwater?”

Flight operations at the Osmani international airport in Sylhet have been suspended for three days as flood waters have almost reached the runway, according to Hafiz Ahmed, the airport manager.

Last month, a pre-monsoon flash flood, triggered by a rush of water from upstream in India’s north-eastern states, hit Bangladesh’s northern and north-eastern regions, destroying crops and damaging homes and roads. The country was just starting to recover from that shock when fresh rains flooded the same areas again this week.

Bangladesh, a nation of 160 million people, is low-lying and faces threats from climate change-related natural disasters such as floods and cyclones. According to the UN’s Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, about 17% of people in Bangladesh would need to be relocated over the next decade or so if global warming persists at the present rate.

*With Agence France-Presse*

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This article was downloaded by **calibre** from <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2022/jun/18/at-least-18-dead-and-millions-stranded-as-floods-devastate-india-and-bangladesh>

[\*\*China\*\*](#)

## **Smoke clouds Shanghai as chemical plant fire leaves at least one dead**

Explosion heard 6km away before three blazes seen in separate buildings, with the fire expected to continue burning for some time



Fires burn at the Sinopec Shanghai Petrochemical Co on Saturday after breaking out around 4am in Shanghai, China. Photograph: Xinhua/REX/Shutterstock

*Agence-France Presse*  
Sat 18 Jun 2022 00.31 EDT

At least one person was killed in a large fire at a Shanghai chemical plant that shot clouds of smoke across the city on Saturday, state media reported.

The fire at a Sinopec Shanghai Petrochemical Co plant in outlying Jinshan district broke out around 4am but was brought under control later that

morning, according to state news agency Xinhua.

“The fire at the scene has been effectively brought under control and protective burning is currently being carried out,” Xinhua said.

“According to our initial understanding, the fire has already caused one death,” Xinhua said.

The fire erupted as Shanghai, China’s industrial engine and most populous city, gingerly resumes business after being sealed off for about two months to counter a coronavirus outbreak driven by the Omicron variant.

While the lockdown was officially lifted at the beginning of June, the snarling of supply chains and shutting of factories continues to have far-reaching consequences for the global economy.

At the petrochemical plant, an early morning explosion was heard by residents as far as 6km (four miles) away, according to local media.

Videos on social media showed a large cloud of fire and ash billowing upwards.

In one aerial video, three fires could be seen in separate buildings.

The Shanghai fire department said on Weibo that it had dispatched more than 500 personnel immediately after the incident around 4.28am.

The ministry of emergency management has dispatched an expert group to the scene, CCTV reported.

Reports have not stated a possible cause of the fire.

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## [Canada](#)

# Canadian priest arrested for 1960s sexual assault at First Nations residential school

Canadian government has admitted that physical and sexual assault at the schools was rampant and has apologized



A monument that commemorates the children sent to an Indigenous residential school. Photograph: Canadian Press/REX/Shutterstock

*AP in Winnipeg*

Fri 17 Jun 2022 12.00 EDT Last modified on Fri 17 Jun 2022 12.20 EDT

Canadian police said they arrested a 92-year-old retired priest for a sexual assault more than 50 years ago at one of Canada's [residential schools for Indigenous children](#).

Sgt Paul Manaigre of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police said on Friday that police arrested retired Father Arthur Masse for the assault. Manaigre said the victim was 10 years old at the time and it happened between 1968 and 1970 at Ford Alexander residential school in Manitoba.

Manaigre said there is no time limit to report a sexual assault. Masse has been released on conditions and is due to be in court next month.

Quick Guide

## **Canada's residential schools**

Show



## **Canada's residential schools**

Over the course of 100 years, more than 150,000 Indigenous children were taken from their families to attend state-funded Christian boarding schools in an effort to forcibly assimilate them into Canadian society.

They were given new names, forcibly converted to Christianity and prohibited from speaking their native languages. Thousands died of disease, neglect and suicide; many were never returned to their families.

The last residential school closed in 1996.

Nearly three-quarters of the 130 residential schools were run by Roman Catholic missionary congregations, with others operated by the Presbyterian, Anglican and the United Church of Canada, which is today the largest Protestant denomination in the country.

In 2015, a historic [Truth and Reconciliation Commission](#) which concluded that the residential school system [amounted to a policy of cultural genocide](#).

Survivor testimony made it clear that sexual, emotional and physical abuse were rife at the schools. And the trauma suffered by students was often passed down to younger generations – a reality magnified by systematic inequities that persist across the country.

Dozens of First Nations [do not have access to drinking water](#), and [racism against Indigenous people is rampant within the healthcare system](#). Indigenous people are overrepresented in federal prisons and [Indigenous women are killed at a rate far higher](#) than other groups.

The commissioners identified 20 unmarked gravesites at former residential schools, but they also warned that more unidentified gravesites were yet to be found across the country.

Photograph: Provincial Archives Of Saskatchewan/PROVINCIAL ARCHIVES OF SASKATCHE

Was this helpful?

Thank you for your feedback.

From the 19th century until the 1970s, more than 150,000 First Nations children were required to attend state-funded Christian schools as part of a program to assimilate them into Canadian society. They were forced to convert to Christianity and not allowed to speak their Indigenous languages. Many were beaten and verbally abused, and up to 6,000 are said to have died.

The Canadian government apologized in parliament in 2008 and admitted that physical and sexual abuse in the schools was rampant. Many students recalled being beaten for speaking their languages. They also lost touch with their parents and customs.

Pope Francis is scheduled to visit Canada late next month to apologize to Indigenous groups for the Catholic church's role in the schools.

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This article was downloaded by **calibre** from <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2022/jun/17/priest-arrested-sexual-assault-indigenous-residential-school-canada>

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## Headlines thursday 16 june 2022

- [Live No 10 to publish Lord Geidt's resignation letter as pressure grows on PM](#)
- [Dom Phillips and Bruno Pereira Brazilian police find two bodies in search for missing men](#)
- [Live Russia-Ukraine war: Macron criticises Russian 'barbarism' during Irpin visit; battles 'fought for every house' in Sievierodonetsk](#)
- [Food UK prices could rise 15% over summer – report](#)
- [School meals Fears rising costs will force caterers to quit contracts](#)

[Skip to key events](#)

[Politics live with Andrew Sparrow](#)[Politics](#)

# No 10 refuses to say if ethics adviser will be replaced following Lord Geidt's resignation after being put in 'impossible position' – as it happened

This live blog is now closed.

- [Geidt letter says request from PM put him in 'odious position'](#)
- [Read Geidt's letter of resignation as PM's ethics adviser](#)
- [No 10 refuses to confirm that PM will appoint new ethics adviser](#)
- [No 10 unable to explain why Geidt asked to advise on tariff policy](#)
- [Geidt resigned as a result of PM 'protecting steel industry' – Rees-Mogg](#)
- [Ellis suggests Harman should recuse herself from inquiry into PM lying](#)
- [Shapps urges rail workers not to strike themselves out of job](#)

Updated 3d ago

[Nadeem Badshah](#) and [Andrew Sparrow](#)

Thu 16 Jun 2022 12.50 EDTFirst published on Thu 16 Jun 2022 04.15 EDT



Boris Johnson has not made a decision on whether to appoint a new ethics adviser. Photograph: Toby Melville/Reuters

*Nadeem Badshah and Andrew Sparrow*

Thu 16 Jun 2022 12.50 EDTFirst published on Thu 16 Jun 2022 04.15 EDT

## Key events

- [3d agoA summary of today's developments](#)
- [3d agoGeidt resigned as a result of Johnson 'protecting the British steel industry', says Rees-Mogg](#)
- [3d agoScottish Tory leader Douglas Ross accuses Sturgeon of favouring 'grievance over governing'](#)
- [3d agoParliament should get power to compel witnesses to give evidence to Commons committees, MPs say](#)
- [3d agoNo 10 unable to explain why – in apparently unprecedented move – Geidt was asked to advise on legality of tariff policy](#)
- [3d agoNo 10 refuses to confirm that Johnson will appoint new ethics adviser to replace Lord Geidt](#)
- [3d agoJohnson says proposal that triggered Geidt's resignation involved defying WTO tariff rules to protect a British industry](#)

Show key events only

## Live feed

Show key events only

From 3d ago

08.06

### **No 10 refuses to confirm that Johnson will appoint new ethics adviser to replace Lord Geidt**

The Downing Street lobby briefing has just finished, and the prime minister's spokesperson has refused to confirm that Lord Geidt will definitely be replaced as the PM's ethics adviser.

The spokesperson said that having a process for ensuring standards are maintained by ministers was "vitally important".

But he said that Geidt himself had raised a number of issues about how the independent adviser on ministers' interests operated and he said Boris Johnson wanted to "carefully consider those and reflect on them".

Asked if it was possible that Geidt would not be replaced, the spokesperson replied:

We have not made a final decision on how best to carry out that function, whether it relates to a specific individual or not, particularly given some of the issues that have been raised recently the prime minister alludes to in his letter. So he will carefully consider that before setting out next steps.

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3d ago12.50

# A summary of today's developments

- **The prime minister's spokesperson refused to confirm that Lord Geidt will definitely be replaced as the PM's ethics adviser.** The spokesperson said that having a process for ensuring standards are maintained by ministers was “vitally important”. Geidt said in his resignation letter that the final straw was a request to consider a proposal that he said would be a “deliberate and purposeful” breach of the ministerial code. He implies that [Boris Johnson](#) asked him to approve of this breach.
- Jacob Rees-Mogg, the Brexit opportunities minister, told Newsnight’s Nicholas Watt that the Geidt resignation saga is really a story about Boris Johnson “protecting the British steel industry”. (See [1.45pm](#).)
- At the Downing Street lobby briefing, the prime minister’s spokesperson said ministers would not be getting directly involved in talks to stop the rail strikes next week.
- The Foreign Office has announced [a fresh wave of sanctions against Vladimir Putin's allies](#), including on officials involved with the “barbaric treatment of children in Ukraine”.
- Nicola Sturgeon has claimed the Conservatives are “terrified” of another vote on Scottish independence after the party’s leader in Scotland challenged her priorities.

- Witnesses should not be able to avoid giving evidence at inquiries after “an increasing number of rich and powerful” people have done so in recent years, MPs have said. As PA Media reported, the Commons committee of privileges has published [a report](#) recommending the introduction of legislation that would ensure parliament can compel witnesses to turn up to the House of Commons when summoned.

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Updated at 13.29 EDT

[3d ago](#)[12.32](#)

Hundreds of Ukrainians welcomed to England since Russia’s invasion have been left homeless or are threatened with homelessness, new figures show.

Families allowed to come to the country either to join relatives or as part of the Homes for Ukraine sponsorship scheme have instead found accommodation unavailable or had arrangements to house them break down.

A total of 660 Ukrainian households were owed a statutory homelessness duty by local authorities in England in the period up to 3 June, according to the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities.

A government spokesperson said: “More than 77,200 Ukrainians have arrived in the UK since Putin’s invasion and all arrivals have access to benefits and public services, as well as the right to work or study, from the day they arrive.

“The overwhelming majority of people are settling in well but in the minority of cases where family or sponsor relationships break down, councils have a duty to ensure families are not left without a roof over their head.

“Councils also have access to a rematching service to find a new sponsor in cases under the Homes for Ukraine scheme.”

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Updated at 13.30 EDT

[3d ago](#)12.13

Plans for a new inland border facility (IBF) in Dover will no longer go ahead, HM Revenue & Customs (HMRC) has announced.

It was hoped a new facility, located at a business park off the A2 in Kent, would see millions of pounds of investment in the area and create 400 jobs.

However, HMRC has announced it will no longer go ahead with opening the site.

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[3d ago](#)12.02

The **FDA**, the union that represents senior civil servants, has expressed concern about No 10 saying it might not replace Lord Geidt as independent adviser on ministerial standards. Dave Penman, its general secretary, said:

The ministerial code is the only mechanism a civil servant can use to raise a complaint of misconduct, bullying or sexual harassment against a minister.

Confidence in that process has already been severely damaged by the prime minister's refusal to accept that the home secretary had breached the code, despite being found to have bullied staff.

If the prime minister does not intend to replace Lord Geidt, then he must immediately put in place measures that ensure a civil servant can, with confidence, raise a complaint about ministerial misconduct.

That's all from me for today. My colleague **Nadeem Badshah** is now taking over.

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[3d ago 11.49](#)

In [a blog on the Geidt resignation](#), the legal commentator **David Allen Green** points out that Brexiters such as Jacob Rees-Mogg used to be rather keen on the idea of trading on WTO terms - terms which, in one case at least, the government now seems willing to ignore. Here's an extract.

You may recall government-supporters during Brexit clamouring for the United Kingdom to trade on '*WTO terms*'.

It often seemed they did not know what that actually meant, and it was said because it sounded good.

Well.

It seems that the government of the United Kingdom is as contemptuous of this type of international law as it is of others.

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Updated at 12.01 EDT

[3d ago 11.46](#)

This is from **Adam Bienkov** at Byline Times.

On the question of Boris Johnson and steel tarrifs, it's worth pointing out that the Conservative party has taken hundreds of thousands of pounds in donations from the steel industry in recent years.  
<https://t.co/9M2YoYjWvQ> <pic.twitter.com/YlgfTvMdDY>

— Adam Bienkov (@AdamBienkov) [June 16, 2022](#)

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[3d ago](#)[11.41](#)

In the House of Lords there was a repeat of the urgent question on Lord Geidt's resignation this afternoon. **Natalie Bennett**, the former Green party leader, asked why "Geidt, an ethics adviser, was asked to give advice on compliance with international law over steel tariffs but Sir James Eadie, first Treasury counsel, was not asked about the legality of plans for the Northern Ireland protocol". **Lord True**, the Cabinet Office minister who was responding for the government, said he would not discuss speculative comments on a commercially confidential matter.



Natalie Bennett Photograph: House of Lords

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Updated at 11.50 EDT

3d ago11.29

Ministers have faced questions about why plans to reform the private rented sector did not do more to address rising rents amid the cost of living crisis.

As PA Media reports, the government published [a white paper today setting out its plans to make the rented sector fairer](#). Under the plans, section 21 “no-fault” evictions will be banned, the decent homes standard will be extended to this sector, arbitrary rent review clauses will be disallowed and renters will get extended rights.

The white paper proposes that it also be made illegal for landlords or agents to place blanket bans on renting to families with children or those in receipt of benefits.

The plans in the white paper will form the basis of a renters’ reform bill that the government has promised in this session of parliament.

In the Commons, **Matthew Pennycook**, the shadow minister for housing and planning, said the plans did not go far enough to protect tenants from steep rent rises. He told MPs:

In none of the coverage this morning or in the white paper itself is there any sign of meaningful proposals to address the problem of unreasonable rent rises.

A one-year rent increase limit, the removal of rent review clauses, and vague assurances about giving tenants the confidence to challenge unjustified increases at tribunal is simply not good enough.

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Updated at 11.54 EDT

3d ago11.11

# **Geidt resigned as a result of Johnson 'protecting the British steel industry', says Rees-Mogg**

**Jacob Rees-Mogg**, the Brexit opportunities minister, has told Newsnight's Nicholas Watt that the Geidt resignation saga is really a story about Boris Johnson "protecting the British steel industry". (See [1.45pm.](#))

"The Prime Minister is backing British industry" [#Newsnight](#)'s [@nicholaswatt](#) speaks to Cabinet Minister Jacob Rees-Mogg MP on why the Prime Minister's ethics advisor Lord Geidt resigned

□ Full report tonight on BBC Two 22:30<https://t.co/uuws3hvYeo>  
[pic.twitter.com/mWgA4HSg1g](https://pic.twitter.com/mWgA4HSg1g)

— BBC Newsnight (@BBCNewsnight) [June 16, 2022](#)

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[3d ago](#)[11.05](#)

John Pullinger, chair of the **Electoral Commission**, has said that the Elections Act that became law earlier this year is a threat to the independence of his organisation. The new legislation allows ministers to issue a strategy and policy statement giving directions to the commission and, in [an interview with Prospect](#), Pullinger said this was incomptible with his organisation being independent.

Although he stressed he would continue to do his job independently and impartially, he said:

Most people would think that the government of the day has only one strategy and policy priority for the next election, and that's to win it for themselves. Powers on the face of a bill like that are inconsistent with the Electoral Commission acting as an independent regulator.

The commission is in charge of ensuring that elections are carried out fairly, and that election spending rules are enforced.

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3d ago **10.28**

## **Scottish Tory leader Douglas Ross accuses Sturgeon of favouring 'grievance over governing'**

**Nicola Sturgeon** has claimed the Conservatives are “terrified” of another vote on Scottish independence after the party’s leader in Scotland challenged her priorities.

At first minister’s questions **Douglas Ross**, the Scottish Conservative leader, asked why Sturgeon chose this week [to make a second independence referendum a priority](#).

**Sturgeon** replied:

There is a real desperation at the heart of Douglas Ross’s approach to independence. It’s very telling that he is so terrified of the substantive debate on independence, so terrified of the verdict of the Scottish people on independence, that he’s reduced to somehow trying to pretend that democracy in Scotland is illegal.

It is not a question of whether this government respects the rule of law – we do and always will – the question is, is Douglas Ross a democrat? And I think the glaring answer to that is no.

In response **Ross** said:

First Minister, your priorities are all wrong at the worst possible time ...

A focus on our recovery, that's what the Scottish people overwhelmingly want, not a referendum.

We need a strong government for all of Scotland, but we're getting a weak campaign group for the nationalist minority that values grievance over governing.



Nicola Sturgeon during FMQs today. Photograph: Andrew Milligan/PA

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Updated at 10.41 EDT

[3d ago](#) [10.12](#)

## **Parliament should get power to compel witnesses to give evidence to Commons committees, MPs say**

Witnesses should not be able to avoid giving evidence at inquiries after “an increasing number of rich and powerful” people have done so in recent years, MPs have said. As PA Media reports, the Commons committee of

privileges has published [a report](#) recommending legislation which would ensure parliament can compel witnesses to turn up to the House of Commons when summoned.

Explaining the recommendations, **Chris Bryant**, who chaired the committee when it was carrying out its inquiry, said:

The right of select committees to summon witnesses and hold the powerful to account cuts to the heart of our parliamentary democracy.

Most witnesses are more than happy to give evidence to a Parliamentary inquiry.

But an increasing number of the rich and powerful have started to resist engaging with select committees in recent years and, in doing so, have shown contempt for Parliament and the people it represents.

From billionaire high street moguls to unaccountable government advisers, these proposals will make it tougher for such individuals to disregard their democratic duty.

Our proposals, if approved by the house, will empower select committees to compel reluctant witnesses to attend or provide documents to parliamentary investigations - allowing committees to conduct their work efficiently and fairly.

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[3d ago](#)[10.04](#)

The **Trade Remedies Authority** has put out [a statement](#) in response to the letter from Boris Johnson to Lord Geidt earlier today, which says Geidt resigned after being asked to advise on a matter related to the TRA. (See [12.01pm](#).) The TRA says this refers to a case “called in” by the government, which means ministers have “full decision-making authority” in relation to it.

In other words, the TRA seems to be saying: don't blame us.

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3d ago09.58

These are from **Paul Caruana Galizia** from Tortoise, who has a new detail about a well-documented party that [Boris Johnson attended in Evgeny Lebedev's villa in Italy in April 2018.](#)

Scoop: in April 2018, Alexander Lebedev set up an unmonitored line between Boris Johnson, then foreign secretary, and Sergei Lavrov, Russia's foreign minister, to discuss the Salisbury poisonings.

But the call never happened because... <https://t.co/RXDih3ZcrJ>

— Paul Caruana Galizia (@pcaruanagalizia) [June 16, 2022](#)

....Johnson overslept.

Happened on his stay at the Lebedevs' in Umbria on the 28/9th April 2018.

He went there, without his security officers, from a Nato summit in Brussels where he told foreign ministers to do more to counter Russia's malign influence.

On his way back: <pic.twitter.com/MAfCr3oBfE>

— Paul Caruana Galizia (@pcaruanagalizia) [June 16, 2022](#)

Account is supported by 3 other sources who were connected to the Foreign Office. One said it's representative of Johnson's "chummy" approach. Other said Foreign Office staff warned him off the idea.

Third said use of Alexander Lebedev was discussed but not "intensively."

— Paul Caruana Galizia (@pcaruanagalizia) [June 16, 2022](#)

Downing Street did not deny the account. It said:

"During his time as Foreign Secretary, the Prime Minister took a leading role in coordinating the global action against the Salisbury poisonings, where 28 countries and NATO evicted more than 150 Russian diplomats."

— Paul Caruana Galizia (@pcaruanagalizia) [June 16, 2022](#)

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Updated at 10.00 EDT

[3d ago](#)[09.46](#)

Here are two more people who find the circumstances of Lord Geidt's resignation curious.

This is from **Mark Reckless**, a former Conservative MP who went on to lead the Brexit party in the Senedd.

I am puzzled by Lord Geidt's stated reason for resigning since Cameron deleted Ministerial Code requirement for ministers to obey 'international law' from 2015. I campaigned for that on [@CommonsHomeAffs](#) and with Dominic Raab when ECtHR stopped deportation of Abu Qatada

— Mark Reckless (@MarkReckless) [June 16, 2022](#)

And these are from **Sir Jonathan Jones**, who was head of the government's legal department until he resigned over the government's plans to break international law with the internal market bill.

Well yes, very curious.

If the Q was whether conduct was \*lawful\*, that's for lawyers & ultimately the Attorney General. If AG says it's lawful, then - no question for the indept adviser. If AG says it's unlawful, then - govt shouldn't do it, again no question for the adviser /1  
[pic.twitter.com/SYVnb1FSXV](https://pic.twitter.com/SYVnb1FSXV)

— Jonathan Jones (@SirJJQC) [June 16, 2022](#)

If the conduct was in clear breach of the Code for some \*other\* reason than lawfulness, then you can see why Lord Geidt is saying - “why are you asking me? You’ve already decided to break the Code, I’m off”.

— Jonathan Jones (@SirJJQC) [June 16, 2022](#)

*UPDATE:* According to **David Anderson**, a peer and former independent reviewer of terrorist legislation, even though the explicit reference to having to obey international law was removed from the ministerial code (Mark Reckless's point above), an implicit obligation to follow international law remained.

The Ministerial Code still mandates compliance with international law, despite a change to its wording, as the Court of Appeal confirmed in 2018: <https://t.co/EELAJ7i5gi> [pic.twitter.com/Q41tvvPhKL](https://pic.twitter.com/Q41tvvPhKL)

— David Anderson (@bricksilk) [September 8, 2020](#)

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Updated at 10.18 EDT

### 3d ago09.23

At the Downing Street lobby briefing the prime minister's spokesperson said ministers would not be getting directly involved in talks to stop the rail strikes next week. The spokesperson said:

Broadly speaking, we remain of the position that it is for the unions to negotiate with their employers rather than the government stepping in, there's no change in that approach.

Proposed legislation to enable the use of agency workers on the railways if the industrial action persists would take "weeks rather than months", the spokesman added.

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### 3d ago09.18

The Foreign Office has announced [a fresh wave of sanctions against Vladimir Putin's allies](#), including on officials involved with the "barbaric treatment of children in Ukraine", PA Media reports. PA says:

Each individual has been dealt an asset freeze preventing them from dealing with British banks or businesses, and a ban on flying to the UK.

Those sanctioned include the Russian children's rights commissioner, Maria Lvova-Belova, who has been accused of enabling 2,000 vulnerable children to be violently taken from the Donbas region for adoption in Russia.

The measures also apply to the head of the Russian Orthodox Church, Patriarch Kirill, who supports Putin's war, and Sergey Savostyanov, the deputy of the Moscow city Duma.

Speaking in the Commons, Liz Truss, the foreign secretary, said Patriarch Kirill has "repeatedly abused his position to justify the war".

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Updated at 09.40 EDT

[3d ago](#)**09.07**

This is from **Angela Rayner**, Labour's deputy leader, on Lord Geidt's resignation letter.

Lord Geidt walked out because of the odious behaviour of Boris Johnson's Downing Street. This prime minister has, in his own adviser's words, made a mockery of the ministerial code. He has now followed both his predecessor and the anti-corruption tsar out of the door in disgust.

There are now no ethics left in this Downing Street regime propped up in office by a Conservative party mired in sleaze and totally unable to tackle the cost of living crisis facing the British people.

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## Dom Phillips and Bruno Pereira

# Dom Phillips and Bruno Pereira: Brazil police find two bodies in search for missing men

Police chief says one of the men arrested in connection with the pair's disappearance had confessed to killing them

- [The writer and the activist: how Dom Phillips and Bruno Pereira bonded over the Amazon](#)



Dom Phillips and Bruno Pereira went missing on 5 June, at the end of a four-day trip down the Itaquai river in the far west of Brazil. Composite: João Laet/AFP/Getty Images (left); Daniel Marenco/Agência O Globo (right)

[Andrew Downie](#) in São Paulo and [Tom Phillips](#) in Atalaia do Norte

Wed 15 Jun 2022 20.56 EDTFirst published on Wed 15 Jun 2022 20.25 EDT

Police in the Brazilian Amazon have found the bodies of two men in the area close to where British journalist Dom Phillips and Indigenous activist Bruno Pereira went missing 10 days ago.

At a press briefing late on Wednesday, regional police chief Eduardo Fontes said one of the two men arrested in connection with the pair's disappearance had confessed to killing them.

"On Tuesday he informed us the location where the bodies were buried and he promised to go with us today to the site so we could confirm where the bodies were buried," Fontes told reporters.

The announcement brought a sad end to a 10-day search which has horrified the nation and underlined the growing dangers faced by those who dare to defend Brazil's environment and Indigenous communities, which have faced a historic assault under the country's far-right president, Jair Bolsonaro.

The location identified by the suspect was 1hr 40min by boat from the river town of Atalaia do Norte and another 3.1km (1.9 miles) by foot into dense forest.

After a day-long operation, involving the army, navy and police force, the Guardian witnessed the bodies being removed from that area, known as the Lago do Preguiça, under the cover of darkness.

Escorted by army troops, they were carried by boat back down the River Itaquai to Atalaia do Norte, where Phillips and Pereira had begun their final journey.

## [Map](#)

Scores of locals flocked to the town's port to watch as officers in camouflage gear loaded the two black body bags on to the back of a federal police vehicle, which set off in a blaze of red and blue lights.

"We are now going to identify the human remains with the most dignity possible," Fontes said. "When the remains are proved to be those of [Dom](#)

[Phillips and Bruno Pereira](#), they will be delivered to the families.”

The news was greeted with relief by Phillips' wife Alessandra Sampaio.

“Although we are still awaiting definitive confirmations, this tragic outcome puts an end to the anguish of not knowing Dom and Bruno’s whereabouts,” she wrote in a statement. “Now we can bring them home and say goodbye with love.

“Today, we also begin our quest for justice. I hope that the investigations exhaust all possibilities and bring definitive answers on all relevant details as soon as possible.”



Superintendent Eduardo Alexandre Fontes speaking during a press conference in Manaus, Amazonas state. Photograph: Ricardo Oliveira/AFP/Getty Images

Fontes said search teams planned to return to the site on Thursday to locate the men's boat. The men were last seen travelling upriver and Fontes alleged the suspects tossed the boat's engine in the river and then filled the vessel with sacks of earth so it would sink.

“We are still investigating,” he said, adding that more arrests were expected. “This was a significant advance.”

## 'Defenders of nature': a tribute to Bruno Pereira and Dom Phillips – video

The press conference was held in Manaus, the capital of Amazonas state, where a series of military and police officials congratulated themselves for the work done, before belatedly recognising the role played by [Indigenous people who helped lead the search](#).

In Atalaia do Norte, Eliseio Marubo, an Indigenous lawyer and close friend of Pereira said: “I feel an indescribable pain because I have lost a brother, I have lost part of my story.”

Tears rolling down his cheeks, Marubo sent a message to the families of the two men who had both sought to champion the Indigenous cause. “You are not alone,” he said. “We will march on together.”



Demonstrators light candles in front of the headquarters of the National Indian Foundation (FUNAI), during a protest against the disappearance of Bruno Pereira and Dom Phillips. Photograph: Raphael Alves/EPA

[Phillips, 57, and Pereira, 41](#) went missing on 5 June, at the end of a four-day trip down the Itaquai river in the far west of Brazil.

Pereira was accompanying Phillips [on a reporting trip for a book about sustainable development in the Amazon](#) but their boat did not arrive as

scheduled at Atalaia do Norte, not far from Brazil's border with Peru.

However, when Pereira's friends raised the alarm, Brazilian authorities were slow to respond and it was the Indigenous communities that made the first unsettling discovery on Saturday [when they found rucksacks, clothing and personal items belonging to the two men.](#)

Police detained one man on Wednesday, Amarildo da Costa de Oliveira, and six days later they arrested his brother Oseney and charged him with "alleged aggravated murder". One of the men gave police the testimony that led to the gruesome find.

The investigation was dogged by setbacks, from the sluggish response of the army and navy search teams, to the heavily criticised actions of the Brazilian embassy in London, who told Phillips' family in the UK that his body had been found, [only to retract the statement later](#).

It also comes amid widespread criticism of Brazil's policies on the environment and the estimated 235 Indigenous tribes living in Brazil.

Deforestation has soared under Bolsonaro, and government agencies devoted to protecting the environment and Indigenous communities have been undermined.

Pereira was a senior figure in the state Indigenous foundation charged with protecting Indigenous communities but was removed from office in late 2019 after he led an operation to destroy illegal mines operating on Indigenous land.

He later began [working with Indigenous rights organisations](#) in remote areas of the rainforest to help them map their territories and protect them from invasions by miners, loggers, and drug-traffickers active in the area.

Late on Wednesday, Brazil's former president Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva said in a statement that Wednesday's news had prompted "pain and indignation" and linked the crime to the dismantling of policies to protect Indigenous people.

“Democracy and Brazil can no longer tolerate violence, hatred and contempt for the values of civilisation,” he said. “Bruno and Dom will live in our memory – and in the hope of a better world”.

*A crowdfunding campaign has been launched to support the families of Dom Phillips and Bruno Pereira. Donate [here](#) in English or [here](#) in Portuguese.*

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[Skip to key events](#)

[Ukraine war live](#)[World news](#)

# Civilian evacuation from Sievierodonetsk plant ‘impossible’, says governor – as it happened

This live blog is now closed, you can find our [latest coverage of the Russia-Ukraine war here](#)

Updated 2d ago

[Samantha Lock](#) (now); [Maya Yang](#), [Léonie Chao-Fong](#) and [Martin Belam](#) (earlier)

Thu 16 Jun 2022 20.21 EDTFirst published on Thu 16 Jun 2022 00.30 EDT

European leaders make symbolic trip to Ukraine to meet Zelenskiy – video

[Samantha Lock](#) (now); [Maya Yang](#), [Léonie Chao-Fong](#) and [Martin Belam](#) (earlier)

Thu 16 Jun 2022 20.21 EDTFirst published on Thu 16 Jun 2022 00.30 EDT

## Key events

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- [3d agoEU leaders in Kyiv support immediate EU candidacy for Ukraine, says Macron](#)
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Show key events only

## Live feed

Show key events only

From 3d ago

[11.13](#)

### **Evacuation from Azot plant in Sievierodonetsk now ‘impossible’, says governor**

**Hundreds of civilians sheltering at the Azot chemical plant in the embattled eastern Ukrainian city of Sievierodonetsk are no longer able to evacuate because of the sustained Russian artillery barrages, according to Luhansk governor, Serhiy Haidai.**

Speaking to CNN, Haidai said:

It is impossible to get out of there now. I mean, it is physically possible, but it is very dangerous due to constant shelling and fighting.

Some 568 people, including 38 children, are currently taking refuge in the Azot plant, according to Haidai.

He said authorities had tried to convince the civilians to leave last month, before major bridges out of the city were destroyed, but that many “didn’t want to go” and were convinced that they would be safer to stay in place.

There have been several cases of civilians who were killed or injured by incoming fire when trying to leave the shelter, for example to cook, he said.

Earlier today, a pro-Russian separatist leader said Russian-backed forces will reopen a humanitarian corridor for civilians to leave the Azot chemical plant, the Interfax news agency reported.

Leonid Pasechnik, head of the self-proclaimed Luhansk People’s Republic, said separatist forces had entered the plant but had been unable to dislodge

Ukrainian fighters from the factory, the Tass news agency reported.

Haidai told CNN that an evacuation would be possible only if there were a complete ceasefire, but he was highly sceptical of any promises made by Russia.

He said:

I hear a lot of what they say, but 99% of it is just nonsense or a lie. If there is a complete ceasefire, then we can take people out. But I do not believe the Russians — as much as they lie, as much as they gave their word and did not keep it. There is a lot of such evidence.

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[2d ago](#)[20.21](#)

## Summary

Thank you for joining us for today's live coverage of the war in [Ukraine](#).

It is currently 3am in the capital Kyiv. We will be pausing this live blog overnight and returning in the morning.

In the meantime, you can read our comprehensive summary of the days' events in our summary below.

- **Hundreds of civilians sheltering at the Azot chemical plant in Sievierodonetsk are no longer able to evacuate because of the sustained Russian artillery barrages, officials say.** 568 people, including 38 children, are currently taking refuge in the Azot plant, Luhansk governor, Serhiy Haidai, told CNN. A pro-Russian separatist leader said Russian-backed forces will reopen a humanitarian corridor for civilians to leave the plant, the Interfax news agency reported.

- The leaders of France, Germany and Italy have vowed to support Ukraine's bid to join the European Union on a visit to Kyiv. Macron said all four EU leaders present supported the idea of granting an “immediate” EU candidate status to Ukraine.
- Russian foreign minister Sergei Lavrov said Russia is “not ashamed of showing who we are” in an interview with the BBC. “We didn’t invade Ukraine, we declared a special military operation because we had absolutely no other way of explaining to the west that dragging Ukraine into Nato was a criminal act,” he said.
- Nato says it is committed to providing equipment to maintain Ukraine’s right to self-defence, and will be making more troop deployments on its eastern flank. Nato’s secretary general, Jens Stoltenberg, condemned “a relentless war of attrition against Ukraine” being waged by Russia, and said Nato continued to offer “unprecedented support so it can defend itself against Moscow’s aggression”.
- The head of the UK’s armed forces says Russia has already “strategically lost” the war in Ukraine and is now a “more diminished power”. Admiral Sir Tony Radakin said Vladimir Putin had lost 25% of Russia’s land power for only “tiny” gains. In an interview with PA Media, he said Russia was running out of troops and advanced missiles and would never be able to take over all of Ukraine.
- Ukraine’s president, Volodymyr Zelenskiy, appeared as a hologram while referencing Star Wars in an attempt to secure more aid from big tech firms. Zelenskiy told a crowd of hundreds at the VivaTech

trade show in Paris on Thursday that Ukraine was offering technology firms a unique chance to rebuild the country as a fully digital democracy.

- At least three civilians were killed and seven injured by a Russian airstrike in the eastern city of Lysychansk, according to local officials. The strike [hit a building where civilians were sheltering](#), Luhansk governor Serhiy Haidai said.
- An overnight Russian air-launched rocket strike hit a suburb of the northern Ukrainian city of Sumy, killing four and wounding six, according to officials. Regional governor Dmytro Zhyvytskyi [said another rocket strike hit the Dobropillia district](#), which lies next to the Russian border, at 5am on Thursday, followed by 26 mortar rounds fired from across the border.
- Children born in Ukraine's Kherson region since 24 February will [automatically receive Russian citizenship](#), according to an official. Kirill Stremousov, deputy head of the Russian-imposed military-civilian administration in the occupied Kherson region, claimed that thousands of citizens in the territory were applying for Russian citizenship. [Ukraine has repeatedly accused Russia of abducting children from its territory](#) and transferring them into Russia.
- A Russian spy [tried and failed to secure an internship at the international criminal court](#) (ICC) using the false identity as a Brazilian citizen that he had built up for as long as a decade, according to Dutch intelligence. Sergey Vladimirovich Cherkasov, 36, accused of being an agent of Russia's GRU military intelligence, was detained when he arrived and sent back to Brazil the following day.

- The UK announced a fresh wave of sanctions against Russia aimed at people involved with the “barbaric treatment of children in Ukraine”. Those targeted by sanctions include the Russian children’s rights commissioner, [Maria Lvova-Belova](#), military commanders, Vladimir Mikhailovich and Patriarch Kirill, the head of the Russian Orthodox church.
- The UK has [purchased and refurbished more than 20 long-range guns](#) – M109s – from a Belgian arms company which it is sending to Ukraine, Britain’s defence secretary, Ben Wallace, said. Russia outnumbers Ukraine in artillery fire by 20 to 1 in some areas but allies are beginning to give Ukraine the long-range artillery and rocket systems that will enable its forces to win, he told Sky News.
- Russia warned that gas flows to Europe via the Nord Stream 1 pipeline could be suspended, blaming problems with turbine repairs. Russia’s ambassador to the EU, Vladimir Chizhov, told the state-owned news agency Ria [that a complete halt in gas flows in the pipeline](#), which supplies gas from Russia to Europe under the Baltic Sea, would be a “catastrophe” for Germany. Canada says it is in active discussions with Germany about a Siemens-made turbine equipment undergoing maintenance in Canada and unable to return due to sanctions.
- **Temporary silos on Ukraine’s border would prevent Russia from stealing Ukrainian grain and ensure the winter harvest is not lost due to a lack of storage**, US agriculture secretary Tom Vilsack said on Thursday. It follows comments from US President Joe Biden that temporary silos would be built along the border with Ukraine.

- **Zelenskiy accused Russia of being unwilling to look for a way to peace, claiming it will “decide for himself that the war must end”.** Ukrainian peace talks negotiator Mykhailo Podolyak also dismissed Russia's most recent comments about being willing to continue negotiations as “[an attempt to deceive the world](#)”. Russia, he said, wanted to give the impression of being ready to talk while planning to stab Ukraine in the back.

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[2d ago 19.44](#)

**Temporary silos on Ukraine’s border would prevent Russia from stealing Ukrainian grain and ensure the winter harvest is not lost due to a lack of storage,** US Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack said on Thursday.

We know of circumstances and situations where that has occurred - Russians having taken grain from Ukrainian farmers. So to the extent that we can get it out of the country, that is a plus that reduces the risk of loss,” Vilsack told reporters.

However, Vilsack stressed that reviving shipments from Ukraine’s Black Sea ports was the most effective and efficient way to export grain.

We would like to see the ports open because that’s the most efficient, most effective way to transport that grain, but it’s still going to take time even if the port is open. So you still have to have a place to put the grain.”

US satellite imagery company Maxar Technologies said on Thursday that Russian-flagged ships have been transporting Ukrainian grain to Russian ally Syria over the last couple of months. [Russia](#) denies stealing Ukrainian grain.

US President Joe Biden said on Tuesday that temporary silos would be built along the border with Ukraine in an effort to help export more grain and

address a growing global food crisis.

Since Russia's invasion and ports blockade, Ukrainian grain shipments have stalled, and more than 20 million tonnes are stuck in silos. The war is stoking a global food crisis with soaring prices for grains, cooking oils, fuel and fertiliser.

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[2d ago 19.20](#)

**Ukraine's president Volodymyr Zelenskiy has accused Russia of being unwilling to look for a way to peace, claiming it will “decide for himself that the war must end”.**

In his latest national [address](#), Zelenskiy said:

All leaders understand why negotiations to end the war are not under way.

Exclusively because of Russia's position, which is only trying to intimidate everyone in Europe and continue the destruction of our state.

They do not want to look for a way to peace. This is an aggressor who must decide for himself that the war must end.

We will continue to fight until we guarantee our state full security and territorial integrity.”

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[2d ago 19.00](#)

**Canada** says it is in active discussions with **Germany** about Siemens-made equipment undergoing maintenance in Canada that **Russia's Gazprom** has

put the blame on for a gas supply cut at the **Nord Stream 1 pipeline**, Reuters is reporting.

The capacity of Gazprom's Nord Stream 1 pipeline to supply gas to [Europe](#) is partly constrained as sanctions make it impossible for Siemens to return a turbine being maintained in Canada, the companies said earlier this week.

“The government of Canada is in active discussions with Germany about the turbines in question, and we are working to reach a resolution,” a spokesman for Canada’s Natural Resources Minister said in a statement.

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[2d ago](#)[18.37](#)

**The UK will welcome representatives from [Ukraine](#) and business leaders on Friday to discuss how British companies can help rebuild key infrastructure in Kyiv.**

Trade secretary Anne-Marie Trevelyan will seek to promote collaboration between British companies in infrastructure, energy and transport, and Ukrainian public and private organisations to help repair damaged and destroyed infrastructure.

Trevelyan will also announce changes to trade remedy measures, including reallocating ring-fenced market access for steel imports from [Russia](#) and Belarus to other countries including Ukraine.

The support provided on Friday will form part of a UK commitment to provide a combined economic, humanitarian and military support package worth around \$3bn.

The European Union has also proposed support to help Ukraine rebuild once the war with Russia ends.

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2d ago 18.01

## Summary

It's 1am in Kyiv. Here's where things stand:

- “We’re not ashamed of showing who we are,” [said](#) Russian foreign minister Sergei Lavrov in a new interview with the BBC. “We didn’t invade Ukraine, we declared a special military operation because we had absolutely no other way of explaining to the West that dragging Ukraine into NATO was a criminal act,” Lavrov said.
- Ukrainian president Volodymyr Zelenskiy has [called](#) for readiness checks in case of an invasion from neighboring Belarus, the Kyiv Independent reports. National Security and Defense Council Secretary Oleksiy Danilov said Zelenskiy hosted a meeting to evaluate threats of further invasion their neighbor.
- The US on Thursday [urged](#) [Russia](#) to treat captured American volunteers who fought alongside Ukrainian forces as prisoners of war with guaranteed humane treatment. “The Russians have certain obligations and members of the Ukrainian armed forces - including volunteers who may be third-country nationals incorporated into the armed forces - should be treated as prisoners of war under the Geneva Conventions,” State Department spokesman Ned Price said.
- The European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) on Thursday [told](#) Russia to prevent the execution of a Moroccan man sentenced to death in a pro-Moscow separatist region of [Ukraine](#) for fighting on behalf of Ukrainian forces. Russia “should ensure that the death penalty imposed on the applicant was not carried out,” the court said its emergency ruling following a petition filed this month by a representative of Saadoun.
- Ukraine’s president, Volodymyr Zelenskiy, [pledged](#) among big tech firms on Thursday at a Paris conference, appearing as a hologram and referencing Star Wars in attempts to secure aid in his country’s fight against Russia’s invasion. Zelenskiy told a crowd of hundreds at

the VivaTech trade show that Ukraine was offering technology firms a unique chance to rebuild the country as a fully digital democracy.

- **Ukraine should be the one to decide whether to accept any territorial concessions towards Russia in attempts of ending the war, said the French president, Emmanuel Macron, on his visit to Kyiv.** “This is up to Ukraine to decide ... I think it is our duty to stand by our values, by international law and thus by Ukraine,” he said.
- **Russia has announced that it is facilitating grain and oilseed exports from Ukraine via Russian-held transit points on the Azov Sea, without disclosing who is providing the sources for export.** Russia’s deputy prime minister, Viktoria Abramchenko, said on Thursday that “Russia is securing a ‘green corridor’ for grains and any other foodstuff such as oilseeds ... so it can be exported from Ukraine without hurdles...”
- **Ukrainian peace talks negotiator Mykhailo Podolyak dismissed Russia’s most recent comments about being willing to continue negotiations as “an attempt to deceive the world”.** Russia, he said, wanted to give the impression of being ready to talk while planning to stab Ukraine in the back.

*That's it from me, Maya Yang, today as I hand the blog over to my colleague in Australia, Samantha Lock, who will bring you the latest updates. I'll be back tomorrow, thank you.*

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2d ago17.45

**“We’re not ashamed of showing who we are,” said Russian foreign minister Sergei Lavrov in a new interview with the BBC.**

“We didn’t invade Ukraine, we declared a special military operation because we had absolutely no other way of explaining to the West that dragging Ukraine into NATO was a criminal act,” Lavrov said.

“Russia isn’t squeaky clean. Russia is what it is & we’re not ashamed of showing who we are.” In an exclusive interview, I question Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov on Russia’s invasion of Ukraine. Producers [@BBCWillVernon](#) [@LizaShuvalova](#) Cameras [@AntonChicherov](#) [@LizaVereykina](#) [pic.twitter.com/yFccy6Vtiu](https://pic.twitter.com/yFccy6Vtiu)

— Steve Rosenberg (@BBCSteveR) [June 16, 2022](#)

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[2d ago](#) [17.18](#)

**Ukrainian president Volodymyr Zelenskiy has called for readiness checks in case of an invasion from neighboring Belarus, the Kyiv Independent reports.**

⚡President Zelensky calls for readiness checks in case of invasion from Belarus.

National Security and Defense Council Secretary Oleksiy Danilov said Zelensky held a meeting to assess threats of further invasion from Belarus and asked for readiness checks in four areas.

— The Kyiv Independent (@KyivIndependent) [June 16, 2022](#)

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[2d ago](#) [16.40](#)

**The US on Thursday urged [Russia](#) to treat captured American volunteers who fought alongside Ukrainian forces as prisoners of war with guaranteed humane treatment.**

The State Department additionally announced that a third American was believed to be missing in [Ukraine](#) in addition to two military veterans who were reportedly captured by the Russian military last week.

“The Russians have certain obligations and members of the Ukrainian armed forces - including volunteers who may be third-country nationals incorporated into the armed forces - should be treated as prisoners of war under the Geneva Conventions,” **State Department spokesman Ned Price** told reporters.

Prisoners of war must be “afforded the treatment and protections commensurate with that status, including humane treatment and fundamental process and fair-trial guarantees,” he said.

Families and members of Congress said Wednesday that **Alexander Drueke** and **Andy Huynh**, both US military veterans who had been living in Alabama, lost contact with their relatives last week while fighting alongside the Ukrainian military near the Russian border.

Price said the US could not confirm details on Drueke and Huynh and added that there were reports of a third American who was said to have gone missing “in recent weeks.”

**President Joe Biden’s** administration, argues that the US is not directly fighting Russia and has discouraged Americans from traveling to the war zone, despite sending billions of dollars worth of weapons and economic aid to Ukraine.



Alexander Drueke, 39, and Andy Tai Ngoc Huynh, 27, are US military veterans living in Alabama who volunteered to go to Ukraine to assist with war efforts. Both have gone missing. Composite: Reuters/Associated Press

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[2d ago](#)[16.10](#)

**The European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) on Thursday told Russia to prevent the execution of a Moroccan man sentenced to death in a pro-Moscow separatist region of [Ukraine](#) for fighting on behalf of Ukrainian forces.**

Agence France-Presse reports:

*Brahim Saadoun, a Moroccan citizen born in 2000, was sentenced to death along with two British men by the unrecognised Donetsk People's Republic (DNR), following his surrender to Russian forces in the conflict sparked by Moscow's invasion of its neighbour.*

*Russia "should ensure that the death penalty imposed on the applicant was not carried out," the court said its emergency ruling following a*

*petition filed this month by a representative of Saadoun.*

*The ruling issued by Europe's rights court is an urgent interim measure, provided on an exceptional basis, when the applicants would otherwise "face a real risk of irreversible harm," it emphasised.*

*Britain has expressed fury over the death sentences handed to the two Britons in the case, **Aiden Aslin** and **Shaun Pinner**. They surrendered in April in Mariupol, a port city in southern Ukraine that was captured by Russian troops after a weeks-long siege.*

*Ironically, the urgent interim measure is the same format used by the ECHR on Tuesday when it triggered the cancellation of the first deportation flight of asylum seekers from the UK to Rwanda, angering London.*

*That move has sparked debate within the British government about whether Britain should continue to implement ECHR rulings.*

*The ECHR is part of the Council of Europe, which ejected Russia from its membership in mid-March following Moscow's invasion of Ukraine. Russia simultaneously also took steps to leave the body.*

*The court still insists it can issue verdicts concerning Russia although the Russian parliament has adopted legislation insisting it should no longer adhere to ECHR rulings.*



A still image, taken from footage released on June 8, 2022 from of the Supreme Court of the self-proclaimed Donetsk People's Republic, showing Britons Aiden Aslin, Shaun Pinner and Moroccan Brahim Saadoun captured by Russian forces during a military conflict in Ukraine, in a courtroom cage. Photograph: Supreme Court Of Donetsk People'S Republic/Reuters

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[2d ago](#)[15.45](#)

**Ukraine’s president, Volodymyr Zelenskiy, pleaded among big tech firms on Thursday at a Paris conference, appearing as a hologram and referencing Star Wars in attempts to secure aid in his country’s fight against Russia’s invasion.**

Zelenskiy told a crowd of hundreds at the VivaTech trade show that Ukraine was offering technology firms a unique chance to rebuild the country as a fully digital democracy.

He asked for help on the terms of lend-lease, an arrangement in which aid is offered without payment but on the understanding that hardware would be returned.

It's unusual for presidents or heads of government to use a hologram to address people but this is not the only aspect of Star Wars that we are putting into practice.

"We will defeat the Empire too," he added, obliquely likening Russian forces to the bad guys in the Star Wars franchise.

Zelenskiy added that his government would lay out a specific plan that would establish a digital government at a conference in Switzerland in the coming weeks.

No other country in the world will offer you such a chance to use the most advanced technologies at a state level ... It's an experiment and a digital revolution, and the modernisation of the current system all at the same time

Ukraine has won praise for its use of technology during the war with Russia, utilising crypto communities to raise funds and even successfully appealing to Elon Musk to supply the infrastructure for satellite-based internet services.



Volodymyr Zelenskiy delivers a speech in a 3D hologram projection, at the VivaTech conference dedicated to innovation and startups, at Porte de

Versailles exhibition centre in Paris, France. Photograph: Benoît Tessier/Reuters

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Updated at 15.58 EDT

[3d ago](#)[15.18](#)

**Ukraine should be the one to decide whether to accept any territorial concessions towards Russia in attempts of ending the war, said the French president, Emmanuel Macron, on his visit to Kyiv.**

When asked what concessions, including on its territory, [Ukraine](#) should accept, Macron told TF1 television:

This is up to Ukraine to decide ... I think it is our duty to stand by our values, by international law and thus by Ukraine.

The leaders of Germany, France and Italy, all criticised in the past by Kyiv for support viewed as too cautious, visited Ukraine on Thursday and offered the hope of EU membership to a country pleading for weapons to fend off Russia's invasion.

**Ukraine's president, Volodymyr Zelenskiy, has repeatedly said Ukraine will not accept giving up any of its territory as a result of Russia's invasion.**



Romania's Klaus Iohannis, Italy's Mario Draghi, Ukraine's Volodymyr Zelensky, France's Emmanuel Macron and Germany's Olaf Scholz during a press conference in Kyiv, Ukraine Photograph: Alexey Furman/Getty Images

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Updated at 15.40 EDT

[3d ago](#)[14.40](#)

**Russia has announced that it is facilitating grain and oilseed exports from [Ukraine](#) via Russian-held transit points on the Azov Sea, without disclosing who is providing the sources for export.**

**Russia's deputy prime minister, Viktoria Abramchenko, said on Thursday that "Russia is securing a 'green corridor' for grains and any other foodstuff such as oilseeds ... so it can be exported from Ukraine without hurdles ..."**

Ukraine has accused Russia of stealing grain from its territories that Russian forces have taken control of.

However, in an interview with Reuters, Abramchenko said: “Russia does not ship grains from Ukraine.”

Ukraine’s inability to use its major deep-sea port, Odesa, because of Russia’s military incursion has led to a jump in global food prices and warnings by the United Nations of hunger in poorer countries that rely heavily on imported grain.

Abramchenko restated Russia’s line that it is for Ukraine to open sea-lanes to Odesa that have been mined. Each side accuses the other of laying the mines to obstruct access to the port, which Ukraine fears that Russia may try to seize with an attack from the sea.

“We cannot provide a green corridor for Odesa as Ukraine has done everything for this port not to work,” Abramchenko said.



Russia army operation of clearing mines at the coast of the Sea of Azov near the port of Mariupol by Russian engineering units in this image released by Russia on May 24, 2022. Photograph: EyePress News/Rex/Shutterstock

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Updated at 15.42 EDT

3d ago[14.19](#)

**Ukrainian peace talks negotiator Mykhailo Podolyak dismissed Russia's most recent comments about being willing to continue negotiations as "an attempt to deceive the world".**

Russia, he said, wanted to give the impression of being ready to talk while planning to stab [Ukraine](#) in the back.

Kyiv would definitely return to the negotiations but only at the right time, he added.

In a separate Twitter post on Thursday, Podolyak added, “Classic ‘Russian style’: destroying cities, arranging public executions, preparing an annexation, but still pretending to negotiate.”

Classic “Russian style”: destroying cities, arranging public executions, preparing an annexation, but still pretending to negotiate. If [#Patrushev](#) wants a dialogue, the words should be backed up by actions: a ceasefire, troops withdrawal, closure of the “[□□ peace](#)” project in [□□](#)

— Михайло Подоляк (@Podolyak\_M) [June 16, 2022](#)

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Updated at 15.42 EDT

3d ago[14.00](#)

## Summary

It's 9pm in Kyiv. Here's where we stand:

- Hundreds of civilians sheltering at the Azot chemical plant in the embattled eastern Ukrainian city of Sievierodonetsk are no longer able to evacuate because of the sustained Russian artillery barrages, according to Luhansk governor, Serhiy Haidai. [568 people, including 38 children, are currently taking refuge in the Azot plant](#), he told CNN. A pro-Russian separatist leader said Russian-backed forces will reopen a humanitarian corridor for civilians to leave the plant, the Interfax news agency reported.
- The leaders of France, Germany and Italy have vowed to support Ukraine's bid to join the European Union on a visit to Kyiv intended as a show of unity in the face of Russian advances and complaints from the Ukrainians about the pace of weapons supplies. Macron [said all four EU leaders present](#) supported the idea of granting an "immediate" EU candidate status to Ukraine.
- Nato's secretary general, Jens Stoltenberg, reiterated the alliance's commitment to providing equipment to maintain Ukraine's right to self-defence, and announced that Nato will be making more troop deployments on its eastern flank. He [condemned "a relentless war of attrition against Ukraine" being waged by Russia](#), and said Nato continued to offer "unprecedented support so it can defend itself against Moscow's aggression".
- At least three civilians were killed and seven injured by a Russian airstrike in the eastern city of Lysychansk, according to the Luhansk governor, Serhiy Haidai. The strike [hit a building where civilians were sheltering](#), Haidai said. It has not been possible to independently verify this information.
- An overnight Russian air-launched rocket strike hit a suburb of the northern Ukrainian city of Sumy, killing four and wounding six, according to officials. Regional governor Dmytro Zhyvytskyi [said](#)

[another rocket strike hit the Dobropillia district](#), which lies next to the Russian border, at 5am on Thursday, followed by 26 mortar rounds fired from across the border.

- Russia's strategic goal in the war is the complete destruction of Ukrainian statehood and the nation, Ukraine's deputy defence minister, [Hanna Malyar](#), has said. She added that the situation remained difficult for Ukrainian forces and that [Russia's main focus now was on establishing full control over the Luhansk and Donetsk regions](#) of eastern Ukraine.
- Children born in Ukraine's Kherson region since 24 February will automatically receive Russian citizenship, according to a statement by an official. Yesterday Stremousov claimed that thousands of citizens in the occupied territory were applying for Russian citizenship. [Ukraine has repeatedly accused Russia of abducting children from its territory](#) and transferring them into Russia.
- A Russian spy tried and failed to secure an internship at the international criminal court (ICC) using the false identity as a Brazilian citizen that he had built up for as long as a decade, according to Dutch intelligence. [Sergey Vladimirovich Cherkasov, 36, accused of being an agent of Russia's GRU military intelligence](#), was detained when he arrived and sent back to Brazil the following day, having failed in his long-term deception.
- The UK announced a fresh wave of sanctions against Russia aimed at people involved with the “barbaric treatment of children in Ukraine”. Those targeted by sanctions include the Russian children's rights commissioner, [Maria Lvova-Belova, the so-called mastermind behind the shadowy abduction programme](#). Other sanctioned

individuals included military commanders and Vladimir Mikhailovich, Patriarch Kirill, the head of the Russian Orthodox church.

- **The UK has purchased and refurbished more than 20 long-range guns – M109s – from a Belgian arms company which it is sending to Ukraine, Britain's defence secretary, Ben Wallace, said.** Russia outnumbers Ukraine in artillery fire by 20 to 1 in some areas but allies are beginning to give Ukraine the long-range artillery and rocket systems that will enable its forces to win, [he told Sky News](#).
- **Russia's foreign ministry announced new sanctions against 121 Australian citizens, including journalists and defence officials, citing what it calls a “Russophobic agenda” in the country.** [Among those newly sanctioned](#) are journalists from Australia's ABC News, Sydney Morning Herald and Sky News, as well as various defence officials, it said.
- **Russia's chief negotiator, Vladimir Medinsky, said Moscow was ready to restart peace talks with Kyiv but claimed it had yet to receive a response to its latest proposals.** According to Interfax news agency, Medinsky [said Kyiv was to blame for the lack of progress](#).
- **Two American volunteers in Ukraine have gone missing and are feared to have been taken prisoner by Russia, officials and family members said on Wednesday.** Alexander Drueke, 39, and Andy Tai Ngoc Huynh, 27, are both US military veterans who had been living in Alabama and went to Ukraine to assist with war efforts. [The pair haven't been heard from in days](#), members of the state's congressional delegation have said.

- **Russia has warned that gas flows to Europe via the Nord Stream 1 pipeline could be suspended, blaming problems with turbine repairs.** Russia's ambassador to the EU, Vladimir Chizhov, told the state-owned news agency Ria [that a complete halt in gas flows in the pipeline,](#) which supplies gas from Russia to Europe under the Baltic Sea, would be a “catastrophe” for Germany.
- **Western and Ukrainian rhetoric claiming Russia will be required to pay reparations for the damage caused by its invasion of Ukraine is not backed by a coherent roadmap based on international law to achieve justice for Ukraine’s victims, a new report has warned.** The report [says little progress has been made in setting up a global mechanism to require Russia to pay compensation](#) and says the delays must end.

*That's it from me, Léonie Chao-Fong, today as I hand the blog over to my colleague Maya Yang. I'll be back tomorrow, thank you.*

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[3d ago](#)[13.56](#)

**The White House said it is “working very hard to learn more” about two US citizens who are missing in Ukraine.**

Alexander Drueke, 39, of Tuscaloosa, Alabama, and Andy Huynh, 27, of Hartselle, Alabama, were last in contact with their families on 8 June.

The pair are thought to have been involved in a mission around the Kharkiv region of eastern Ukraine, where they had volunteered to fight, Reuters reports.

US officials have said there is no confirmation that the two men have been captured by Russian forces.

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## Inflation

# UK food price rises could hit 15% over summer, report says

Ukraine war, China lockdowns and Brexit help push up inflation, with products that rely on wheat worst hit



Products that rely on wheat, such as baked goods, could face the most rapid price rises. Photograph: Daniel Harvey Gonzalez/InPictures/Getty

*[Sarah Butler](#)*

*[@whatbutlersaw](#)*

Wed 15 Jun 2022 19.01 EDT Last modified on Wed 15 Jun 2022 19.02 EDT

Food price rises in the UK could hit 15% this summer – the highest level in more than 20 years – with inflation lasting into the middle of next year, according to a report.

Meat, cereals, dairy, fruit and vegetables are likely to be the worst affected as the war in Ukraine combines with production lockdowns in China and

export bans on key food stuffs such as palm oil from Indonesia and wheat from India, the grocery trade body IGD warns.

Products that rely on wheat, such as chicken, pork and bakery items, are likely to face the most rapid price rises as problems with [exports and production from Ukraine](#), a big producer of grain, combine with sanctions on Russia, another key producer.

The report suggests inflation will last at least until next summer but could persist beyond that as a result of a range of factors such as additional key agricultural countries introducing export bans, trade disruption connected to [Brexit](#), unfavourable weather in the northern hemisphere or further weakening of sterling.

The report says Britain's food and consumer goods industry is “uniquely exposed to current pressures due to a reliance on food imports and the impacts of EU exit”.

It says the new regime has added to costs through additional administration at the EU border and other legislation changes – as well as labour shortages prompting higher wages for farmers and food producers.

James Walton, the chief economist at IGD, said: “From our research, we are unlikely to see the cost of living pressures easing soon. This will undoubtedly leave many households – and the businesses serving them – looking to the future with considerable anxiety. If average food bills go up 10.9% in a year, a family of four would need to find approximately £516 extra a year. We are already seeing households skipping meals – a clear indicator of food stress.

“We expect the mood of shoppers to remain bleak for the foreseeable future as they are impacted by rising inflation and a decline in real wages. Shoppers are likely to dial up money-saving tactics as far as possible.”

Changes in behaviour, such as switching to supermarkets' own-label products or searching for bargains at discount chains, mean the inflation experienced by households may be closer to 9%.

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However, soaring food bills will only add to pressures on household budgets as average [UK wages fall at the fastest rate in two decades](#), while energy and petrol costs increase to deliver the highest overall rate of inflation since the 1970s.

One in seven lower-income households say they are missing more meals, while higher-income households are more likely to plan their shopping to keep a lid on spending.

Problems with availability of some goods, [such as sunflower oil](#), were likely to persist this year, affecting sales performance for retailers and upsetting shoppers, it said.

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## School meals

# Fears rising costs will force school catering firms to pull out of contracts

Children will receive ‘poorer quality meals’ in September as firms look for cheaper options



Rising food, energy and staff costs might force some catering firms to pull out of contracts before September. Photograph: Daniel Leal/AFP/Getty Images

[Sally Weale](#)

Wed 15 Jun 2022 13.18 EDT Last modified on Thu 16 Jun 2022 00.12 EDT

Soaring costs are putting the school food industry under “considerable strain”, prompting fears that some catering firms will be forced to pull out of contracts before the start of the next academic year.

With food prices up by 20%, and staff and energy costs also rising, the sector has warned that schoolchildren will be served “poorer quality meals”

in September as catering firms look for cheaper options to fill stomachs.

The 7p uplift in funding for universal infant free school meals (UIFSM) from £2.34 to £2.41, announced by the government this week, was described as “just not enough” by campaigners, who said it applies only to children in reception and the first two years of primary, and in any case falls well short of inflation.

Smaller firms providing catering services to schools are said to be “at breaking point” as they don’t benefit from the economies of scale that larger firms may enjoy, and are more exposed to rising costs.

LACA, which represents more than 3,000 school food providers who deliver 3m lunches in 22,000 schools every day, warned that some firms will struggle to meet school food standards in September with current levels of government funding.

“Many of our members are at breaking point, the industry needs meaningful investment,” a LACA statement said. “LACA have long called for an increase to a minimum of £2.47 [for UIFSM], in line with [other] free school meal funding and for this to rise annually with inflation.

“Our members have made it clear that without this increase they will find it hard to meet the school food standards in September. For many children this is their only hot meal of the day, which is why it is more urgent than ever that caterers receive sufficient funding.”

“The school food industry is under considerable strain,” said Jacquie Blake, chair of LACA. “Across the board, on average, we are seeing food prices increase by 10-20%. However, the funding for free school meals is fixed at £2.47, meaning that caterers across the country are struggling.

“This is especially true for smaller caterers who don’t have the same economies of scale. We know that this will only get worse in the next 6-12 months and is likely to lead to poorer quality meals.”

Many schools already subsidise government funding for free school meals, taking money from other parts of their budget to make up the shortfall.

Others are reluctantly planning price rises for paid-for school meals in September to pass on costs.

Matthew Knight, catering manager at Hillstone primary school in Shard End, Birmingham, described the 7p uplift for UIFSM as inadequate. “It’s 2022 and we can’t put a hot meal on the table for children – that’s a sad indictment of this country.”

Knight does all the catering in-house, rather than using an outside contractor, and the school – which serves a largely disadvantaged, white community – prioritises good food, cooking and food education. Of the 470 children on the school roll, more than 50% are eligible for free school meals.

Price rises, however, are already reshaping the menu. The cost of a pack of 60 fishcakes has doubled from £5.95 to £11.95. Breakfast used to be free, now the school charges 40p. And by September, Knight says things will be worse.

“We are going to have to give some serious thought to our menu and the services we provide to our children. It’s going to be unsustainable. Putting up the price [for those that pay] is not an option for us. Anecdotally, people are struggling massively.”

Anne Giliker, an education procurement consultant, said school caterers were not only struggling with funding levels, but also with recruitment. “It’s very hard for them right now, both to recruit and to make everything balance,” she said.

In one recent case, she said, a catering firm was forced to pull out of a retendering process for a catering contract with a primary school because of low funding levels. Ordinarily, an incumbent contractor which had successfully fulfilled previous contracts would automatically resubmit. “They just said they could not make the income work.”

A government spokesperson said the £18m boost to UIFSM would help schools continue providing free, healthy nutritious lunches for 1.25 million children, adding: “This government has expanded access to free school meals more than any other in recent decades, and we continue to work

across government to address rising costs, building on over £37bn announced to help the most vulnerable.”

## How school meals are changing to keep costs down

**Beef mince:** caterers are adding either pulses – like red lentils – or a protein substitute to make mince go further and reduce costs.

**Lamb:** off the menu – too expensive.

**Fish fingers:** costs of white fish have gone up, particularly as much of it is caught in Russian waters, so pollack and coley are being used as substitutes. “We’re going to have to get used to grey fish fingers,” said one caterer.

**Fruit:** pricier summer favourites like strawberries and melon are disappearing, in favour of cheaper alternatives like apples and oranges.

**Buy British:** “We all want to buy British where we can,” said one school food supplier, “but we’re at the point where that’s potentially going to be compromised. If we can buy chicken from an EU source that’s cheaper, we may have to.”

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This article was downloaded by **calibre** from <https://www.theguardian.com/education/2022/jun/15/rising-costs-put-pressure-on-school-food-industry>.

## 2022.06.16 - Spotlight

- Five women on abortions before Roe I got in the car and he blindfolded me. I was willing to risk death'
- Having a ball The best of Photo Basel
- 'It's like the loss happened yesterday' Prolonged grief is now a disorder in the US – so how long is too long to mourn?
- Winging it to the top 'If you work hard and succeed, you're a loser'

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## **'I got in the car and he blindfolded me. I was willing to risk death': five women on abortions before Roe**



From left to right: Trudy Hale, Sarah B Thompson, Fran Moreland Johns, Barbara Lee and Carol Deanow. Composite: Provided photos

If the supreme court reverses the federal right to abortion, some Americans will no longer have access to the procedure. Five women speak of their experience in pre-Roe v Wade era

[Candice Pires](#) and [Clare Considine](#)

Thu 16 Jun 2022 01.00 EDT Last modified on Thu 16 Jun 2022 01.17 EDT

Roe v Wade, the landmark [US supreme court](#) decision that has given Americans abortion rights since 22 January 1973, was set to turn 50 next year. This June, as the supreme court approaches summer recess, it looks likely to release a decision that means the critical precedent will never reach its landmark birthday.

With the regulation of abortion returned to individual states, a large swath of the midwest and south – about 20 states housing half of the country's population – will no longer have access to legal abortion.

This is set to see a return to abortion experiences that have many similarities to pre-Roe v Wade America. Pre-1973, those with the necessary means travelled across state lines to get the procedures they needed. Today, like back then, campaigners fear that poor, Black, Latina, teenage women and undocumented immigrants will be disproportionately affected. What is different today is that some women will be able to access abortion pills over the internet and self-manage the procedure.

One advocacy group, Grandmothers for Reproductive Rights, is made up of older women who fight to protect the reproductive rights they campaigned to secure pre-Roe v Wade. "Often abortions are talked about as endings," says executive director Kelli Wescott McCannell. "The women in our program have decades of life since their abortions that show what was made possible for them because of that abortion."

Here we speak to five women from across the US about their experiences of abortion in the pre-Roe v Wade era. Some were nervous, others defiant. But all shared their story in the hope that their past could shape America's future.

# **‘I crawled up on the kitchen table and she had this can of Lysol’**

*Trudy Hale, 73, writer, Norwood, Virginia*

*Abortion: 1967, aged 18, Memphis, Tennessee*



I heard through the grapevine that a guy we knew, who was a dealer – it was all just grass and acid then – knew a doctor who did abortions. I asked the dealer, Larry, and he said, “Oh yeah, sure. It’s \$300.” I had no money. I lived with my dad and two brothers in a two-bedroom duplex and I was in my freshman year of college. So I stole clothes and sold them.

I gave Larry the \$300 and he told me he’d come pick me up at 6am. He drove this big blue Oldsmobile convertible. I got in the car and he blindfolded me. I was scared but had to be alert to try and sense where we were going. I was willing to risk death rather than have my father find out I was pregnant.

Larry led me into this house and up some stairs. He tightened the blindfold. The house sounded vacant. He took me into a room and said, “Take down your pants and lie down,” and then left. I remember lying there and a radio

playing an interview with a farmer who was talking about how to plant crowder peas. Then I heard footsteps and at least two people came into the room. No one spoke. There was the clink and clank of instruments, and then Larry said, “Spread your legs.” Someone inserted a rubber tube into me to induce a miscarriage. There was no pain. They left the tube in there and it was cut long and left coiled in my underpants.

Larry drove me back and I only took the blindfold off when we got home. I was a good student and went straight to class. I remember sitting in the lunchroom, feeling this tube in my pants, and nothing happening. I went home, went to sleep, still nothing. The next day, I called Larry and told him. He reluctantly said he’d set up a time to do it again. And so I went through the whole thing again. But the same thing happened, it didn’t work.

I became desperate and terrified. I was getting bigger and couldn’t button my pants. I must have been almost three months pregnant.

I told my friend, Mary-Ann, who was five years older and this rough, wild kind of character; she’d been in the navy and had had a dishonourable discharge. “Well, I can do it,” she said. “When I was in the Navy I stole all the stuff.”

So we went to her father’s house while he was out. She put on greens and was very proud of her surgical prowess. I crawled up on the kitchen table and she had this can of Lysol that she was spraying around the room to disinfect it. She used the same technique with the rubber tube except she inserted it much further.

I went home and the contractions started. By now it’s night-time. My brothers were roaming around the house and I went into the bathroom and someone’s banging on the door and I just freaked out because the pain was so bad. I had to get out.

I called Mary-Ann and she had a friend come pick me up. We went looking for a motel. It was cold, maybe late December. In a parking lot, I threw myself on the hood of a car so the snow would numb me.

We scraped together \$8 for a single room and my friend snuck me in. It was eight hours of pain. I was beating my head against the wall while he brought me towels to soak up the blood. Finally, the fetus came out. I was shocked when the placenta came out after; I thought it was twins.

At 18, I hated the idea of having a child. There's no telling what kind of a mother I would have been then. I never regretted it. It's not until I was 30 that I chose to have children.

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## **'When we got home we told people we'd been in Memphis, shopping'**

*Sarah B Thompson, 68, retired school librarian, Fayetteville, Arkansas*

*Abortion: 1971, aged 17, New York*



It was the summer before I was due to go to college. My parents let me fly to Oklahoma City from our home in Little Rock, Arkansas, to visit my best friend. There were lots of wild nights of partying, skinny dipping and beer drinking.

When my period was a day late, I suspected I might be pregnant but was in denial. Every afternoon, my mother and I would watch soap operas together while we ate lunch, and I started not being able to stay awake. My period never came.

I talked to a couple of friends. One told me about a local gynaecologist who could advise me what to do. When I called his office, I guess they realised they were dealing with a child because I got in quickly. I went by myself and the doctor was so patient and kind. He said I was about 12 weeks pregnant. “Sarah,” he told me, “you’re going to have to go home and tell your parents.” Because abortion was illegal in Arkansas, he said I was going to have to travel to New York if I wanted one.

I had old southern parents, very traditional. When I told them, I could tell they were disappointed and worried. They contacted the gynaecologist and he connected them to a doctor in New York. It was arranged quickly. Mother and I were to fly to New York City and Daddy would stay home. We were not rich, but Daddy had savings.

The day of the flight, Mother and I got dressed up to travel, as you did in those days. Early the next morning, we went to New York City hospital. We had to find the bursar’s office as she had to pay cash upfront. There were big signs saying, “NO CHECKS”. Then we went upstairs and I put on a gown.

After that, there’s kind of a blank. I remember waiting on a gurney and then I remember waking up. I stayed in a ward overnight with three other women who’d just had abortions. They were all older than me. We talked. One was putting on her false eyelashes and getting ready to go back to Florida. Another was married and her husband would come in to see her. I think we all felt fortunate to be there; to have safe, legal healthcare.

When we got home we told people we’d been in Memphis, shopping for college clothes. It was a good story for the older relatives. My mother said, “Sarah, we will never speak of this again.”

Three weeks after the abortion, my parents dropped me off at the University of Arkansas, helped me unpack and drove away. I was able to show up with my classmates from high school and begin my new life.

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# **‘My rapist gave me a phone number and \$100’**

***Fran Moreland Johns, 88, writer, San Francisco, California***

*Abortion: 1956, aged 22, Atlanta, Georgia*



When I realized I was pregnant, I went back to my rapist because I didn't have anywhere else to go. He gave me a phone number and \$100, which was more than my monthly income. The man who raped me was basically my boss. I was right out of college and worked in public relations for petroleum companies. He was wealthy and prominent and had a family. I'd babysat his kids. I lived with my sister. We were one year apart in school and joined at the hip but it was so shameful I didn't tell her.

I called the number and just said, “I need help.” A man on the other end replied, “Do you have the cash?” He gave me instructions to stand in front of a theatre downtown on Sunday at 9am, and that if anyone was with me, the deal would be off. I had no idea what was going to happen. I just figured he would get me ‘unpregnant’. I was completely numb.

It was a cold rainy February morning and the worst day of my life. A car pulled up, I got into the back seat and the man in the front handed me a blue

bandanna to cover my eyes. We pulled up to a small house and he told me I could take my blindfold off. Inside was a woman, I presume his wife or girlfriend, and she showed me to a little room with a table. She told me to lie on the table and then the man came in, inserted something into my vagina, I think it was a straw, and that was it. I don't think he washed his hands. It took minutes. We got back in the car and he dropped me off where he'd picked me up. He said, "You'll start bleeding in a little while," and I did and it did not stop and I was terrified.

Monday morning, I was still bleeding. I still didn't tell my sister. Getting an abortion was more shameful than having been raped. I called into work sick and went to my obstetrician. "Who did this to you?" he said. I would not have told him, or anyone else, in a million years. My allegiance was to the abortionist – he had given me my life back. The obstetrician did a D&C and gave me a lot of medicine to combat the infection. I'm just the luckiest person in the world to have not died of sepsis.

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## **'I was so worried someone would find out'**

*Congresswoman Barbara Lee, 75, California*

*Abortion: Aged 16, Mexico*



There were two things I was afraid of. First of all, that I was going to die because unsafe septic abortions were the main cause of death for black women in the 1960s. And that I was going to be put in jail because it was illegal. On top of that, the stigma was awful. I was so worried someone would find out. I went to a Catholic school, was the first black cheerleader, and I was pregnant. As a teenager, those were very hard times before Roe v Wade.

We lived in California, where abortion was illegal. When I told my mother, she let me make my own decision and then she sent me to a friend of hers in Texas, who traveled with me to have the abortion in Mexico, where it was also illegal.

I grew up pretty quickly after because I recognized that I didn't have a right to make decisions about my own body. And that forced me to learn more about how this country provides for women's bodily autonomy. I got involved in campaigning for [Shirley Chisholm](#) and she was one of the first black women I knew who was out there speaking for reproductive justice, and how racial equity and economic equity had to be part of that.

My mother was so loving and caring in helping me make the decision. She insisted that I did not need to talk about it because it was so personal and that's how it should be. I didn't talk about it publicly but when Mississippi and Texas changed their abortion laws last year, there was no way that I couldn't [tell my story](#). I didn't want to, but I was compelled.

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**'I don't remember much about the procedure except the doctor saying, 'Don't make any noise'**

*Carol Deanow, 79, retired professor of social work, Brookline, Massachusetts*

*Abortion: 1965, aged 22, Washington DC*



I was dating somebody but we weren't at all serious. He refused to use a condom and I was too naive to say, "No condom, no sex." I missed my period and quickly knew what was happening. I never considered for a minute carrying the pregnancy to term. It was just not going to be part of my life at that point. I had a plan: I was going to finish my PhD and teach.

I told the guy I'd been dating – we may not have even been dating by the time I realized I was pregnant. He said, "Well, I guess I should ask you to marry me." I told him not to be silly. "We both know we aren't going to do this," I said. And I told a friend who I knew could get me the name of someone to perform an abortion. Her friend knew a friend who knew a friend who had accompanied somebody to one; it was that kind of underground network.

The unwritten rule among girls at my college was that you never let your checking account go under \$300. We all knew what that meant. So I had the money. I don't think the guy contributed financially. And I don't know that I would have allowed him to; it was always considered the woman's problem. He did drive me the hour-long journey from Baltimore to Washington for the procedure.

We went to a small office and the person who carried it out was an MD. I was fortunate but it still felt very illegal. The room wasn't sterile, like an operating room, but it was clean and professional. I remember almost nothing about the procedure except the doctor saying, "Don't make any noise." And that it was painful, there was no anaesthesia.

My ride drove me back to my dorm. That was the last time I saw him. I threw up in the middle of the lobby and told everyone I had the flu.

I was relieved. I felt like I'd done something very wrong but I had to do it. We were taught to feel shame and guilt. It was the illegality of it. When I went home after that summer, I told my father I needed to see a psychiatrist. I felt like I wasn't making good decisions and was out of control.

A few years later, I went to social work school. When I was given an assignment to write about someone I knew who had done something deviant, I wrote about myself and my abortion. My male instructor commented on the paper: "It's been a long time since I considered an abortion a deviant act." It was the first time I'd heard anyone talk about abortion without negativity. It was wonderful. Life-changing.

*Interviews have been condensed for clarity.*

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## Having a ball: the best of Photo Basel – in pictures

‘I don’t want to simply tell a story’ ... Feng Li’s Ocean of Balls.  
Photograph: Feng Li/High Noon

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## **‘It’s like the loss happened yesterday’: prolonged grief is now a disorder in the US – so how long is too long to mourn?**



‘I seriously thought that there was something wrong with me’ ... the inclusion of prolonged grief disorder in a manual for US doctors has caused controversy. Illustration: Ula Šveikauskaitė at Synergyart/The Guardian

Losing a loved one can be life-changing and, for some, debilitating. Could a diagnosis help, or are we medicalising a natural human emotion?



[Emine Saner](#)

[@eminesaner](#)

Thu 16 Jun 2022 05.00 EDT Last modified on Thu 16 Jun 2022 09.32 EDT

For a while, Davina Rivers thought something wasn't right with her. "It will be seven years in November since my husband died, and I'm still grieving for him every day, I miss him every day, I wish he was here every day," she says. She has suffered from depression before, and she thought her intense grief had settled, like a grey mist, into a kind of depression. Rivers and her husband, Eric, married in 1998, and they have three daughters; he died in 2015 at the age of 49. She spoke to Eric's brother recently, to celebrate the achievement of one of her daughters, which Eric would have been thrilled with. "He said: 'Oh, yes, I thought about him one day this week', and I just thought, 'How different our lives are.'" For me, it's an everyday feeling: whenever I wake up, and go to sleep, I miss him."

She has met other widows online, and feels she is different. "I see people start new relationships and get married and go on to have great happiness in their lives, and I don't see that for myself, somehow. My husband, I think he was my One." Losing him, she says, has affected everything. Rivers, 61,

continued to work after her husband was diagnosed with motor neurone disease, and after his death, she went back to work as a podiatrist five months later. “But I found it very difficult. I think the trauma of it all had a massive impact on me. I became quite introverted. I didn’t want to be a burden to people so I stopped going out. I don’t like going out walking, which is the really strange part of it: it’s almost like I don’t like people seeing me. I can get up and go to work, but I find it difficult to go for a walk.” And so, she says, “I seriously thought that there was something wrong with me.”



Prolonged grief disorder can apply to people still in intense grief after a year.  
Photograph: Carlo107/Getty Images/posed by model

The idea of prolonged or extended grief has been a controversial one – is it possible, or desirable, to put a time limit on a natural human emotion? – but in March, after years of wrangling, the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM) officially recognised prolonged grief disorder (PGD). The inclusion in the US publication, which doctors use to diagnose disorders, will mean that those who meet the criteria – people still in intense grief after a year – can have their treatment covered by insurance companies. The DSM is not used in the UK, but it is influential, even as it is also criticised for “medicalising” and labelling common human experiences; the inclusion of prolonged grief disorder has caused some controversy.

“I feel quite disturbed that it has been described as a medical problem that needs to be fixed, because I don’t think it is,” says Rivers. Grief is entirely subjective, and if for whatever reason she isn’t considered healed, then that is a societal problem, she says, not a medical one. “I think society puts you under pressure to get over it.”

Ultimately, grief can be a really transformative experience; it can change who you are as a person.

*Dr Lucy Selman*

There are pros and cons to this new diagnosis, says Dr Lucy Selman, associate professor in palliative and end of life care at the University of Bristol, and founder of the [Good Grief festival](#). “There’s been a lot of controversy about the DSM for many years, and mental health advocates have argued against the way the DSM divides up different conditions,” she says. For some people, a diagnosis can be helpful; for others, there is “a lot of recognition of the damage some of those labels can do to people and how they can stick with people for many years. So I think it’s a bit of a double-edged sword.”

The general idea it has raised on grief – that it is something you “recover” from – is largely unhelpful, she says. “Ultimately, grief can be a really transformative experience; it can change who you are as a person. So the idea that it’s just something you move through, and then you come out of the other side the same as you were before, doesn’t really hold.”



‘We should feel comfortable sharing as much as we want to about how we’re feeling in our grief’ Photograph: Demaeerre/Getty Images/iStockphoto/Posed by model

Grief, she says, “is interesting, because it has a psychological dimension, but it’s something which is going to happen to all of us and it’s more of a social issue”. Most people cope with even profound grief, she says, usually with the support of their social networks – family, friends, their community – but there is a significant minority, “probably about 10% of people who have more complex responses to grief, so they might get stuck and ruminating, feel that they’re unable to move through their grief and really find a new identity and integrate it into their lives and carry on.” It is people within that group, she says, “who will potentially end up with a diagnosis of prolonged grief disorder, and that might be helpful”. With a formal diagnosis, they might be able to access specialist help.

“What I would argue is everyone who has been bereaved is likely to have some need for support,” says Selman. If we were a more grief-literate society, and knew how to support them, that 10% who struggle – and the smaller number who are diagnosed with PGD – might not end up in that situation: “People would be more familiar with what grief is. We would feel comfortable being there for people who’ve been bereaved, and sharing as much as we want to about how we’re feeling in our grief. It always surprises

me how people, sometimes, can really struggle with just the very simple thing of saying: ‘I’m so sorry that happened to you.’” The inclusion in the DSM of a disorder that will only apply to a minority of people is not, she says, the answer to the bigger problem: that our society is not good at grief.

Queen Victoria never stopped wearing black and no one went: ‘The Queen’s being excessive’

*Dr Brandy Schillace*

We have become unaccustomed “to dealing with and living with negative emotions and so we very quickly jump to pathologise those, but all those negative emotions that you experience in grief are an absolutely normal, natural part of it,” says Dr Lucy Hone, resilience researcher and co-founder of [Coping With Loss](#), which runs practical support courses. “One of the early questions is: how long am I going to feel like this for? How long is this terrible aching, longing, and disarray going to last? And the truth is we can’t put a timeline on that, but what we do want people to be is generally managing to function. Our benchmark is that as long as you’re generally managing to function, then that’s natural grief, so don’t expect all the negative emotions and the disbelief to leave you quickly.” There’s a good chance, she says, “they won’t go within a year”.

The concept of a grief that you “get over” is quite modern, says Dr Brandy Schillace, editor in chief of the BMJ’s Medical Humanities Journal and author of Death’s Summer Coat: What the History of Death and Dying Teaches Us About Life and Living. In the 19th century, grief was visible, she says. “Queen Victoria grieved her husband for the rest of her life: she never stopped wearing black and no one went: ‘The Queen’s being excessive,’” says Schillace. “There were rules to grief. For instance, the grieving period, in terms of the mourning – the clothing that you wore – was longer if you lost your husband, than if you lost your wife. And if you’d lost your kids, it was different. So there was this idea that time periods adjusted, based on the grief.” You could tell when someone was “in mourning”, she says. “Whereas today the impulse is to look like you’re not grieving; they normalised grief, by making it quite public.”



Queen Victoria, who was famed for only wearing black after her husband's death. Photograph: W and D Downey/Getty Images

Bereavements were not only more common – many children died before the age of five, and people died of illnesses and diseases that are not fatal today – they were also more visible, and a state of grieving was considered “normal”, says Schillace. “We’re very privileged in the west and we are screened from death and dying. You get sick, you go to a hospital, nobody has to watch that happen.”

The change, she thinks, happened gradually. Along with advances in medicine and longer life expectancies, the rise of capitalism and postwar productivity has also had an impact, she believes. The idea of “productivity” being the optimum state “is western, but it’s very American. Within that concept, it doesn’t make space for grieving or illness or all sorts of things, even care of children. We have created a somewhat artificial concept of ‘normal’ being a state of non-grieving. Then of course, you’re going to pathologise grief and [believe that] if you are clinging to your grief, that’s an abnormal way to live your life, as opposed to recognising that grief is a constant intimate companion. When you lose someone close to you, it’s more like an amputation. It’s not like getting the flu and recovering. It’s like: ‘I’ve lost a limb, and now I have to adjust.’ So nothing you do is exactly the same again.”

Holly Prigerson, professor of geriatrics and co-director of Cornell University's Center for Research on End of Life Care, has been braced for the criticism of prolonged grief disorder. She pioneered its recognition, in research going back to the 1990s. Working in geriatric psychiatry, she was part of a team researching the effects of antidepressants for the treatment of bereavement-related depression in later life. She would sit in meetings, she recalls, where the depression and anxiety scores dropped throughout treatment, but she noticed that grief symptoms were not easing. Her colleagues, she says, "were like: 'That's OK, grief is the normal reaction to loss. We're psychiatrists, we care about depression and anxiety, and we're delighted we are able to move the needle on that.' Which is all good – the only question is: how do you know that grief might not be a problem for these people as much as depression and anxiety?"

It's like the loss happened yesterday; they're still in shock and disbelief  
... stuck in this state of disabling mourning

*Holly Prigerson*

She decided to study it and realised that a "grief syndrome" was different from symptoms of depression and anxiety. "Then the question was: what does that matter?" Prigerson followed up with participants over a period of time, "and what we found was that grief cluster, over and above the symptoms of depression and anxiety, was a better predictor of things like increases in suicidal ideation and was associated with hospitalisations for heart attacks." It was associated, she says, with sleep impairment, divorce and "a whole bunch of negative outcomes that I've spent the last 30 years showing".

Prigerson is frustrated that the criticism she and the DSM have received for "trying to medicate grief" has confused healthy and normal grief with prolonged grief disorder. "It's rare," she says. "It's very difficult to meet our criteria, and among bereaved people, 4% or less meet these criteria. It's severe, distressing and disabling levels of yearning and pining, and preoccupation with the deceased. The immediate acute sense of grief that is normal and natural right after someone you love has died – we've done studies of how these symptoms change over time." For the majority of people, after six months, they are on the decline. "But for people with

prolonged grief disorder, it's like the loss happened yesterday; they're still in a state of shock and disbelief and they don't know how they're going to get their lives together ... it's like someone just pulled the rug out from under them. They're stuck in this state of distressing mourning."

What it is not, she says, is people still missing a loved one, or experiencing a wave of grief, many years later. "Grief travels with everyone. My mom died of Covid a year ago and every day there's a time when I miss her, I think about her," she says. "But I'm not stuck feeling like life is meaningless, and adrift because of the loss. Do I feel pangs of grief? Yes, and that's normal and natural and not cause for concern. That's just being a human."

With a new disorder comes potential new treatments, which could be therapy or drugs. One, naltrexone, which is used to treat addiction, is being trialled, again raising controversy. "People are saying: 'You're calling love an addiction,'" says Prigerson. "[But we're not] saying we're trying to give you a pill that will take away your grief. We know that antidepressants have not proved helpful, and certain types of psychotherapy have not proved helpful. This is about trying to understand something better to help those who are stuck, and in a lot of pain." What does seem tricky to work out is which people, if any, would get better in their own time, beyond the one-year period. Prigerson says the majority with prolonged grief don't, but accepts that some do.

Hone is sceptical, not necessarily about the diagnosis, but about how it may be treated by those who don't understand it, or who don't understand grief. "Who's training those counsellors? And what material are those counsellors going to be giving out? Because at the moment, the most common model of grief that is still coming out of universities and all kinds of health courses is the 'five stages of grief', and there is no empirical evidence to support [that]." One of the most common reasons people seek bereavement counselling, she says, is because "they feel they're not grieving properly"; they are not experiencing the denial, anger, bargaining, depression and acceptance that took on a life of its own in popular consciousness, even though its creator, the psychiatrist Elisabeth Kübler-Ross, later said she regretted the way the five stages had been misunderstood. "It's an unhelpful, popular myth that needs to be retired," says Hone.

People expect their grief to reduce over time, she says, “and it doesn’t, but what happens is that your world grows around it, so it reduces relatively. That is Lois Tonkin’s theory of grief, and we find in our work, that gives people hope. We always say grief is as individual as your fingerprint: everybody grieves differently, there are no rules, you have to find what works for you.” When the loss is especially profound – losing a child, for instance – “it challenges all that you’ve assumed about the world, everything that you think you know the way that life should unfold. And so what you have to do is slowly start to remake sense of the world again.”

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**'If you work hard and succeed, you're a loser': can you really wing it to the top?**



Bluster and braggadocio ... Elon Musk, Donald Trump and Boris Johnson.  
Composite: Getty/EPA/SOPA/Shutterstock/Guardian Design

Forget the spreadsheets and make it up as you go along – that's the message of leaders from Elon Musk to Boris Johnson. But is acting on instinct really

a good idea?



[Emma Beddington](#)

Thu 16 Jun 2022 01.00 EDT

There are, it seems, two types of “winging it” stories. First, there are the triumphant ones – the victories pulled, cheekily, improbably, from the jaws of defeat. Like the time a historian (who prefers to remain nameless) turned up to give a talk on one subject, only to discover her hosts were expecting, and had advertised, another. “I wrote the full thing – an hour-long show – in 10 panicked minutes,” she says. “At the end, a lady came up to congratulate me on how spontaneous my delivery was.”

Then there is the other kind of winging it story – the kind that ends in ignominy. Remember the safeguarding minister, Rachel Maclean, tying herself in factually inaccurate knots when asked about stop-and-search powers? The Australian journalist Matt Doran, who interviewed Adele without listening to her album? Or the culture secretary, Nadine Dorries, claiming Channel 4 was publicly funded, then that Channel 5 had been privatised?

There are even worse examples. As a young journalist, Sarah Dempster was unwell when she was supposed to review a Meat Loaf concert, so she wrote the piece without attending. “An hour after publication, the paper called to inform me that the gig had, in fact, been cancelled. I was sacked,” [she tweeted](#). “The Sun wrote a piece about it. The headline: ‘MEAT OAF’.”

Why does anyone wing it, and how do they dare? As a lifelong dreary prepper, I have been wondering this since reading [a profile in the New York Times](#) of winger extraordinaire Elon Musk. “To a degree unseen in any other mogul, the entrepreneur acts on whim, fancy and the certainty that he is 100% right,” it related, detailing how Musk wings even the biggest decisions, operating on gut feeling and without a business plan, rejecting expert advice.



Genius or graft? Apple founder Steve Jobs and Zhou Qunfei, China’s richest woman. Composite: Getty/Shutterstock/Guardian Design

What, I wonder, is the appeal of this strategy? And is it a legitimate – indeed, more successful – way of doing business? Can Musk, the CEO of Tesla (a company with [a market capitalisation of £570bn](#)) and the founder of SpaceX (the first private company [to send humans into space](#)) really be winging it?

Some are sceptical. “Is this self-presentation or an accurate statement?” asks [Tomas Chamorro-Premuzic](#), an organisational psychologist and the author of Why Do So Many Incompetent Men Become Leaders? “Musk is probably way too smart to actually operate under that principle; he uses this arrogant self-presentation to his advantage. Brand Musk accounts for a big chunk of his success.” In contrast, he says, the recent [Netflix SpaceX documentary](#) shows Musk as “quite self-critical, quite humble”.

It is an idea echoed by Stefan Stern, a visiting professor at the Bayes Business School at City, University of London and the author of Myths of Management. “I can’t believe that he doesn’t draw on data; it’s a leading-edge thing he’s engaged in. When you promote yourself as a sort of visionary or hero, you absolutely want to try to claim that there’s something special about your insights – they’re not a petty, banal matter of data.”

When you promote yourself as a visionary, you want to try to claim that there’s something special about your insights

*Stefan Stern*

The implication is that Musk is like those schoolkids who claim not to have done a minute’s revision, then ace the exam. There is, the argument goes, something innately appealing about someone operating effortlessly on flair, instinct and inspiration: a Steve Jobs, not a Zhou Qunfei – the discreet founder of Lens Technology and the richest woman in China, who, Chamorro-Premuzic says, credits her success to “hard work and a relentless desire to learn”.

“There’s something romantic to the idea that there are mavericks who don’t need to work very hard,” adds Chamorro-Premuzic. “We say we value hard work and dedication, but, by definition, talent is more of an extraordinary gift and we celebrate that more.”

The leadership expert [Eve Poole](#) agrees. “No one wants to make it feel like hard work,” she says. “No one wants to say: ‘I slaved in front of a spreadsheet for 20 hours before I made that decision.’”

For Stern, Boris Johnson's apparent penchant for winging it carries a similar message. "When he says: 'We got the big calls right,' he's saying: 'These small-minded people obsess about data and numbers and statistics, but with my instinct, my judgment, I – the uniquely gifted, insightful leader – got the big calls right.' It's not even true!"

His self-presentation as "a charismatic figure with panache who is apparently spontaneous" is particularly interesting, Stern says, given that "the other thing we know about Johnson is he's not spontaneous, he doesn't have good lines off the cuff". (See that [disastrous CBI Peppa Pig speech](#) in November, recent prime minister's questions performances or his testy, defensive responses in more probing interviews.)

Is there any foundation for the notion that gut feeling is superior to pedestrian, data-driven decision-making? The cognitive psychologist [Gary Klein](#) has spent his career researching intuition in decision-making; 35 years on, his research on how firefighters act swiftly under pressure in tough situations is still cited. "We weren't looking for intuition," he says. Rather, his team's original theory was that firefighters might be rapidly evaluating two options when they decided how to tackle a fire. "They told us: 'We don't compare any options.' More than that, they said: 'We never make any decisions.'" Klein didn't understand how firefighters could believe only one course of action was possible and land on it without making comparisons.

A pig's ear ... Johnson's rambling speech to the CBI in November.

Further digging revealed a different picture. With 15 to 20 years of experience, Klein explains, the firefighters were classifying the situation based on fires they had seen – a process known as "pattern matching". The second step Klein called "mental simulation": the firefighters would visualise how a course of action would run and adjust their model accordingly. "It's a blend of intuition and analysis," says Klein. The process was near-instantaneous. "Most decisions were made in less than a minute."

So, what looks like winging it can, in fact, be instinctive decision-making backed up by experience – what Poole calls "really quick heuristics in your brain ... synaptic connections established through years of conditioning". Leaders who trust that, she says, "are just fucking excellent".

This decision-making model is common in one of the areas where people are least comfortable with the idea of winging it: healthcare. No one wants to end up in the hands of a seat-of-the-pants neurosurgeon, but Klein's research suggests medical professionals use intuitive decision-making and gut feeling as a matter of course.

His book *The Power of Intuition* tells the story of an experienced neonatal intensive care unit nurse accurately diagnosing a baby with sepsis just by walking past the incubator and getting a gut feeling, when a less experienced nurse who had been conscientiously tracking all the infant's vitals had failed to spot it. "An experienced physician sees a cluster of cues and says sepsis. We've heard stories of someone who was just a resident; there was a tough case and they called the attending physician. The attending physician does not even enter the room and from the door just looks at the patient and sees there's an issue and says: 'Ah, congestive heart failure.'"



Firefighters in New York. Gary Klein's research suggests they use 'a blend of intuition and analysis' to make quick decisions. Photograph: Anadolu Agency/Getty Images

The experiences that feed intuition can be less concrete. Poole has been researching what humans still have to offer in a world in which AI is ever-more powerful, such as what she calls "witch-style intuition" – that sense of

foreboding when you enter a room or meet someone. “We all know we have had those feelings and we tend to discount them and think they’re a bit silly and weird,” she says. “But I think it’s probably coming from the collective historical unconscious, trying to keep us safe as a species.” There are, she says, two strands: “your own, desperately hard-earned gut feeling, laid down in templates of data and knowledge, then the spooky ephemera that you can pick up through ‘spidey sense’, which I think can still be really reliable.”

It can, but it isn’t always. Intuition of any kind is not infallible. Klein describes it as a “data point”: something to take into consideration, not to accept uncritically. One area in which intuition gives demonstrably poor outcomes is recruitment. As Chamorro-Premuzic explains, unstructured interview processes increase and reinforce conscious and unconscious biases about candidates. We all believe our own intuition to be superior, he says: “In an interview situation, this is a big problem, because hiring managers think they have an ability to see through candidates and to understand whether they are competent.” Companies will spend large budgets on diversity and inclusion, “then tell you they hire for ‘culture fit’ – and the main way to evaluate culture fit is whether somebody ‘feels right’ in a job interview. Even if managers are well-meaning and open-minded, they will gravitate towards candidates who are like them and they are comfortable with.”

It appeals to people who don’t feel anything any more – it gives them a massive adrenaline rush

*Eve Poole*

Moreover, studies show that people tend to make up their mind in the first 60 or 90 seconds, he says. This is pattern recognition gone wrong, according to Stern. When decision-makers see someone who reminds them of themselves, they think: “Oh yeah, he’s got the right stuff. I used to be like him.”

Donald Trump springs to mind here. I read Klein a typical Trump pronouncement: “I have a gut and my gut tells me more sometimes than anybody else’s brain can ever tell me.” It reminds Klein of two dangerous fallacies about intuition: “One, some people think intuition is innate ability,

which I don't think it is; it's based on experience. Two, intuition is a general skill and will apply in lots of different situations. I don't think that's true." Having decent intuition in an area where you have professional experience – "like real estate", he says, pointedly – does not mean you have a transferable skill.

Talking to people who admit to winging it reveals that, mainly, they mean the "good" kind of intuition: calling on a wealth of relevant experience and deploying it in defined circumstances. That often involves an element of performance, where spontaneity can be the secret ingredient.

Susannah, who works in publishing, says: "I love to wing it in sales presentations. When I wing it, I suddenly find a new angle; it works every time. But only, I think, because I'm winging stuff I already know deeply." Kathy, a senior financial services strategist, says: "If it's something I don't know at all, I won't wing it, but in my area of expertise I'm the queen of prep five minutes before the meeting."

These are the good wingers, but of course the bad ones are out there – the lazy, the grandiose blaggers and the bullshitters, too often in positions of power. "There are a lot of men, particularly, who do that," says Poole. "I think it does appeal to people who don't feel anything any more – it's all so boring and that's the way they get some feelings. It gives them a massive adrenaline rush; it makes them feel very powerful and victorious." It is not usually a successful long-term strategy, she adds, comfortingly; what Chamorro-Premuzic calls "the sense of Teflon-style immunity" betrays them eventually. "I just think you get caught out. It's the spin of the wheel and that's why I hate it: it's so risky for your organisation."

But we still admire them, buy their products, even vote for them. Why do we fall for it? It is a lack of "followership maturity", according to Chamorro-Premuzic, and varies from culture to culture. "I grew up in South America, where if you work hard and you succeed you're automatically a loser," he says. "Whereas if you bullshit and deceive people, we should worship you. There are cultures that truly value self-improvement, hard work and knowledge and there are cultures that value confidence."

A country that wants to be entertained, he says, is likely to apply low standards for leadership, preferring self-belief to caution and hard work. “Whether it’s Trump, Boris, Steve Jobs, [Elon Musk](#) – they celebrate them because they challenge the establishment. When they behave in anarchic ways, disrespecting the rules, I think they can channel the anger that people have.” The kicker is that we assume there’s some competence behind the blagging and bluster, that the emperor is fully clothed. But how do we work out if it is true: spreadsheet or gut?

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## Poverty leaves scars for life – I'm still scared of strangers at the door and bills through the letterbox

[Jack Monroe](#)



Denying people basic human needs for the sake of saving a few quid now is a false economy – the long-term impacts of poverty are a ticking health timebomb

- This article is part of a new series, [the heat or eat diaries](#): dispatches from the frontline of Britain's cost of living emergency



Composite: Guardian design/Getty

Thu 16 Jun 2022 02.00 EDT Last modified on Thu 16 Jun 2022 15.27 EDT

The current cost of living crisis that threatens to plunge millions more people into poverty is going to have far longer-term impacts than a summer of discontent, a few months of belt-tightening or watching what we all spend at the supermarket. Many well-meaning guides offering advice on “how to cope” have been published over the past few months, and although they offer some practical tips that may help a slender margin of people teetering on the precipice of crisis, the truth is that the majority of those struggling have been sliding into this cesspit of deprivation and destitution for [nigh on a decade now](#).

Twelve years of brutal, deliberate cuts to welfare, social security and health services, 12 years of cuts to mental health services, and the increasing reliance on the voluntary sector to try to catch people as they fall through the gaping holes in the safety net mean that those at the sharp end have very few resources left to turn to in order to cope.

And coping isn’t the only concern. Indeed, talking of “surviving” the crisis or “coping” with it is abhorrently casual rhetoric in one of the richest economies in the world. It is as though our citizens deserve little more than

to claw at the periphery of an existence, while strapping hot-water bottles to the smalls of their backs and taping clingfilm over their windowpanes, carefully snipping coupons from the free newspapers and filling in endless marketing surveys for tuppence apiece, wrapping casserole pans in dressing gowns to keep in the heat or “boiling” pasta in a heatproof flask.

Poverty is exhausting. It requires time, effort, energy, organisation, impetus, an internal calculator and steely mental fortitude that those in the Treasury could only dream of possessing. And should it not kill you, in the end, from starvation or cold or mental ill health, should you scrabble somehow to the sunlit uplands of “just about managing”, I’m sorry to tell you that although your bank balance may be in the black one day, so too will your head.

I’ve written extensively over the years about how I often could not open my own front door nor my mail as a result of living in poverty, when the only people who knocked on the door were bailiffs or debt collectors. An unexpected visitor leaves me having a full-blown panic attack. Years of therapy has alleviated some of it, some of the time, but my physical and mental health will probably never make a full recovery. Complex post-traumatic stress disorder (CPTSD), arthritis exacerbated by living in cold homes, respiratory difficulties from the damp, complex trauma, an array of mental health issues, a hoarding problem, and a slow burning addiction brought to an almost fatal head last year: my story is by no means unique or exceptional.

Short-term exposure to and experience of poverty – whether fuel poverty, food poverty, period poverty, or the root cause of all of them, the insufficient resources with which to meet your most fundamental human needs – has long-term and disproportionate effects for years to come. Childhood exposure to poverty, deprivation and adversity falls under the umbrella of adverse childhood experiences, known as ACEs. It’s on a par with domestic abuse, childhood sexual assault, loss of a parent, parental incarceration, violence and neglect.

Exposure to ACEs increases the risk of trauma later in life, both mentally and physically. Bessel van der Kolk writes extensively on this phenomenon in his book *The Body Keeps the Score*; the devastating impact of trauma on

those who suffer it and witness it, on their families and how it can be handed down through generations. Those who experience trauma often disconnect from their own bodies and minds in extreme and complex ways, and this is largely misunderstood in both the medical and therapeutic fields.

Exposure to adverse experiences increases the risk of trauma later in life, with less favourable health outcomes, a negative impact on general wellbeing, increased likelihood of risky or criminal behaviours, poor educational and academic outcomes, and financial difficulties.

Children who experience food insecurity, even short term, are more likely to fall ill, have a slower recovery rate and are more likely to need hospital admission. Food poverty does not exist in a vacuum, and as one of the fundamental survival instincts of our species, food is one of the last necessities that people will choose to cut in a crisis.

Disabled people are five times more likely to be at risk of food insecurity, poverty and a lack of adequate nutritional food than non-disabled people. And food insecurity at any age is linked to a higher probability of chronic illness. The 14.5 million people living in poverty in the UK today are ticking timebombs of increased toxic stress, post-traumatic stress disorder, PTSD, cognitive difficulties, depression, gum disease, chronic fatigue, osteoporosis, asthma, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, arterial disease, mental illness, diabetes, hypertension, inflammation, autoimmune disorders, suicidal ideation and suicide.

Choosing to deny people the most basic of human needs for the sake of scraping a few quid off the bottom line today will end up costing us – as a society, as a country and as an economy – far more in the months and years to come. If this government cannot bring itself to repair the shreds of the deliberately decimated social safety net for the sake of empathy, decency and common humanity, it needs to be patched up for the sake of long-term economic recovery. And it needs to start today.

- Jack Monroe is a campaigner, columnist and author

- The Trussell Trust is an anti-poverty charity that campaigns to end the need for food banks. Show your support at: [trusselltrust.org/guardian](https://trusselltrust.org/guardian)
  - In the UK and Ireland, [Samaritans](https://www.samaritans.org) can be contacted on 116 123, or email [jo@samaritans.org](mailto:jo@samaritans.org) or [jo@samaritans.ie](mailto:jo@samaritans.ie). In the US, the [National Suicide Prevention Lifeline](https://suicidepreventionlifeline.org) is at 800-273-8255 or chat for support. You can also text HOME to 741741 to connect with a crisis text line counselor. In Australia, the crisis support service [Lifeline](https://lifeline.org.au) is 13 11 14. Other international helplines can be found at [befrienders.org](https://befrienders.org)
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Opinion**Boris Johnson**

## **Johnson doesn't see poor asylum seekers. He sees a way to win byelections and survive**

[Martin Kettle](#)



He has been derided as an uncontrollable shopping trolley, but there is calculation in how he tacks right to secure his position



‘Boris Johnson is completely different. For him, government is overwhelmingly about getting and maintaining office.’ Photograph: Tayfun Salcı/Zuma Press Wire/Rex/Shutterstock

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Perhaps to his own surprise, [Boris Johnson](#) finds himself part of a generation of western leaders who are compelled to grapple with much more daunting global issues than they expected a few years back as they rose towards power. Yet whereas Joe Biden, Emmanuel Macron or Olaf Scholz all give the impression, to different degrees, that they grasp the interconnected seriousness of the moment and are attempting, with varying records of success, to address it, Johnson is completely different. For him, government is overwhelmingly about getting and maintaining office. Everything else – war, inflation, climate, public health – is secondary.

It is extremely important to understand this overriding priority. It may be impossible otherwise to make sense of some of Johnson’s political choices and stances. The Rwanda [deportation row](#) this week is the latest prime example, though it is far from the only one. There is no point trying to understand the attempted deportations as a policy that might be an attempt to solve a genuine problem – global asylum seeking. They can only be understood as performative politics for the benefit of the parts of the Conservative party that hold Johnson’s future in their hands.

Rationally, the attempt to fly a small handful of unwilling refugees to [Rwanda](#) this week is not only morally and legally questionable, it is also procedurally tendentious and premature. It was always clear that the policy – of picking up asylum seekers on the Kent coast and sending them to central Africa – would be tested in the courts, and this is indeed happening. The supreme court is due to rule on the issue in July. The legal cases of the past few days, including the European court of human rights order, have all been focused on trying to stop the government from jumping the gun.

So why is the government not waiting? The answer to that question lies not in any innovative brilliance or efficacy of the policy but in Johnson's precarious political position. A week today, voters go to the polls in the two by-elections that provide the next big threat to Johnson's position. The one in Wakefield is being seen as a test of Johnson's capacity to hold on to working-class seats in the north and Midlands against Labour, while that in Tiverton and Honiton is a [paradigm examination](#) of the Conservatives' grip on rural seats in the south and west against the Liberal Democrats.

Although [Johnson survived](#) last week's no-confidence vote provoked by his Downing Street lockdown parties, he is not out of the woods yet. A double defeat on 23 June would frighten dozens of Tory MPs far more thoroughly than many admit. Even if Johnson successfully retains the leadership through the summer, with the economy on the verge of recession and the cost of living crisis likely to tighten markedly as winter nears and fuel prices rise again, further challenges are likely.

Boris Johnson says laws 'may need to be changed' for Rwanda plan to go ahead – video

The airfield scenes on Tuesday night, with the deportation flight aborted at the 11th hour, should thus be understood as deliberately performative. The wheeze was to spotlight the government's hostility not just to asylum seekers but also to lawyers and judges. The [intervention](#) by the European court of human rights supplied a powerful and gratefully received emotional connection with the populist campaigns for sovereignty and Brexit (never mind that the ECHR is nothing formally to do with the European Union).

The target audiences in all this were the rightwing press and Tory voters in the two by-elections. All that mattered was that they should have been aroused by the confrontation. If Guardian readers got angry, or Keir Starmer or Ed Davey made a fuss about it (which, perhaps significantly, neither of them did at prime minister's questions on Wednesday), so much the better. In that context the financial cost was immaterial. If the [Conservatives](#) hold on to Tiverton and Honiton, and the threat to Johnson abates again for a while, it will be judged to have been worth every penny.

Dominic Cummings's [famous comparison](#) of Johnson with a supermarket trolley, rolling first to one side of the political aisle and then to other, grabbing hold of whatever takes his fancy, is a stimulating one. But it implies that Johnson's choices are entirely impulsive and random. This is not true. It underplays the reality that his recent career is marked by a certain consistency. He always tacks more readily to the right than to the centre when he is in trouble. He did this over relaxing the Covid regulations, over the [Owen Paterson affair](#) and over the [Northern Ireland protocol](#). Now he is doing it over deportations to Rwanda and the Human Rights Act. Next week, it will be the rail strikes. He may well do it over the green agenda before he is much older.

This instinct to tack rightwards is about something larger than any of Johnson's ideological views. It goes back to the fundamental choice that he made in 2016 to support rather than oppose Brexit. Then and afterwards, his aim was always to position the Tory party in a place where Nigel Farage could not split it from the right. It still is so today, even if Farage himself is no longer in the frontline.

The positioning, however, is often Potemkin-like. It looks rightwing, and that is what counts in the party. To Johnson, the policy reality of government is of far less concern than being the head of it. His politics is built more around campaigning and appearance than about work and achievement. Deporting asylum seekers to Rwanda matters less than being believed ready and willing to do it. What always concerns Johnson most is not what he does but what he is.

- Martin Kettle is a Guardian columnist

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## OpinionTransgender

# Forget toxic Twitter debates: the UK isn't as divided on trans rights as you think

[Luke Tryl](#)

Rows about gender identity are increasingly acrimonious, but our report shows people are compassionate and respectful

- Luke Tryl is the UK director of More in Common



'Many people shared respect for trans people's bravery and gratitude that things had got better in recent years.' Photograph: Hester Ng/SOPA Images/REX/Shutterstock

Thu 16 Jun 2022 01.00 EDT Last modified on Thu 16 Jun 2022 03.06 EDT

For a country famed for its modesty and reserve, the UK does seem to have found itself having an awful lot of conversations about genitalia before breakfast. I'm talking, of course, about the latest "gotcha" trend of posing questions to senior politicians about whether or not women can have penises, in what has become an increasingly acrimonious row about trans rights.

Couple that with the nightly social media pile-ons directed at anyone who dares to offer a nuanced position on gender identity, and it's no wonder that when I told people that my organisation, More in Common, was writing a report about public attitudes on the topic, the most common response was that we were "very brave".

But having spent many evenings over the past few months talking to ordinary Britons across the country from Glasgow to Witney and Brighton to Blyth (along with polling of 5,000 others), we found the public talked about trans people, and some of the issues involved, in a way that was totally removed from the debate playing out on the airwaves or our phone screens.

Log on to Twitter and it appears as though Britain is divided in two: between the trans allies and the transphobes. But when you log off and swap 280 characters for proper conversations, you see a very different picture.

First, most people start from a position of compassion about the struggles that trans people face. Many people shared stories with us about their trans colleagues, students, friends and family, with roughly a quarter of the population knowing someone who is trans according to our research. They shared respect for people's bravery and gratitude that things had got better in recent years, along with frustration about the challenges and discrimination that trans people still face.

Most Britons don't think the debate about trans people is one of the most important issues facing our country today (in fact, according to our research, only 2% do). Many are concerned instead about how they're going to pay next month's gas bill. But that doesn't mean the public aren't informed about the issues involved – in fact, we heard plenty of stories about the

commonsense approaches that they've taken to accommodating trans people in their schools, communities and workplaces.

Almost no one we spoke to got worked up about calling someone by their preferred pronouns. Most thought it was important that schools were making trans pupils feel supported, and were also teaching young people that trans people existed. Some found the new terminology they heard from their children confusing, but their concerns were about being shouted at for getting things wrong or asking questions rather than hostility to change.

Instead, by and large, the public take a “live and let live approach” as long as it doesn’t undermine notions of fairness and fair play. That explains, for instance, why most people were happy, or indifferent, to the idea of introducing more unisex toilets (and those who weren’t were far more concerned about men’s toilet hygiene than any worries about trans people).

However, they were opposed (57% to 19%) to allowing trans women to compete in women’s sports – not because they want to police who does and who doesn’t count as a woman, but because they don’t think it’s fair. As Natalie from Long Eaton put it: “I think it’s a bit of a minefield, isn’t it? Men do tend to be stronger than women.”

Similarly, far from wanting to misgender children as the attorney general appeared to advocate a few weeks ago, most teachers in our focus groups said it was important that they respected children as they explored their gender identity. But at the same time people didn’t want children to undergo irreversible processes – such as taking cross-sex hormones – before the age of 18 or without proper medical advice and support. Far from two binary positions, the Britons we spoke to constantly strove to find the fairest path forward – embracing trans inclusion on some issues, and wanting to preserve sex-based boundaries on the other.

It was also clear that most people don’t see trans people as one monolithic group – they distinguished between those who had been through gender reassignment surgery and those who hadn’t, or those who had lived in their expressed gender for a long time and those for a short time. They felt that it was important to take a case-by-case approach rather than deciding policy

through blanket diktats – that might not always be feasible, but often would better reflect the very individual journeys of people involved.

More than anything, the public wanted the space to be able to talk about these issues and to try to find a way through. The greatest threat to that is if the toxic discourse starts to bleed into the public conversation, leaving people afraid of being shouted down or labelled as bigots. Such an outcome would be bad for trans people, bad for those concerned about the protection of sex-based rights, and bad for society at large as we grapple with how to handle issues of social change.

- Luke Tryl is the UK director of More in Common
  - *Do you have an opinion on the issues raised in this article? If you would like to submit a letter of up to 300 words to be considered for publication, email it to us at [guardian.letters@theguardian.com](mailto:guardian.letters@theguardian.com)*
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The politics sketch**Keir Starmer**

## **Tortured Star Wars gags fail to free Starmer from boredom paradox**

[John Crace](#)



While Labour leader's sci-fi sequence fell flat at PMQs, his 'Conservative Corbyn' joke was near suicidal



Starmer missed an early chance to ridicule the prime minister's explanation for the UK's slow growth rate. Photograph: UK Parliament/Jessica Taylor/PA

Wed 15 Jun 2022 14.15 EDT Last modified on Thu 16 Jun 2022 00.14 EDT

You'd have thought there were worse things to be called than "boring" as leader of the opposition. Especially when so many people in the country identify the prime minister as an amoral, lying chancer. Boring may not be ideal – who wouldn't prefer to be engaging? – but at least it conveys an air of dependability. Someone who can be trusted to deliver.

But [Keir Starmer](#) seems to have taken the description given to him by some of the shadow cabinet to heart and is hell-bent on proving that he is actually very interesting. Which is completely counter-productive. Because he then falls into the boredom paradox.

The more he tries to convince the world he's a "fun kinda guy" the duller he seems to get. A rabbit-hole from which it's hard to escape. Far better to embrace the dullness within. To make a virtue of it. To show that it's OK to be authentically dull. Wear the cardie with pride. No one ever fell in love with Keir because of his charisma.

Still, the Labour leader had begun prime minister's questions promisingly by keeping it short and sweet. How come the UK had the second lowest growth in the G20 with only Russia worst off? A sun-burnt [Boris Johnson](#) – we all know how much he likes to go to outdoor work events in No 10 – came back with an equally snappy answer. We were doing so badly because we had come out of the pandemic quickest.

It sounded like complete doggy. Mainly because it was. So here was Starmer's chance to ridicule The Convict. To expose the toddler's logic. Let's get this straight. If Covid had gone on for another six months then our economy would be booming. Or maybe we'd be better off living under a permanent lockdown. To think that Johnson's is the finest brain the Tory party can throw up to run the country.

Instead Starmer went into a tortured Star Wars gag about Boris being Jabba the Hutt, which died on its feet. As did his efforts to sound "down with the kids" by squeezing in a reference to Love Island, since it was clear he didn't have a clue what he was talking about. And saying that his backbenchers thought Johnson was the "Conservative Corbyn" was borderline suicidal. Corbyn may have been unpopular, but Keir had backed him as leader. But in between he did manage to land a few more telling blows on the economy.

"Stop talking the country down," the Convict shouted, waving his arms in irritation. It's now unpatriotic to say anything negative about the country even if it's true. Mention [England's 4-0 defeat to Hungary](#) and you're as good as dead.

Johnson didn't want to talk about boring things that everyone cared about. Like the cost of living. He wanted only to talk about the things that divide the country. And excite the right wing of his party. Like Brexit. "We got Brexit done," he insisted. News to everyone. If Brexit is done, why have we yet to see any benefits? Why are we about to break international law and enter a trade war with the EU?

Like refugees. [Labour](#) was on the side of the people smugglers. Apparently. The Tories were on the side of the wannabe refugees who stayed in their own country and died. Oh, and also on the side of ignoring the law again by leaving the human rights court. There was no piece of international law the

UK should be willing to accept. The World Trade Organization? Full of lefty capitalists. UEFA? Nasty footballcrats who are plotting a new offside law to disadvantage England and Wales.

And another thing ... the Convict was rattling through his list of perceived grievances. Labour was doing nothing to stop next week's rail strikes. He seemed to think Labour had been in government for the past 12 years and that Starmer was responsible for the Tories having made no effort to negotiate with the unions.

The hardcore, insentient fanatics on the backbenches lapped it up. Never happier than when they have an enemy to fight. The EU. The human rights court. The unions. Refugees. The world. They roared their approval. So much so that much of the rest of PMQs was an unintelligible cacophony. A pitiful shambles for which the weak Speaker was responsible. Lindsay Hoyle makes a show of threatening MPs but never follows through. And the MPs walk all over him. Throw one out and you may get a functioning chamber.

Once the last echoes of PMQs had died away, Priti Patel stood up to give a statement on why spending £500,000 on a flight that had never taken off was fantastic value for money. It had never been about the numbers, more about the fight. "We have a world-leading scheme," she said, repeating the words her idiot non-savant junior minister, Tom Pursglove, had used on Monday. World-leading, as in everyone else has decided it's a catastrophically moronic idea.

But even though the lawyers – Priti Vacant couldn't conceal her contempt for people who try to apply the law correctly – had managed to get everyone off the plane, the scheme was still a stunning success. The fewer refugees we exported to Rwanda, the more its value was proved. Out-trafficking the traffickers. And yes there was another plane ready to leave, just as soon as the lawyers had made sure there would be no one on it. It's what the refugees would have wanted. Their aim had always been to get to Rwanda. You just couldn't get there by rubber boat.

Yvette Cooper reprised her role from Monday. Her outrage at the way the government is shaming the country is palpable. She was the model of clarity

as she took apart Vacant's threadbare arguments. There was a reason Israel had given up on its people transportation scheme. And it wasn't because it was unethical. Though it was. It was because it didn't work. So how about setting up some safe routes and co-operating more with France. Priti winced at the thought of doing anything with France. Wait til someone tells her it's just across the Channel.

"We must adopt the right tone," said Vacant. Her lack of self-awareness is breathtaking. She's not even a clever narcissist. "And a scheme cannot be unworkable and expensive." Except it can, obviously. Truly, she is a philosopher queen. If it's possible to get something wrong, she will find a way. Resourceful, if nothing else.

Much of the rest of the session was spent with Tory backbenchers trying to persuade themselves that the beastlier they were being to refugees the nicer they were being. Dialectical refugeeism. Schrödinger's foreigners. Peter Bone said there was a difference between traffickers and smugglers. And that anyone who allowed themselves to be smuggled deserved to die.

Others just laid into foreign courts. They have yet to learn the difference between foreign and international. Or that the UK was one of the principal founders of the European convention on human rights. Jonathan Gullis seemed unaware that the human rights court was written into the Good Friday agreement. And he is parliamentary private secretary to Brandon Lewis. The Northern Ireland secretary. Truly the wankocracy is in overdrive. Heading remorselessly towards the wall.

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## 2022.06.16 - Around the world

- Xinjiang UN human rights chief could not speak to detained Uyghurs or families during visit
- China US says support for Russia over Ukraine puts Beijing on ‘wrong side of history’
- John Hinckley Man who shot Ronald Reagan gains full freedom 41 years later
- Ramen a leg Across Asia, noodle prices are heating up as wheat supply goes to pot

## [Xinjiang](#)

# **UN human rights chief could not speak to detained Uyghurs or families during Xinjiang visit**

Michelle Bachelet says she was supervised by China officials throughout six-day visit that critics have called a propaganda coup for Beijing



United Nations human rights commissioner Michelle Bachelet said there were limitations on her visit to Xinjiang, China. Photograph: Fabrice Coffrini/AFP/Getty Images

*[Helen Davidson](#) in Taipei  
[@heldavidson](#)*

Thu 16 Jun 2022 01.23 EDT Last modified on Thu 16 Jun 2022 13.10 EDT

Michelle Bachelet has said wasn't able to speak to any detained Uyghurs or their families during her controversial visit to Xinjiang, and was accompanied by government officials while in the region.

The UN human rights chief, who this week announced [she would not be seeking another term](#), told a session of the 50th Human Rights Council in Geneva that there were limitations on her visit to the region in China, where authorities have been accused of committing crimes against humanity and genocide against the Uyghurs and other Muslim minorities.

Bachelet and a team from the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) spent six days in Guangdong and Xinjiang for a visit that activists and some western governments [described as a propaganda coup for the Chinese government](#).

In a statement on Wednesday, Bachelet said she was able to meet members of civil society organisations without government supervision, but in [Xinjiang](#) was “accompanied by government officials throughout the visit”.

At a press conference in Guangdong held on the final day of her tour, Bachelet was asked directly by the Guardian about her ability to speak to Uyghur civilians and other people “without supervision” and to have free and open discussions about their experiences.

At the time Bachelet said that because of the Covid bubble they weren’t able to meet everyone “but with the people we were able to speak to, it was in an unsupervised manner”.

On Wednesday she reiterated “limitations” on the visit. “As it would be true of any high-level visit which by definition is not an investigation mission, there were limitations especially given the prevailing Covid restrictions,” she said.

“I visited Kashgar prison plus a former so-called VETC [vocational education and training centre], where I spoke to the authorities. I was not able to speak to any [Uyghurs](#) currently detained or their families during the visit. However, in anticipation of this, I did meet with some former detainees who are now outside the country and with families who have lost contact with loved ones ahead of my visit.”

After her visit Bachelet was criticised by rights groups, some western governments and Uyghur activists for failing to strongly condemn the Chinese government's abuses in Xinjiang, and for using terminology favoured by the government in her press conference, including "vocational education and training centre". VETCs are the government's name for a network of facilities in which an estimated one million Uyghurs have been detained and allegedly subject to human rights abuses.

Activists including Uyghur human rights lawyer Rayhan Asat told media their families in Xinjiang had been prevented from leaving their homes by authorities during Bachelet's visit. Asat's brother has been detained in the Xinjiang system [since he disappeared in 2016](#).

The OHCHR has been under pressure [to release a long-awaited report](#) on the human rights situation in China, which was completed in late 2021.

On Wednesday during a separate address, Bachelet said her office was working on updates to their assessment of the situation in Xinjiang which would be shared with the Chinese government for comment before publication.

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## US foreign policy

# US says China's support for Russia over Ukraine puts it on 'wrong side of history'

'China claims to be neutral, but its behavior makes clear that it is still investing in close ties to Russia,' state department says



President Xi Jinping of China assured Vladimir Putin of support for Moscow's 'sovereignty and security' in a telephone call on Wednesday.  
Photograph: Alexei Druzhinin/AP

*AFP in Washington*

Wed 15 Jun 2022 16.31 EDTFirst published on Wed 15 Jun 2022 15.33 EDT

Xi Jinping has assured Vladimir Putin of China's support on Russian "sovereignty and security" prompting Washington to warn Beijing it risked ending up "on the wrong side of history".

China has refused to condemn Moscow's invasion of [Ukraine](#) and has been accused of providing diplomatic cover for Russia by blasting western sanctions and arms sales to Kyiv.

China is "willing to continue to offer mutual support [to Russia] on issues concerning core interests and major concerns such as sovereignty and security," state broadcaster CCTV reported Xi as saying during a call with Putin.

It was the second reported call between the two leaders since Putin launched his invasion of Ukraine on 24 February.

According to CCTV, Xi praised the "good momentum of development" in bilateral relations since the start of the year "in the face of global turmoil and changes".

Beijing was willing to "intensify strategic coordination between the two countries", Xi reportedly said.

The Kremlin said the two leaders had agreed to ramp up economic cooperation in the face of "unlawful" western sanctions.

"It was agreed to expand cooperation in the energy, financial, industrial, transport and other areas, taking into account the situation in the global economy that has become more complicated due to the unlawful sanctions policy of the west," the Kremlin said following the phone call.

But the United States swiftly weighed in with a frosty retort to Beijing's expressed alignment with Moscow.

"China claims to be neutral, but its behavior makes clear that it is still investing in close ties to Russia," a US state department spokesperson said.

Washington was "monitoring China's activity closely", including how, nearly four months into Russia's war in Ukraine, the Asian giant was "still echoing Russian propaganda around the world" and suggesting Moscow's atrocities in Ukraine were "staged," the official said.

“Nations that side with Vladimir Putin will inevitably find themselves on the wrong side of history.”

The west has adopted unprecedented sanctions against Russia in retaliation for its invasion of Ukraine, and Moscow considers that Europe and the United States have thus caused a global economic slowdown.

Moscow is also looking for new markets and suppliers to replace the major foreign firms that left Russia following the invasion.

The European Union and the US have warned that any backing from Beijing for Russia’s war, or help for Moscow to dodge western sanctions, would damage ties.

Once bitter cold war enemies, Beijing and Moscow have stepped up cooperation in recent years as a counterbalance to what they see as US global dominance.

The pair have drawn closer in the political, trade and military spheres as part of what they call a “no limits” relationship.

Last week they unveiled the first road bridge linking the two countries, connecting the far eastern Russian city of Blagoveshchensk with the northern Chinese city of Heihe.

The leaders’ call on Wednesday fell on Xi’s 69th birthday and was their first reported communication since the day after Russia launched its Ukraine invasion.

Beijing is Moscow’s largest trading partner, with trade volumes last year hitting \$147bn, according to Chinese customs data.

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## US news

# John Hinckley gains full freedom 41 years after Ronald Reagan assassination attempt

Hinckley, who shot and wounded the president in 1981 but was acquitted by reason of insanity, had decades of mental health supervision



John Hinckley, pictured in 2003, was 25 when he tried to assassinate Ronald Reagan in 1981. He was freed from court oversight on Wednesday.  
Photograph: Evan Vucci/AP

*Associated Press*

Thu 16 Jun 2022 01.47 EDT Last modified on Fri 17 Jun 2022 00.27 EDT

John Hinckley, who shot and wounded US president [Ronald Reagan](#) in 1981, has been freed from court oversight, officially concluding decades of supervision by legal and mental health professionals.

“After 41 years 2 months and 15 days, FREEDOM AT LAST!!!,” he wrote on Twitter shortly after noon on Wednesday.

The lifting of all restrictions had been expected since late September. US district court judge Paul L Friedman in Washington had said he would free Hinckley on 15 June if he continued to remain mentally stable in the community in Virginia where he has lived since 2016.

Hinckley, who was acquitted of trying to kill the then US president by reason of insanity, spent the decades before that in a Washington mental hospital.

Hinckley has gained nearly 30,000 followers on Twitter and YouTube in recent months as the judge loosened Hinckley’s restrictions before fully lifting all of them.

But the greying 67-year-old is far from being the household name that he became after shooting and wounding the 40th US president and several others outside a Washington hotel. Today, historians say Hinckley is at best a question on a quiz show and someone who unintentionally helped build the Reagan legend and inspire a push for stricter gun control.

“If Hinckley had succeeded in killing Reagan, then he would have been a pivotal historical figure,” HW Brands, a historian and Reagan biographer, wrote in an email to the Associated Press. “As it is, he is a misguided soul whom history has already forgotten.”



Secret Service agents and police officers swarm Hinckley after he tried to assassinate Ronald Reagan outside the Washington Hilton on 30 March 1981. Photograph: Ron Edmonds/AP

Barbara A Perry, a professor and director of presidential studies at the University of Virginia's Miller Center, said that Hinckley "would be maybe a Jeopardy question". But his impact remains tangible in Reagan's legacy.

"For the president himself to have been so seriously wounded, and to come back from that that actually made Ronald Reagan the legend that he became ... like the movie hero that he was," Perry said.

Reagan showed grace and humor in the face of death, Perry said. After being shot, the president told emergency room doctors that he hoped they were all Republicans. He later joked to his wife Nancy that he was sorry he "forgot to duck".

When the president first spoke to Congress after the shooting, he looked "just a little bit thinner, but he's still the robust cowboy that is Ronald Reagan", Perry said.

The assassination attempt paralyzed Reagan press secretary James Brady, who died in 2014.

In 1993, president Bill Clinton signed into law the Brady bill, which required a five-day waiting period for handgun purchases and background checks of prospective buyers. The Brady Campaign to Prevent Gun Violence and the Brady Center to Prevent Gun Violence are named after Brady and his wife Sarah.

The shooting also injured Secret Service agent Timothy McCarthy and Washington police officer Thomas Delahanty.

Hinckley was 25 and suffering from acute psychosis at the time of the attack. When jurors found him not guilty by reason of insanity, they said he needed treatment and not a lifetime in confinement. He was ordered to live at St Elizabeths hospital in Washington.



An artist's rendering of John Hinckley and his parents Jack and Jo Ann in federal court in Washington in November 2004. Photograph: Dana Verkouteren/AP

In the 2000s, Hinckley began making visits to his parents' home in a gated community in Williamsburg. A 2016 court order granted him permission to live with his mother full time, albeit under various restrictions, after experts said his mental illness had been in remission for decades.

Hinckley's mother died in July. He signed a lease on a one-bedroom apartment in the area last year and began living there with his cat, Theo, according to court filings.

Over the years, the court restricted Hinckley from owning a gun or using drugs or alcohol. He also couldn't contact the actor Jodie Foster, with whom he was obsessed at the time of the shooting, or any of his victims or their families.

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## Supply chain crisis

# Ramen a leg: noodle prices heat up as wheat supply goes to pot

Floods in China and war in Ukraine cause grain shortage, while strained supply chain adds to squeeze on a staple food for millions



Taiwanese woman Mama Lai at her noodle stall in Taipei, where prices are rising in line with costs in many Asian countries. Photograph: Chi Hui Lin/The Guardian

*[Martin Farrer](#)*

Thu 16 Jun 2022 02.11 EDTFirst published on Thu 16 Jun 2022 00.27 EDT

The world's hundreds of millions of noodle eaters face a rise in the price of their favourite meal as producers look set to heap surging wheat, energy and transport costs on to consumers.

Factors ranging from the war in Ukraine to droughts and floods in the past year have combined to cause a price squeeze that could see the cost of wheat

rise 30% this year in China, while also adding to already rising prices in [South Korea](#) and Japan.

In China, the world's largest consumer of noodles, food inflation [is rising](#) at the quickest pace for almost two years as large cities such as Shanghai open up after lockdowns.

Widespread floods [in the country's wheat belt](#) in 2021 have caused a shortage of the basic ingredient of noodles, exacerbated by supply chain problems and now the war in Ukraine.

Prices of refined flour are already up more than 10% in [China](#) since the beginning of the year, to record highs, according to data from Mysteel, a China-based consultancy, and may rise further if wheat costs keep climbing.

“Food flour prices have basically stabilised at the moment,” a trader with a major milling plant in China told Reuters. “But higher wheat prices will eventually be passed on to end products.”

Mama Lai and her husband have run their food stall in a small Taipei street market for more than three decades, but she has rarely seen such high price increases.

Wearing a face mask and a backwards baseball cap, Lai doles out dish after dish of noodles and soup for about 60NTD each (\$2) to queues of customers.

“Compared to past decades, I feel the noodle prices have increased a lot more in the last two to three years,” she says. “It keeps going up. I didn’t really feel the price increases until the last five years.”



Mama Lai at work in her stall in Taipei. Photograph: Chi Hui Lin/The Guardian

The price of wheat had already risen sharply due to the coronavirus pandemic and snarl-ups in the global supply chain. But the war in Ukraine has seen the price almost double from November when it was about \$260 per tonne to about \$475 per tonne in mid-May this year.

Andrew Whitelaw, an analyst at Thomas Elders Markets in Australia, said Russia's invasion of Ukraine took 30% of global wheat exports off the market at a stroke.

"There's your supply shortage," he said. "A big chunk of the cost of noodles is clearly wheat so it causes the price of noodles to rise. In bread production the cost of wheat accounts for about 10-15% of the price, but in noodles it's potentially higher."

Noodles are a staple for millions of people around the world, but especially in Asia. According to the [World Instant Noodles Association](#), there are 290m servings of instant noodles eaten every day, which means 106.4bn servings a year.

China is the number one consumer with 44bn servings in 2021, followed in second place by Indonesia on 13bn serves.

The government in Jakarta is so concerned about a potential noodle shock that its economics minister [raised the issue](#) at the summit of the world's movers and shakers in Davos last month, while shortages of buckwheat are also pushing up the cost of [Japan's famous soba noodles](#).

There is also concern about price rises in South Korea, which is the biggest per capita consumer of instant noodles in the world. South Korea has seen the price of wheat imports rise sharply this year, topping \$400 per tonne in May for the first time in 13 years.

The Korea Consumer Agency said that the price of the country's popular dish *kalguksu*, or hot soup with flour noodles, rose 8.7% in March to a record high of more than 8,000 won (just over US\$6). Other popular noodle dishes such as *naengmyeon* and *jajangmyeon* also rose steeply in price. The national statistics office said on Sunday that its index measuring the cost of eating out rose 4.2% from December to May.

Instant noodles are also very popular in [Japan](#) but the shortage of buckwheat – a less common grain – is causing concern because it is needed to make soba noodles.

With no end in sight to the war in Ukraine, the squeeze on prices could last for some time, according to Dr Medo Pournader, a supply chain expert at the University of Melbourne, who identified a witches' brew of interlinked problems as the cause.

As well as the loss of exports from Ukraine and Russia, the supply of fertiliser from Russia and Belarus to grow wheat has also been disrupted by the war, and rising energy prices have made production elsewhere more expensive.

“Then there are logistical problems that started during the pandemic with ports closed in China and backlogs at many other ports,” she said. “So all

together it's a huge amount of problems cascading between each other from food production to fertiliser, and energy to logistics."

Back in Taipei, Mama Lai says she has tried to keep price increases to a minimum but times are getting tough for everyone.

"The price increase is still in an acceptable range for my customers," she says. "I didn't increase the price for many years. We earn less but we don't lose money. My stall is for the working-class people...many are regular customers."

*Additional reporting by Chi Hui Lin and Helen Davidson in Taipei*

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