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2022.06.20 - 2022.06.26

- [2022.06.26 - Opinion](#)
- [Headlines](#)
- [2022.06.23 - Spotlight](#)
- [2022.06.23 - Opinion](#)
- [2022.06.23 - Around the world](#)
- [Headlines](#)
- [2022.06.21 - Spotlight](#)
- [2022.06.21 - Opinion](#)
- [2022.06.21 - Around the world](#)
- [Headlines](#)
- [2022.06.24 - Spotlight](#)
- [2022.06.24 - Opinion](#)
- [2022.06.24 - Around the world](#)
- [Headlines monday 20 june 2022](#)
- [2022.06.20 - Spotlight](#)
- [2022.06.20 - Opinion](#)
- [2022.06.20 - Around the world](#)
- [Headlines saturday 25 june 2022](#)
- [2022.06.25 - Spotlight](#)
- [2022.06.25 - Opinion](#)
- [2022.06.25 - Around the world](#)

2022.06.26 - Opinion

- [Women must be allowed to defend abortion as a sex-based right](#)
- [The Observer view on why Britain needs Tory MPs to oust Boris Johnson](#)
- [The Observer view on Donald Trump's influence on Roe v Wade ruling](#)
- [Infamy! Infamy! Carry on Boris – cartoon](#)
- [Philip Larkin's profound and beautiful poetry sent me back to the classroom](#)
- [Boris Johnson couldn't bag a top job for Carrie but nepotism in politics is doing nicely](#)
- [Enemy within? Hardly... most people see why we need unions prepared to strike](#)
- [Chris Evans may need to rein in TFI Friday reboot](#)
- [For the record](#)
- [Letters: Carole Cadwalladr's victory was just a first step](#)
- [Stab-in-the-back: the nasty old myth that Brexiters are exploiting to explain away the disaster](#)

[The Observer](#)[Roe v Wade](#)

Women must be allowed to defend abortion as a sex-based right

[Sonia Sodha](#)



For generations, US liberals relied on the Roe v Wade ruling to support sex-based rights. Last week's reversal shows how misguided they were



The nine members of the US supreme court in Washington DC. Photograph: AFP/Getty

Sun 26 Jun 2022 03.00 EDT

To mark the supreme court judgment that guaranteed American women a right to abortion in 1973, the feminist magazine *Ms.* published a graphic photo of a dead 27-year-old woman kneeling over, surrounded by bloody towels. Her name was [Gerri Santoro](#) and she died alone in a motel room during a botched abortion in 1964, a mother to two young daughters who had left her [violently abusive husband](#).

That is the image the United States will today again have to confront as a result of the anticipated decision of the supreme court to overturn that federal guarantor of abortion rights, [Roe v Wade](#). It leaves abortion rights to the states, meaning abortion is now illegal or soon-to-be illegal in 22 states in all or most circumstances, including, in some states, in cases of rape. It comes in the wake of already reduced access to abortion in many of those states as a result of practical restrictions on the operation of abortion clinics. It is a dramatic rollback of women's rights in one of the world's richest countries, which prides itself on its protection of individual liberties.

The case against abortion bans is overwhelming. It is impossible to abolish abortion altogether: desperate women will always find ways, putting their own lives at risk and making them vulnerable to sexual and financial exploitation. The only effective and safe way to reduce abortion is to expand access to contraception, something Republicans have impeded under Trump. It has been estimated that maternal mortality will increase by 20% in places with a ban. It is always inhumane and degrading to force a woman to give birth against her will, but there is something particularly chilling about doing it in a country as unequal as the US, where half of women seeking an abortion live below the poverty line. The US is a terrible place to be a poor woman: exceptional among nations belonging to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development in having zero national entitlement to maternity pay, it has no universal healthcare, the highest rates of maternal mortality of any wealthy nation and barely any support with the costs of childcare.

Worst of all will be the impact on survivors of rape and domestic abuse. Abortion bans ally the state with violent men who use sexual assault as a means of control, by forcing women to carry the pregnancies that result from their rape to term, heaping trauma upon trauma and making them more dependent on their abusers. In some states, the criminalisation of abortion will be wielded to impose penal sanctions on these women – a breathtaking level of state-sanctioned misogyny.

It is frightening to witness, but cannot be understood without reference to the fraught politics of the US. American feminists have long regarded women's abortion rights as fragile, established as they were by a supreme court that engages in unashamedly political interpretation of an 18th-century constitution that is almost impossible to amend. A majority liberal supreme court derived the right to abortion on privacy grounds, but it was inevitable that a majority conservative supreme court would one day overturn it. To ensure their longevity, women's reproductive rights needed to be codified by American legislators on grounds of sex discrimination.

But the levels of inertia built into the other two branches of government, the presidency and Congress, have empowered a loud and rich evangelical religious minority to the extent that Democrats would have had to expend

significant political capital in order to protect the majority position on abortion.

They chose not to: neither the Clinton nor the Obama administrations made this a priority, despite Obama promising before his election it would be one of the first things he would do. Women's rights were banked, even as they so clearly hung by a time-limited judicial thread. And Democrats have been far less strategic than their counterparts on the right in using the constitution to their advantage; Trump was able to appoint three out of the nine justices on today's court not just through luck or dirty tactics, but because Ruth Bader Ginsburg chose not to step down during the Obama presidency. The result is a supreme court that can impose its minority political views on a country for decades to come.

While there remain huge issues of abortion access in Northern Ireland, there are limited parallels to be drawn with most of the UK, where we are lucky that abortion is a settled, non-partisan issue and there is no significant religious minority opposed to abortion rights. But there are broader lessons for British feminists and others who seek progressive social change.

We forget at our peril that the patriarchal oppression of women is heavily rooted in our reproductive systems

While abortion rights may be settled here, we have plenty enough problems: a woman is killed by a man every three days in the UK and rape convictions are at an all-time low. The US – a society in which individual rights are so prized, but in which women are treated as if they are men who just happen to have wombs – offers a cautionary tale. We forget at our peril that the patriarchal oppression of women is heavily rooted in our reproductive systems and that equality cannot be achieved without recognising that women are a sex class who need specific rights, to abortion for one, quite apart from those accorded to men. Yet even as conservative justices write that banning abortion does not amount to sex discrimination, “women” has become an offensive and exclusionary word to some on the American left.

But perhaps the most important lesson of all is the danger of relying on judicial activism to deliver and maintain social change, rather than building

a democratic consensus around it. Ireland provides a powerful counterpoint. Establishing abortion rights there was no less of a challenge than in the US, arguably more so given the role the Catholic church has played as a moral arbiter in Irish society. Yet Ireland's political leaders paved the way for a respectful national conversation that built a popular super-majority for abortion rights, which brought together progressive and conservative voters. It shows the extent to which these conversations can be had. Liberals who rely on the courts to the exclusion of talking to people who don't think like them ultimately only undermine the progressive change they seek to achieve.

Sonia Sodha is an Observer columnist

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| [Section menu](#) | [Main menu](#) |

[The Observer](#)[Boris Johnson](#)

The Observer view on why Britain needs Tory MPs to oust Boris Johnson

[Observer editorial](#)

His party should heed what voters signalled in Thursday's crushing byelection defeats – get him out of Downing Street



Boris Johnson reacting to Thursday's byelection results. Photograph: AP

Sun 26 Jun 2022 01.00 EDT Last modified on Sun 26 Jun 2022 03.26 EDT

Britain has suffered bad prime ministers in various guises: the ineffective and weak, the out of touch, the self-interested. None, however, can match [Boris Johnson](#), whose utter lack of integrity, honesty and commitment to public service put him in a dire class all of his own. His continuing tenure in Downing Street after being fined for breaking his own laws, and as new revelations continue to emerge about his lack of financial probity, is a national disgrace.

Thursday's [disastrous byelection](#) results in Wakefield and Tiverton and Honiton are only the latest sign that the public have fallen out of love with

their prime minister. Johnson suffers from dreadful [personal ratings](#) and fewer than one in three voters have [confidence](#) in the government's handling of the economy. The results illustrate three uncomfortable truths for the Conservatives. First, Johnson has in the space of less than three years transformed from an electoral asset into an electoral liability for the Conservative party. Second, Brexit has rapidly declined in political salience in the last three years. Johnson was able to use the promise of getting Brexit done to knit together an electoral coalition that brought together Conservative heartlands with many formerly Labour-voting seats in the Midlands and the north in 2019. But even though a majority of voters in both Wakefield and Tiverton and Honiton voted for Brexit, this did not stop significant numbers of voters in each seat voting for Labour and the Liberal Democrats respectively. Last, there is an anti-Conservative sentiment among voters who are prepared to vote tactically in order to unseat Conservative MPs where there is a clear anti-Conservative front runner, whether they are Labour or Liberal Democrat. This cost the Conservatives heavily in 1997 after almost 20 years in government and it is likely to cost them heavily again in 2023 or 2024.

Johnson has in the space of less than three years transformed from an electoral asset into an electoral liability

This newspaper has long argued that Johnson must resign on substantive grounds and that if he will not go willingly there is a moral duty on MPs in his party to force him out. Other prime ministers from both parties would have had the decency to resign had they committed any one of a number of Johnson's infractions, including breaking the law and misleading parliament. Yet Johnson still clings to office even as new allegations about wrongdoing come to light.

Last week, he [was accused](#) of trying to secure employment for his partner in a senior Foreign Office job while foreign secretary and asked the cabinet secretary to [lobby the royal household](#) for a job on his behalf as prime minister, allegations he [did not deny](#) when put to him in parliament last week. Conservative sources have reported that Johnson also planned on soliciting a £150,000 donation from the same donor who paid for the

Downing Street flat refurbishment in order to [build a treehouse](#) for his son on the grounds of his grace-and-favour residence at Chequers, until the proposal was scuppered on security grounds by the police. It is at the same time ludicrous and entirely believable. Yet only four in 10 of his MPs [voted against Johnson](#) in the vote of confidence triggered earlier this month. If the national interest is not enough for Tory MPs – and it should be for any parliamentarian with a sense of duty to their country and their voters – then self-interest should motivate them. The longer Johnson is allowed to continue in office, the more damage he will do to their party as well as the country.

What is abundantly clear is that Johnson is a prime minister who does not know why he is in office. There are no ideas and no guiding philosophy that appear to drive the work of his government, just empty rhetoric around “levelling up” without any policy levers that could credibly close the big economic gap between the south east and the rest of the country. Brexit is “done” in the sense that the UK has left the EU, but it has been achieved in a way that has undermined the political stability of Northern Ireland, is likely to result in decades of negotiation and renegotiation and has depressed Britain’s GDP at a time of economic stagnation and record inflation, a burden people simply cannot afford.

What is abundantly clear is that Johnson is a prime minister who does not know why he is in office

New policy announcements take the form of unworkable interventions that cause great harm for the sake of capturing newspaper headlines, such as the government’s plan to forcibly deport asylum seekers from countries such as Iraq and Afghanistan to Rwanda, or to privatise Channel 4, or to scrap the Human Rights Act in an attempt to water down citizens’ abilities to challenge unlawful government actions in the courts. Again and again, Johnson tries to blame anyone else for his woes; from a Labour party that has not been in government for 12 years; to the press for daring to report his misdeeds instead of trumpeting his so-called achievements. The rambling interviews he gave the day after the byelection results were an embarrassment.

All this is taking too long to sink in for a cohort of **Conservatives** who know they are in electoral trouble but do not know what to do about it and a cabinet of hapless ministers, many of whom are in high office not because of talent but solely because they have pinned their own fortunes to Johnson's mast. But the longer they leave it, the worse it will be not just for the Conservative party, but for the country. Boris Johnson must go and Conservative MPs must make it happen.

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| [Section menu](#) | [Main menu](#) |

The Observer[Roe v Wade](#)

The Observer view on Donald Trump's influence on Roe v Wade ruling

[Observer editorial](#)

The US abortion ban is the ex-president's legacy and he must face prosecution for abuse of power



Nadine Seiler, an abortion rights demonstrator, protests in Washington DC.
Photograph: Michael McCoy/Reuters

Sun 26 Jun 2022 01.30 EDT Last modified on Sun 26 Jun 2022 03.29 EDT

The baleful influence of [Donald Trump](#) continues to be felt in American life despite his decisive election defeat in 2020 and subsequent disgraceful behaviour. The supreme court's regressive, dangerous and insulting decision to abolish a woman's constitutional right to abortion was made possible by Trump's appointment of three highly conservative justices who all voted for the change.

This disaster is not all Trump's doing. A noisy anti-abortion lobby of rightwing Republicans and evangelical Christians has fought for decades to

scrap the 1973 Roe v Wade ruling giving women the right to choose. But they represent, at most, [one-third of Americans](#). Trump adopted their minority view for the same reason he champions the gun lobby – for electoral advantage.

Although the court's decision was anticipated, it is still a tremendous shock – as ensuing nationwide protests suggest. The speed with which some Republican-controlled states are moving to outlaw or restrict abortion is also dismaying. The fear is that the other hard-won privacy rights and freedoms, such as the right to [contraception and same-sex marriage, may be threatened](#).

Seeking to limit divisions, the chief justice, John Roberts, [had hoped to limit](#) Roe v Wade rather than abolish it outright. The Trump justices' willingness to take the most extreme option will further undermine public confidence in the court, damaged like other US institutions by the political partisanship of the “culture wars” era.

It has long been evident Trump lacks strong religious or moral convictions on abortion. As always, his motives are self-serving

President Joe Biden described the ruling as a “sad day”, while outraged Democrats say they will try to enshrine abortion rights in federal law. To do so, they need to win big in November's congressional midterm elections. Abortion rights are thus certain to be a [central issue](#) in the autumn campaign and the 2024 presidential election.

Trump will relish that. As is his wont, he claimed [personal credit](#) for the court's decision, saying it was his “great honour” to have made it possible. Yet it has long been evident he lacks strong religious or moral convictions about abortion or anything else. As always, his motives are self-serving. Even erstwhile diehard supporters tire of such cynicism. There is evidence that [Trump fatigue](#) is setting in.

Proof of that contention has been on display in recent days on Capitol Hill, where an investigation into the [6 January 2021 insurrection](#) is providing jaw-dropping testimony about Trump's undeniable criminal culpability. From the

moment he realised Biden was winning on election night in November 2020, Trump began a concerted, deliberate and illegal effort to [reverse the result](#).

Abusing the power of his office, Trump intimidated officials in Georgia and other swing states in a move to fiddle the vote, knowingly disseminated false claims of fraud and conspiracy theories, and dangled promises of presidential pardons for those who supported his coup attempt. “Just say the election is corrupt and leave the rest to me,” senior justice department officials said Trump told them.

When none of that worked, he openly incited white supremacist groups such as the Proud Boys to attack Congress to prevent certification of Biden’s victory. When they [threatened to hang](#) his vice-president, Mike Pence, for refusing to invalidate the election outcome, he applauded. “Maybe our supporters have the right idea,” he reportedly told aides. Pence “[deserves it](#)”.

Like the abortion debate, this is not over. Clinging to his “big lie”, Trump claims everything else is a hoax. As ever, he subverts American democracy. But he has been weakened and now is not the time to let him off the hook. Trump plainly [broke numerous laws](#). Most Americans agree: [he must face criminal prosecution](#).

Do you have an opinion on the issues raised in this article? If you would like to submit a letter of up to 250 words to be considered for publication, email it to us at observer.letters@observer.co.uk

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Observer comment cartoon

Boris Johnson

Infamy! Infamy! Carry on Boris – cartoon

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The Observer[Philip Larkin](#)

Philip Larkin's profound and beautiful poetry sent me back to the classroom

Rachel Cooke



The exam board that dropped the poet and others from the curriculum has overlooked their effects on young minds



'His existential despair served somehow to rouse me from my Nescafé and Neighbours stupor': Philip Larkin in 1973. Photograph: Radio Times/Getty Images

Sat 25 Jun 2022 10.00 EDT Last modified on Sun 26 Jun 2022 00.07 EDT

It must be possible to believe that a curriculum should not be preserved for all eternity in aspic – that some measure of change can only be a good thing – and yet still to grieve on hearing the news that OCR, one of the three main exam boards, [has removed](#) work by Thomas Hardy, John Keats, Philip Larkin and Wilfred Owen from its syllabus.

Such mournfulness seems natural to me, born as it is as much of what we love as of where we might stand in the culture wars. If the young don't yet have their favourite verses, the rest of us wander around with certain lines engraved forever on our hearts, the only truly lovely remnants we may have of our long-ago school days.

Larkin has always been my man and I hate the thought that others might not find him as I did. At 16, I was an educational disaster. Teachers' strikes had made it easy to wag it and quite soon I was pretty much a full-time truant, a state of affairs that endured for more than a year. Only when I happened to open *The Whitsun Weddings* did some spark of interest finally stir deep

inside the lazy, truculent refusenik I'd become. Larkin's poems – this is hardly news – are extraordinarily beautiful, extremely profound and, above all, amazingly easy to read. He was, I've always felt, my unlikely saviour, his existential despair serving somehow to rouse me from my Nescafé and *Neighbours* stupor; his famous and ineffably lovely arrow-shower refreshing parts of the teenage me no other poet could possibly reach.

Treasures lost



'Heart-stopping collection': Yazidi girls in Kurdistan in 1940s Iraq.
Photograph: Released under a Creative Commons CC BY NC license

At the Courtauld Gallery to see its [Edvard Munch exhibition](#), I wandered into a side room and found a heart-stopping collection of photographs of Iraqi Kurdistan. Taken in the 1940s by Anthony Kersting (1916-2008), they depict many buildings that have since been destroyed by IS, as well as the people – the Yazidis, in particular – for whom they were sacred. What treasure! And yet, how melancholic. I stared for a long time at the disappeared [Mosque of Nebi Yunis](#) near the site of ancient Nineveh, which was blown up in 2014. Having replaced an Assyrian church, it was reputed not only to be the burial place of Jonah, but also of the whale that swallowed him, of which a large tooth remained by way of evidence. The Courtauld holds [42,000 prints](#) by Kersting, images it's in the process of digitising

thanks to a volunteer army that has so far donated 32,000 hours of its members' free time.

In search of Scargill



Arthur Scargill walks along a police line during the Orgreave strike in 1984.
Photograph: Don McPhee/The Guardian

Everyone I know is watching James Graham's series *Sherwood*, a drama set in a Nottinghamshire village still scarred by the divisions of the miners' strike. But if we're gripped by its plot, we're also spooked by its timing. Last week, it was almost as if Graham had conjured a ghost, episode four having been broadcast on the same day that Arthur Scargill, the former leader of the National Union of Mineworkers, was seen [joining a picket line](#) in support of the rail strike.

Thanks to my Sheffield roots – in the early 1980s, the NUM built a huge HQ in the city, its central section designed to resemble a pithead; it was known locally as King Arthur's Castle – I will never stop being fascinated by Scargill, nor writing to him asking for an interview (he never replies). Following his reappearance, I wasted an age on the NUM's eerily quaint website, where I read, mouth wide open, of [Low Hall in Scalby](#), near Whitby: a 31-bedroom house that comes with a library and crown green

bowling and which is otherwise known as the Yorkshire Area Miners Holiday Home.

Rachel Cooke is an Observer journalist

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| [Section menu](#) | [Main menu](#) |

[The Observer](#)[Boris Johnson](#)

Boris Johnson couldn't bag a top job for Carrie but nepotism in politics is doing nicely

[Catherine Bennett](#)



It's no wonder that MPs seem to shrug off the latest allegations, with their mums, sons and sisters all potentially for hire



Boris Johnson and his wife Carrie attend the Commonwealth heads of government meeting opening ceremony on 24 June in Kigali, Rwanda.
Photograph: Chris Jackson/Getty Images

Sun 26 Jun 2022 02.00 EDT Last modified on Sun 26 Jun 2022 03.29 EDT

Not least because of the exceptional effort that went into suppressing the story, it's looking [increasingly likely](#) that the prime minister has, as alleged, been moonlighting – with mixed success – as Carrie Johnson's agent. But as ever with Johnson, it's probably futile to hope that further achievements in polluting public life will be ruinous to his prospects.

Where does “known nepotist tried more nepotism” even rank beside the transgressions he’s survived? If it’s worse than blagging a £112,000 flat refurb and soliciting a £150,000 treehouse from the same donor, it’s not as reprehensible as repeatedly breaking your own health legislation, lying about it, then becoming the first sitting prime minister to get a fixed penalty notice. And that delinquency was arguably less sinister than the broader ethical attrition that is his trademark, from humiliating ethics advisers to the attempt to save [Owen Paterson](#), by changing the rules, from suspension by the committee on standards in public life (CSPL). That’s the committee [already accommodating](#) a fellow former member of the Bullingdon Club, an appointment Labour described as “rampant sleaze”.

Again, if it weren't for the [farcical censorship](#), Johnson's alleged breach of five out of seven Nolan principles (integrity, selflessness, objectivity, accountability, leadership) might still look mild in comparison with the successful, completely open nepotism that gifted his brother a seat in the House of Lords. That came after Johnson's former lover, Jennifer Arcuri, felt the [benefit of his mentoring](#): "How can I be your footstool to your career?"

But much as Caligula's horse never got the consul job, making do with a luxurious stable upgrade, the then Carrie Symonds never did work at the Foreign Office. Or later, at the Earthshot prize. Is the footstool losing his touch? Downing Street, a rogue outfit that could once shelter Dominic Cummings, with his "weirdos and misfits", and create insane peerages against official advice, for Lord Lebedev, the KGB agent's son, and for the cash-for-access Tory asset, Lord Cruddas, appears to have struggled to promote his wife, even with her [glowing credentials](#).

But what could be yet more useful in burying the latest known micro-breaches in the great dung heap of Johnson's reputation is that, in treating elected office as a whole-family enterprise, he's not, for once, unusual. As recently as 2017, when they were consulted on reform by the Independent Parliamentary Standards Authority, a majority of MPs defended a tradition of institutionalised nepotism, for which the parliamentary euphemism is "connected parties". There were the usual protests that an astonishing number of political Wags turn out to be uniquely diligent workers; that random husbands, daughters, grandchildren, nieces and parents likewise deserve never-advertised jobs offering – barring electoral defeat – total job security and an endlessly understanding boss.

Current connected employees include a son convicted of supplying drugs and a wife penalised for drink driving. The loyalty can work both ways: Harriet Warburton continued working (between £35,000 and £39,000 a year) for David Warburton after press allegations about sexual harassment. The MP is now being [investigated](#) on three different counts by the parliamentary standards commissioner. Inquiries to Mrs Warburton, his "senior communication officer".

Happily, in the face of MPs' resistance, Ipsa instead endorsed the view of the CSPL that appointing family is "out of step with modern employment practice" and abolished it. Less happily, it decided that existing family staff should be allowed to work indefinitely. In the event, for instance, of Nadine Dorries ever surrendering her seat, constituents would endure the loss not only of the culture secretary but of her daughter, Jennifer Dorries, a "senior parliamentary assistant" whose salary last year was between £45,000 and £49,999.00. At least the Dorrieses would have the consolation of reducing nepotism in mid-Bedfordshire. Nadine, who at one point employed two daughters, has spoken passionately about workplace accessibility, "not just [to] people whose mum and dad worked there".

Ipsa made the further concession that, should they become "connected parties" – presumably by sleeping with their employer – previously unconnected workers could continue, thus redesignated, for a further two years.

Five years since these reforms, that more than 80 MPs still employ connected parties leaves them in this respect hardly more ethical, if generally more genteel, than Johnson. Supposing there's a difference between their licensed nepotism and the married Johnson's alleged plan, when foreign secretary, for the Foreign and Commonwealth Office to employ his wife's imminent successor, it seems to rest mainly on technicalities. In most cases, the public is essentially required to fund connected functionaries because of their sexual relationship with the hiring MP.

The public is essentially required to fund connected functionaries due to their sexual relationship with the hiring MP

True, a number of beneficiaries, as with the earlier papal system, are blood or step relations of their employer. Ian Blackford pays his stepson; Gavin Robinson has appointed his father as office manager. Thérèse Coffey's sister, Clare, assists the work and pensions minister, according to the register of interests, "on a casual basis"; the latest Ipsa data shows her employed last year as a full-time case worker (£25,000 to £29,000). Which may or may not be reasonable; without any qualification or performance indicators, who

knows? Maybe Central Suffolk and North Ipswich is fortunate that Dan Poulter employs his mum, Carol Poulter, as his assistant, for between £35,000 and £39,000 (part time). Dan is 43.

Now, indirectly, Johnson also benefits from this abject system, it having allowed his supporters to dismiss allegations about thwarted nepotism as a massive “so what?”. At the same time, it’s tricky for cleaner figures to shame Johnson’s nepotism, as they can his cronyism, if some of their most ostentatiously virtuous colleagues don’t personally see the harm in it. In fact, the clearest sign that this constituted a significant affront to remaining government proprieties surely came from Downing Street itself. If ventures in covert nepotism could look like nothing special in the light of Johnson’s record and of cross-party tolerance for unfair appointments, at least someone close to him thought it so compromising as to be worth covering up. Well done them.

Catherine Bennett is an Observer columnist

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[The ObserverRMT](#)

Enemy within? Hardly... most people see why we need unions prepared to strike

[Kenan Malik](#)



Membership may have plummeted but the RMT and others play a key role in making Britain fairer



Mick Lynch visits the RMT picket line at Euston station in London on 23 June 2022. Photograph: Guy Smallman/Getty Images

Sun 26 Jun 2022 02.30 EDT

The Tories love the working class. So long as workers can help them win red wall seats. So long as they can paint them as “socially conservative” and use them as alibis for legislation hostile to immigrants or welfare claimants. So long as they can exploit them as props for a fantasy levelling up agenda.

But the moment workers take matters into their own hands, assert their collective voice and take action to preserve wages and conditions, they are denounced as militants and the enemy within; even, ludicrously, as “Putin’s friend”, as Tory MP [Tobias Elwood claimed](#) about RMT strikers. Tories like the idea of the working class in the abstract, as individuals who might vote for them every five years, but not the working class in the flesh, as people who act collectively to defend their rights.

Critics of the [RMT](#), in the government and beyond, have attempted to portray strikes as an immoral weapon wielded by uncaring union bosses to “hold the country to ransom”. In fact, strikes are weapons of the powerless,

not the powerful, a means of restoring a modicum of balance in a highly unequal relationship between employers and workers.

Strikes are weapons of the powerless, not the powerful

Corporations have myriad ways of imposing their power on employees: cutting wages, enforcing redundancies, tearing up contracts, withdrawing investment. When companies threaten to close down plants if their redundancy or wage cut plans are not accepted, or to move investment elsewhere if they don't receive sufficient sweeteners, few call it "holding the country to ransom". But that's exactly what it is – and with far more leverage than unions could ever muster.

The main deterrent workers collectively possess in response to the power of employers is the withdrawal of their labour. No one takes strike action lightly – after all, workers lose money by going on strike. But sometimes it is a weapon they have to wield.

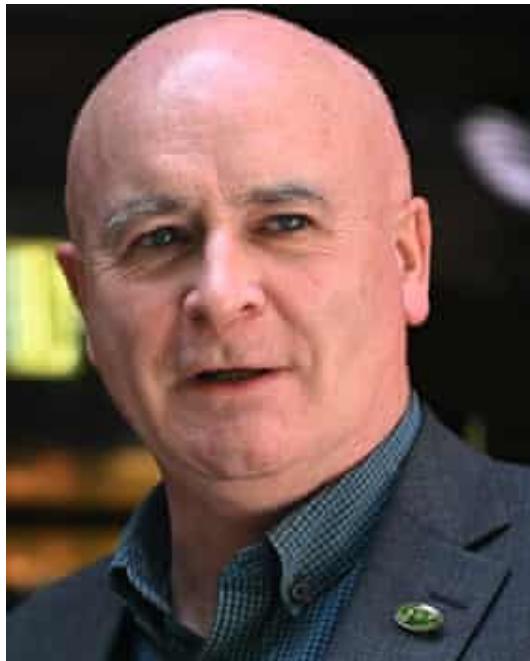
Whenever an "essential" group of workers goes on strike, Conservatives chorus that "unions are too strong". It's a claim as plausible as suggesting that the problem with Boris Johnson is that he has too much moral decency. Over the past 40 years, successive governments have made it increasingly difficult to go on strike, stripped away the possibilities of effective action and outlawed most forms of solidarity, from secondary strikes to flying pickets.

For all the Tory taunts, [Labour](#) has been only marginally more supportive of union rights. In the run-up to the 1997 general election, Tony Blair, responding to Tory claims that the party was too close to the unions, insisted that "the essential elements of the trade union legislation of the 1980s will remain". "The changes that we do propose," he added, would still "leave British law the most restrictive on trade unions in the western world". It remains so.

The [P&O debacle](#) earlier this year revealed the ease with which companies can circumvent the paltry legislation that exists to protect workers and sacrifice them to the call of profit. When P&O sacked almost 800 people and

replaced them with lower-paid agency staff, there was much ministerial hand-wringing. Faced with the RMT, a union that has refused to be cowed by employers, ministers have [threatened to change the law](#) to make it easier to use agency staff to break strikes. The proposed use of agency staff would be temporary, but it is both a further attempt to crush strike action and another step towards the P&O model of industrial relations. There has been a lot of chatter about “a return to the 70s”; the truth is, the status of British workers today is closer to that of P&O employees than it is to the miners or printers of 40 years ago.

Given the current talk of “levelling up”, it is worth emphasising that one of the most important tools in preventing inequality are trade unions. Between 1937 and 1979, union membership in Britain doubled, while the share of income going to the top 1% fell by two-thirds. [Between 1979 and 2014](#), membership of unions halved and the share of income for the richest 1% more than doubled. Workers’ share of national wealth [has also fallen](#) and wages have not kept up with rises in productivity. Unions are indispensable in protecting living standards and workplace conditions.



RMT general secretary Mick Lynch: ‘the kind of voice that should be at the heart of any opposition’. Photograph: Andy Rain/EPA

The reason the government is desperate to paint railway workers as uniquely greedy or uncaring is that it knows a host of other workers are in much the same position and may themselves soon take action: teachers, nurses, postal workers, BA check-in staff, BT engineers. It knows, too, that if the RMT wins, it becomes easier for other workers to achieve their goals.

The union's leader, Mick Lynch, has won many plaudits for his straightforwardness, eloquence and willingness to call out bullshit, whether from ministers or journalists. It is the kind of voice that should be at the heart of any opposition. Labour, though, seems too frightened of Tories' accusations to show the most basic elements of solidarity, forcing the shadow health secretary, Wes Streeting, to apologise for telling BBC *Question Time* that had he been an RMT member he would have voted for strike action and threatening to discipline frontbenchers who join picket lines.

As it happens, the public is far more sympathetic to strikers than the Labour leadership might suppose. Most people worry about the inconvenience that strikes create but also support the rightness of the cause.

The real surprise is not that there may be an explosion of strikes this summer but that there has been so little industrial action in recent years. In 1979, 29.5m days were lost in strike action; by 2018, that had fallen to fewer than 300,000. The previous year, just 33,000 workers had gone on strike – a historical low. The catastrophic fall in union membership and the legal restrictions on strike actions have allowed the Tories to push through austerity and wage restraint. Now, many workers are showing their unwillingness to continue doing so.

The government's insistence that wage claims should not match inflation is a demand that all workers must take a cut in real pay. As with austerity, the price of economic crisis is borne by those at the bottom. When unions push back, that should be reason for solidarity, not censure.

Kenan Malik is an Observer columnist

| [Section menu](#) | [Main menu](#) |

[The Observer](#)[Chris Evans](#)

Chris Evans may need to rein in TFI Friday reboot

[Rebecca Nicholson](#)



He suggests that the chat and music show could be livestreamed, but will celebrities today be as much fun?



Chris Evans has suggested his 90s chat and music show *TFI Friday* will be returning this year. Photograph: Dan Kitwood/Getty Images

Sat 25 Jun 2022 12.00 EDT Last modified on Sun 26 Jun 2022 00.07 EDT

Chris Evans has suggested that his old music-and-chatshow [*TFI Friday*](#) will be returning later this year. But the raucous series, which ran on Channel 4 from 1996 to 2000, and came back for a brief revival in 2015, could appear in a very different format. “The thing is, you don’t need a TV channel now,” Evans told listeners of his Virgin Radio breakfast show. “*TFI Friday* doesn’t have to be an hour long, it could be longer, we could livestream it.” He said it could draw on its wealth of archive material, some unbroadcast, which made me personally very excited to see if there was a performance of a Kula Shaker B-side tucked away somewhere on a hard drive.

You can find compilations of the show in its 90s heyday on YouTube and some of it has aged better than I expected, based solely on my memories of sitting down to watch it after school on a Friday night. Many of its comedy “bits” are deliberately amateurish and would easily find a home on TikTok or Reels today. Its everything’s-a-joke, only-kidding tone dominates vast corners of the internet now. Its interviews are freewheeling, in a podcast kind of way. Considering it was on at teatime, there was a sense that anything could happen, though the worst that did happen was the odd celebrity saying “fuck” on air.

Its appeal was in its curated chaos, though that chaos existed within parameters: pre-watershed, a fixed run time. A livestream sounds like it would be aiming for unharnessed chaos, which is a very different prospect. When certain podcasts get so big that they start to run for however long the presenter feels like talking, they lose their sharpness and focus. When it comes to TV, on a channel or not, I have strong feelings that nobody needs more than an hour of anything. Yes, that even applies to [*Stranger Things*](#).

What has changed most, though, is that despite *TFI Friday* feeling like a precursor of many elements of entertainment today, its mood is that of a long-gone age. Evans's interviews with celebrities are a relic of a different time. Today, famous people are cautious, afraid of saying anything of interest, and celebrity interviews are mostly a bland tussle between fulfilling promotional purposes and avoiding controversy. The new [Brad Pitt profile in GQ Magazine](#) reported the actor talking about his dreams and revealed that when it comes to water, his friends have all gone “room temp”. A livestream has a lot to do if it must free us from celebrities telling us their dreams.

Jane Austen: I'm persuaded, but others still debate new film



Jane Austen: would she really be turning in her grave? Photograph: Stock Montage/Getty Images

They're about as common as a resignation-worthy offence in the Conservative party, but even so I always look forward to another new Jane Austen adaptation. The latest version of *Persuasion*, Austen's best novel, sounded great: Dakota Johnson as Anne Elliot, Cosmo Jarvis as Captain Wentworth and Carrie Cracknell making the move from stage to screen as director. Being playful with the original can lead to gems – I loved the recent-ish [*Emma*](#), with Anya Taylor-Joy – but this *Persuasion* has led to a surprisingly fierce backlash online.

As always with trailer storms, it is impossible to judge the film based on a two-and-a-half-minute [compilation of scenes](#) and it could well be that it is not showing its best side. But Austenites are less than impressed with what they have seen so far, particularly objecting to the [not very Austen-like line](#): “Now we’re worse than exes – we’re friends.” On the plus side, it might have led to one of the most considerate and enlightening comments sections on the internet, as viewers of the YouTube video debate Elliot’s interior life and the delicate craft of Austen’s language. It is an Austen symposium and it is gripping.

Anita Alvarez’s rescue was a work of art



Coach Andrea Fuentes reaches out to save Anita Alvarez during the Budapest 2022 World Aquatics Championships. Photograph: Oli Scarff/AFP/Getty Images

The series of photographs showing the US artistic swimmer Anita Alvarez unconscious after fainting and sinking to the bottom of a swimming pool and her coach, Andrea Fuentes, diving in to rescue her, were so vivid and powerful that they remained at the top of many news sites' most-read stories lists for a time last week.

"Instead of going up, she was going down," [Fuentes told the BBC](#), whose claim that she simply went into "problem-solving mode" might be the understatement of the year. "I'm just so grateful to have her as a coach," said Alvarez, who comes a close second, particularly given that Fuentes has rescued her before, after a previous fainting episode. She is reportedly feeling much better.

The [AFP photographer Oli Scarff](#) captured the dramatic scenes and the [images are remarkable](#). They have the considered composition of a painting or a series of paintings. The water gives them a painterly sheen, while the sequence tells a story of triumph over adversity. There is Alvarez, alone, in peril, until Fuentes, fully clothed, approaches and eventually pulls her swimmer to the surface. It was difficult to look away from what could have

been a terrible situation, although it did feel better to see them knowing that Alvarez was OK.

Would it have had the same impact or reach if it had been a video? I don't think it would. There was something about these still images that slowed it all down and asked us to pause and consider. Perhaps that's why they stood out so much: they showed courage, and resilience, and steadiness, too.

Rebecca Nicholson is an Observer columnist

This article was downloaded by **calibre** from <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2022/jun/25/chris-evans-rein-in-tfi-friday-reboot>

| [Section menu](#) | [Main menu](#) |

[For the record](#)UK news

For the record

This week's corrections

Sun 26 Jun 2022 01.00 EDT

The headline and text of an article about tagging people arriving in the UK should have referred to asylum seekers, not refugees ([Outrage over scheme to put electronic tags on refugees](#), 19 June, p2).

The mass shooting in Buffalo, US, in May this year took place at a supermarket, not a school as a feature said ([Where science meets fiction: the dark history of eugenics](#), 19 June, New Review, p22).

An article about Vin Murria said that she and her investment vehicle AdvancedAdvT control 22% of M&C Saatchi and claim to have backing from other shareholders to increase her overall stake in the advertising agency to 43%. To clarify, this claim was made in May when Murria and AdvancedAdvT put in their takeover offer ([‘Fearless’ female tycoon at war with Mad Men](#), 19 June, p51).

An opinion piece ([Arron Banks almost crushed me in court. Instead, my quest for the facts was vindicated](#), 19 June, p39) meant to refer to the author being contacted by the director of the Orwell prize, not by its “chair”.

In describing Floella Benjamin as the first female actor to enter the House of Lords, we overlooked Lola Young who was created a life peer six years earlier in 2004 ([‘I’m Miss Optimist. I don’t let the bad things eat me up’](#), 12 June, Magazine, p8).

A review of the Meltdown festival mistakenly suggested Moonchild Sanelly was in the line-up ([Two kinds of Meltdown magic](#), 19 June, the New Review, p34).

Other recently amended articles include:

[Network of Syria conspiracy theorists identified](#)

[Starling Bank: questions over volume of customers taken on during Covid crisis](#)

[Trial of Sepp Blatter and Michel Platini will make for electric theatre](#)

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

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| [Section menu](#) | [Main menu](#) |

[The ObserverBrexit](#)

Letters: Carole Cadwalladr's victory was just a first step

The fortitude and tenacity of the Observer journalist is commendable but doesn't hide the urgent need for a royal commission into Brexit



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

Sun 26 Jun 2022 01.00 EDT

Carole Cadwalladr's courage in pursuing the involvement of Arron Banks with the Russian government must be applauded ("[Arron Banks almost crushed me in court. Instead, my quest for the facts was vindicated](#)", Comment). But it is now clearer than ever that a future British government, not mired in mendacity as the current administration is, should appoint a judge-led royal commission that is unconstrained in its right and ability to probe every aspect of the campaigns supporting Britain's leaving the European Union.

Cadwalladr's case is only a foot in the door. A royal commission must expose every lie that was uttered that demonstrates how British politicians have been corrupted by Kremlin influence. Such an inquiry will not only go some way to expose the flaws in the country's electoral funding and function, it may also reveal to our fellow Europeans that the Brexit campaign was an enterprise engineered by a few to deceive many. And that could help build the bridges Britain needs to restore a relationship with the EU.

Henry Harington
Luccombe, Somerset

I am proud to be one of the 28,887 who donated to Carole Cadwalladr's defence fund and I would not hesitate to donate again, should she need it.

Gerard Hearne
Hest Bank, Lancaster

The gene genie

Eugenics is nonsense for a reason that Adam Rutherford misses and has only become apparent relatively recently ("[Where science meets history: the dark history of eugenics](#)", the New Review). The brilliance of Mendel was that he chose traits that bred true, and this was because there was a direct link between the underlying genes and their effect on next-generation peas.

Such Mendelian genes are however very rare and have minimal roles in the sorts of traits that eugenicists care about. The great majority of genes produce proteins that work only indirectly; this is because they cooperate with many other proteins in networks whose collective output is a trait, such as growth, pigmentation or height.

Such is the complexity of these networks that we still cannot predict how the mix of maternal and paternal proteins in a child will lead to its traits, unless mutations incapacitate a network. Two examples: there was no reason to expect that just one of the offspring of the unexceptional Herr and Frau Einstein would become the most brilliant physicist ever; and the breeding of racehorses for speed is anything other than Mendelian, as every punter intuitively knows.

Jonathan Bard
Oxford

Prisoners need treatment

Your article stating that 25% of prisoners have attention deficit hyperactivity disorder ([News](#)) does not mention the lack of treatment once diagnosed. I am a consultant liaison psychiatrist working in a general hospital. I have seen numerous examples where patients' impulsivity, due to ADHD, has led to severe trauma through self harm, attempted suicide and accidents. The cost to the individual and society is great.

In addition, I often see cases where patients have left hospital without completing treatment, again in part at least, due to ADHD. Despite identifying patients with ADHD and knowing I have the skills and medication to treat it effectively, I cannot do so because our local clinical commissioning group does not fund a service for these patients.

ADHD is one of the most treatable mental illnesses. Treatment is low risk, cheap and effective. Identification and treatment has been proved to reduce recidivism, substance misuse and mortality. Why am I not allowed to treat these patients in the knowledge that there will be adequate follow-up?

Dr Vicky Cleak
Southampton

Dial D for defibrillator

The fact that there is no longer the same need for phone booths is no reason to see them as "clutter" ([Notebook](#)). They can serve valuable community functions. One outstanding example I noticed was in Bishop's Stortford, where a surviving booth, as well as being an attractive piece of street furniture, houses a defibrillator, available for public use in emergencies.

As someone who a few years ago had a cardiac arrest in a public place, I am acutely aware of the value of these devices being readily available. To waste this attractive resource is purblind vandalism.

Kevin McGrath
Harlow, Essex

The true era of Brit pop

Kaitlyn Tiffany sketches an interesting history of teenage fandom (“[The truth about screaming fangirls](#)”, the New Review) and it ties in well with another Caitlin (Moran’s) opinions in *How to be Famous* about the need for pubescent girls to find an identity and be on a team. But the case of the Beatles is interesting in that it cut across age, gender and class. Beatles and Rolling Stones’ fans back then could be 12-year-old girls and 22-year-old guys. Each new album was eagerly anticipated and assessed for music development. Families would sit watching the pop TV programmes to decide whether groups’ new singles might be hits.

But it only lasted a while. The Monkees were an obvious American construct based around a TV series and when David Cassidy and the Osmonds came along the hip 22-year-olds turned away in disgust. It started to polarise and ghettoise thereafter, but for a while the UK was the centre of the universe.

David Redshaw
Saltdean, East Sussex

In praise of hospitality staff

One of my Bulgarian pub boys, who has been with me for 10 years, has just sent me a fabulous article by Rachel Cooke: “[I have the answer to the restaurant staffing crisis. First, let me put on my apron...](#)” (the Observer Food Monthly). It was an apt read, as finding staff is nigh on impossible right now because of the impact of both Brexit and Covid. It’s hard work serving people but it’s rewarding when you do it well. There’s nothing better than going out for a meal with family and being taken care of by a helpful, knowledgeable waiter who knows their stuff.

In the rest of the world, working in hospitality is something to be proud of. To be good takes years of training and hard work and the ability to really read people. I’ve been in the industry for 30 years and I’m ashamed when I

hear customers asking my team what they're going to do for their "real career". Being a brilliant waiter or barman is a skill just like being a CEO or a fireman.

The next time you're eating out, remember that when we're looking after you, we could be with our own loved ones, enjoying the same kind of experience. Instead we've chosen to give our care to you; it might be Christmas, Easter or a busy bank holiday, time when all "normal" people are having a well-earned rest and we're still working so that you can do just that. Let's stand by our hospitality staff, some of the most hard-working professionals we have but still entirely undervalued in this country.

Barbara Cossins, landlady

Tarrant Monkton, Dorset

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[The Observer](#)[David Frost](#)

Stab-in-the-back: the nasty old myth that Brexiters are exploiting to explain away the disaster

[Nick Cohen](#)



Lord Frost and others are reinventing a tactic used by the beaten German generals in 1918



Former Brexit minister and UK chief negotiator Lord Frost. Photograph: Jonathan Brady/PA

Sat 25 Jun 2022 14.00 EDT Last modified on Sat 25 Jun 2022 16.05 EDT

The mediocrity of Lord “Frosty” Frost isn’t ordinary. There is an epic quality to his failings. The parochialism of his nationalism and irresponsibility of his conspiracy theories have allowed one paunchy man to embody the entire collapse of modern conservatism into know-nothing paranoia.

No serious person outside the ruling elite doubts that Frost and Boris Johnson’s hard Brexit heightened the misery of millions. They have raised inflation, cut the national wealth and diverted the energy of Britain’s rulers away from the economic crisis into needless disputes with our neighbours.

Extremist movements face their greatest danger when their supporters realise all hope is gone. Failure brings the risk that the faithful will think again and walk away. Conservatives might now move from nationalism to patriotism, and contemplate the compromises the UK must make to repair the damage they have caused.

Without visible benefits from [Brexit](#), betrayal narratives are all the leaders of the Brexit right have to hold the movement together. They must persuade their followers, and perhaps themselves, that they have not wasted their lives on a futile cause. The internal struggle to keep the faithful in line is why it can feel as if you are eavesdropping on private conversations when you listen to Conservative debates. The right is talking to itself rather than to the country: dousing its supporters' doubts by feeding their fears. Conservatism hasn't diminished Britain because Brexit was a mistake, it tells them. Your leaders did not take you for fools. You were betrayed – we were all betrayed! – by saboteurs who turned victory into defeat.

The UK is witnessing a modern version of the *Dolchstoßlegende* (stab-in-the-back myth) that the beaten German generals of 1918 used to shift blame for defeat in the First World War away from the military and on to socialists, pacifists and Jews in Berlin. Yet, whatever lies they told, Erich Ludendorff and the rest of the high command accepted that Germany had lost the war. Brexiters do not accept their defeat. They imply rather than acknowledge failure by shifting responsibility to others. And no one shifts as reliably as Lord Frost. He is as regular as a bowel movement.

Don't blame us, blame the civil servants, he courageously declared last week. The emasculating consequences of subcontracting decision-making to the EU meant British officials could not draw up "genuine proposals for liberalisation and change" now we were out. You cannot expect elected politicians (or unelected in Frost's case) to know what to do with Brexit, he implied. The servants were responsible for the ignorance of their masters.

The public sector as an enemy within is a recurring Brexit theme. Iain Duncan Smith's [Centre for Brexit Studies](#) showed it was a front organisation for the Tory right by beginning its latest report with an airbrushing of the historical record. Niall Ferguson, a historian himself, apparently, said the referendum had taught him that the public was ready "to pay a significant amount" to divorce from the EU. He forgot, I suspect because he had to forget to stay in with the right, that the Leave campaign of 2016 dismissed warnings of significant costs to the public as "project fear" and that the Conservative government of 2022 is so scared of revealing the true price that it won't publish an [economic assessment of the damage](#).

The report concludes with a theme that is now so hackneyed it is orthodoxy. The refusal of the civil service to give Brexit its “wholehearted support” explains why Brexit Britain has failed to turn the UK into what it calls “[a leading voice for civilisation](#)”.

Go deeper into the myths of the cornered right and the all-powerful civil servant isn’t the only monster you meet. Asked why Brexit is still bedevilled by arguments over Ireland, Frost blamed the “madness” of the hung parliament of 2017-19 in passing a “surrender act” (his words) that blocked a no-deal Brexit and forced him to compromise. He must think everyone on the right has forgotten that he and Johnson agreed to the border in the Irish Sea in 2020 when they had a huge parliamentary majority and could do as they pleased.

The Trumpian special pleading and Orwellian denial of reality go unremarked because too many people, including too many on the left, fear the loneliness of breaking with the tribe and the vituperation that will follow. For some, the fear can be measured in pounds and pence. You cannot publicly describe the harm Brexit has inflicted and expect to keep your job in the Conservative party, Tory press or rightwing thinktank. Most, however, succumb to the softer but more pervasive social pressure to stick with your friends.

The career of Frosty the Strawman makes my point for me. By 2016 he had left the diplomatic service behind after a characteristically unimpressive career in the Foreign Office, to work for the Scotch Whisky Association. He opposed leaving the EU, as David Cameron, Liz Truss and most of the [Tory mainstream did](#), and warned audiences with surprising prescience that Brexit would cost each citizen about £1,500 a year.

When the Tory mainstream charged right, Frost charged with them, scrambling over the bodies of his comrades to get out in front. As he rose without trace, his Brexit boosterism earned him commissions from the *Telegraph*, a seat in Johnson’s cabinet and a peerage in less than four years.

The conspiracy theorist’s choice of targets tells you how they see the future as well as the past. In the 1920s, the German far right’s stab-in-the-back attack on democrats, socialists and Jews established the hit list for the Nazis.

In 2012, when Vladimir Putin began accusing Russian NGOs of “[serving foreign national interests](#)”, you could smell the paranoia that would lead to today’s wars.

The refusal of British Conservatives to accept responsibility predicts a future in which they go all out to destroy the independent institutions that failed to make Tory dreams come true. Lord Frost has already resigned from Johnson’s cabinet so he can urge Conservatives to go further and faster to the right. He may be an unscrupulous mediocrity, but that does not stop him clearly seeing the Conservative party’s final terminus.

Nick Cohen is an Observer columnist

This article was downloaded by **calibre** from <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2022/jun/25/stab-in-the-back-nasty-old-myth-brexiters-exploiting-to-explain-away-the-disaster>

| [Section menu](#) | [Main menu](#) |

Headlines

- [Live Boris Johnson visits Rwanda as voting gets under way in crucial byelections](#)
- [Byelections PM faces double verdict as polls open](#)
- [Live Train strikes: second day of action brings disruption to Britain's rail network](#)
- [Rail strikes Second day of action starts after talks collapse](#)

[Skip to key events](#)

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

Boris Johnson ‘unlikely’ to bring up Rwanda asylum policy with Charles, says No 10 – as it happened

This live blog is now closed, [you can find our latest political coverage here](#)

Updated 3d ago

[Miranda Bryant](#) (now) and [Fran Lawther](#) (earlier)

Thu 23 Jun 2022 12.18 EDTFirst published on Thu 23 Jun 2022 05.12 EDT

Johnson will emphasise ‘obvious merits’ of Rwanda asylum strategy to Prince Charles – video

[Miranda Bryant](#) (now) and [Fran Lawther](#) (earlier)

Thu 23 Jun 2022 12.18 EDTFirst published on Thu 23 Jun 2022 05.12 EDT

Key events

- [3d agoHere's a summary of today ...](#)
- [3d agoConservatives stuck in a 2016 Brexit 'fever dream', says David Lammy](#)
- [3d agoCovid outbreaks in care homes rise for third week in a row](#)
- [3d agoJohnson 'unlikely' to bring up Rwanda asylum policy with Charles, says No 10](#)
- [3d agoBritish Airways workers based at Heathrow vote to strike](#)
- [3d agoBoris Johnson said he will stress 'obvious merits' of asylum strategy to Prince Charles](#)
- [3d agoBoris Johnson says UK will 'keep going' with controversial Rwanda asylum policy](#)

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[3d ago](#) [12.18](#)

Here's a summary of today ...

- Six years since the Brexit referendum, David Lammy says the UK still lacks a clear foreign policy. The shadow foreign secretary accused the Conservatives of being “stuck in a fever dream of 2016”.
- Covid outbreaks in care homes have risen for a third consecutive week and hospital numbers are continuing to rise, according to latest government figures.
- Boris Johnson is “unlikely” to bring up the Rwanda asylum policy with Prince Charles when they meet, Downing Street has said. The prime minister’s spokesperson said the issue will not be “at the forefront of his mind”.
- British Airways workers based at Heathrow have voted to strike in a dispute over pay. Members of the GMB and Unite backed industrial action. The unions said holidaymakers face disruption, warning of a summer of strikes.
- The prime minister has also said he will stress the “obvious merits” of his Rwanda asylum policy when he meets Prince Charles in Kigali tomorrow after his condemnation of the “appalling” plan.
- The prime minister has defended the legality of his controversial asylum policy, claiming it is not unlawful and that he is “just going to keep going”. Speaking from a school in Kigali, Boris Johnson told those with concerns over the plan to “think about the way these two countries can work together to solve what is a very complex problem of illegal people trafficking”.
- Boris Johnson claimed in his address in Kigali that the Commonwealth has “the super-fertiliser” for prosperity. The prime minister told the Commonwealth Business Forum that the

Commonwealth has the power to “forge a new Africa” and share African countries’ optimism.

- The prime minister earlier suggested it would be **“crazy” for him to resign** if the Conservatives lost both by-elections. “Are you crazy?” Boris Johnson told journalists travelling with him to Kigali when prospects of his departure was raised.
- Lord Frost, the former Brexit minister, said the true economic impact of Brexit **may never be known** and said he wished Boris Johnson would **stop making “factually incorrect statements”**. He made the comments at an event held by the think tank UK in a Changing Europe, held six years after the EU referendum.
- Boris Johnson **visited the Rwandan president** this morning while voting got under way in Wakefield and Tiverton and Honiton, where the Conservatives face two vital by-elections. The prime minister is in Kigali where he visited Paul Kagame at his office following heavy criticism about his deportation policy to the east African country.

That’s it from me for today, and for the blog. Thanks for reading.

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Updated at 12.33 EDT

[3d ago 11.49](#)

The government has urged unions to call off rail strikes “as quickly as possible”. No 10’s comments come ahead of a third planned strike on Saturday.

A Downing Street spokesperson said:

My understanding is there were talks between the RMT and Network Rail today.

But what we want to see is for the unions to call off the strikes, to continue to negotiate and to come to an agreement with their employer.

We don't want to see this strike action to continue for a moment longer than it has to.

Asked whether it was possible to do before Saturday's strike, he said: "That's a question for the unions."

He said the government has not been alerted to any further rail strikes after this week.

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Updated at 11.55 EDT

[3d ago](#)[11.44](#)

Conservatives stuck in a 2016 Brexit 'fever dream', says David Lammy

Six years since the Brexit referendum, David Lammy says the UK still lacks a clear foreign policy and accused the Conservatives of being “stuck in a fever dream of 2016”.

The shadow foreign secretary said at a Changing Europe thinktank event:

I'm afraid the Conservatives cannot hide from the fact that their choices have left us more damaged almost than any comparable economy.

Instead of working closely with the EU, the Conservatives were “stuck in a fever dream of 2016, picking fights with our closest allies instead of moving on and negotiating solutions,” he said.

He added:

The government's position is that the situation in Ukraine is so serious that their law-breaking prime minister must remain in office, but

apparently not serious enough to stop us picking a diplomatic fight with our closest allies.



David Lammy, the shadow foreign secretary, pictured in February.
Photograph: Aaron Chown/PA

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Updated at 11.49 EDT

[3d ago](#)[11.01](#)

Covid outbreaks in care homes rise for third week in a row

Covid outbreaks in care homes have risen for a third consecutive week and hospital numbers are continuing to rise, according to the latest government figures.

The data, from the UK health security agency (UKHSA), comes as health experts warn that nearly one in six people aged 75-plus have not had a

vaccine dose in the last six months.

The number of suspected Covid outbreaks last week in all settings in the UK was 331, up from 222 the previous week and the highest since the end of April. There were 245 outbreaks detected in care homes.

The UKHSA also found the rate of hospital admissions of people with virus among over 85s was 69.3 per 100,000 last week – up from 52.1.

Dr Mary Ramsay, the UKHSA director of clinical programmes, said:

We continue to see increases in Covid-19 outbreaks within care homes and hospitalisations among those aged 75 years and over.

Our data also shows that 17.5 per cent of people aged 75 years and over have not had a vaccine within the past six months, putting them more at risk of severe disease.

We urge everyone in this age group, as well as those living in a care home or who are clinically vulnerable, to ensure they get their spring booster for protection against serious illness.

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Updated at 11.31 EDT

[3d ago](#) [10.55](#)

Johnson 'unlikely' to bring up Rwanda asylum policy with Charles, says No 10

Boris Johnson is “unlikely” to bring up the Rwanda asylum policy with Prince Charles when they meet tomorrow morning, Downing Street has said.

The prime minister's spokesperson said the issue will not be "at the forefront of his mind", reports PA.

He said:

I'm not going to be over-prescriptive over what the PM will say in any meeting, that includes this one. The prime minister's focus remains on some of the important challenges on the future of Commonwealth, on climate change, on girls' education.

He added:

It's unlikely and I'm only not being categorical because it's simply as a matter of course I do not rule in or out any topic when two individuals meet.

Downing Street also said that Johnson did not raise human rights issues with Paul Kagame, the Rwandan president.

The spokesperson said:

I don't believe they discussed that in their meeting, there were quite a number of issues they talked through.

You'll know that some of the concerns with regards to rights have been raised on a number of occasions including at ministerial level very recently, so it is something we do raise with Rwanda.

We encourage them to uphold and champion the Commonwealth values.

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Updated at 11.03 EDT

[3d ago](#)[10.49](#)

Here's an image, shared on Twitter by [Boris Johnson](#), of the prime minister's Kigali genocide memorial message:

We must do everything we can to ensure that human hearts never again are allowed to breed such hatred.

It was an honour to visit the Kigali Genocide Memorial.
pic.twitter.com/eaJAml5QrG

— Boris Johnson (@BorisJohnson) [June 23, 2022](#)

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[3d ago](#)[10.32](#)

Meanwhile, Prince Charles's office has refused to be drawn on the royal's reported criticisms of the government's Rwanda asylum scheme.

A spokesperson for Clarence House told PA Media that the future king, who is in Rwanda to open a summit of Commonwealth leaders, was politically neutral.

His statement came after [Boris Johnson](#) appeared to take a veiled swipe at the prince and those who have attacked plans to forcibly remove asylum seekers to the east African nation. The spokesperson added that "policy is a matter for government".

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Updated at 10.45 EDT

[3d ago](#)[10.13](#)

And here is the full report by **Julia Kollewe** about Heathrow strikes this summer:

Heathrow airport faces disruption from strikes this summer, as hundreds of check-in and ground staff voted in favour of walkouts during the peak holiday period in a dispute with British Airways over pay.

As a [second day of national rail strikes](#) is under way, 700 workers employed by BA were balloted on industrial action by unions including GMB and Unite. Some 95% of those who voted (about half the total 700 workers) said they were prepared to strike, on a turnout of more than 80%. Strike dates will be confirmed in the coming days but are likely to be during the school holidays. The Unite ballot closes on Monday.

The dispute stems from BA using “fire and rehire” practices to cut workers’ pay during the pandemic when they could not fight back, the GMB union said.

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Updated at 10.14 EDT

[3d ago](#)[10.02](#)

British Airways workers based at Heathrow vote to strike

British Airways workers based at Heathrow have voted to strike in a dispute over pay.

PA Media reports members of the GMB and Unite backed industrial action. The unions said holidaymakers face disruption, warning of a summer of strikes.

Workers, including check-in staff, will now decide on strike dates, which the union said were likely to be held during the peak summer holiday period.

Nadine Houghton, GMB national officer, said: “With grim predictability, holidaymakers face massive disruption thanks to the pig-headedness of British Airways.

“BA have tried to offer our members crumbs from the table in the form of a 10% one-off bonus payment, but this doesn’t cut the mustard. Our members need to be reinstated the 10% they had stolen from them last year with full back pay and the 10% bonus which other colleagues have been paid.”

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Updated at 10.45 EDT

[3d ago](#)[09.52](#)

The Telegraph’s Christopher Hope has tweeted that pro-Brexit MPs expect the government to force the Lords to accept three bills that have caused controversy.

Brexiteers fully expect the Government to use the Parliament Act to force the Lords to accept the three Brexit Bills - Northern Ireland Protocol, Bill of Rights and Brexit Freedoms, for the first time in nearly 20 years.

— Christopher Hope✉ (@christopherhope) [June 23, 2022](#)

The Bills need to have their second readings in the Commons 18 months before the end of the parliamentary session so they are in law by early 2024

Sir Bill Cash says: "It is going to be the battle for Brexit. We have got a majority and the House of Lords cannot stand in the way."

— Christopher Hope✉ (@christopherhope) [June 23, 2022](#)

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[3d ago](#)[09.46](#)

Boris Johnson visited the Kigali Genocide Memorial where the remains of about 250,000 people killed in the Rwandan genocide are buried.

PA Media reports the prime minister said he found it “utterly shocking” to witness the images and physical memorials of the genocide as he was led around a museum by survivors.

Johnson bowed his head during a wreath-laying ceremony and wrote a message in the visitors’ book.

He also paused at the flame of remembrance marking 28 years since the 100 days that saw Hutu extremists claim the lives of around 800,000 Tutsi and moderate Hutus.

“It has been utterly shocking to see these images, and so many physical memorials, of the appalling and inexplicable genocide against the Tutsis,” Johnson’s message read. “We must do everything we can to ensure that human hearts never again are allowed to breed such hatred.”

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[3d ago](#)[09.30](#)

Robert Halfon, chair of the education select committee, said a teachers’ strike ([see also 13:08](#)) would put children into a “defacto lockdown”, causing problems and misery for them and their families.

“Our children have been damaged massively over the past few years because of Covid, because most children were not in school,” he told the BBC’s World At One programme.

He added:

We know the damage that's done to their educational attainment, their mental health, their life chances, their safeguarding, and to put children into de facto lockdown by having a strike wouldn't just cause misery to the children but also would cause huge problems for parents because of course, many of them have to be in work whilst their children are at school. So this is not the way to solve these problems.

But he said he would be in favour of more help for staff on lower wages, such as teaching assistants and support staff.

If there could be a focus on the lower-paid professionals in school, I think that would help.

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Updated at 09.53 EDT

[3d ago](#)[08.43](#)

A claim in Boris Johnson's speech – that it was hotter in London than Kigali ([see 12:18](#)) – has been called into question.

Jim Pickard, the Financial Times' chief political correspondent, pointed out that there was actually a six degree temperature difference between the cities:

Boris Johnson opens his speech to the Commonwealth Business Forum by claiming it's hotter in London than Kigali today
pic.twitter.com/DyV59zDpn

— Jim Pickard (@PickardJE) [June 23, 2022](#)

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Updated at 08.57 EDT

3d ago08.31

Here's [Lisa O'Carroll](#), the Guardian's Brexit correspondent, on Lord Frost's comments earlier:

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3d ago08.27

Boris Johnson has just tweeted about his meeting with the Rwandan president, Paul Kagame:

Good to meet President [@PaulKagame](#) in the beautiful city of Kigali this morning.

As we hand over the Commonwealth Chair-in-Office to Rwanda, our countries will be working together closely to address the most pressing global challenges.

□□□□ pic.twitter.com/Qd2LmMXNzU

— Boris Johnson (@BorisJohnson) [June 23, 2022](#)

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Updated at 08.57 EDT

3d ago08.25

A Clarence House spokesperson told PA:

As we have said previously we will not be commenting on supposed remarks made in private except to say that the prince is politically neutral. Policy is a matter for government.

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Updated at 08.26 EDT

Newest [Newest](#)

Previous [Previous](#)

1
of
3

[Next](#)

[Oldest](#) [Oldest](#)

This article was downloaded by **calibre** from <https://www.theguardian.com/politics/live/2022/jun/23/boris-johnson-rwanda-by-elections-wakefield-tiverton-honiton-latest-uk-politics-live>

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Byelections

Boris Johnson faces double verdict as polls open in by-elections

Labour clear favourite to win in Wakefield while Tories and Lib Dems in close race in Tiverton and Honiton



Boris Johnson survived a confidence vote this month but could face a renewed effort to unseat him in the autumn. Photograph: Daniel Leal/AP

[Peter Walker](#) Political correspondent

[@peterwalker99](#)

Thu 23 Jun 2022 02.00 EDT Last modified on Thu 23 Jun 2022 02.02 EDT

Boris Johnson faces a hugely important verdict from voters on Thursday as the [Conservatives](#) defend seats in Wakefield and in Tiverton and Honiton, with a double defeat likely to reignite speculation about a new challenge from Tory MPs.

The by-elections were called after the respective MPs resigned in disgrace. Imran Ahmad Khan [stepped down](#) in Wakefield having been convicted of sexually assaulting a teenage boy, while [Neil Parish quit](#) in Tiverton and Honiton after watching pornography in the Commons.

The West Yorkshire seat had been safely Labour before Khan took it for the Conservatives in 2019, and Labour is the clear favourite to win on Thursday. The Devon constituency, in contrast, is seen as neck-and-neck between the Conservatives and the [Liberal Democrats](#), despite the seat in its various forms having been strongly Tory for more than a century.

Parish won in 2019 by a majority of more than 24,000. If the Lib Dems win, it is being billed as the biggest majority ever overturned in this way, although there have been higher percentage swings.

Losing Tiverton and Honiton would be likely to particularly worry Conservative MPs given not just the size of the majority but also that it would be another rural, Brexit-minded Tory stronghold to shift to the Lib Dems in less than six months. In December the Lib Dems [took North Shropshire](#), overturning a Tory majority of nearly 23,000 after the former MP, Owen Paterson, quit over a lobbying scandal.

In June last year the Lib Dems [won another](#) formerly very safe Tory seat, Chesham and Amersham, a so-called blue wall commuter-belt constituency to the north-west of London.

Lib Dem campaigners have said Tiverton and Honiton is seen as winnable but they worry that a number of disaffected Conservative voters will stay at home rather than transferring their support.

While [Labour](#) and the Lib Dems are fielding candidates in both seats and have made no pact, there has been an implicit understanding that each party would concentrate resources in Wakefield and in Tiverton and Honiton respectively, so as to boost their chances of victory.

This month sustained pressure on the prime minister over lockdown-breaking parties in Downing Street and worries about a sense of drift in

government led to [a confidence vote](#) in which 148 Tory MPs tried to oust Johnson and 211 backed him.

While ministers sought to present this as a resounding endorsement, Johnson did worse than Theresa May when she faced a similar vote, with 41% of his parliamentary party wanting a new leader.

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Under Conservative party rules, the win gives Johnson a 12-month immunity from challenge, but these could be changed if there is sufficient appetite for it among Tory MPs. This seems unlikely in the short term, but rebel MPs would see a double by-election loss as a significant setback, which could mean a renewed effort to unseat Johnson in the autumn.

Johnson has sought to reset his premiership with a focus on issues that give him the opportunity to please his core voters, including battles with lawyers over deporting asylum seekers to Rwanda, changing human rights rules, and trying to blame Labour for rail strikes.

This article was downloaded by **calibre** from <https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2022/jun/23/boris-johnson-double-verdict-wakefield-tiverton-and-honiton-bylections>

[Skip to key events](#)

[Rail strikes](#)

Train strikes: Boris Johnson calls union action ‘unnecessary’ amid second day of rail disruption – as it happened

This live blog has now closed

- [Heathrow faces summer of disruption as BA staff vote to strike](#)
- [Arthur Scargill joins rail picket line in Sheffield](#)
- [Climate justice groups join rail picket lines](#)
- [Analysis: how the Tories turned on workers](#)

Updated 3d ago

[Jedidajah Otte \(now\)](#) and [Rachel Hall \(earlier\)](#)

Thu 23 Jun 2022 13.06 EDTFirst published on Thu 23 Jun 2022 02.31 EDT

Boris Johnson: rail strikes 'unnecessary' and 'a terrible idea' – video

[Jedidajah Otte \(now\)](#) and [Rachel Hall \(earlier\)](#)

Thu 23 Jun 2022 13.06 EDTFirst published on Thu 23 Jun 2022 02.31 EDT

Key events

- [3d agoSummary](#)
- [3d agoBA strike would mean summer of 'misery' for British holidaymakers, Downing Street says](#)
- [3d agoSummary](#)
- [3d agoBritish Airways workers vote to strike](#)
- [3d agoBoris Johnson calls rail strikes 'unnecessary'](#)
- [3d agoMore railway workers to vote on further strikes](#)

- [3d ago](#)[Road congestion levels higher in London, lower in other cities](#)

Show key events only

Live feed

Show key events only

From 3d ago

[07.28](#)

Boris Johnson calls rail strikes 'unnecessary'

Speaking from Rwanda, the prime minister, Boris Johnson, said the rail strikes this week were “unnecessary” and stressed the benefits of “sensible reforms” of the rail system.

I just think it is important to remember that these strikes are unnecessary. I think people should get around the table and sort it out.

This is a government that is investing more in railways than any previous government in the last 50 years.

To have a great future for rail, for railway workers and their families, we have got to have some sensible reforms and that is things like reforming ticket offices - I did a huge amount of that when I was running London.

It is stuff that maybe the union barons are more attached to perhaps than their workers. I think the strikes are a terrible idea.

Boris Johnson: rail strikes 'unnecessary' and 'a terrible idea' – video

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Updated at 11.45 EDT

[3d ago](#) [13.06](#)

Summary



Jedidajah Otte

Here the latest developments at a glance:

- British Airways workers based at Heathrow have voted in favour of strikes [in a dispute over pay](#), the GMB and Unite unions announced on Thursday.
- Scottish first minister Nicola Sturgeon has told the UK government to have “respect” for workers by resolving the train dispute that is “crippling” the UK.
- Downing Street has urged the unions to call off the rail strikes “as quickly as possible”, adding it was up to them whether to go ahead with Saturday’s action.
- Speaking in Rwanda, Boris Johnson [branded the rail strikes “unnecessary”](#) and said “sensible reforms” were needed.
- More railway workers are [set to vote on strikes](#), threatening fresh disruption in the industry throughout the summer.

- TomTom figures suggested that road congestion was higher than last week in London this morning, but lower in other cities.
- The head of the UK's recruitment body warned that changing the law to allow firms to hire agency workers to replace staff on strike during industrial disputes would not work.
- Rail union leaders hailed a 7.1% pay deal for Merseyrail staff, which was struck without government involvement, as evidence that it is ministers who are blocking a deal in the national dispute.
- The second day of strike action resulted in **only around one in five trains will run** and mainly on main lines during the day. Network Rail said that rail services today would "look much like they did on Tuesday", starting later in the morning and ending early in the evening, around 6.30pm.
- **Train services will continue to be disrupted on Friday** because of knock-on effects of Thursday's rail strikes.

That's all from me, this blog will now close. Thanks for following along.

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3d ago 12.51

Train services will continue to be disrupted on Friday because of knock-on effects of the second day of this week's rail strikes.

Only around 60% of the 20,000 normal weekday services will be able to operate.

Walkouts by signallers and control room staff who would usually have worked overnight from Thursday night into Friday morning mean trains will leave depots later than normal, delaying the start of services, PA reports.

The process of taking trains out of depots will only begin when signallers on daytime shifts start work at 6am to 6.30am.

It is expected that the start of services will be delayed by up to four hours in

some locations. Usually, passenger services begin at between around 5am and 6am.

In London, services will increase quickly as trains do not have to travel long distances from depots to stations, but in more remote locations, this will take several hours.

Network Rail said that “even during the day the service will stay thinner” than usual and some operators will wind down services slightly earlier than normal.

Services on Saturday are expected to be affected similarly to the other strike days on Tuesday and Thursday.

Around 20% of services will run and just half of lines will be open, and only between 7.30am and 6.30pm.

Negotiations are ongoing and passengers are urged to check with train operators for updates to services, in case Saturday’s strike will be called off.

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[3d ago](#)[12.35](#)

First minister Nicola Sturgeon has told the UK government to have “respect” for workers by resolving the train dispute that is “crippling” the UK.

Asked during first minister’s questions on Thursday whether she believes the UK government’s reported proposals to allow agency staff to replace striking workers is “inflaming” the issue, Sturgeon said it is workers who are paying the price.

Sturgeon said she understands the dangers of the dispute “escalating” if a resolution is not reached between rail employers and unions.

She added:

[Workers] are paying the price for Tory anti-trade union rhetoric, in fact, anti-trade unionism which I completely deprecate.

We should respect workers across the economy. We should respect public sector workers and we should seek to negotiate fair resolution to disputes, particularly at a time of inflation - inflation being exacerbated in the UK by the folly of Brexit.

The rail strike that is crippling the UK right now is not the result of a pay dispute with ScotRail. It is a dispute with Network Rail and with English train operating companies, therefore it is entirely a reserved matter.

And the other thing I remember from a few weeks ago in this chamber when there was a potential for a ScotRail dispute, Tory MSPs getting up and demanding intervention from this Government to resolve it.

So let me repeat the call today for the UK government to start doing their job to get round the table to bring a resolution to this and to drop the anti-trade unionism and have some respect for workers across the economy.



Nicola Sturgeon arrives at Holyrood. Photograph: Andrew Milligan/PA

The second of three scheduled strikes is taking place on Thursday, with further industrial action expected on Saturday.

ScotRail has warned the disruption could continue until next week.

Earlier, Scottish transport minister **Jenny Gilruth** told MSPs that two meetings with the UK government over the strikes this week had been cancelled, PA reports.

She said:

There were planned meetings that were scheduled to take place between the devolved administrations and the UK government on Monday - those were cancelled at short notice.

I was meant to meet with Wendy Morton, the rail minister, on Wednesday - that meeting was also cancelled at short notice.

So I have to say, despite repeated representations between myself and [UK transport secretary] **Grant Shapps**, there has been limited consultation between the UK government and this government.

That is deeply regrettable because at this moment in time, Network Rail remains reserved.

A Department for [Transport](#) spokesperson said:

We continue to encourage the unions and industry to agree to a deal to call off these strikes. Although the government is not the employer, ministers remain extremely close to the issues on both sides and the ongoing discussions.

We will also continue to look at everything we can do to minimise disruption to protect the travelling public who are the innocent victims in this.

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Updated at 14.28 EDT

3d ago[12.13](#)



People walk along a platform at Liverpool Street station, during heavily reduced rail services. Photograph: Henry Nicholls/Reuters



RMT union members hold placards at the picket line outside London Bridge station. Photograph: Anadolu Agency/Getty Images



Empty ticket barriers at Cardiff Central train station. Photograph: Matthew Horwood/Getty Images

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Updated at 14.29 EDT

[3d ago](#)[11.52](#)

The unions should call off the rail strikes “as quickly as possible”, Downing Street has said, adding it was up to them whether to go ahead with Saturday’s action.

A No 10 spokesman said:

My understanding is there were talks between the RMT (Rail, Maritime and Transport union) and Network Rail today.

But what we want to see is for the unions to call off the strikes, to continue to negotiate and to come to an agreement with their employer.

We don’t want to see this strike action to continue for a moment longer than it has to.

Asked if this was possible before Saturday's strike, he said:

That's a question for the unions.

The government has not been informed of any further rail strikes after this week, the official said, PA reports.

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Updated at 12.08 EDT

[3d ago](#) [11.28](#)

BA strike would mean summer of 'misery' for British holidaymakers, Downing Street says

Strike action by British Airways workers would add to the "misery" passengers are suffering at airports, Downing Street has said after [hundreds of check-in and ground staff voted in favour of walkouts](#) in a dispute over pay.

A No 10 spokesman said:

This is obviously a matter for British Airways and the unions and we would strongly encourage both to come together to find a settlement.

We don't want to see any further disruption for passengers and strike action would only add to the misery being faced by passengers at airports.

DfT (Department for Transport) will obviously work closely to look at what contingency measures BA could put in place and we expect BA to put in place contingency measures to ensure that as little disruption is caused, and that where there is disruption that passengers can be refunded.

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[3d ago](#)[11.06](#)



Jedidajah Otte

The largest rail strikes in over 30 years have come at a time of record fuel prices, with more than two-fifths of motorists driving less frequently or making shorter journeys since petrol prices began to soar in March, a survey suggests.

Some 43% of the UK public are cutting back on driving, potentially leaving certain demographics isolated and inconvenienced as a result, the poll by Opinium found.

Some 35% of those in rural areas have been driving less because of fuel costs, compared with 31% of those in suburban areas and 23% of those in urban areas.

People in rural areas in particular have raised concerns about isolation, and have underlined the importance of reliable public transport across the country.

John Williams, 70, a pensioner from **Talmine, Sutherland**, feels increasingly cut off from the world, and mainly because of the cost of fuel.

He told the Guardian:

Earlier this week I paid £2.34 per litre for petrol. There is no public transport here. The triple pension lock is cancelled. We are effectively under house arrest.

At the moment I only drive when it's essential. I have practically given up on going to church because of fuel prices, which I used to do every week. I only shop when I absolutely have to.

After long periods of isolation during the coronavirus lockdowns, Williams has not seen his social life return to pre-pandemic levels, to a significant degree because of the cost of living crisis.

I'm not in as bad a situation as the people who don't have enough food or can't heat their homes, but my nearest family are in the Inverness area, around 100 miles from here, and I haven't seen them in more than a year, mainly because of the cost of driving there. It would be very expensive.

Almost two in five unpaid carers (37%) had also cut down on their miles, as had 33% of key workers and 21% of paid carers.

More than half of all drivers (54%) have changed their habits in some way in response to rising fuel costs, most commonly taking shorter trips (29%), taking public transport instead of driving (18%), cancelling journeys (16%) or avoiding driving to work and instead choosing to work from home (15%).

Opinium Research surveyed 2,000 UK adults online between June 17-21.

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Updated at 11.26 EDT

3d ago**10.45**

My colleague **Mark Brown**, the Guardian's North of England correspondent, has this piece on the former leader of the National Union of Mineworkers, **Arthur Scargill**, joining the picket line in Sheffield today.

The 84-year-old found harsh words to describe his view on Labour leader **Keir Starmer** in response to a question on Labour's attitude towards this week's strikes.

I'm Jeddajah Otte and I'll be taking over this blog now for the next few hours. Feel free to get in touch on Twitter [@JedySays](#) with tips or comments.

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[3d ago](#)[09.59](#)

Summary



Rachel Hall

Thanks for following the blog this morning and early afternoon on the second day of UK rail strikes. Here are all the main events:

- Speaking in Rwanda, Boris Johnson **branded the rail strikes “unnecessary”** and said “sensible reforms” were needed.
- **More railway workers are set to vote on strikes**, threatening fresh disruption in the industry throughout the summer.
- TomTom figures suggested that **road congestion was higher than last week in London** this morning, but lower in other cities.
- The head of the UK’s recruitment body **warned that changing the law to allow firms to hire agency workers to replace staff on strike during industrial disputes would not work**.
- Rail union leaders **hailed a 7.1% pay deal for Merseyrail staff**, which was struck without government involvement, as evidence that it is ministers who are blocking a deal in the national dispute.
- The **second day of strike action resulted in only around one in five trains will run** and mainly on main lines during the day. Network Rail said that rail services today would “look much like they did on Tuesday”, starting later in the morning and ending early in the evening, around 6.30pm.
- British Airways workers at Heathrow **voted in favour of strikes** in a dispute over pay.

I’m handing over to my colleague Jedidajah Otte who will be keeping you updated for the rest of the day.

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Updated at 10.05 EDT

[3d ago](#)[09.54](#)

British Airways workers vote to strike

British Airways workers based at Heathrow have voted in favour of strikes in a dispute over pay, the GMB and Unite unions announced.

Sky News reports:

The GMB trade union finished balloting its BA members working at Heathrow Airport on Thursday morning - announcing shortly after that 95% of workers had voted to strike this summer.

Separately, BA workers at Heathrow who are members of the Unite union have been balloted too, with results expected on Monday.

In total, more than 700 BA check-in staff and ground handling agents could strike during this industrial action.

GMB is seeking to reverse a 10% pay cut on workers imposed during the pandemic. BA says it has offered a 10% one-off bonus, but not a return to the same pay as before.

A BA spokesperson said:

After a deeply difficult two years which saw the business lose more than £4bn, these colleagues were offered a 10% payment for this year which was rejected.

We remain fully committed to talks with our trade unions about their concerns and we hope that together we can find a way to reach an agreement in the best interests of our people and our customers.

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Updated at 09.55 EDT

[3d ago](#)09.05

The Times' transport correspondent Ben Clatworthy has tweeted that a Network Rail spokesperson said the number of people using its stations on

the first day of the rail strikes on Tuesday was between 12% and 18% of normal levels.

PA reports that although the spokesperson didn't report figures for today, he believed these to be similar.

STRIKES LATEST: A Network Rail spokesman said the number of people using its stations on the first day of the rail strikes on Tuesday was between 12% and 18% of normal [#RailStrikes #RMTUnion #tttot](#)

— Ben Clatworthy (@benclatworthy) [June 23, 2022](#)

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Updated at 09.07 EDT

[3d ago](#)[09.03](#)

An academic at the University of Bristol has pointed out that **the UK government failed in its attempt to change the law to allow strikers to be replaced with agency workers in 2015**, and the move remains unlikely to work or to comply with international law.

[Writing in the Conversation](#), Tonia Novitz, a professor of labour law, said:

So why was the idea dropped in 2015? Unsurprisingly, the proposal was rejected by the Trades Union Congress (TUC) as an attempt to threaten the right to strike. It was also viewed by leading NGOs, including Amnesty International and Liberty, as “a major attack on civil liberties”.

Perhaps as importantly, the proposal also failed to pass standard parliamentary scrutiny. The Regulatory Policy Committee (RPC) - the UK’s regulation watchdog - criticised several major elements of the government’s impact assessment of this regulatory change. For a start, the government claimed that 22% of working days lost to strikes could

be covered by agency workers, but the RPC found a lack of sufficient evidence for this figure.

The RPC also highlighted the need to factor in the costs of helping employers familiarise themselves with the new law and the impact on productivity. It observed that the impact assessment itself acknowledged that “agency workers may lower the usual productivity of the workplace”, but it discounted this in its calculations without explanation.

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Updated at 09.38 EDT

[3d ago](#)08.44



Gwyn Topham

The Guardian's transport correspondent Gwyn Topham has spoken to unions and recruiters about their views on **government moves to allow agency workers to replace striking staff**.

The [TUC](#) said it was a cynical and unworkable move, while rail unions dismissed it as “playing to the gallery”. Network Rail has said most of the roles which have most affected train services during the strike, particularly signalling, cannot be filled by agency staff.

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Updated at 09.39 EDT

[Newest](#)[Newest](#)

[Previous](#)

1
of
3

[Next](#)

[Oldest](#)[Oldest](#)

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Rail strikes

Second day of rail strikes start after talks collapse in acrimony

Just one in five trains set to run as RMT accuses UK government of ‘wrecking negotiations’ and TSSA union accepts 7.1% offer



Stratford railway station. Just one in five trains will run on Thursday, with services only running between 7.30am and 6.30pm. Photograph: Stefan Rousseau/PA

[Julia Kollewe](#) and [Gwyn Topham](#)

Thu 23 Jun 2022 04.21 EDTFirst published on Thu 23 Jun 2022 03.44 EDT

A second day of rail strike action is under way after talks to avert the stoppage [collapsed in rancour](#) on Wednesday night.

Millions of passengers face disruption to train services across Great Britain on Thursday as 40,000 RMT members working for [Network Rail](#) and 13 train operating companies stage their second strike in a week.

Just one in five trains will run on Thursday, with services only running between 7.30am and 6.30pm. Trains will mostly be restricted to main lines, with about half of the network closed. Passengers are being asked to travel only if necessary.

The government plans to change the law – repealing what it describes as “burdensome” legal restrictions – to enable businesses to supply temporary agency workers to cover for staff on strike during industrial action. Network Rail welcomed the move but Labour and trade unions condemned it as a “recipe for disaster”.

'Marxist or the Hood?': RMT's Mick Lynch asked bizarre questions amid rail strikes – video

Last night, the head of the [RMT](#) union, Mick Lynch, hit out at the transport secretary, Grant Shapps, for “wrecking negotiations by not allowing Network Rail to withdraw their letter threatening redundancy for 2,900 of our members” in the dispute over pay, working conditions and proposed “modernisation” plans. Shapps said the RMT claim was “a total lie”. Network Rail said the union had walked away from talks.

Separately, the [Transport](#) Salaried Staffs' Association announced that its members at Merseyrail had accepted a 7.1% pay offer.

Tim Shoveller, the managing director of the north west and central region at Network Rail, said a similar deal with the RMT was very unlikely. “We currently have an offer that totals 3% on the table and we’re keen to improve that, but that’s subject to affordability,” he told BBC radio 4’s Today programme on Thursday.

He said the difference between the 3% and the 7.1% pay offers was £65m every year of cost savings that the industry would have to find. But he added: “We can see a way of funding a pay deal, not at those sort of proportions, but still an overall good package recognising that the prime thing the unions are asking for is a guarantee of no compulsory redundancies.”

Also speaking on Radio 4, Eddie Dempsey, the RMT assistant general secretary, said he would be talking to Shoveller on Thursday, and that the Network Rail letter would not necessarily stop the union from negotiating.

Nevertheless, he said: “What we can’t understand is how people from the industry can go onto the media and say ‘We have no intention of making people compulsorily redundant’ but issue us a letter starting the legal process for consultation on redundancy and refuse to give us a no-compulsory redundancy guarantee which is the number one demand we have in this dispute.”

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Dempsey described the Merseyrail 7.1% pay deal as “significant” and said other transport workers, at London Underground and Crossrail, had managed to get inflation-busting pay deals.

“All of the companies we are in dispute with are controlled by the Department for Transport,” he said. “We figure there is an affordability issue in the railway and that comes down to profiteering. It can’t be the case that we’re seeing billions taken out of our railway industry in the form of private profits right through the health emergency, and be told at the same time we can’t afford to pay the workers a pay rise, some of whom are in the third year of a pay freeze. That’s intolerable to us.”

Members of the drivers’ union Aslef on Greater Anglia are striking on Thursday in a separate dispute over pay.

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2022.06.23 - Spotlight

- [The untold story of Terrence Higgins ‘He taught me about love, affection and great sex’](#)
- [Essential exercises to perfect posture How to stop yourself getting injured while gardening](#)
- [Grounded! What to do in an airport if your flight is delayed by one, three, six or 12 hours](#)
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‘He taught me about love, affection and great sex’: the untold story of Terrence Higgins



‘He gave me a lot of space to be an awkward teenager without any confidence’ ... Rupert Whitaker. Composite: Joel Goodman/Terrence Higgins Trust

Britain's best-known HIV charity was launched 40 years ago, but little is known about the man who inspired it. The trust's co-founders, a former partner and a close friend, reflect on his extraordinary life and legacy



[Simon Hattenstone](#)

Thu 23 Jun 2022 01.00 EDT Last modified on Thu 23 Jun 2022 11.34 EDT

When Rupert Whitaker met Terry Higgins, he was 18 years old, callow and just starting out in life. Higgins was 37, streetwise and, although neither knew it at the time, approaching the end of his. They spent a blissful year together in which Whitaker learned so much. “He taught me that there was love and affection and safety and great sex and fun – that it *all* existed,” he says. “I was 19 and one month when Terry died.”

Today, Higgins continues to influence his life. Whitaker, a psychiatrist and immunologist, has dedicated himself to helping people who are HIV positive in the name of Higgins. He is one of two founders of the [Terrence Higgins Trust](#) (THT), which celebrates its 40th anniversary this year. Not only has this kept his partner’s name alive, but it has also raised awareness of the virus, supported those who have it and, perhaps most importantly of all, helped destigmatise HIV.

The name Terrence Higgins is recognised throughout the UK today, but little is known about the man. That was how Whitaker wanted it at the time, he says, but he has agreed to talk openly about him today. Higgins was the first named person in the UK to die of an Aids-related illness, on 4 July 1982. By naming it after a person, the founders of THT hoped to humanise the deadly epidemic. But stigma was not the only reason it didn't have Aids or HIV in its title; the terms hadn't been invented at the time Higgins died. When Whitaker joined forces with Higgins' great friend Martyn Butler to support people, it was a condition that had no name.

Despite this, the organisation met with considerable hostility in its early days; there was rampant homophobia in Britain, fuelled by a tabloid press that revelled in headlines about a "gay plague". Politicians, the [NHS](#) and newspapers were initially suspicious of THT, because of their lack of expertise in health, fundraising or science. It was initially called the Terry Higgins Trust – because none of his friends had known him as Terrence – and the establishment was even snobbish about the name. What kind of man was called Terry? "We changed to the more formal Terrence Higgins. Terry was thought to be too 'street,'" Whitaker says. "We struggled to get it incorporated as a charity in the first place because the attitude was: 'You're not us, so why should we allow you to do this?' Who were 'us'? 'Straight, white, upper-middle-class males.'"

Whitaker has formidable whiskers, speaks with a stentorian self-assurance and cuts an imposing figure. "I'm not easily pushed around," he says. But, as a child, he was. He came from a deeply dysfunctional upper-middle-class family (his paternal great-great-grandfather founded J Whitaker and Sons, the publisher of Whitaker's Almanac). His mother, a dirt-poor, part-Māori girl from New Zealand, was a dancer and a beauty. But his father was violent, putting her in hospital a number of times. Broken by abuse, she became an alcoholic, addicted to prescription drugs. His parents divorced when he was seven; he says he wished they would have done so much earlier. "I was clinically depressed when I was six," he says. "I asked my mum how Māoris killed themselves," he says – and followed that by trying to kill himself.

When he was 13, his mother fell asleep while smoking in bed, was severely burned and died from complications. Whitaker's father sent him from [London](#) to a remote boarding school that offered help for children from broken families. He was a bright boy and a talented musician. But, at the age of 15, he became the first boy to come out at school – and he paid a price. The young Whitaker was both bolshie and a bag of nerves. He was all set for a singing scholarship at Cambridge University, so long as he passed the entrance exam. But his low self-esteem meant he couldn't go through with it. "I was too afraid to sit them, so I turned it down." Why? "I didn't think I was bright enough."



Higgins as a schoolboy. Photograph: Terrence Higgins Trust

Instead of going to Cambridge, Whitaker went to Germany for a year and worked as a clerk at a publishing house. It was here that he embarked on his first relationship, after being seduced by a boss twice his age. He believes it was in Germany that he was infected with HIV.

By the summer of 1981, however, he was back in London, where he met Higgins in the West End nightclub Bang. It was a life-transforming moment. They couldn't have been more different. Higgins was a working-class man who had grown up in south Wales and left for London to live the life he wanted. He was easy in his skin and naturally flamboyant. Whitaker's

confidence was all front. “I was afraid of my own shadow. It was like everyone else had the rulebook to life and understood what was going on, and I had no idea.”

Higgins, however, had no hang-ups. He was out and proud, while the young Whitaker was out and cowed. Higgins adored gay culture, American culture, books, movies, music, clothes, clubbing. He was determined to live life for himself. It could so easily have expressed itself in solipsism, but Whitaker says it was the opposite. There was nothing more Higgins wanted than to create a sense of family among friends – perhaps to compensate for the fact that so many had become estranged from their birth families.

He was so innately anti-establishment that he wasn’t even aware of it. “He would wait for me on the other side of the street from my father’s flat,” says Whitaker. “And he’d show up in this outrageous pink, sleeveless sweater – he didn’t give a damn. Those were not the days when you could do that with impunity. People would notice; why is that man wearing pink?” Did that bother him? “Terry didn’t give a shit. He wasn’t bothered enough even to remark about it.”

Terry gave me the sense that it was OK to stand your ground. He made me grow up, and held my hand as I did it

Martyn Butler

What did Whitaker find attractive about Higgins? “I was smitten by the macho-man look. I loved moustaches. Nobody had a beard then. Short hair and tight jeans, plaid shirts and construction boots.” Did Whitaker have a moustache? “God no, I couldn’t grow anything till I was in my late 20s. I was a very smooth-cheeked young man, but fortunately I had a good jawline.”

Soon after they started dating, Whitaker left for Durham University to study psychology, anthropology and philosophy. But he would return to London most weekends to spend time with Higgins. Higgins was so patient with him, he says. In what way? “He was patient with my shyness. I was never enthusiastic about anything, because I didn’t know what it would entail. He’d be like: ‘Let’s go out to a club,’ and I’d be like: ‘OK.’ It would never

be: ‘Yeah, that would be lovely,’ because if I’d said that and the other shoe drops then it’s like I’m an idiot. There was a constant vigilance about waiting for the shit to hit the fan. He gave me a lot of space to be an awkward teenager without any confidence, and that was really kind.”

Did Higgins seem much more mature than you? “Oh God yes. He had an enormous amount of confidence. But it wasn’t this swagger or braggadocio. It was simply that he had faith in himself and he didn’t have much respect for the things that one was supposed to be respectful of. He would respect things that earned his respect. It was a very similar attitude to me now. He taught me a hell of a lot.”

As a young man, Higgins had joined the navy. I ask Whitaker what he did. “He caused trouble.” He laughs. When he decided he wanted out, he and another sailor told the commanding officer that they were gay and had to be fired, because back then gay people were banned from the armed forces. “The commanding officer said: ‘Tough! If I let go of all the poofs in the navy, we wouldn’t have a navy.’” So they made him stay? “Yes. It was: ‘Don’t ask, don’t tell. We’re not interested and we’ll ignore you or punish you if you make a point out of it.’” So what did Higgins do? Whitaker grins. “He and a friend went over the side of the ship with a tin of paint and painted hammers and sickles and got kicked out.”



Rupert Whitaker in 1984.

Whitaker bursts out laughing. He has a huge, life-affirming laugh. “It reflected his character very much.” Was Higgins a lefty or anarchic? “More bloody-minded. Like: ‘Take me seriously, and if you don’t you’re in for it.’”

After the navy, Higgins worked for Hansard, typing up parliamentary reports. “At Hansard, he was also a trouble-maker – a constructive trouble-maker.” Whitaker tells me he recently discovered that Higgins started a trade union there. “They didn’t welcome it, not least because, according to an old colleague of his, there was a culture of bullying in the offices. Terry waded in to put a stop to that, which he did with proper Welsh welly.”

Higgins had been a chunky man, known to his friends as Fat Terry. By the time Whitaker met him, he was losing weight because of his illness. His friends just thought he was shedding puppy fat and looked better for it. Higgins was pleased with it, too; he had no sense he was ill. Then he suddenly became extremely sick. Whitaker was away that weekend in France, singing in a concert. By the time he got back, Higgins had been hospitalised after collapsing at the gay nightclub Heaven. “He was unconscious in isolation. I had read something about this gay cancer that had been identified in Los Angeles. I said to Terry’s consultant: ‘I wonder if it’s this American disease,’ because he had no idea what was going on. He didn’t even respond. He barely looked at me.”

Higgins seemed to recover and came out of hospital. Whitaker shows me one of the few existing photos of him. He is painfully thin. “He was out having a picnic with friends, which is when this photo was taken. Even though he had lost so much weight, we had no idea how severe his illness was.” Less than a month after he was first hospitalised, Higgins died.

Whitaker was devastated on two fronts. He had lost his best friend and the love of his life. But he also knew that, whatever Higgins had died of, he also had it. He had first experienced an unexplained fever in Germany the previous year. Things improved. But the symptoms became more severe after Higgins’ death – the fever was now accompanied by constant exhaustion and headaches. Whitaker was convinced it was just a matter of time. “I was thinking: you’ve got maybe a year if you’re lucky. It was like

my life was cauterised. Then the question was: OK, what do I do in the time that I have?"



Higgins (*far right*) with friends, a few weeks before he died.

His priority was to create something by which to remember Higgins and help people in his – or their – situation. Butler organised the first meeting, in his flat. Like Higgins, Butler, who also grew up in south Wales, came to the Big Smoke in search of thrills. He had worked as a projectionist in Cardiff and got himself a job in the West End. Then, in 1978, he met Higgins and they became fast friends.

Butler is at home in Newport when we chat. He tells me it was such an exciting time – and a dangerous one. His life was by turns glamorous and squalid, he says. "I mixed with stars and rubbed shoulders with royalty. But, at the same time, I was sexually abused, street homeless, badly treated by employers – homophobia was rife. When you're hanging around Soho every day, you meet some characters that you wouldn't wish on your worst enemy."

Did Higgins have that kind of life, too? "Absolutely not," he says. "He was the most self-assured man I ever met." Butler, who is 67, was 10 years younger than Higgins. Like Whitaker, he was a diffident young man whom

Higgins protected. He quickly became part of the family Higgins created. “For once, I had somebody who didn’t want anything from me. Terry didn’t want sex, he didn’t want my money, he didn’t want anything. And here he was, helping me out, showing me the ropes, standing up for me. He gave me a wonderful piece of advice that changed my life. I was ever so grateful to him, because he taught me how to tell people to fuck off. He gave me the sense that it was OK to stand your ground, to not be a wimp. He made me grow up, and held my hand as I did it.”

He’d show up in this outrageous pink, sleeveless sweater – he didn’t give a damn. You couldn’t do that with impunity

Before long, Butler was sitting with Higgins in Heaven, handing out similar advice to young men newly arrived from the sticks. “We used to get a Friday and Saturday night intake into London. Young lads would show up to Heaven with their suitcases. Terry would be really protective of young guys coming on to the scene. He was amazing like that.” Higgins was a star at Heaven – partly because he DJd there, but mainly because he was Terry; a one-off. Butler says household names would stop to chat with them. “We were the heartbeat of Heaven. Freddie [Mercury] would come in. Jim Hutton, Freddie’s boyfriend, and I were drinking buddies for years. Kenny Everett was frequently in our corner. They were just mates, really.”

Both men later died from Aids-related illness – Mercury in 1991, Everett in 1995. Butler lost so many friends over the next decades. “I used to keep a record of people who died in the front of my Bible, and I remember one day looking at it – within five years, there were 50 names. All those people were DJs, dancers, backstage people.

“Even more upsetting sometimes were those people who were ‘family’ – people we looked out for and treasured and they just stopped coming.” They would disappear overnight, he says. “They’d go back to Birmingham or Northampton or whatever village they came from – and they’d never come back. You had no idea what kind of support they had when they went home. It might have been good, it might have been atrocious. And you used to think: well, if you’d been here, we could have held your hand; we would have been there for you.”

How did it affect Butler when Higgins died? “It left a huge hole, because when you have this family and you’re part of this thing that’s bigger than you ...” He trails off. How did Whitaker cope? “Rupert aged about five years overnight.”

Shortly after Higgins died, Whitaker returned to London. He swapped from Durham to the University of London so he could be near Middlesex hospital in Fitzrovia, where his deteriorating health was being monitored. Like Higgins, he had not yet had a diagnosis, although his consultant had suggested it might be cancer.

Butler and Whitaker started meeting regularly with others who wanted to do something to help, in the London Apprentice, a pub in east London. But the rest of the community regarded them with suspicion. When they tried to hand out leaflets in other pubs, they were frequently chucked out. Elsewhere, they were told they wouldn’t get charitable status, because nobody had heard of a charity for sexually transmitted diseases.

About a year after Higgins died, Whitaker ran into the doctors who had treated him. There had still been no diagnosis. “I said: ‘Well, what did he die of?’ And they said: ‘We’re writing up his case in one of the medical journals and you can read it in there.’ I had no political awareness back then, but even then I thought that was fucking rude. I was the stupid little boyfriend and they had no duty to tell me anything.”

They also made it clear that they were astonished to see Whitaker. They expected him to be dead. Today, he is one of Britain’s longest HIV survivors.

It is impossible to accurately estimate how many people have died of Aids-related illnesses in the UK. There was such a stigma attached to the virus that people denied they had it, or only a patient’s final illness (such as pneumonia) was recorded on the death certificate.



Martyn Butler and Rupert Whitaker with a Rainbow Honours award. They were made OBEs this month. Photograph: Eamonn M McCormack/Getty Images

At 22, Whitaker self-diagnosed after taking a western blot, the technique used to test for HIV. His diagnosis was later confirmed by the specialist team, who had known for some time, although Whitaker had not been told. “God knows why,” he says. Since then, he has had a number of close brushes with death. At 30, he was diagnosed with Aids. “I’d been reinfected unwillingly and my immune system crashed within three months. I’d been raped by somebody I knew.” He comes to a stop. “Sorry. It’s one of those situations where I find myself pretty inarticulate.”

Shortly afterwards, he had a severe stroke, unrelated to HIV. “I was living in northern California in the redwood forests. I was found on the floor of my cabin three days after I’d had the stroke.” Then he had a heart attack. His right coronary artery was found to be 99% closed. Whitaker says it is only in the past few years that he has started to think of himself as a survivor with a future.

In August 1983, 13 months after Higgins died, THT was formally recognised with a constitution and bank account. By November, it was a limited company with a board of directors. By January 1984, it had gained

charitable status. THT was the first charity in the UK to be set up in response to the HIV epidemic. Its services included buddying/home-help, counselling, drugs and sex education. Under the stewardship of Nick Partridge, who started in the post room and was CEO from 1992 to 2013, it became the largest HIV charity in the UK and one of the largest in Europe. It has absorbed many smaller charities over its 40 years and now has 400 staff and more than 1,000 volunteers.

At the end of 1984, Whitaker won a scholarship to do a PhD in psychiatry and immunology in the US and stopped being actively involved in running THT. He is proud of the charity's achievements. There was a period when he believes it overexpanded and became too corporate. "Rather than leading the discussion and creating vision, it was trying to be the best financially in the sector, sometimes at a cost to the people with HIV and at risk of HIV." For a while, he says, he was made to feel unwelcome. Now, he says THT has got its mojo back under the leadership of Ian Green, who took over as CEO in 2016. "It has rediscovered its passion and is working on all cylinders." Butler and Whitaker were [awarded OBEs this month](#) in recognition of their services to charity and public health.

Butler tells me how attitudes have changed since he was a young man – largely because of legislation. "The prospect of marriage, civil partnerships, adoption – of joint property ownership, even – were not on the cards. If I was 16 coming on to the scene today, I'd want a husband, a family, a career. I'd want it hassle-free and have every right to expect it. When I came out, all I was ever told was: 'You're going to be very lonely when you're old.'" The doom-mongers were wrong on all fronts, he says.

Yes, he is alone, but he is not lonely. "I love it on my own. I own the remote, I own the calendar, I own the shopping basket. Nobody tells me what to wear or when to get to bed. As long as I don't mind sleeping alone, I'm fine."

Whitaker now runs the Tuke Institute, an organisation he founded in 2007 to promote integrated health services and a patient-centred approach to medicine. He tells me that he recently found one of the first pamphlets he wrote for THT and realised he was fighting for the same thing then that he is

now – for the medical profession to look at the whole person, not just the diseased body.

As for Higgins, he would be 77 now. Whitaker says Higgins not only taught him about the possibility of love, but also the importance of expressing it. “That was remarkable to me. It was a revelation. It was wonderful. I’d never had that open affection. I get it from my current partner.” He often thinks about what the future would have held for them if Higgins had survived. “I wonder if Terry and I would have still been together. Probably not, but my partner now has a very similar personality to Terry.” He is convinced of one thing, though. “Even if we hadn’t been in a relationship, we would still have been very close.”

In the UK, [Samaritans](#) can be contacted on 116 123 or by emailing jo@samaritans.org or jo@samaritans.ie. The [domestic abuse helpline](#) is 0808 2000 247. In Australia, the crisis support service [Lifeline](#) is on 13 11 14 and the [national family violence counselling service](#) is on 1800 737 732. In the US, the [suicide prevention lifeline](#) is 1-800-273-8255 and the [domestic violence hotline](#) is 1-800-799-SAFE (7233). Other international helplines can be found via [befrienders.org](#)

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Growing pains?: How to stop yourself getting injured while gardening – from essential exercises to the perfect posture



Ground force ... Jeff Hughes and Madeline Hooper, presenters of GardenFit. Hughes is adopting the armchair position for safer lifting. Photograph: GardenFit

Bending to dig, twisting to prune and carrying heavy loads can all mean gardeners end up with unnecessary aches. Here are some expert tips to keep you healthy as your garden blooms



Amy Fleming

Thu 23 Jun 2022 05.00 EDT

One of the reasons [gardening](#) is such good exercise is that the sheer joy of it disguises how hard you're working, so you end up exerting yourself more than you would at the gym. Scientific studies demonstrate [this](#) – not that I need proof. When I manage to steal a moment to prune a tangle of triffids, I have trouble stopping. Before I know it, I've been waving a chainsaw aloft on a pole for four hours.

The only downside is that the endless yanking, pushing, lifting and bending can lead to, or exacerbate, aches and pains. NHS Digital figures for 2020-21 (AKA the great lockdown gardening and DIY boom) record 12,355 admissions to hospital in England with injuries related to “overexertion and strenuous or repetitive movements”. But it doesn't have to be this way.

Madeline Hooper, a retired PR executive who lives in the Hudson Valley north of New York, reached a point where she could no longer ignore her

sore neck. “I love gardening,” she says, “and it doesn’t matter how long it takes to weed the bed – I’m weeding the whole bed. But I had terrible neck and upper shoulder pain.” Being a can-do type, she sought help from personal trainer Jeff Hughes, whose simple, commonsense approach worked. The pair have now teamed up on a US TV show called [GardenFit](#), in which they travel around America, admiring gardens while helping to educate the world about how to garden painlessly.

The first thing to know is that posture is everything. “If your head is back and your chest is puffed out and your shoulders are back and down, you feel tall and powerful,” says Hughes. “Whatever you do, you will incorporate the correct muscle, whereas when you hunch, you are incorporating muscles that aren’t designed to do that job. And that’s what we do when we get tired.”

When your shoulder gets tired of lifting your arm, stop lifting your damn arm

Hooper’s technique was a perfect example of this. “Your shoulder lifts your arm,” says Hughes, “and your trapezius lifts your shoulder. If you’re doing something all day and your shoulder gets tired of lifting your arm, your body’s smart. It goes: what else can lift the arm? All of a sudden your trapezius is doing something it wasn’t designed to do, and of course your neck is going to hurt.” The solution is simple: “When your shoulder gets tired of lifting your arm, stop lifting your damn arm!

“As soon as you start recognising that you can’t hold your posture correctly any more, do something on the ground, or grab the shovel and dig. Now you’re in going the opposite direction with your shoulders.”



‘Keep swapping jobs’ ... Danny Clarke. Photograph: The Black Gardener

British garden designer and TV presenter [Danny Clarke](#) follows a similar philosophy. “Keep swapping jobs,” he says. “I always say, ‘Little and often.’” He has his own sequence. “I don’t tear into the heavy lifting, or the digging. I’ll warm the body up by mowing.” Coming from a sports background, he says, “I’m quite aware of my body, and what it can and can’t do.” For some, a mental adjustment is required to let go of completing a task in one session. “Don’t try to finish it, because the garden is never finished,” says Clarke, serenely. “That’s the beauty of it: it is infinite. Savour each moment. Enjoy it.”

Sometimes strengthening exercises are required to correct pain-inducing posture – Hughes recalls a gardener called Bob, who appears in the TV show with lower-back pain. “He didn’t stand up straight when he walked,” says Hughes. “The lower back is holding up everything above it, so if you’re hunched over, it’s getting strained.”

If this sounds like you, you might want to try this. “Relax your shoulders,” says Hughes. “Imagine that you have on your favourite pair of blue jeans and I want you to very slowly take your shoulder blades and slide them down into your back pockets.” This creates a pivot effect, where your chest puffs out, you breathe more easily and your spine is aligned. While holding

this, he adds, “whatever muscle is starting to get tired right now, that’s your weak muscle that you need to strengthen”. The longer you hold this posture, he says, the more training those weak muscles will get, eventually enabling them to do their job automatically.

To wake these muscles up in Bob, Hughes gave him an elastic exercise band to hold out in front like handlebars, and then raise above his head. The effect was immediate, with Bob marvelling at his newfound ability to stand up straight. “Your whole perspective changes,” says Hughes, “because now your peripheral vision is better.” Hughes prescribed Bob four weeks of practising his new posture, and briefly repeating some moves with his exercise band every day.

While you are working in your garden, allotment or community plot, with your shoulder blades in your back pockets, the next move to master is what Hooper and Hughes call “armchair”, which isn’t as restful as it sounds but could save your back when you are bending or lifting. “If you spread your feet, you’re automatically closer to the ground,” says Hughes. “Everything drops down, and when you bend, your knees and butt stick out and you come down into a good squat base.” Then you rest your arms on your legs. “Now your lower back isn’t holding your body up. If you apply that to the next eight hours, your back will be your best friend at the end of the day.”

When you use one arm for weeding or sowing, you can keep the other supporting arm resting on its leg, but switching arms is crucial. Hughes says it is essential to train your nondominant hand to do its fair share of the work. Not only will this spread the load on your arms and shoulders, but “you’re going to be balanced with your twisting; you’re starting to balance out your torso”. Similarly, if you’re on a ladder, he says: “Turn it around, so now you’re twisting the other way.”



Hooper and Hughes demonstrate how to save your back when working close to the ground. Photograph: GardenFit

Balance reappears in the pair's final top tip, which they call the "seesaw" and involves, again, being more aware of your body while you are working. If you are reaching your arm out while holding heavy clippers, you need to counter that weight by holding the shoulder blade down, so that, says Hughes: "You can match the pressure here with the pressure there, like a little seesaw bounce effect."

Hooper says that within four weeks of integrating Hughes's fixes into her life, healthier habits had embedded themselves and she started to feel better. "After six weeks, I never had pain again from gardening.

"I wish I had learned this when I first started to garden," says Hooper. In all the gardening courses and books she has completed, she says, "nobody teaches this".

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Grounded! What to do in an airport if your flight is delayed by one, three, six or 12 hours



Staying grounded ... a delay can mean more time with your book.
Photograph: CBW/Alamy

Travel chaos is leaving many passengers stuck in departures for what seems like for ever. But apart from endlessly climbing the walls what can you do to keep yourself occupied and your kids from climbing the walls?



[Stuart Heritage](#)

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Thu 23 Jun 2022 05.00 EDT

This was supposed to be a glorious summer. With Covid largely diminished, it was going to be the first year since 2019 where we would all get to pack our suitcases and jet off to warmer climes. Clearly, that hasn't happened.

There are several factors at play here. The [cost of living crisis](#) in the UK has put foreign travel out of the reach of many; the [rail strikes](#) have made getting to the airport more difficult; a [new wave of Covid](#) has stopped people from leaving their homes and – most importantly – airports themselves are an [absolute nightmare](#).

Around 5,000 Heathrow passengers have had [their flights cancelled](#) as a result. Additionally, staff shortages mean that Gatwick will be running up to [50 fewer flights a day](#) throughout the summer months, with [EasyJet alone cutting 11,000 flights](#). And, just to make things even more interesting,

[British Airways check-in staff](#) may strike next month. In other words: the chances of finding yourself stranded at the airport are impossibly high.

So what can you do? The sensible thing would be to stay at home but, failing that, here's a handy guide to killing time at an airport.

If your flight is delayed by an hour



Slide away ... if it's just an hour's wait, why not head to the soft play facilities? Photograph: FamVeld/Getty//iStockphoto/posed by models

Usually this would be a cause of some frustration. This year, however, you're getting off lightly. Basically, the airport is your oyster. Just do the usual: you could stretch your legs with a few laps of the terminal, or grab a bite to eat, or indulge in some light shopping. If you have young kids, now is the time to explore whatever soft play options the airport has to offer. Equally, you could just find a seat and kill time on your phone, providing that the wifi is working. Of course, there is also the pub. An hour in the pub probably won't hurt. Either way, this will all be fine.

If your flight is delayed by three hours



Screen not heard ... with three hours of *Bluey*, your child will barely notice the delay. Photograph: jacobblund/Getty/iStockphoto/posed by models

Now it's time to start thinking smart, because three hours is a particularly frustrating length of time: too long to idly fill but too short to start taking drastic action. For example, this is when nosing around shops will become genuinely torturous. What's more, unless you happen to be ruthlessly sharp-elbowed, all the phone-charging points will have been nabbed by other disgruntled passengers, meaning you run the risk of draining your battery with non-essential scrolling.

However, if you have kids, this is exactly what their tablets were made for. Find a seat anywhere you can, pop their headphones on and let them gorge themselves on as many episodes of *Bluey* as they are willing to consume. Yes, sure, screen time is bad, but this is an emergency.

This is also the length of time where stress management starts to become an issue. You can mitigate this in a couple of ways. If you're in [Heathrow](#), for example, you'll find a spa in Terminal 5, where weary travellers can get massages and facials. Anywhere else buy a book, or opt for a large, leisurely meal. A three-hour pub visit could be risky, so proceed with caution.

If your flight is delayed by six hours



Shower power ... lounges may not be all they're cracked up to be, but you can stay clean and refreshed in there. Photograph: Jan Mika/Alamy

We'll start with the good news: a delay this long qualifies you for compensation. Any delay over three hours entitles you to between £110 and £520, and Money Saving Expert has a [free tool](#) to help you claim it. You are also entitled to food and drink, which will usually be issued in the form of a voucher.

But this is not going to solve everything. After six hours in an airport, you will be mad with equal parts stress and boredom, and your children, if you have them, will have long since turned feral. Free time-killing options are still available (all airports have prayer rooms, which at the very least offer some amount of quiet). But if you have got compensation coming, this may be time to consider shelling out on a lounge. These will have food and drink, and often showers, and they don't flinch at the sight of children. True, they are relatively expensive, and not always as luxurious as they claim; also they usually boot you out after three hours – but needs must, and if you're nice they'll probably extend your stay for free. Whatever you do, definitely, definitely do not spend six hours in the pub.

If your flight is delayed by 12 hours



Take flight ... if you're delayed by 12 hours, seriously consider swapping this for your own bed. Photograph: Alex Segre/Alamy

Oh God, go home. Look at you. You're coming apart at the seams. Technically, if your delay stretches to the next day, the airline will provide accommodation for you. But if it doesn't, what are you going to do? You have explored every godforsaken nook of the airport. All your electrical devices ran out of juice six hours ago. The lounge staff can't stand the sight of you. Your children won't stop crying. All you will remember from this holiday is the terrible time you had getting there. A delay of this length also qualifies you for a full refund, so cut your losses, go home and try again in a less hellish year. Alternatively, go to the pub.

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The King of Kowloon: my search for the cult graffiti prophet of Hong Kong

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2022.06.23 - Opinion

- [My generation is obsessed with the cult of wellness – but all that striving to be your best self can be dangerous](#)
- [A hostile environment baton passed from Theresa May to Priti Patel – and a decade of cruelty](#)
- [Why we are ready to strike: a panel of workers respond](#)
- [Putin is not yet ready to end the Ukraine war. When he is, we must be prepared](#)

[Opinion](#)[Health & wellbeing](#)

My generation is obsessed with the cult of wellness – but all that striving to be your best self can be dangerous

Ione Gamble

People have become transfixed with the idea that being well is the most impressive thing you can do – and as someone who is permanently unwell I will always be considered lesser



‘Wellness, in the 21st century, has replaced religion as the moral signposting by which we live our lives’. Photograph: rbkomar/Getty Images

Thu 23 Jun 2022 01.58 EDT Last modified on Thu 23 Jun 2022 05.31 EDT

I have spent a huge part of my 20s learning to accept that I will never be healthy, after being diagnosed with an incurable illness – Crohn’s disease – two weeks after my 19th birthday. And although being “healthy” has never been a priority for me (I’ve never stepped foot in a gym and find it

impossible to eat [10 portions of fruit and veg a day](#)) my ambivalence towards “wellness” grew as I dealt with being permanently unwell. It has also made me an anomaly among my peers.

From my bed, unable to move, I watched my generation become obsessed with being their best selves. We have become utterly transfixed with the idea that wellness is the key to a successful life; that our relationships, careers, friendships and mental health will all suffer unless we pursue being “well” above all else.

We seem to have arrived at the collective assumption that if you aren’t actively preventing ill health then you’re an irresponsible nihilist. It is no longer enough to simply deal with sickness as it comes – we must be actively battling against it at all times. Where wellness was once a niche lifestyle pursuit peddled by Hollywood stars such as [Gwyneth Paltrow](#) and [Kourtney Kardashian](#), it has become commonplace to partake in practices many would once have ridiculed: juice cleanses, vitamin drips and sunrise yoga sessions have replaced trips to the hairdressers and a simple slick of lippy.

What’s more, it is just as common to find health advice on social media as it is influencers’ fashion hauls or hot takes by political pundits. We are urged to consider our health and wellbeing as a determining factor in every decision we make, and are constantly looking for ways to improve our existence by optimising our insides. Wellness, in the 21st century, has replaced religion as the moral signposting by which we live our lives. We no longer avoid sinning for fear we’ll be shut out of heaven; instead, we avoid unhealthy behaviour for fear it will make us sick.

Millennials drink alcohol less often than the generation before them, while [Gen Z drink 20% less than millennials](#), and [87% of them exercise more than three times a week](#). Smoking is no longer cool, recreational drug use is for losers, and being “well” is the most impressive thing you can do for yourself. It’s implied that the key to a happy life is to be well – and that contentment is impossible without good health.

On the surface, it's hard to find the fault in the way that health has shifted from being purely a medical concern to an all-encompassing way of life. Understanding how your body works and what it needs is, surely, no bad thing. But placing health concerns and responsibilities on individuals, rather than pushing for improved government legislation, creates more problems than it solves. Especially when, for many of us, absolute health is an unattainable goal. As long as there is no cure for Crohn's disease, I will always be considered as lesser than those who can dedicate their lives to whichever wellness fad is trending that week.

In the 80s, political economist Robert Crawford [theorised](#) that a then recent move towards prioritising individual health had become popular in response to disappointment at the lack of positive change during the politically charged 60s and 70s. With traditional activism appearing stagnant, and our governments failing us both then and now, it appears many have once again turned inwards – feeling the world around them to be immovable.

Chronic illness aside, only a tiny portion of society can afford to pour its income into wellness treatments, the effectiveness of which often remains unproven. Pseudoscientific treatments, diet plans and supplements can also contribute to false information infiltrating social media feeds under the guise of health advice. But ultimately, so long as we view our health as an individual plight, we're letting elected health officials off the hook. As we guzzle down the newest superfood, the NHS is being stretched beyond its means. Our infatuation with wellness continues to set a dangerous precedent that as long as we take care of ourselves, we shouldn't need it at all.

Ione Gamble is the author of [Poor Little Sick Girls: A Love Letter to Unacceptable Women](#)

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[Opinion](#)[Immigration and asylum](#)

A hostile environment baton passed from Theresa May to Priti Patel – and a decade of cruelty

[Kamila Shamsie](#)

From ‘Go home’ vans to Rwanda deportation flights, there has been a lot to learn, but we can’t and won’t succumb to despair



Illustration: Guardian Design

Thu 23 Jun 2022 04.00 EDT Last modified on Thu 23 Jun 2022 05.54 EDT

In 2001, the [Nobel laureate Abdulrazak Gurnah](#) published *By the Sea*, the story of Saleh Omar, a man who arrives at Gatwick airport as a refugee. The border official he speaks to says his parents also came to Britain as refugees, “But my parents are European, they have a right, they’re part of the family.” He goes on to say, “You don’t belong here … and we don’t want you here.

We'll make life hard on you, make you suffer indignities, perhaps even commit violence on you."

Omar is far from unaffected, but he carries within him an important piece of knowledge: he knows that by the British government's own rules he is entitled to asylum, and though the official might spew racist language he will have no option in the end but to stamp Omar's passport and allow him through. As indeed he does.

I have read the novel twice, 20 years apart. The behaviour of the official becomes no less appalling but, even so, I read the Gatwick scene very differently the second time around. In Priti Patel's Britain, I was struck by how fortunate Omar was to encounter laws that are better than the people whose work it is to enforce them.

This year, the year of the Rwanda asylum plan, we mark 10 years since Theresa May as home secretary introduced the [hostile environment policy](#). Soon afterwards, the coalition government created the [Hostile Environment Working Group](#) which consisted of 12 government departments including schools, care services and health. What does it do to the fabric of British society if the NHS is required to pass on information to a Home Office as part of a hostile environment policy? What kind of country asks its doctors to spy for the government? A cruel one, for starters. The cruelty has become normalised to the point that it's possible to read Saleh Omar's racist encounter and think of the word "fortunate".

To understand this normalisation better, it's instructive to go back to 2013 and the government-sponsored billboards on the sides of vans, with the message "In the UK illegally? Go home or face arrest". When reports of the vans first became public there was a heartening singularity of voice condemning the [Home Office](#).

But within a few months, media outlets started to report the [failure of the policy](#) in terms of the number of people – 11 – who had self-deported as a result of the vans. Phrases such as "just 11 people" implicitly bought into the government's own reasoning that more deportations mean greater success.

What the media didn't tell us about the "just 11" was their names, their stories.

Six years later, the Guardian's Amelia Gentleman reported the [story of Joycelyn John](#), who legally arrived in Britain aged four from Grenada, but who lost her passport with the "indefinite leave to remain" stamp that proved her status. She was classified as an illegal immigrant in 2014 and threatened with deportation in letter after letter from the Home Office, despite the 75 pages of evidence she had gathered to prove she had spent a lifetime in the UK. John lived for a further two years within the hostile environment, unable to work or use public services, until the terror of being shackled and deported, and the desperation of being in debt, turned her to self-deportation. She described herself as "suicidal".

The eventual outcry about stories that came to be known as the [Windrush scandal](#) meant John was finally able to return to the UK. But "scandal" is far too mild a term to use about what happened. Windrush atrocity is closer to the mark. Surely the minimum we should be able to expect of our government is an acknowledgment of human dignity.



'Joycelyn John lived within the hostile environment, unable to work or use public services, until the terror of being shackled and deported, turned her to self-deportation.' Photograph: Yves Salmon/The Guardian

And now we have the [thwarted, but not defeated](#), removals to Rwanda. The government has learned a little from the Windrush atrocity. It is aware that those being threatened with removal to Rwanda may turn out to be the kinds of people most Britons don't want deported. For instance, the Iranian ex-police commander who refused to shoot protesters during an anti-government demonstration. The British government doesn't want to have to explain why someone like that isn't even having his case for asylum considered. So it keeps repeating the point that its real target is the “evil” of people smuggling.

Outrage and normalisation – this is the pattern we need to break. The outrage is around the Rwanda removals; the normalisation in process now is the one that divides asylum seekers into two tiers: those who enter by “safe and legal” routes and all others, who are categorised as brought over by people smugglers.

When I hear the phrase hostile environment, I find myself thinking about a man whose name isn't John. I met this man via the [Refugee Tales](#) project, which pairs up writers with people who have had experience of the UK's asylum system. He had been tortured and imprisoned in his former country, and didn't want the government he had escaped from to return its attention to him. But he did want me to use his first name when I wrote about him. Just before the story went to press, he had a request. Could I change his name to John? His asylum claim had been accepted in the UK, but he had to reapply every three years for 15 years before he could become eligible for indefinite leave to remain. Now he was afraid that his mildly phrased words about the asylum system may be reason enough for his next application to be rejected. I think often about the man whose name isn't John.

Then I think of myself and how fortunate I've been in my own path to UK citizenship: I was never an asylum seeker; I was never under threat of detention; I came to the UK on a visa for writers, artists and composers, and was easily able to switch to a tier 1 visa. The immigration official who granted my first visa extension was not just human but kind, and later responded to an email query with a PS to say he had heard me on Radio 4 and that I had “sounded great”. Despite all this, until I became a citizen I didn't write fiction set in contemporary Britain, because the nature of my fiction is such that it can't help but enter the realm of politics and, like the

man whose name isn't John, I was afraid my words may annoy the wrong person and my visa extension or citizenship application may be denied. Once I had my passport, in 2013, I thought, now I can write freely. But only weeks after I became a citizen, I read an interview in which May signalled her intention to vastly increase the use of [citizenship-stripping powers](#).

And now we're in the age of Priti Patel, when migrants and their children feel they may never be entirely and unequivocally secure in their right to go on living in Britain. There are moments, and writing this essay has been among them, when I feel the hostile environment inside me as a kernel of fear that never goes away.

Still, I'm grateful for that kernel of fear. It brings with it a sense of injustice, a desire for change. It allows you to cheer on the victories, of which the halt to the Rwanda flights is only the most recent. In 2018, schools stopped collecting information about [students' nationalities](#) and place of birth, and NHS Digital announced it had stopped sharing data with the Home Office. Just last month, the government announced that under 18s who are looked after by a local authority will [no longer have to pay](#) the £1,012 fee for registration as British citizens. Activists have blocked deportations and deportation flights. Lawyers have secured release orders for so many of those in detention. Those who thought they were alone have discovered they are not.

Behind all the victories of the past decade, there are campaigners and organisations who have never given in to the luxury of despair or hopelessness. None of their victories have been "small victories". Each one transforms lives.

- This is an edited version of a lecture for *Migrants Organise*. The full text can be found [here](#). Kamila Shamsie's most recent novel is *Home Fire*, winner of the 2018 Women's Prize for Fiction

| [Section menu](#) | [Main menu](#) |

The panelIndustrial action

Why we are ready to strike: a panel of workers respond

[Hannah David](#), [Sarah Hallett](#), [Mike Kemp](#), [Paramjit Ahluwalia](#), [Phil Kemp](#) and [Nicola Jukes](#)

Pay freezes, cutbacks and redundancies on top of pandemic burnout and the cost of living crisis have left us with no choice



RMT union members picket outside Victoria train station in London on 21 June 2022. Photograph: Carl Court/Getty Images

Thu 23 Jun 2022 01.00 EDT Last modified on Thu 23 Jun 2022 07.45 EDT

Hannah David, civil servant: Most people living in poverty are in work



Since I started working more than 10 years ago, I've seen recruitment freezes, pay freezes, [cutbacks and redundancies](#), but I've never seen a proper pay rise.

It's hard for my generation to see ourselves as working towards a better future, a house, kids, when our take-home pay covers less each year.

Many of my colleagues, those employed in the roles so important to keeping society running, and the dedicated and talented people I know in museums and galleries, are working on temporary or precarious contracts for minimum wage.

Most people living in poverty are in work and it's the government that's allowing that to happen. Work isn't paying, and not just for people working in hospitality on zero-hours contracts, but for people working for the government in civil service jobs, many of whom are forced by low wages to claim benefits and use food banks.

The government should be employing people with exemplary contracts and decent pay to show other employers how things ought to be done.

PCS union members are dedicated to our work, but we can't stand idly by while our pensions are stolen, our pay stagnates and our burden grows.

That's why I'll be balloting for strike action.

- Hannah David works for Historic England and is a member of the PCS union

Sarah Hallett and Mike Kemp, junior doctors: We are exhausted, fed up and burnt out





Junior doctors know they face many challenges and hurdles – they know from the minute they leave medical school, often with substantial student debt, and begin their training across numerous disciplines and different hospitals. But no doctor was prepared for the past two years. Like everyone in healthcare, junior doctors have had to dig deep into both their physical and emotional reserves, while also making sacrifices with their training and personal lives.

Two years of pandemic have taken their toll. And between 2008-09 and 2020-21, the estimated take-home pay for the average junior doctor in England declined by 22.4% in real terms, with these losses accelerating now as inflation continues to rise. A junior doctor is not worth a quarter less today than they were 13 years ago.

The BMA is therefore calling on the government to commit to full restoration of pay to levels equivalent to 2008-09 adjusted for inflation by the end of this year. If the demand to restore pay is not met, the BMA will begin preparations for a ballot of junior doctors in England for industrial action by early 2023 at the latest. Junior doctors are exhausted, fed up, and evidence shows that up to a [third are suffering from burnout](#).

There is a worldwide shortage of doctors: disillusioned junior doctors will leave the NHS altogether, taking up better paid roles with better working conditions abroad. Junior doctors train here and want to work here, but the NHS is buckling under a workforce crisis, which the actions of the government are only making worse.

- Dr Sarah Hallett and Dr Mike Kemp are co-chairs of the BMA junior doctor committee
- For more information about the BMA's pay campaigning visit the [BMA website](#)

Paramjit Ahluwalia, barrister: Specialist criminal barristers are leaving in droves



My working week started with sifting through 650 pages of evidence until 11pm on Sunday. I left home on Monday at 6am for a plea and trial preparation morning hearing. The prison van didn't arrive at court until 12.30pm. For Monday and Sunday's preparation, the government-set fee is £91 (+VAT) – which has hardly shifted in two decades, the equivalent of £5 an hour that will not be paid for months.

I feel privileged to serve the public as a criminal barrister, alongside likeminded talented court staff, judges, solicitors and clerks. But with current pay rates it is sadly no surprise that a quarter of specialist criminal barristers have left in just five years, and most won't return.

Along with all criminal lawyers, I am not workshy, nor do I opt for industrial action lightly. Too often I will work until 2am, sifting disclosure of evidence that can, for example, mean that cross-examination in court of a vulnerable witness is unnecessary. At the criminal bar, we work these hours to ensure trials stay on track and all parties have a fair trial – defendants, witnesses and importantly victims of crime.

I want to keep diversity in our profession – of political views, ages, ethnicities and backgrounds. It is irrelevant that my father was a taxi driver and my mother works on a supermarket checkout. But this is starting to become an unsustainable profession, reversing fast a generation of advancements on diversity. We are all the poorer if there is no one left to prosecute or defend.

- Paramjit Ahluwalia is a barrister at Lamb Building chambers

Phil Kemp, teacher: We've been backed into a corner



The past 12 years have been a disaster for the teaching profession in England. I'm talking about increased class sizes with fewer resources to deliver a narrowing curriculum. Then there's the government's obsession with structural change in schools – such as the push for academisation – without focusing resources on what actually happens in classrooms, where the real difference is going to be made.

Our pay and pensions over this period have been thoroughly eroded. The slump in teachers' pay has been 20%, and we're paying in more for less to our pensions. That means we're not even talking about a pay rise, if you think about it: in relative terms, we're talking about our pay being restored to what it was.

Don't get me wrong, I love teaching and I always have. But these are the reasons the profession, which I've been in for 33 years, is in such disarray. Many of our younger colleagues are sitting and scratching their heads and thinking, "Why did I get into this?" They're leaving because they can see it's unsustainable.

Industrial action often gets portrayed negatively in the press, but my question is: what are we meant to do instead? We put in pay awards into the school teachers' pay review body every year, but they themselves are

straitjacketed because they get a cost envelope from the government. The union I'm in has only done one day of national action in the past 12 years, in 2011 – we tend to act more on a school-by-school basis. [Striking for any teacher](#) is absolutely the last resort, but we've been backed into a corner.

- Phil Kemp works in alternative curriculum provision in North Tyneside. He is a former president of NASUWT, the teachers' union

Nicola Jukes, rail worker: I nearly died when rail safety was neglected



There are several reasons why I will be voting yes on my ballot paper. I'm a ticket office worker for LNER in Wakefield and I fear for my job as we know the government wants to [close ticket offices](#). I don't want to lose my job, I can't afford to, so I'm voting for no compulsory redundancies.

The government keeps spinning that rail workers are on £44,000, but some of my colleagues are on just above the national minimum wage, so I'm voting for a pay rise and for no changes to our conditions.

The most important reason for me to put a yes on my ballot paper is the proposed loss of maintenance staff within Network Rail. Believe me, this loss will be the downfall of our railway. I should know, I nearly died in the Hatfield crash.

On 17 October 2000, I was having a normal day working as a host, then my life changed. The train I was working on went over a damaged line at more than 100mph and it shattered beneath us, hurling everyone everywhere. As the train split, I was flung around like a rag doll, desperately trying to find something to hold on to. I'll never forget those terrifying minutes.

[Four people died](#) needlessly that day because proper maintenance had not been carried out.

So, Mr [Grant Shapps](#), this is not just about our pay. This is also about a safe working environment for our members and a safe journey for all people who use our transport systems.

- Nicola Jukes is a TSSA member and works for LNER as a ticket office worker in Wakefield
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OpinionUkraine

Putin is not yet ready to end the Ukraine war. When he is, we must be prepared

[Jonathan Powell](#)

It's vital to avoid a false choice between peace and justice: that only helps the Kremlin. We need terms both sides might accept



Volodymyr Zelenskiy at a meeting in the southern Ukrainian city of Mykolaiv on 18 June. Photograph: Ukrainian Presidential Press Service/Reuters

Thu 23 Jun 2022 03.00 EDT Last modified on Thu 23 Jun 2022 08.35 EDT

We are setting up an entirely false choice over Ukraine that, if pursued, could unnecessarily undermine European unity. Last week a [poll](#) for the European Council on Foreign Relations showed two camps in European public opinion emerging: a larger peace camp (35%) that wants to cut and

run now, and a smaller justice camp (22%) that wants to push ahead until victory. In fact, if you look at the detail, there are three groups, with the biggest single group (43%) choosing both peace and justice.

This divide between peace and justice is reflected in public polemic, too. At one extreme there is Henry Kissinger, [arguing at Davos](#) that Ukraine should concede territory now to secure a ceasefire and warning us to avoid humiliating Vladimir Putin. Not surprisingly, this provoked a sharp reaction from those who correctly point out that Putin shows no sign of being ready to negotiate seriously or respond to concessions. More likely, a pre-emptive cringe would not only fail to secure a lasting peace, but would also leave Putin in a position to return and grab more of Ukraine once he regroups his forces.

At the other extreme, passionate Ukraine supporters such as [Anne Applebaum](#) and [Timothy Snyder](#) believe that all negotiation is appeasement, and that Ukraine must be backed against Russia until total victory is achieved. Conveniently, they never actually define what victory is. Is it driving Russia back to 23 February lines? Or out of Ukrainian territory altogether? Does Ukraine have to keep fighting until the Russian armed forces are permanently disabled and Putin unseated?

In this debate we seem not to have learned any of the lessons of our history. You can only impose terms on a country if you invade and conquer it, as the allies did in Germany in 1945. Otherwise, even “winners” have to negotiate, as at Versailles in 1919. And since no one is proposing that [Ukraine](#) invades Russia, Volodymyr Zelenskiy is right to maintain that this war will have to end with a negotiated settlement. Russia will continue to exist as a neighbour of Ukraine, and will still have much larger armed forces. There will only be a lasting peace if we do not leave Russia nursing a grievance, isolated and waiting for the next opportunity to invade.

There is always a tension between peace and justice when you try to solve a conflict. If President Santos Calderón of Colombia had told Farc leaders in 2012 that he wanted peace but they would have to go to jail for 30 years, it is a fair bet they would not have been interested in negotiating. Equally it would have been wrong to accept a blanket amnesty after 50 years of war,

leaving victims without satisfaction. Instead, Santos set up a system of transitional justice to achieve a balance between peace and justice, to give past victims the closure they deserved while making sure there were no new victims in future. There will have to be the same balance between peace and justice in Ukraine.

Fundamentally, this debate loses sight of the essential fact that it is the Ukrainians doing the fighting, not us. We could have come to their defence as we did for Poland in 1939 (too late), in Kuwait in 1991, or in Kosovo in 1999. But we chose not to. Therefore only Ukrainians have the right to decide when to negotiate and what concessions to make. They must not be pressured again into a peace agreement they cannot deliver, as they were in [Minsk in 2014](#). Nor must they be pressured into an endless war.

Putin is not yet ready for serious negotiations. But he may become ready, depending on his calculus after the battle of the Donbas, so we need to be prepared. He could declare a ceasefire in place, [as he did in 2014](#), holding on to the territory he has gained. That would leave Ukraine with another frozen conflict, which Putin would exploit to prevent the country moving down the path to a European future. Such a ceasefire would be a trap. Ukraine may need to insist on fighting and talking at the same time to secure a satisfactory agreement. It should be supported in those negotiations by its allies, who hold the key to sanctions and security guarantees to deter Russia from invading again. We should act now to create a group of friends of Ukraine to offer that support, as other negotiation processes have done.

The greatest guarantee of Ukraine's secure future lies in the EU's hands. If Ukraine is offered candidate status now and a clear track to membership, even if lengthy, then it will be far harder for [Russia](#) to invade again. This would also give Ukraine's government the levers and incentives it needs to fundamentally reform a system still too dominated by a corrupt Soviet-era legacy of oligarchs and kleptocrats. It is difficult for the EU, which is very aware of its past mistakes in letting countries in too early. But it knows Ukraine is a special case.

We also need to expand the current negotiation agenda. Early Russia-Ukraine talks were too stacked towards Russian demands in terms of

territory and the neutrality of Ukraine. A new agenda needs to be balanced with Ukraine's priorities: justice for the crimes committed, rebuilding the country and recognition of Ukraine's territorial integrity. The issue of territory is, in the end, a zero-sum game. We will need to increase the pie to find ways to allow trade-offs. That requires a wider negotiation on the future of European security, including a new conventional forces agreement and a new relationship between Nato and Russia.

The false dichotomy we risk setting up for ourselves now between peace and justice in Ukraine will play into Putin's hands. The unity displayed so far has put new life into the EU and Nato, and we should not imperil it. If we want this to be the last European war then we must concentrate on setting the table for the right kind of negotiation, rather than arguing unnecessarily about how much we are prepared to eat.

This article was amended on 23 June 2022. An earlier version gave the percentage of Europeans classed by a poll as being in the "justice camp" as 25%, rather than 22%.

- Jonathan Powell was Tony Blair's chief negotiator on Northern Ireland while chief of staff to the prime minister, 1997-2007, and is the chief executive and founder of Inter Mediate, a charity devoted to helping end armed conflicts

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2022.06.23 - Around the world

- [Ghislaine Maxwell US prosecutors urge 30-year minimum prison sentence](#)
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Ghislaine Maxwell

Ghislaine Maxwell: US prosecutors urge 30-year minimum prison sentence

Prosecutors make recommendation in court filing a week before Maxwell's sentencing for sex-trafficking conviction



The FBI announced the charges against Ghislaine Maxwell in July 2020. Prosecutors have called for her to be jailed for at least 30 years. Photograph: Lucas Jackson/Reuters

[Victoria Bekiempis](#)

Thu 23 Jun 2022 01.23 EDT Last modified on Thu 23 Jun 2022 14.52 EDT

Ghislaine Maxwell should get at least 30 years' imprisonment for sex trafficking when she is sentenced next week for her role in facilitating the abuse of teenage girls by Jeffrey Epstein, New York federal prosecutors have said in court filings.

“Ghislaine Maxwell sexually exploited young girls for years. It is difficult to overstate the magnitude of her crimes and the harm she caused. Her crimes demand justice,” they said in a court filing on Wednesday. “The government urges the court to impose a sentence within the applicable guidelines range of 360 to 660 months’ imprisonment.”

The prosecution’s filing comes one week after Maxwell’s lawyers argued that she should receive “well below” the 20-year sentence recommended by sentencing officials. Although Maxwell’s defense attorneys and prosecutors each make their arguments for an appropriate sentence, the decision ultimately rests with Alison Nathan, the judge.

“Maxwell’s conduct was shockingly predatory,” prosecutors said in arguing for a lengthy sentence. “She was a calculating, sophisticated, and dangerous criminal who preyed on vulnerable young girls and groomed them for sexual abuse.

“Not only did her conduct exhibit a callous disregard for other human beings, but her practice of targeting vulnerable victims reflects her view that struggling young girls could be treated like disposable objects.”

Maxwell was convicted on [29 December](#) for her role in the late financier and convicted sex offender Jeffrey Epstein’s sexual abuse of girls, some as young as 14, who she brought into his orbit. She will be sentenced on 28 June. She maintains her innocence.

Epstein was apprehended by federal authorities in July 2019, on sex-trafficking counts. He killed himself in a [New York City](#) federal jail while his case was pending.

In their [bid for leniency](#), Maxwell’s lawyers contended that her jail conditions were harrowing, alleging that “an inmate in Ms Maxwell’s unit threatened to kill her, claiming that an additional 20 years’ incarceration would be worth the money she’d receive for murdering Ms Maxwell”.

They also argued that an emotionally abusive childhood – at the hands of an emotionally explosive father, the publishing baron Robert Maxwell – primed

her for Epstein's influence. Robert Maxwell was killed in a boating accident shortly after his daughter moved to New York in 1991 to launch a magazine for his publishing empire.

"Her relationship with Epstein began at a moment of extreme vulnerability [in] Ghislaine's life after the tragic death of our father. He, our father, was a powerful and dominant figure," several of her siblings claimed in sentencing filings.

"And as elder siblings, we witnessed our father taking Ghislaine under his wing, whereby she became over-dependent on his approval and vulnerable to his frequent, rapid mood swings, huge rages and rejections," they said. "This led her to becoming very vulnerable to abusive and powerful men who would be able to take advantage of her innate good nature."

"It is striking that Ghislaine did not show any perverse behavior before she met Epstein. Nor did she show any after leaving him, which she eventually managed to do," they claimed. "The effect of our father's psychologically abusive treatment of her, foreshadowed Epstein's own ability to exploit, manipulate and control her."

"She had a difficult, traumatic childhood with an overbearing, narcissistic and demanding father. It made her vulnerable to Epstein, whom she met right after her father's death," Maxwell's lawyers said. "It is the biggest mistake she made in her life and one that she has not and never will repeat."

Prosecutors criticised this argument, saying that Maxwell's upbringing did not support a lesser sentence.

"Although many defendants come before sentencing courts with compelling mitigating factors from difficult upbringings, Maxwell is not among them. She has enjoyed a remarkable life of privilege, having lived in luxury and moved in social circles among the famous and powerful," they wrote.

"And while the defendant may have had a marginally less positive experience than other exceptionally wealthy children, it is difficult to see how stern conversation at the family dinner table is an excuse for participating in a child exploitation scheme."

Elsewhere in the document, prosecutors also insisted that Maxwell wasn't passive in her role in facilitating Epstein's abusive behavior, saying, "the defendant acted as an organizer and leader of a massive operation that spanned many years."

"In operating as the lady of the house and as Epstein's right hand, the defendant was responsible for overseeing and organizing extensive logistics involved in facilitating the sexual abuse of multiple minors and ensuring a culture of silence that prevented that scheme from being uncovered," they wrote. "Epstein and the defendant were two knowing participants who took the lead in identifying, enticing, and grooming minor girls to be abused."

This article was downloaded by **calibre** from <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2022/jun/23/ghislaine-maxwell-prison-sentence-us-prosecutors>

| [Section menu](#) | [Main menu](#) |

Diego Maradona

Diego Maradona: eight to go on trial in Argentina for homicide

Defendants named in judge's report include football star's three doctors, a psychiatrist and two nurses



Diego Maradona's personal doctor, Leopoldo Luque, arriving at court in June last year to testify before prosecutors. Photograph: Juan Mabromata/AFP/Getty

Reuters in Buenos Aires

Thu 23 Jun 2022 02.36 EDT Last modified on Thu 23 Jun 2022 03.51 EDT

Eight people who took care of the Argentinian football superstar [Diego Maradona](#) will be tried for homicide, according to a ruling released on Wednesday following an investigation into his death from cardiac arrest.

In the 236-page document seen by Reuters, the judge in charge of the case questioned "the behaviours – active or by omission – of each of the accused

which led to and contributed to the realisation of the harmful result”.

The ruling said eight people including doctors, nurses and a psychologist who cared for Maradona at the time of his death in 2020 are accused of “simple homicide,” a serious charge that means taking a life with intent. A medical board appointed to investigate Maradona’s death [concluded in 2021](#) that his medical team acted in an “inappropriate, deficient and reckless manner”.

Quick Guide

How do I sign up for sport breaking news alerts?

Show

- Download the Guardian app from the iOS App Store on iPhones or the Google Play store on Android phones by searching for 'The Guardian'.
- If you already have the Guardian app, make sure you're on the most recent version.
- In the Guardian app, tap the yellow button at the bottom right, then go to Settings (the gear icon), then Notifications.
- Turn on sport notifications.

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Maradona was considered one of the greatest football players in history, though the diminutive player nicknamed “Pelusa” for his long mane of hair and “D10S” as a play on the Spanish word for “God” using the number on his shirt, battled drug and alcohol abuse for years.

Mario Baudry, a lawyer for one of Maradona’s sons, told Reuters that the World Cup winner was “in a situation of helplessness” by the time of his death. Maradona [died on 25 November 2020, at the age of 60](#).

“As soon as I saw the cause, I said it was homicide,” he said. “I fought for a long time and here we are, with this stage completed.”



An improvised altar set up by fans of Argentinos Juniors, where Diego Maradona used to play, in La Paternal neighbourhood, Buenos Aires, on the day of his death. Photograph: Alejandro Pagni/AFP/Getty Images

Argentinian prosecutors began investigations shortly after Maradona's death at a house near Buenos Aires, including ordering searches of properties of his personal doctor and probing others involved in his care. The defendants named in the ruling were: Maradona's neurosurgeon and personal doctor, Leopoldo Luque; his psychiatrist, Agustina Cosachov; his psychologist, Carlos Diaz; two nurses, Gisella Madrid and Ricardo Almiron; their boss, Mariano Perroni; and two doctors, Pedro Di Spagna and Nancy Forlini.

The defendants have denied responsibility for Maradona's death. The judge said lawyers for some of them had requested the case be dismissed.

Vadim Mischanchuk, an attorney for Cosachov, said they would appeal against the decision, adding that the psychiatrist's area of care had no relation with the cause of death. "A guilty party is being sought at all costs and objectivity is being lost," the lawyer said.

Reuters could not immediately reach the defendants or the other lawyers for comment.

The crime of “simple homicide” in [Argentina](#) usually leads to a prison sentence of between eight and 25 years, according to the country’s penal code. There is no set date for the trial yet.

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| [Section menu](#) | [Main menu](#) |

[Aung San Suu Kyi](#)

Aung San Suu Kyi moved to solitary confinement, says Myanmar junta

Ousted leader, held at secret location for past year, charged with at least 20 offences and could spend rest of life in jail



Myanmar's deposed leader Aung San Suu Kyi will be tried by the military junta at a prison facility in the capital, Naypyidaw. Photograph: Wason Wanichakorn/AP

[Rebecca Ratcliffe](#) and agencies

Thu 23 Jun 2022 05.43 EDTFirst published on Thu 23 Jun 2022 01.50 EDT

Aung San Suu Kyi has been moved to solitary confinement inside a prison compound in Myanmar's capital, Naypyidaw, according to the junta.

The former leader, who is 77, has been held by the military since 1 February last year, [when it ousted her democratically elected government](#), plunging Myanmar into chaos.

She has since been charged with at least 20 offences that could lead to her spending the rest of her life in jail, including [multiple counts of corruption](#), which each carry a maximum penalty of 15 years.

Her legal team have denied the charges, while rights groups have [condemned the cases](#) as an attempt to remove her as a political threat.

After last year's coup, she was initially held at her home in the capital but has spent the past year at an unknown location, where she is helped by seven people detained alongside her, and has a dog – reportedly a gift from her son.

Zaw Min Tun, a junta spokesperson, said on Thursday that she had been transferred to a prison compound in Naypyidaw. "In accordance with criminal laws ... [Aung San Suu Kyi] has been kept in solitary confinement in prison," he said.

Aung San Suu Kyi previously spent a total of 15 years in detention at the hands of the military, though she was mostly held at her home, a lakeside villa in Yangon.

According to the [Assistance Association for Political Prisoners](#), an advocacy group that tracks killings and arrests, 11,174 people suspected of opposing the junta are now being detained, while [2,007 people have been killed](#).

Senior members of Aung San Suu Kyi's government and party are among those held, including her adviser, the [Australian economist Sean Turnell](#), who is imprisoned in Naypyidaw.

Turnell and Aung San Suu Kyi are accused of breaching the Official Secrets Act, which carries a maximum prison sentence of 14 years, and are due to appear at the court inside the prison on Thursday, Associated Press reports.

Information about Aung San Suu Kyi's trials is limited, as hearings are not accessible to the media and her legal team have been barred from speaking about proceedings.

This article was downloaded by **calibre** from <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2022/jun/23/aung-san-suu-kyi-trial-moved-to-prison-in-myanmars-capital>

| [Section menu](#) | [Main menu](#) |

[Austria](#)

Vienna reclaims title of the world's most liveable city

Annual rankings return Austria's capital to first place, as former title-holder Auckland tumbles to 34th and Ukraine war sees eastern cities slump



Vienna's state opera house. The Austrian capital has been named the world's most livable city. Photograph: pressdigital/Getty Images/iStockphoto

Staff and agencies

Wed 22 Jun 2022 21.43 EDT Last modified on Thu 23 Jun 2022 14.52 EDT

The Austrian capital, Vienna, has made a comeback as the world's most liveable city, according to an annual report from the Economist.

Vienna snatched the top spot from [New Zealand](#) city Auckland, which tumbled down to 34th place due to coronavirus pandemic restrictions, according to the report by the Economist intelligence unit published on Thursday.

“Vienna, which slipped to 12th place in our rankings in early 2021 as its museums and restaurants were closed, has since [rebounded to first place](#), the position it held in 2018 and 2019,” the report said.

“Stability and good infrastructure are the city’s main charms for its inhabitants, supported by good healthcare and plenty of opportunities for culture and entertainment.”

Melbourne has retained its place as one of the world’s most liveable cities, ranking 10th, as other Australian capitals dropped out of the global top 10. Last year Brisbane, Adelaide and Perth were all in the top 10, but they have fallen to 27th, 30th and 32nd respectively.

The Ukrainian capital, Kyiv, was not included this year after Russia invaded the country in late February, while Russian cities Moscow and St Petersburg fell in the rankings over “censorship” and the impact of western sanctions.

Europe boasted six out of the top 10 cities.

The Austrian capital was followed by the Danish capital, Copenhagen, and Switzerland’s Zurich. Fellow Swiss city Geneva came sixth, Germany’s Frankfurt seventh, and the Netherlands’ Amsterdam ninth.

Canada also did well. Calgary came in joint third position, followed by Vancouver in fifth place and Toronto in eighth.

Japan’s Osaka and Australia’s Melbourne shared 10th place. France’s capital, Paris, came 19th, 23 places up from last year. The Belgian capital, Brussels, was 24th, just behind Canada’s Montreal.

The premier of Victoria, Daniel Andrews, said the ranking shows Melbourne is back on the world stage after years of Covid-19 lockdowns and restrictions.

“It’s hard to get a table at a restaurant, it’s hard to get a room in a hotel,” Andrews told reporters on Thursday.

“The city’s back. We are thriving and Victorians can be very proud of what they’ve achieved.”

Melbourne held the title of the world’s most liveable city for seven years from 2011, before it was unseated in 2018 by the Austrian capital, Vienna.

Auckland’s fall in the rankings reflected the changing landscape of the coronavirus pandemic over the past year, with vaccination allowing many societies to reopen.

While it was demoted for its Covid restrictions this year, they were responsible for it gaining top spot in 2021, with the Economist saying at the time: “New Zealand’s tough lockdown allowed their society to reopen and enabled citizens of cities like Auckland and Wellington to enjoy a lifestyle that looked similar to pre-pandemic life.”

More bluntly, [politics reporter](#) Thomas Coughlan remarked then that: “I guess there’s no pandemic here so it’s technically easier to be alive here versus being dead elsewhere.”

In this year’s rankings, the UK’s capital, London, was the world’s 33rd most liveable city, five places behind Manchester in 28. Spain’s Barcelona and Madrid came 35th and 43rd respectively. Italy’s Milan ranked number 49, the US city of New York 51, and China’s Beijing came 71st.

Lebanon’s capital, Beirut, which was ravaged by a 2020 port explosion and is battling a crippling financial crisis, was not included in the ranking of business destinations.

Neither was Kyiv, after the Russian invasion on 24 February forced the Economist to abort its survey of the city. Russia’s capital, Moscow, saw its liveability ranking fall by 15 places, while St Petersburg slipped by 13 places.

“Increased censorship accompanies the ongoing conflict,” the report noted. “Russian cities are additionally seeing restrictions on culture and environment as a result of western economic sanctions.”

Other cities in eastern Europe were considered less stable following “raised diplomatic tensions” due to the war in Ukraine.

The capital of war-torn Syria, Damascus, retained its place as least liveable city on the planet.

Agence France-Presse contributed to this report

This article was downloaded by **calibre** from <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2022/jun/23/vienna-reclaims-title-of-the-worlds-most-liveable-city>.

| [Section menu](#) | [Main menu](#) |

[France](#)

French MP sued for allegedly adopting aristocratic family's name

Emmanuel Taché de la Pagerie, a member of Marine Le Pen's far-right party, faces legal action by descendants of the Tascher de la Pagerie family



The Coronation of Napoleon and Empress Josephine by David. Descendants of the Tascher de la Pagerie family, whose members included Josephine, are suing a French MP. Photograph: Joel Robine/AFP/Getty Images

Agence France-Presse

Wed 22 Jun 2022 21.20 EDT Last modified on Thu 23 Jun 2022 13.38 EDT

A newly elected MP for Marine Le Pen's resurgent far-right National Rally party has been sued by the descendants of one of France's oldest aristocratic families who accuse him of adding their name to his own.

Emmanuel Taché de la Pagerie, 47, was one of dozens of National Rally MPs [voted into the National Assembly on Sunday](#), with his official ID

verified and approved by the local authorities in the southern city of Marseille.

Born Emmanuel Taché in the working-class Paris suburb of Montreuil, he told Le Monde newspaper this week that he added “de la Pagerie” to his passport 30 years ago, when he worked in fashion and broadcasting before entering politics.



Emmanuel Taché de la Pagerie with National Rally leader Marine Le Pen.
Photograph: Emmanuel Taché de la Pagerie/Facebook

“It’s perfectly normal in the art and communication sectors to use a pen name or preferred name. The only restriction is that you can’t pass it on to your children,” Taché de la Pagerie’s lawyer Alexandre Varaut said in a statement.

He said his client’s use of the name “has been public knowledge for several decades”.

The male line of the [Tascher de la Pagerie](#) family died out in 1993, but three descendants sued the deputy this week, alleging their historic name had been appropriated.

The most famous member of the family was the Empress Joséphine de Beauharnais, [who married Napoléon Bonaparte in 1796](#). Her full name was Marie Josèphe Rose Tascher de la Pagerie.

While not illegal under French law, the use of aristocratic surnames can be a prickly subject.

Critics of former president Valéry Giscard d'Estaing sniped about his grandfather's acquisition of the noble-sounding "de" ("of") particle, though few ever did for fellow commoner Charles de Gaulle.

It was an unwelcome dispute for Taché de La Pagerie's party days after it scored [a major parliamentary breakthrough](#).

"We have filed a complaint to protect the family name," Frederic Pichon, a lawyer for the three women, told AFP, adding that a date for hearings would be set on 8 July.

They are seeking a symbolic one euro in damages, and a fine of 500 euros a day if Emmanuel Taché continues to use their name.

"The fact that he's in the National Rally or France Unbowed or the Republic on the Move isn't the problem," he said, referring to the far left and the centrists of President Emmanuel Macron.

He said the aristocratic name was rare and noted "a risk of confusion in the eyes of the public," even if the Taché and Tascher spellings are different.

"My clients are from Normandy but live in Paris, and are the sole heirs to have this name since the death of their father in 1993 – and one of his final wishes was that his name be protected," Pichon said.

Emmanuel Taché de la Pagerie did not respond to requests for comments, but told Le Monde that having just been elected, "I don't have time to waste on this type of stuff".

| [Section menu](#) | [Main menu](#) |

Headlines

- [Live Russia-Ukraine war: Moscow to summon EU ambassador over ‘openly hostile’ Kaliningrad cargo transit ban](#)
- [Cost of living crisis Rolls-Royce to give staff £2,000 to help ease burden](#)
- [Live UK food inflation hits 13-year high; Elon Musk says US recession ‘more likely than not’](#)
- [Supermarkets Britons face paying £380 a year more as inflation hits 13-year high](#)

[Skip to key events](#)

[Ukraine war live](#)[World news](#)

Russian forces capture settlements near Lysychansk and Sievierodonetsk – 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); [*Vivian HoLéonie Chao-Fong*](#) and [*Martin Belam*](#) (earlier)

Tue 21 Jun 2022 20.04 EDTFirst published on Tue 21 Jun 2022 00.38 EDT



A Ukrainian soldier flashes the victory sign atop a tank in Donetsk region, Ukraine, on Monday 20 June as Russia's war on Ukraine continues.
Photograph: Efrem Lukatsky/AP

Samantha Lock (now); Vivian HoLéonie Chao-Fong and Martin Belam (earlier)

Tue 21 Jun 2022 20.04 EDTFirst published on Tue 21 Jun 2022 00.38 EDT

Key events

- [4d agoSummary](#)
- [4d agoToday so far](#)
- [4d agoRussia advances in eastern Ukraine](#)
- [5d agoSummary](#)
- [5d agoUkraine launches strikes on Snake Island](#)
- [5d agoToday so far...](#)
- [5d agoRussian forces capture Donbas frontline village near Sievierodonetsk, says Ukraine](#)

Show key events only

Live feed

Show key events only

From 5d ago

[12.52](#)

Ukraine launches strikes on Snake Island

Ukraine's army said it had launched airstrikes on Zmiinyi Island, also known as Snake Island, causing "significant losses" to Russian forces.

In a post on Facebook, the military's southern operational command said it had used "aimed strikes with the use of various forces" on the island.

The command added:

The military operation continues and requires information silence until it is over.

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Updated at 13.19 EDT

[4d ago](#)[20.04](#)

Summary

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

We will be pausing our live reporting 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 army said it had launched airstrikes on Zmiinyi Island, also known as Snake Island, causing "significant losses" to Russian forces.** The military's southern operational command [said it had used "aimed strikes with the use of various forces" on the island](#). The military operation "continues", it added.
- **The military situation for Ukraine's defenders in the eastern Donbas is "[extremely difficult](#)", officials say.** Some 568 civilians are thought to be holed up in Sievierodonetsk's Azot chemical plant, as Russian attacks intensified in an effort to capture Sievierodonetsk and Lysychansk. Serhiy Haidai, governor of the Luhansk region, said Lysychansk was getting shelled "en masse".
- **Russian forces have [captured several settlements](#) near the embattled eastern cities of Lysychansk and Sievierodonetsk.** The

head of the Sievierodonetsk district military administration, Roman Vlasenko, said the frontline village of Toshkivka had not been under Ukrainian control since Monday. Russian forces also reportedly captured Pidlisne and Mala Dolyna, located southwest of Sievierodonetsk, and saw success near the Hirske settlement in Luhansk.

- **At least 15 civilians were killed in Ukraine's Kharkiv region by Russian shelling on Tuesday**, according to regional governor Oleh Synegubov.
- **Mass mobilisation is “about to happen” in Russia with the Kremlin recruiting people in poorer regions to fight in Ukraine, according to western officials.** Officials also said there was “more chatter” about Vladimir Putin’s health and “more speculation” about who would replace him in Russia. However, there does not appear to be an “immediate threat” to the Russian president’s position from the elite or the general population, they said.
- **A fire that broke out after Ukrainian forces allegedly attacked oil rigs in the Black Sea off the coast of Crimea is approaching an oil well, according to a pro-Russian official.** Three people were wounded and seven people are still reportedly missing. The Russian-backed leader of annexed Crimea, Sergei Aksyonov, blamed Kyiv for the attack.
- **Russia has demanded that Lithuania immediately lift a ban on the transit of goods on an EU sanctions list across its territory to the Russian exclave of Kaliningrad.** The secretary of the security council of the Russian Federation, Nikolai Patrushev, said the consequences of

the ban “will have a serious negative impact on the population of Lithuania”.

- **The US attorney general, Merrick Garland, visited Ukraine on Tuesday to discuss efforts to prosecute individuals involved in war crimes during Russia’s invasion, a justice department official said.** Garland met with Ukraine’s prosecutor general, Iryna Venediktova, and announced a War Crimes Accountability team that will work to identify and prosecute anyone who committed war crimes in Ukraine. “There is no hiding place for war criminals,” Garland said.
- **The Kremlin has said that two captured US volunteers are not covered by the Geneva conventions and could face the death penalty.** Russian media claimed that two of three US volunteers missing in Ukraine have been captured and are being held by pro-Russian separatist forces. The Kremlin has denied it knows the location of the two men.
- **German self-propelled howitzers have arrived in Ukraine** in the first delivery of heavy weapons promised by Berlin. “We have replenishment!” Ukraine’s defence minister Oleksii Reznikov announced. “The German Panzerhaubitze 2000 with trained Ukrainian crews joined the Ukrainian artillery family.”
- **Turkey should be cautious about delivering more weapons to Ukraine, the head of Turkey’s weapons production agency said.** Remarks by Ismail Demir to the Wall Street Journal show how Ankara is increasingly playing both sides of Russia’s war in Ukraine in contrast to other Nato allies, just months after Turkish-made drones played a critical role in Kyiv’s defence against Russia’s invasion.

- Turkey's military delegation will travel to Russia this week to discuss a possible safe sea corridor in the Black Sea to export Ukrainian grain, according to Turkish presidency sources. A four-way meeting between Turkey, Ukraine, Russia and the United Nations will be held in Istanbul in the coming weeks, possibly with the participation of Turkey's president, Recep Tayyip Erdogan, and the UN's secretary general, Antonio Guterres, the sources said.
- European countries are united in their support for granting Ukraine the status of European Union member candidate, Luxembourg's foreign affairs minister said. Jean Asselborn told reporters: "We are working towards the point where we tell Putin that Ukraine belongs to Europe, that we will also defend the values that Ukraine defends."
- The UK government is "determined" to impose further sanctions on Russia and will continue to do so until Moscow fully withdraws from Ukraine, Britain's foreign secretary, Liz Truss, said. She told parliament that she would be travelling to Turkey on Wednesday to discuss options to help get grain out of Odesa. Prime minister Boris Johnson also warned of "growing fatigue" around the war and said any concessions to Russian president Vladimir Putin would be a "disaster".
- Estonia summoned the Russian ambassador on Tuesday to protest an "extremely serious" violation of its airspace by a Russian helicopter. The Estonian foreign ministry said the helicopter had flown over a point in the south-east without permission on June 18.

- Russia has [blocked the website of the Telegraph](#) for its reporting on the invasion of Ukraine. The newspaper said it had been accused of “disseminating false information about a special military operation by the Russian armed forces in Ukraine”.
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[4d ago19.29](#)

British prime minister Boris Johnson warned of “growing fatigue” around the war and said any concessions to Russian president Vladimir Putin would be a “disaster”.

Johnson promised the UK would be “steadfast” in supporting Ukrainians and vowed to ensure “fresh political, military and financial support from the international community” to the war-torn country, his official spokesman said on Tuesday.

The Prime Minister’s concern is that it may not be at the forefront of everyone’s minds, because of ... some of those wider global challenges we’re facing, not least on inflation around the world,” according to the official.

Johnson told Cabinet that “we must not allow anyone to believe that making concessions to Putin would lead to anything but disaster”, as this could be “perceived to be a reward for their unwarranted aggression” and “would embolden not just Russia but their allies and have an impact on UK security and on our economy,” the spokesperson said.

At the Cabinet meeting, Johnson also said Britain would work to “drain the grain from Ukraine” as “the bombardment of cities and infrastructure and the blockade of ports is crippling Ukraine’s ability to export its produce”.

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4d ago **19.07**

The United States has called it “appalling” for the Kremlin to suggest that two US citizens captured while fighting for [Ukraine](#) against the Russian invasion could face execution.

John Kirby, a White House spokesman, spoke to reporters on Tuesday after the Kremlin spokesman said the two men are not protected by the Geneva Conventions on prisoners of war.

It’s appalling that a public official in Russia would even suggest the death penalty for two American citizens that were in Ukraine.”

Kirby said the Kremlin was being at minimum reckless with the comments.

Whether they actually mean what they’re saying here, and that this could be an outcome, that they could levy a death penalty against two Americans that were fighting in Ukraine, or that they just feel that it’s a responsible thing for a major power to do, to talk about doing this... either one of them is equally alarming.”

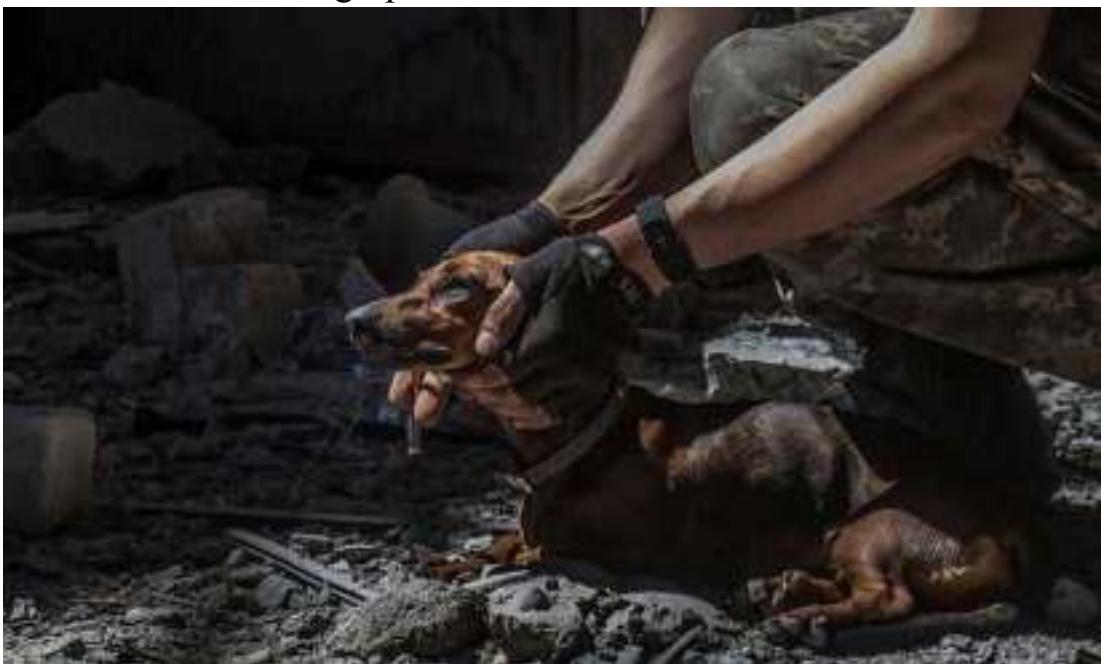
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4d ago **18.37**

Amid Russia’s brutal assault on Ukraine’s eastern city of **Sievierodonetsk**, a few images capture a moment of quiet as Ukrainian service members help a small dog found in a destroyed building in the ruined city.



A Ukrainian service member pets a dog in the industrial area of the city of Sievierodonetsk. Photograph: Reuters



Ukrainian service members help a small dog found in a destroyed building in the ruined city. Photograph: Reuters



Russia's brutal assault on Ukraine's eastern city of Sievierodonetsk continues. Photograph: Reuters

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[4d ago](#) [18.11](#)

Today so far

- Russia has advanced in the Donbas, **capturing** the frontline village of **Toshkivka** earlier and continuing on to capture **Pidlisne** and **Mala Dolyna** later today. The twin cities of **Sievierodonetsk** and **Lysychansk** are sustaining heavy damages as the Russians intensify their attacks, with at least [568 civilians believed to be holed up in Sievierodonetsk's Azot chemical plant.](#)
- The **Kremlin** has not provided the US any additional details on the whereabouts of the two American military veterans captured in Ukraine, **Alexander Drueke** and **Andy Tai Ngoc Huynh**, who were volunteering to defend Ukraine against Russian invaders when they

were captured by Russian forces. **Antony Blinken**, US secretary of state, will be speaking with their families virtually tomorrow, as well as the family of US basketball star **Brittney Griner**, who has been detained in Russia since February for allegedly possessing **hashish oil**. In May, the **US state department** determined that Griner had been **wrongfully detained** and spokesman **Ned Price** reiterated today the department's commitment in securing her release. Her wife has accused Russia of holding her as a political pawn.

- Despite the state department's commitment to securing Griner's release, over the weekend, the **US embassy in Moscow** botched a phone call between Griner and her wife - the first phone call between the couple in Griner's four month-long detention. Price and the **White House** apologised for the mishap today and Price said the call has since been rescheduled.
- At least **15 civilians** were killed in the **Kharkiv** region today by **Russian shelling**.
- **Estonia** has summoned the **Russian ambassador** to protest the violation of its airspace by a Russian helicopter on 18 June.
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4d ago17.51

Antony Blinken, US secretary of state, will have a virtual conversation tomorrow with the families of both the American hostages and wrongfully detained abroad - that would mean the families of military veterans **Alexander Drueke** and **Andy Tai Ngoc Huynh**, who were volunteering to defend Ukraine against Russian invaders, as well as the family of US basketball star **Brittney Griner**, who has been detained in Russia since February for allegedly possessing **hashish oil**. Her wife has accused Russia of holding Griner as a political pawn.

New: Sec Blinken will have a virtual conversation tomorrow with the families of American hostages and wrongful detainees abroad, according to a Sr State Department official.

— Kylie Atwood (@kylieatwood) [June 21, 2022](#)

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[4d ago](#) [17.34](#)

Russia advances in eastern Ukraine

Earlier today, **Russia** captured the frontline village of **Toshkivka** near the twin cities of **Sievierodonetsk** and **Lysychansk** in the **Donbas** region. Continuing on, Russian forces captured **Pidlisne** and **Mala Dolyna**, located southwest of Sievierodonetsk, and saw success near the **Hirske** settlement in the **Luhansk oblast**.

Worrying news from the Donbas.

Russian troops have been able to capture Toshkivka, Pidlisne and Mala Dolyna after successfully crossing the Siversky Donets river southwest of Sievierodonetsk.

The Zolote village salient is now in danger of encirclement.
pic.twitter.com/F6WGnSgQyf

— Oleksiy Sorokin (@mrsorokaa) [June 21, 2022](#)

⚡ General Staff: Russia captures Pidlisne and Myrna Dolyna southwest of Sievierodonetsk.

The Russian military has also had partial success near Hirske settlement in Luhansk Oblast, according to Ukraine's Armed Forces.

— The Kyiv Independent (@KyivIndependent) [June 21, 2022](#)

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Updated at 18.01 EDT

4d ago 17.06

A **Russian mine** detonated on a beach in the **Odesa oblast**, damaging one house. Local authorities reissued warnings to not visit beaches or swim during this time.

Russian mine detonated on beach in Odesa Obl: 1 house damaged

Reported by Chairman of the Odessa OMA

« I would like to reiterate the ban on visiting beaches and swimming in the sea » he added.<https://t.co/lE9P5CgIQG>
pic.twitter.com/lR8vXzawI6

— Euromaidan Press (@EuromaidanPress) June 21, 2022

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4d ago 16.47

At least **15 civilians** were killed in the **Kharkiv** region today by **Russian shelling**, Reuters is reporting.

Six people have died in and around Kharkiv, and another six in **Chuhuiv**, located to the southeast, regional governor **Oleh Synegubov** said. Three have died in **Zolochiv**, located to the northwest of the city.

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4d ago 16.30

Hundreds gathered today in Lviv for the funeral of 27-year-old **Artem Dymyd**, who was killed defending **Ukraine** in the **Donetsk** region on 18 June. He was [living in the US](#) when Russian forces first invaded his homeland, and his first instinct was to immediately return and fight.

Mother of 27-year old Artem Damyd who was killed defending Ukraine from Russian invasion in Donbas sang her last lullaby at her son's funeral in Lviv [pic.twitter.com/kGqFtsVlxc](#)

— Iuliia Mendel (@IuliiaMendel) [June 21, 2022](#)



Ukrainian servicemen carry a coffin with the body of their comrade Artem Dymyd, who was recently killed in a battle against Russian troops, as Russia's attack on Ukraine continues, during a funeral ceremony in Lviv, Ukraine June 21, 2022. Photograph: Reuters



Ukrainian servicemen carry a coffin with the body of their comrade Artem Dymyd, who was recently killed in a battle against Russian troops, as Russia's attack on Ukraine continues, during a funeral ceremony in Lviv, Ukraine June 21, 2022. Photograph: Reuters



Workers bury the coffin with the body of Artem Dymyd, a Ukrainian service member who was recently killed in a battle against Russian troops, as Russia's attack on Ukraine continues, during a funeral ceremony in Lviv, Ukraine June 21, 2022. Photograph: Reuters

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Updated at 17.22 EDT

[4d ago](#)[16.06](#)

Estonia has summoned the **Russian ambassador** to protest the violation of its airspace by a Russian helicopter on 18 June.

NEW - (Reuters) - Estonia summons the Russian ambassador to protest the violation of its national airspace by a Russian helicopter on June 18

"Estonia considers this an extremely serious and regrettable incident that undoubtedly causes additional tensions"-Foreign Ministry

— Phil Stewart (@phildstewart) [June 21, 2022](#)

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[4d ago](#)[15.42](#)

The **Kremlin** has not provided the US any additional details on the whereabouts of two Americans captured in **Ukraine**, according to **Ned Price**, a spokesman for the **US state department**.

"We have no additional details beyond what's been reported in the media," Price said. "We've been in direct contact with Russian authorities. We have not been provided, either by Russian authorities or by Russian proxy forces or any other entity, with additional details on the whereabouts of these Americans. We are pursuing every channel, every opportunity we have, to learn more and support their families in this difficult hour."

Alexander Drueke and **Andy Tai Ngoc Huynh** were two US military veterans volunteering to defend Ukraine against Russian invaders when they

were captured by Russian forces. The Kremlin acknowledged in an interview with MSNBC yesterday that Druke and Huynh were being held and were under investigation for “crimes”, but would not say more about where they were being held.

The Interfax news agency [today reported](#) that they were in the Russian-backed separatist region of **Donetsk** in eastern Ukraine, where Britons **Shaun Pinner** and **Aiden Aslin** and Moroccan citizen **Brahim Saadoun** - also volunteer fighters - were sentenced to death earlier this month. **Dmitry Peskov**, the Kremlin spokesperson, said Druke and Huynh could [also face the death penalty](#).

“We have both publicly as well as privately called on the Russian government and its proxies to live up to their international obligations in their treatment of all individuals including those captured fighting in Ukraine,” Price said. “We expect and, in fact, international law and the law of war expects and requires, all those captured on the battle field be treated humanely and with respect consistent with the laws of war.”

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[4d ago](#)[15.10](#)

Lysychansk in the eastern **Donbas** is getting hit hard, with **Serhiy Haidai**, governor of the **Luhansk** region, [describing it](#) as the city getting shelled “en masse”.

Here are some images of what life is like in the Lysychansk at the moment:



Residents take cover, fearing potential artillery shelling, in the town of Lysychansk on 21 June amid the Russian invasion of Ukraine. Photograph: Anatolii Stepanov/AFP/Getty Images



A Ukrainian serviceman walks past the wreckage of cars on a street in Lysychansk on 21 June. Photograph: Anatolii Stepanov/AFP/Getty Images



A man rides a bicycle among debris in Lysychansk on 21 June as Ukraine says Russian shelling has caused “catastrophic destruction” in the eastern industrial city. Photograph: Anatolii Stepanov/AFP/Getty Images



Ukrainian servicemen dig a trench in the outskirts of Lysychansk on 21 June. Photograph: Anatolii Stepanov/AFP/Getty Images



A man walks in front of damaged residential building on a street in Lysychansk on 21 June. Photograph: Anatolii Stepanov/AFP/Getty Images

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Updated at 15.52 EDT

[5d ago](#)[14.35](#)

The US state department spokesperson **Ned Price** has responded to the botched phone call between the US basketball star **Brittney Griner** and her wife by confirming that the call has been rescheduled.

He reiterated that the state department has classified Griner as “**wrongfully detained** by **Russia** and has been wrongfully detained for far too long and whose case we are working on assiduously to see her released as quickly as can be achieved”.

“We deeply regret that Brittney Griner was unable to speak to her wife over the weekend because of a logistical error,” Price said. “It was a mistake. It was a mistake that we have worked to rectify. As we said before, the call has been rescheduled and will take place in relatively short order.”

Griner had dialled into the US embassy in Moscow 11 times – the embassy was then to connect her with her wife in Phoenix – but apparently nobody was working the desk where the phone rang on Saturday. Price attributed this “logistical error” to restrictions put in place on the embassy by the Kremlin.

“It was a logistical error that was compounded in part by the fact that our embassy in Moscow is under significant restrictions in terms of its staffing,” Price said. “When we have issues with the telephone system there, for example, the technicians are not located on site, in fact they’re not even located in Russia. They have to be located in a third country because of the onerous restrictions that the Russian federation has placed on our embassy and its operations.”

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Updated at 15.45 EDT

[Newest](#)[Newest](#)

[Previous](#)

1
of
6

[Next](#)

[Oldest](#)[Oldest](#)

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Rolls-Royce

Rolls-Royce to give staff £2,000 to help ease cost of living crisis

Engineering firm says it is the first time it has made payment linked to economic climate not performance



Rolls-Royce has a UK workforce of about 20,000. Photograph: Paul Ellis/AFP/Getty Images

[Julia Köllewe](#)

Tue 21 Jun 2022 04.52 EDT Last modified on Tue 21 Jun 2022 07.08 EDT

Rolls-Royce is to give more than 14,000 staff a £2,000 payment to help them cope with the soaring cost of living, the first time the engineering firm has made such a move.

The one-off payment will go to shopfloor staff and junior management, who are mainly based at the company's two biggest sites in Derby and Bristol. They represent 70% of Rolls-Royce's UK workforce of about 20,000.

A Rolls-Royce spokesperson said the company was offering the majority of its UK staff a £2,000 cash lump sum “to help them through the current exceptional economic climate”. He said it was the first time the company has paid out a cash lump sum that is not linked to performance, but to the economic climate.

In the latest sign that the cost of living crisis is worsening, the data firm Kantar said on Tuesday that [annual food bills will rise by £380](#) this year. Grocery price inflation jumped to 8.3% in the four weeks to 12 June.

Energy bills have soared in the UK, petrol and diesel prices have risen to record highs and the official [inflation rate hit a 40-year high of 9% in April](#). The energy price cap [could reach nearly £3,000](#) at the beginning of October, according to a new forecast from the research firm Cornwall Insight.

About 3,000 Rolls-Royce staff – mainly junior managers – will receive the cash lump sum in August, while the other 11,000 workers, who are represented by the Unite union, will receive it once it has been approved by the union. The company is also offering those 11,000 shopfloor workers a 4% pay rise, backdated to March. The average salary among them is £40,000 a year.

The spokesperson said: “In addition, we are offering our shopfloor staff the highest annual pay rise for at least a decade, backdated to March, and together these measures represent around a 9% pay increase for them.”

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The junior managers already had a pay rise in March, an average of 2.5% in line with other managers at the company, and they are paid more than shopfloor workers.

Shopfloor workers who are not represented by the union also got an average 2.5% pay rise in March, but if the union accepts the 4% pay deal, Rolls-Royce will also increase the pay of non-unionised shopfloor staff by 1.5% so they get the same package.

Last week, it emerged that [Lloyds Bank will give more than 64,000 staff a £1,000 one-off payment](#) to help with rising living costs. The payment, due to be made in August, comes after a campaign by the Unite union.

This article was downloaded by **calibre** from <https://www.theguardian.com/business/2022/jun/21/rolls-royce-staff-cost-of-living-crisis>

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UK manufacturing growth slows; Kellogg to split in three; Elon Musk's US recession warning – as it happened

Rolling coverage of the latest economic and financial news

- [Latest: Kellogg to spin off North American cereals and plant-food divisions](#)
- [UK Manufacturing output growth slowing](#)
- [Elon Musk: US recession more likely than not in near term](#)
- [BoE chief economist: Further rate rises needed](#)
- [Grocery inflation jumped to 8.3% in June](#)

Updated 5d ago

[Graeme Wearden](#)

Tue 21 Jun 2022 10.39 EDT First published on Tue 21 Jun 2022 03.18 EDT



A production line packing strawberries in the UK Photograph: National Farmers Union/Alamy

Graeme Wearden

Tue 21 Jun 2022 10.39 EDTFirst published on Tue 21 Jun 2022 03.18 EDT

Key events

- [5d agoSummary](#)
- [5d agoUS home sales drop](#)
- [5d agoKellogg to split in three, in new focus on snacks](#)
- [5d agoMarket up despite recession fears - but is it just a bear market rally?](#)
- [5d agoUK factory growth softens](#)
- [5d agoFull story: Britons face paying £380 a year more as supermarket inflation hits 13-year high](#)
- [5d agoBoE chief economist sees further rate rises ahead](#)

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From 5d ago

04.31

Elon Musk: US recession more likely than not in near term

Tesla chief executive Elon Musk has warned that the US economy could soon fall into recession.

In an interview with Bloomberg News at the Qatar Economic Forum in Doha this morning, Musk said it appears “more likely than not” that the US economy enters recession in the near term.

Asked about president Biden’s prediction that a recession was “not inevitable” despite rising inflation, Musk pointed out that it will happen eventually... and quite possibly soon.

Musk said:

“A recession is inevitable at some point. As to whether there is a recession in the near term, I think that is more likely than not.

It’s not a certainty, but it appears more likely than not.

Musk isn’t alone. A poll of academic economists earlier this month found that nearly 70% predict the US economy will tip into a recession next year, as the Federal Reserve lifts interest rates aggressively in an attempt to cool inflation.

"A recession is inevitable at some point. In the near-term I think it is more likely than not," says Tesla CEO @elonmusk.

He talks to us in a wide-ranging conversation from the Qatar Economic Forum <https://t.co/bx32zCU2sR> pic.twitter.com/viHtMv2ub4

— Bloomberg TV (@BloombergTV) June 21, 2022

During the interview, Musk also said Tesla plans to cut its salaried workforce by about 10% over the next three months, which will work out as a 3.5% cut in total headcount.

Musk said:

“Tesla is reducing its salaried workforce roughly 10% over the next three months or so. We expect to grow our hourly workforce. We grew very fast on the salaried side, grew a little too fast in some areas”

Tesla is cutting its salaried workforce by about 10% over the next three months, resulting in a reduction of as much as about 3.5% in total headcount, CEO Elon Musk says
[#QatarEconomicForum# منتدى قطر الاقتصادي](#) <https://t.co/4RZvdiHt7z>

— Bloomberg (@business) [June 21, 2022](#)

Musk added that supply constraints were the biggest brake on Tesla’s growth, rather than competition from rival automakers.

On his planned takeover of Twitter, Musk said there are still a few “unresolved matters”, including the issue of how many bots are on the social media platform [[earlier this month he threatened to walk away from the deal](#)]

And asked whether he would support Donald Trump in the next US presidential election, Musk said he was “undecided at this point on that election.”

Elon Musk says there are still a few “unresolved matters” with his Twitter takeover, and he is still waiting for a resolution on the matter of how many bots are on the platform [#QatarEconomicForum](#) [# منتدى قطر الاقتصادي](https://t.co/XrEc5Iy2wN)

— Bloomberg (@business) [June 21, 2022](#)

Elon Musk says he would focus on "driving the product" at Twitter but doesn't necessarily plan to be the CEO [#QatarEconomicForum](#)
[# منتدى قطر الاقتصادي](#)

Live updates: <https://t.co/XrEc5Iy2wN> pic.twitter.com/rtJl80ZoOO

— Bloomberg (@business) [June 21, 2022](#)

"We really don't think about competition at all" — Elon Musk says that demand for Tesla cars is "extremely high and the wait list is long" [#QatarEconomicForum](#) [# منتدى قطر الاقتصادي](#)

Live updates: <https://t.co/E2yno3USFg> pic.twitter.com/wGiDIyIY2R

— Bloomberg (@business) [June 21, 2022](#)

Elon Musk says Tesla is reducing the salaried workforce by 10% over the next three months or so, while the hourly workforce will grow [#QatarEconomicForum](#) [# منتدى قطر الاقتصادي](#)

Live updates: <https://t.co/E2yno3USFg>

— Bloomberg (@business) [June 21, 2022](#)

Asked specifically whether he'd support Donald Trump for the next US presidential election, Elon Musk says "I'm undecided at this point on that election" [#QatarEconomicForum](#) [# منتدى قطر الاقتصادي](#)

Live updates: <https://t.co/E2yno3USFg> pic.twitter.com/kijDluwdkQ

— Bloomberg (@business) [June 21, 2022](#)

Elon Musk: "I have never said that people should invest in crypto. In the case of Tesla, SpaceX, myself, we all did buy some Bitcoin, but it's a small percentage of our total cash assets" [#QatarEconomicForum](#)

منتدى قطر الاقتصادي

Live analysis ↓ <https://t.co/E2yno3USFg>

— Bloomberg (@business) [June 21, 2022](#)

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Updated at 04.49 EDT

[5d ago](#) [10.36](#)

Summary

Time for a recap.

Growth at UK factories has slowed, with bosses reporting a slowdown in output and new orders. With demand cooling, fewer manufacturers expect to raise prices over the next quarter.

British consumers have been hit by the sharpest increase in grocery bills in 13 years. Supermarkets are around 8.3% more expensive than a year ago, adding £380 to the average spend on food this year.

The Bank of England's chief economist has predicted that further interest rate rises will be needed to cool UK inflation.

Tesla's Elon Musk has said it is 'more likely than not' that the US will enter recession soon. Economist Nouriel Roubini, and Goldman Sachs, have also voiced concerns that a downturn could be near.

The US housing market has continued to cool, with existing home sales hitting their lowest rate in almost two years.

-Home sales fell in May for the fourth straight month.
-At \$407,600, the median existing-home sales price exceeded \$400,000 for the first time.
-Month-over-month home sales fell in three out of four U.S. regions, year-over-year sales fell in all four regions.[@NAR_Research](https://pic.twitter.com/HsNbK4QddU)

— Christopher Salas (@ChristopherS_DC) [June 21, 2022](#)

Food giant Kellogg Co is splitting into three companies, sending its shares up almost 3%. Kellogg plans to focus on snacks, and will spin off its North American cereals division, and its plant-based foods.

The hospitality industry has warned that today's UK rail strikes will cost restaurants, pubs and other businesses £500m in revenue.

'Fragile' hospitality industry 'cannot withstand economic shock' of rail strikes <https://t.co/rz2tCab4s9>

— Sky News Business (@SkyNewsBiz) [June 21, 2022](#)

Footfall in central London to 1pm today has been 27% lower than last Tuesday and in city centres outside of the capital it was down by 11.2%, according to retail analysts Springboard.

The commodity trader [Glencore](#) has pleaded guilty in a London court to seven counts of bribery related to its oil operations in several African countries.

Rolls-Royce is to give more than 14,000 staff a £2,000 payment to help them cope with the soaring cost of living, the first time the engineering firm has made such a move.

EasyJet cabin crew unions in Spain have called nine days of strikes in July, threatening to add to a summer of disruption for airline passengers.

Stock markets have clawed back some of last week's heavy losses, with the UK's FTSE 100 up 30 points or 0.4% in late trading, and solid gains on Wall Street.

We'll be back tomorrow morning, when UK inflation could climb to a new 40-year high.... GW

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Updated at 10.39 EDT

5d ago [10.15](#)

US home sales drop

Just in: Sales of US homes fell last month as the once red-hot housing market cools.

Sales of existing US homes (excluding new builds) dropped by 3.4% in May to the lowest rate since June 2020, during the first wave of Covid-19.

That follows a 2.6% drop in April, as rising US interest rates deter potential buyers.

Existing home sales in the US declined by 3.4% to a seasonally adjusted annual rate of 5.41 million in May of 2022 (5.6 million In April), the lowest since June of 2020 and slightly above forecasts of 5.39 million. pic.twitter.com/eRkFzVVLx2

— FTMO.com (@FTMO_com) [June 21, 2022](#)

Lawrence Yun, chief economist at the National Association of Realtors, predicted that home sales would fall further:

“The impact of higher mortgage rates are not yet fully reflected in the data.”

“Home sales have essentially returned to the levels seen in 2019 – prior to the pandemic – after two years of gangbuster performance,” said NAR Chief Economist Lawrence Yun. [#NAREHS](#)

— NAR Research (@NAR_Research) [June 21, 2022](#)

Prices kept rising, though, supported by a lack of supply. The median house price hit \$407,600 in May, up 14.8% on May 2021.

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[5d ago](#)[10.04](#)

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[5d ago](#)[10.00](#)

Coca-Cola’s chief executive James Quincey has warned that companies are facing a “very painful” three years from a geopolitical and macroeconomic point of view, *Reuters reports*.

Efforts to move to a recycling-oriented circular economy will have to be made “in the face of what is likely to be a very painful next zero to three years from a macroeconomic and geopolitical point of view,” Quincey told the Consumer Goods Forum’s Global Summit conference in Dublin on Tuesday.

COCA-COLA CEO QUINCEY: WE ARE LIKELY FACING A VERY PAINFUL NEXT 1-3 YEARS FROM A MACROECONOMIC POINT OF VIEW. [\\$KO](#)

— BreakingStocks (@BreakingStocks_) [June 21, 2022](#)

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[5d ago](#) [09.57](#)

Stocks have opened higher in New York, with the **Dow Jones industrial average** up 460 points, or 1.5%, at 30,349 points.

U.S. stocks opened with sharp gains Tuesday as investors returned from a three-day weekend honoring the Juneteenth holiday and after the S&P 500 had its worst week since March 2020.

<https://t.co/Sdbc1Qb9xz> pic.twitter.com/5nYTOOBIRE

— MarketWatch (@MarketWatch) [June 21, 2022](#)

Fiona Cincotta of **City Index** remains cautious, pointing out that [markets just had their worst week since 2020](#).

High inflation and aggressive central bank tightening raised fears of recession last week sending stocks tumbling to levels last seen in 2020 in the pandemic. The S&P fell 5.8% dropping into a bear market, down over 20% from its early January record high. The fact that the market has entered a bear market doesn't mean that it will stop falling.

In fact, today's rise isn't a risk reset at all, fundamentally nothing has changed since last week. It isn't unusual for stocks to rise after a heavy selloff. Given that a recession isn't fully priced in there could well be more decline to come.

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Updated at 10.00 EDT

5d ago09.48

A US recession would spell bad news for the Democrats and their 2024 election hopes - since the Great Depression, no incumbent party has ever retained the White House if there has been a recession in the 2 years prior to an election. Via Deutsche Bank.
pic.twitter.com/ONo1BVoSyc

— Jamie McGeever (@ReutersJamie) [June 21, 2022](#)

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5d ago09.33

US growth slowed sharply in May, according to a closely watched survey from the Chicago Federal Reserve.

The Chicago Fed's national activity index weakened to +0.01 in May, down from +0.40 in April. That suggests economic growth declined in May, with only a marginal expansion.

Softer print for Chicago Fed National Activity Index in May at 0.01, vs. 0.47 est. & 0.40 prior (rev down from 0.47); personal consumption & housing component subtracted from activity; employment stayed positive ... overall, 47/85 individual indicators made positive contributions pic.twitter.com/HcCLlAmA8j

— Liz Ann Sonders (@LizAnnSonders) [June 21, 2022](#)

The [@ChicagoFed](#) National Activity Index fell to 0.01 in May from 0.40 in Apr. Indicator breakdown:

- Employment: 0.08 (Apr 0.07)
- Sales: 0.05 (Apr -0.07)
- Production: -0.01 (Apr 0.29)
- Consumption: -0.11 (Apr 0.10) [#economy](#) <https://t.co/HkgiJeL88G> pic.twitter.com/bOsTQaEQe2

— MTS Insights (@MTSInsights) [June 21, 2022](#)

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[5d ago](#) [09.24](#)

Overnight, Goldman Sachs economists cut their US growth forecasts and warned that the risk of recession is rising.

The Goldman team now sees a 30% probability of America entering a recession over the next year, up from 15% previously.

If a recession is avoided, there's then a 25% 'conditional probability' of entering a recession in the following year.

That implies a 48% cumulative probability in the next two years versus 35% previously, Bloomberg explains.

Goldman says there's a 30% risk of a US recession over the next year -- a lot lower than many (eg Larry Summers). "We are skeptical that hot wage growth and high inflation expectations are as entrenched today" as the 1970s. <https://t.co/6iZBG2vUXa> via [@endacurran](#) [@economics](#)

— Steve Matthews (@SteveMatthews12) [June 21, 2022](#)

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5d ago **09.12**

Kellogg's split comes at a particularly perilous time in the industry due to rising costs, both for labour and for material, points out Associated Press.

Russia's invasion of Ukraine has pushed grain prices higher and this month, the U.S. reported that inflation is hitting four-decade highs.

Last fall, about 1,400 workers at Kellogg's cereal plants went on strike for nearly three months before winning a new contract with immediate, across the board wage increases and enhanced benefits for all workers. In March, few hundred other workers at a plant the makes Cheez-Its won a new contract with 15% wage increases over three years.

Kellogg will split into three companies: a cereal maker, a snack maker and a plant-based food company. Kellogg, whose brands include Eggo waffles and Rice Krispies cereal, said the planned spinoffs are expected to be completed by the end of 2023. <https://t.co/pr2HoA45KP>

— The Associated Press (@AP) [June 21, 2022](#)

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5d ago **08.33**

Kellogg to split in three, in new focus on snacks



A box of Kellogg Crunchy Nut cereals Photograph: Carolyn Jenkins/Alamy

US food giant Kellogg has announced plans to split into three companies, as it focuses on snacks.

Kellogg, which began in 1894 when W.K Kellogg created Corn Flakes, has announced it will spin off its North American cereals and plant-based food divisions in two new companies.

Shares in **Kellogg** have jumped over 6% in pre-market trading, as it become the latest major US firm to break itself up.

Kellogg says the snack division made \$11.4bn of net sales last year, or about 80% of total sales. It is focused on global snacking, international cereal and noodles, and North America frozen breakfast.

Brands include *Pringles*, *Pop-Tarts*, *Kellogg's* breakfast cereals, *Frosties*, *Coco-Pops*, and *Crunchy Nut*. This business is expected to be a higher-growth company than today's Kellogg Company, it says.

CEO Steve Cahillane, who will become chairman and CEO of the global snacking company, says splitting up the company makes sense:

“These businesses all have significant standalone potential, and an enhanced focus will enable them to better direct their resources toward their distinct strategic priorities.”

The names of the new businesses haven’t been decided yet.

“The North America Cereal Co.”, brought in \$2.4bn in net sales last year, and will operate in the U.S., Canada, and Caribbean.

“Plant Co.”, which includes the *MorningStar Farms* brand, had \$340m of net sales last year, and will be focus on plant-based foods.

In the past two years major U.S. firms such as Johnson & Johnson and General Electric Co have both announced splits.

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Updated at 08.34 EDT

[5d ago](#) [07.46](#)

Market up despite recession fears - but is it just a bear market rally?

Back in the markets... European stocks are holding their earlier gains, with the UK's [FTSE 100](#) now up 0.8%, or 56 points, at 7177 points.

Investors are anticipating that Wall Street will open higher, after the Juneteenth holiday on Monday.

A positive start to New York trading would be a relief after the S&P 500 plunged into a bear market last week.

FUTURES RALLYING BEFORE MARKET OPEN

DOW +1.66% □
S&P 500 E-MINI +1.85% □
NASDAQ +1.91% □

— Papertrade (@papertrade_gg) [June 21, 2022](#)

But with recession fears swirling ([as Elon Musk has shown](#)), the economic picture is still troubling.

The FT's Naomi Rovnick writes:

Hani Redha, multi-asset portfolio manager at PineBridge Investments, characterised Tuesday's moves as a "bear market rally," caused by a "psychological desire" for a shift in the market mood.

"It doesn't really change the bigger picture of growth slowing down and tightening financial conditions," he added.

"That combination still remains the overarching theme, which is pretty challenging."

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Updated at 07.54 EDT

[5d ago](#) [07.37](#)

Recession worries are also rising in Germany.

The Federation of German Industries (BDI) more than halved its economic forecast for 2022 this morning, predicting German gross domestic product will only grow by 1.5% this year. Before the Ukraine war began, it forecast growth of 3.5%

The BDI also said a halt in Russian gas deliveries would make recession inevitable in Europe's largest economy.

The influential German Chambers of Industry and Commerce (BDI) has revised down its economic growth estimate for Germany to 1.5% for 2022.

— dpa news agency (@dpa_intl) [June 21, 2022](#)

“German industry support the [#sanctions](#) against [#Russia](#) not just because of the ‘primacy of politics’ but out of conviction,” [@Der_BDI](#) president Siegfried Russwurm says. “Rule of law and human rights are non-negotiable.” [#TDI22 #Ukraine](#) pic.twitter.com/tH5QVNjS4s

— Sebastian Schwark (@DrSchwark) [June 21, 2022](#)

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[5d ago](#)[06.59](#)

Britain’s postal workers could soon join railway staff in taking industrial action over pay.

The Communications Workers Union has announced it is serving notice for a national ballot on pay at the postal group Royal Mail. It is seeking an inflation-based, no strings pay award.

Papers will be sent to CWU members on the 28th of June, with the result due three weeks later. The results of the ballot would inform a decision on whether to take industrial action.

CWU’s deputy general secretary Terry Pullinger said, in a video posted on Twitter, that the union will recommend industrial action if there’s not been any movement on the pay claim by then.

Pullinger said:

“Today we will be serving a notice on Royal Mail Group over a pay claim, our claim for an inflation-based no strings pay award. The company has imposed a 2% pay award, miles away from where inflation is, totally inadequate.

“We will have the result on the 19th of July. At that point, depending on where we are, we will make decision as whether we need to take industrial action, and if there has been no movement that is exactly what we will be recommending.”

Pullinger added that Royal Mail’s CEO, Simon Thompson, received a bonus of more than £140,000, taking his overall package to over £700,000 last year.

We are serving notice for a National Ballot on Pay on Royal Mail Group today - ballot papers dispatched next Tuesday - vote yes or forever accept less <https://t.co/jEucE1RuB3>

— The CWU (@CWUnews) [June 21, 2022](#)

Royal Mail has said it doesn’t believe there are grounds for industrial action, and that its pay offer is worth up to 5.5% [including a 2% productivity bonus, and agreement on changes to conditions such as an expanded Sunday parcel delivery offer].

A **Royal Mail** spokesperson said:

“We offered a deal worth up to 5.5% for CWU grade colleagues, the biggest increase we have offered for many years, which was rejected by the CWU.”

Last month, communications regulator Ofcom announced a formal investigation into Royal Mail, after almost a fifth of first-class deliveries arrived at least a day late in the year to April.



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5d ago 06.26

UK factory growth softens

Growth at UK manufacturers is slowing and order books have softened, in another sign that economic demand is easing.

The CBI's latest survey of British factories has found that manufacturing output growth slowed slightly in the three months to June, and is expected to ease further in the three months ahead.

Output increased in 12 out of 17 sectors in the three months to June, led by the motor vehicles and aerospace sub-sectors. But the food, drink & tobacco sub-sector shrank for the first time in just over a year.

Factory bosses reported that export order books fell back to a normal level in June, but were still above their long-term averages.

Encouragingly, fewer manufacturers plan to raise their prices than earlier this year. A net balance of 58% of firms expected domestic price growth for the three months ahead, down from 75% in May and a survey record of +80% in March 2022.

That is the weakest expectations for selling price inflation since September 2021 (although significantly above the long-run average).

Broadly positive story coming from our latest manufacturing survey, with output growth strong, stock adequacy improving, and price growth expectations easing. However, many manufacturers continue to tell us that they're facing strong cost pressures and recruitment difficulties
<https://t.co/QdjJvAtS0A>

— Martin Sartorius (@SartoriusMartin) [June 21, 2022](#)

Signs of weaker growth could be deterring some firms from raising prices.

Anna Leach, CBI deputy chief economist, explains:

“While manufacturing output is still being supported by a backlog of orders, growth appears to be softening.

Stocks of finished goods are now seen as broadly adequate and we may be seeing the first signs that weaker activity is beginning to slow the pace of price increases in the sector.

Manufacturers continue to report a range of challenges, including significant cost pressures, shipping delays, shortages of key inputs, and, not least, recruitment difficulties. Skills shortages remain widespread and are a key constraint on growth. All of these trends are weighing on confidence.”

Stock adequacy improved in June. Stocks of finished goods were seen as broadly adequate, having been reported as inadequate for much of the past year [#ITS pic.twitter.com/9CeSsMhqgp](#)

— CBI Economics (@CBI_Economics) [June 21, 2022](#)

Expectations for domestic price growth for the three months ahead eased notably in June. While price expectations remained historically strong, they were at their lowest since September 2021 [#ITS pic.twitter.com/NOHcjXOUhi](#)

— CBI Economics (@CBI_Economics) [June 21, 2022](#)

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[5d ago](#)[05.50](#)

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[5d ago](#)**05.39**

There could be more disruption to flights next month, as Spain-based easyJet's cabin staff will go on strike for nine days in July,

The workers will walk out July 1, 2, 3, 15, 16, 17, 29, 30 and 31 to protest against low wages, Miguel Galan, the general secretary of union USO's easyJet section, told reporters this morning.

Yesterday easyJet announced it would cut its summer flight schedule, as staff shortages left airlines and airports unable to handle the increase in travel as Covid restrictions were lifted.

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[5d ago](#)**05.32**

Full story: Britons face paying £380 a year more as supermarket inflation hits 13-year high

Supermarket inflation hit 8.3% in the past month, the highest rate in 13 years, adding £380 to annual bills as the rising cost of living weighs on families, my colleague Sarah Butler reports:

Sales fell at all the big supermarkets as shoppers switched to discounters Aldi and Lidl and bought more own-label goods in an effort to keep a lid on spending, according to the latest data from Kantar.

Sales of supermarkets' cheapest own-label products rose 12% while Aldi and Lidl's sales rose by 7.9% and 9.5% respectively in the three months to 12 June. Aldi's share of the grocery market is 9.6%, less than 1% behind Morrisons where sales fell by 7.2% in the three-month period making it the biggest loser in the market.

Here's the full story:

Despite the money-saving trend, families splashed out during the platinum jubilee celebrations, buying a third more alcohol and 35% more ice-cream than during an average week, according to Kantar.

Sales of lemon curd were also up 16% as many people had a go at making the official [jubilee trifle](#).

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2

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Supermarkets

Average UK food bill rises by £380 a year as grocery inflation hits 13-year high

Shoppers turn to own-label goods as discounters Aldi and Lidl benefit from living costs crunch



Shoppers are watching budgets closely as the cost-of-living crisis takes its toll, said Kantar. Photograph: Julien Behal/PA

[Sarah Butler](#)

[@whatbutlersaw](#)

Tue 21 Jun 2022 06.40 EDTFirst published on Tue 21 Jun 2022 04.25 EDT

Supermarket inflation hit 8.3% in the past month, the highest rate in 13 years, adding £380 to annual bills as the rising cost of living weighs on families.

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Fraser McEvitt, the head of retail and consumer insight at Kantar, said: "The inflation number makes for difficult reading and shoppers will be watching budgets closely as the cost of living crisis takes its toll."

"Based on our latest data, the average annual grocery bill is on course to rise by £380. This is over £100 more than the number we reported in April this year, showing just how sharp price increases have been recently and the impact inflation is having on the sector."

He said prices were rising fastest in dog food, butter and milk, while the price of spirits was falling.

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The latest evidence of rising inflation comes after the UK's grocery trade body said price rises in the UK [could hit 15% this summer](#) – the highest level in more than 20 years. High inflation could last into the middle of next year, according to its report published last week.

Food price inflation is being fuelled by the war in Ukraine, which is a key grain and oil seed producer. Disruption to exports from the country as well as sanctions on Russia, which is a big grain and petrochemical exporter, as well as Covid-related production lockdowns in China and export bans on key food stuffs such as palm oil from Indonesia and wheat from India.

Despite the money-saving trend, families splashed out during the platinum jubilee celebrations, buying a third more alcohol and 35% more ice-cream than during an average week, according to Kantar. Sales of lemon curd were also up 16% as many people had a go at making the official [jubilee trifle](#).

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| [Section menu](#) | [Main menu](#) |

2022.06.21 - Spotlight

- Bill Pullman ‘The term late bloomer sounds an awful lot like loser’
- Artist Penny Goring ‘David Bowie showed me that there was another world’
- Palantir Concerns over data firm poised to be ‘operating system’ of NHS
- Netflix and bills Which streaming services are really worth shelling out for?

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Interview

Bill Pullman: ‘The term late bloomer sounds an awful lot like loser’

[Fiona Sturges](#)



Everyman for himself ... Bill Pullman in rehearsals for *Mad House*.
Photograph: Jenny Anderson

The Independence Day star landed his first major role in his 30s, but has since made up for lost time. Now he's heading to the stage in a furious satire. He talks about family, fame and how Ibsen put him in a coma

Tue 21 Jun 2022 03.00 EDT Last modified on Tue 21 Jun 2022 04.36 EDT

Bill Pullman was 32 years old when he starred in his first film, 1986's Ruthless People. This is, he notes, at least a decade later than most movie stars get their big break. "The term 'late bloomer' sounds awfully like loser, but I guess it's what I am," he says. "It sounds to me like a politically correct term for: 'You're stupid. Why did you take so long?'"

The reason he took so long is theatre. Prior to Pullman's Hollywood career, during which he has hopscotched from film noir (*Lost Highway*) and kids' films (*Casper*) to horror (*Lake Placid*, *The Grudge*), romcoms (*Sleepless in Seattle*, *While You Were Sleeping*) and a triumphant blockbuster (*Independence Day*), he spent much of his time directing and acting in plays. Even a catastrophic fall during a student production of Ibsen's *Brand*, which caused a brain haemorrhage and put him in a coma for two and a half days, didn't put him off. He was 21 at the time and playing the titular pastor who, at one point, climbs up an ice church, which in this production was constructed out of the bodies of the other actors. "I was climbing up on people's shoulders, someone moved and then: boom! Down I came," he recalls. "I never did go back to Ibsen after that."

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Pullman, who is 68, is talking from New York where he is in rehearsals for Theresa Rebeck's new play [Mad House](#), a black comedy about familial dysfunction set in rural Pennsylvania. It is his first theatre role since the pandemic and the time away has made the process that much sweeter. As an actor, he says, "you want it to be lively, you want to hear ideas that you haven't heard spoken communally in a while. You want to feel that charged energy of simple entrances and exits."

Pullman talks in a low, laconic drawl but his eyes are bright and full of mischief. He has the air of a man quietly enjoying a joke that he's not sharing with the class. When he's not travelling for work, Pullman and his wife, the dancer Tamara Hurwitz, divide their time between Beachwood Canyon, Los Angeles, and a cattle ranch in Montana that he has co-owned with his brother for 30 years. Nowadays he is mostly in charge of infrastructure – fence mending, irrigation and so on – although when his three children were young they spent long summers there, during which Pullman would roll up his sleeves and muck in. "If you're having to plug meds up the butt of some beast, a lot of other things seem very manageable," he says.



Oval officer ... Bill Pullman (centre) in *Independence Day*. Photograph: Everett/Alamy

In *Mad House*, he plays patriarch Daniel, who has advanced emphysema and is being looked after by his son Michael, played by David Harbour (*Stranger Things*' Jim Hopper). "Daniel is circling the drain," Pullman says. "The one son who is available for care-giving is the son he feels the need to grind on the most. There are two other children who show up wanting to talk about what's going to happen to the inheritance, though my character is cagey about it, choosing to torment them instead." As the play progresses, Daniel becomes increasingly frail until he is confined to a hospital bed, though he

continues his campaign of cruelty. “You can still wage war from a horizontal position,” says Pullman.

The scene of a family gathered round a bedside resonates with the actor. “My father died in my arms,” he says. “I wasn’t there when my mother died. But I have three brothers and three sisters and we’re all at that precarious age now where there are illnesses. A friend of mine calls this stage ‘shooter’s alley’.” Pullman, who grew up in Hornell in Steuben County, New York state, comes from a family of doctors. Both his parents and his grandfather worked in medicine, “so they had this ability to talk objectively about disease and death. Even when it was happening close to home, they were into the data and the miracles of medicine and the body.”

I always felt there was something useful about being a bit of a chameleon or a cipher

Pullman was never tempted to follow his parents into medicine, but it took him a while to find his passion. After high school, he studied construction, imagining he would end up restoring old houses for a living. But then he got involved with the college drama department where one of the professors encouraged him to act. Pullman went on to do a degree in theatre, followed by an MA in directing. In his 20s he took a teaching post at Montana State University. In the end it was money, or the lack of it, that lured him back into acting. “I loved Montana and had a good life there, but the pay was poor and there was this itch that hadn’t been scratched.”

So Pullman and Hurwitz moved to New York, where he appeared in assorted plays including Sam Shepard’s Curse of the Starving Class, opposite Kathy Bates. In 1985 he moved to Los Angeles where parts in Ruthless People, with Bette Midler and Danny DeVito, and Mel Brooks’s Spaceballs set his film career in motion. Pullman found himself frequently cast as “the guy who loses the girl” (see While You Were Sleeping, A League of Their Own and Sleepless in Seattle, where he is dumped by Meg Ryan), but was able to show greater range in the late 1990s as the troubled sax player Fred Madison in David Lynch’s Lost Highway and as the US president in Independence Day. For years, strangers would come up to him and ask him to recite his famously defiant Independence Day speech – “We will not go quietly into

the night! We will not vanish without a fight!” – although, he says with faux-menace: “I learned to beat them back.”



Police force ... Bill Pullman as Harry Ambrose in *The Sinner*. Photograph: USA Network/NBCU/Getty

The last few years have been mostly taken up with [The Sinner](#), the detective series in which he plays a grizzled cop grappling with past trauma. After the success of the first season, it was recommissioned as an anthology series, with Pullman's character as the only constant. “I was really scared signing up for it,” he admits. “I admire actors who find joy in doing eight or nine seasons of the same thing, but my mind is too crazy. I thought I'd wither on the vine. But the showrunner Derek Simonds was great and we would talk before every season about where the story would go. So I never did get bored.”

For years, Pullman was in the odd position of being a household name who was forever mistaken for the late Bill Paxton, star of *Apollo 13*, *Twister* and *A Simple Plan*. Even now, Pullman's Wikipedia page has a slightly impertinent note at the top: “Not to be confused with Bill Paxton.” Pullman blames the confusion on the plosives in their names, though I suspect it's more to do with their everyman personas. In 1998, at the height of Pullman's fame, the critic Greil Marcus was moved to write *American Berserk: Bill*

Pullman's Face, a lofty treatise plotting the evolution of America through the actor's film roles, in which he decried his ordinariness and ubiquity. When I bring it up, Pullman exclaims: "My God, you read that?" but stops himself from saying more. When I ask what it was like to be scrutinised so closely, he replies: "I always felt there was something useful about being a bit of a chameleon or a cipher. And so I thought: 'Wow, did I get that wrong! I thought that was meant to be the idea.' But sure, it's not always the money-maker. If you have a brand just being yourself as a star, it's a little easier to build wealth."

Pullman adds that he has always enjoyed the fact that when strangers approach him to say "I really like you in ... ", he can never predict what film they will say. "I have no idea whether they're going to say Casper or Spaceballs or The Sinner. To have that variety in my work makes me feel lucky. I always wanted to be the vessel, where I could get possessed by something."

In his article about Pullman, Marcus also quotes Lynch who, on researching Pullman's back catalogue while casting for Lost Highway, said: "I always saw something in his eyes ... I saw the possibility for rage, for insanity." Does that ring true, I ask? "If you're talking about rage then that lands me right back to this play," Pullman replies, clearly pleased at the opportunity to bring our conversation full circle. "In the past I've had characters rage against conditions, and rage against injustices. But this guy, Daniel, needs to inflict rage, to incite rage. But, you know, I'd forgotten [Lynch] said that. I think he was probably on to something."

Mad House is at the Ambassadors theatre, London, to 4 September.

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Interview

Artist Penny Goring: ‘David Bowie showed me that there was another world’

[Hettie Judah](#)



‘I felt that I wasn’t posh enough to be a part of the art world’ ... Goring at her home/studio in London. Photograph: Linda Nylind/The Guardian

Brought up in a rough area, Goring drank heavily and never thought that she would make it as an artist. Finally, after a detour into ‘weird Facebook’, her freaky explorations of womanhood are getting their due

Tue 21 Jun 2022 05.37 EDT

The floor beneath Penny Goring’s worktable is awash in filaments and fragments of scarlet cloth. Slivers and snippets carry across the carpet in crimson eddies, as though blood had spilled from her stabbing scissors and is seeping across the floor of her bedroom into the world beyond.

Encountering her art – haunting doll-like soft sculptures; paintings lifted from a brutal dreamworld – it is easy to conject an image of Goring as some otherworldly creature plucked from a fairytale. We meet on a wet day in late spring, not at a haunted forest but the very real-worldy locale of Surbiton station. Walking through the rain as buses splatter past, we talk about not being able to wear high heels anymore, and her time as an art student in London in the early 1990s.

“When I close that door and I’m on my own, the rest of the world disappears,” she tells me, sitting at her little worktable above the sanguine tide of thread and textile scraps. “Everything I have ever done has been centred on feelings. It’s easier to communicate emotions by inventing shapes that show how it feels.” Her work is variously funny-sad, sexy-sad, comforting-sad, politically furious and excellently freaky. There are her spirit-like Anxiety Objects, which strap on to and hamper the body, and the self-explanatory Extreme Naked Yoga drawings. A series of beautiful, storybook-like pictures of violently entangled women – the Amelia works – recall a mutually destructive relationship.



I Was a Visionary for Boudica (2015). Digital collage. Photograph: courtesy of the artist and Arcadia Missa, London

Goring's soft sculptures are meticulously crafted and stitched by hand. "I like labour-intensive things that I do with care over long periods of time. Everything is sewn with this tiny little needle," she tells me, pulling a sharp tool from the belly of a bear stuffed with pins. "This teddy bear is always by my side: it's called Relapse Ted," she says, replacing him. "I was in a treatment centre in 2005 because I'm in recovery as an alcoholic."

I only want to make things I can do in my room, with no help from anyone else. I like to think I'm slyly poking fun at the big boys

It's the week before sculptures and paintings, old and new, will be collected from Goring's flat and delivered to London's ICA for the installation of Penny World, a 30-year survey show. You could read that title as Penny v World, "because I am not comfortable in this world", she says. But also as a play on Poundland: "Everything I make is using materials I can afford, and I'm on a very tight budget."

She leans into this poverty of means, using food dyes, felt tip pens and fabric from old clothes. The weighty-looking golden Plague Doll, covered in breast-like boils, is made of stretchy fabric rather than cast in bronze: "I

couldn't afford that," she says. "I only want to make things that I can do in my room, with no help from anyone else. I like to think that I'm slyly poking fun at the big boys and grand gestures, because she could be monumental but she's gold Spandex."



Relapse Ted. Photograph: Linda Nylind/The Guardian

Her enveloping environment for the [ICA](#) includes lino flooring ("I grew up with fitted lino because mum and dad couldn't afford a fitted carpet"), homely magnolia wall paint and captions in 1970s-style bubble writing.

Ahead of the show, Goring's home is unusually stuffed. She has hung work on the walls for me to see. The scarlet Hell Doll hangs above her bed, arms severed to stumps, a black heart like a void where her face should be, and long curls like tentacles or flames in place of legs. Other sculptures lie on shelves, mummified in layers of cellophane against the moths and dust. In the hallway (but not the show) is a huge print of an image posted on Goring's cult Tumblr feed in 2015. A model in a green fur coat sits with legs splayed, her head concealed by a crude cutout of Goring's face. The lines "pragmatic vagina / romantic clitoris" hover on the surface.



‘It is hard to live with them, I’ll be glad when they’re not there’ ... Goring and one of her dolls. Photograph: Linda Nylind/The Guardian

Growing up a misfit “in a really rough area in southeast London”, Goring became an “expert truant”. Her saviour was David Bowie. She joined his fan club aged nine and saw him play Earl’s Court when she was 10: “He showed me that there was another world, apart from this harsh, scary place where I was getting beaten up and told that I was a freak.”

Arriving at Kingston art school in her late 20s, she discovered artists who explored awkward, overwhelming feelings. “Frida Kahlo: she was like my gateway drug,” says Goring. From there she found [Eva Hesse](#). Then [Louise Bourgeois](#): “She is so close to my heart. I feel such an affinity with her work.” A pile of neat student sketchbooks is stacked on the windowsill. Goring invites me to explore them. The germs of her current work are already evident. Even the title – Penny World – pops up.

Goring has not taken a conventional route (if there is such a thing) into the art world. She is not comfortable with face-to-face encounters. (Those swirly legs on the Hell Doll? That’s panic, melting the feet and ankles into useless jelly.) Despite the support of tutors including painter [Peter Doig](#), she was not awarded a place on an MA course after art school. “I’ve always been really shy and had a lack of confidence, and was drinking quite heavily by the end

of my final year,” she says. “I just resigned myself, quite happily in the end. I made my peace with carrying on making my work anyway.”

But purchasing a computer for her daughter’s schoolwork in 2009 introduced Goring to the participatory culture of [web 2.0](#): a way to make her work public in private. What came out was not pictures but words. “As I was painting, I kept hearing huge swarms of words invading my head. I kept trying to ignore them and they wouldn’t go away.” For six months, “they were building up and getting louder and louder. Just torrents of stories. I sat down and started writing them.”



Those Who Live Without Torment (Red 4), 2020. Photograph: courtesy of the artist and Arcadia Missa, London

She posted fragments of text on Twitter which other writers identified as poetry. Goring was embraced by the online writing community, first joining the collective [Year Zero Writers](#), then falling into the edgier, lower-case, wonky spelling, auto-fiction world of the “alt-lit” movement. Here Goring encountered “a whole new way of writing and communication”. Alt-lit “used Facebook as a poem. Everything was poetry.” She engaged with the visual realm again, combining text with found images, making videos and gifs. “It was only when the scene ended that we all realised we were part of

a huge, sprawling universe called [Weird Facebook](#): we were this little poem-y corner of it.”

You can carry baggage around for too long sometimes, if you don’t examine your thought processes and trace things back to where they’re coming from

Thus, it was through the written word that Goring re-entered the art world. A video over which she recites her 2013 poem Fear (“I fear I will not get what I fear I want. / I fear what I want. / I fear I will not get what I need, let alone want. / I fear lonely, drunken, drugged-up defeat. / I fear arthritis …”) was selected by curator Rózsa Farkas for a group show at the ICA. After seeing her paintings and sculpture, Farkas went on to champion Goring through her newly commercial gallery, [Arcadia Missa](#).

To coincide with Penny World, Arcadia Missa is publishing two volumes of Goring’s writing: the poetry collection [Fail Like Fire](#) and a 2016 text, Headfuck the Reader. “She changed my life,” Goring says of Farkas. “I felt that I wasn’t posh enough to be a part of the art world. She helped me see that was something to let go of. Because you can carry baggage around for too long sometimes, if you don’t examine your thought processes and trace things back to where they’re coming from.”



Truly (Art Hell), 2019. Photograph: courtesy of the artist and Arcadia Missa, London

I ask how it feels to live surrounded by her own work: each doll or painting apparently testament to an emotional evisceration. “It is hard to live with them, basically, is the simple answer,” she decides on reflection. “Big statement dolls, I’ll be glad when they’re not there.” Nevertheless it can hurt to let things go. She describes feeling “a pang” when Farkas sold a favourite drawing recently.

Goring has mixed feelings about participating in the brutal public arena of the commercial art world. There’s a series of drawings tellingly titled Art Hells. “I don’t think of an audience when I’m making,” she says. If she imagines “people to please, impress, or entertain, my mind goes blank, I feel really self-conscious and I can’t make anything worth making.”

Nevertheless, it is also a source of sincere delight: after decades of precarious living she can support herself and her daughter through art and poetry. “To think that all the weird stuff I’ve been making all my life can now be how I make my living, it’s very peculiar. It’s like a revelation.”

- [Penny World is at the ICA, London, until 18 September.](#)
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NHS

Palantir: Trump-backer's data firm that wants a big NHS deal

Company co-founded by Silicon Valley's Peter Thiel has been criticised for US defence and immigration contracts



Peter Thiel's Palantir is favourite to win a £360m contract to amalgamate a wide range of NHS health data on to a single platform. Photograph: John Lamparski/Getty Images

Dan Milmo Global technology editor

Tue 21 Jun 2022 05.20 EDTFirst published on Tue 21 Jun 2022 02.00 EDT

For a company tipped to provide the NHS's new overarching data platform, it is appropriate that Palantir Technologies is named after an all-seeing orb.

Palantir, which draws its name from the powerful crystal balls deployed in JRR Tolkien's The Lord of the Rings, is the favourite to win a £360m contract for the NHS's Federated Data Platform (FDP). Covering everything

from individual patients' data to vaccination programmes, waiting lists and medical trials, the FDP will aggregate data from multiple sources and different formats on to a single platform.

According to a document sent to potential bidders for the five-year contract, it will "provide access to real-time data to enable decision-making to better coordinate care". Speaking at London Tech Week last week, the health secretary, Sajid Javid, said: "This is the perfect moment to bring data together and reap the benefits."

The ambitious scope of the platform has alarmed campaign groups, who fear for patient confidentiality, privacy and data security, but the identity of the frontrunner has also caused concern.

US-based Palantir was co-founded by [Peter Thiel](#), one of Silicon Valley's few high-profile Donald Trump supporters. The \$15.6bn (£12.7bn) company has been criticised for its work with the US immigration agency, as well as its intelligence service and defence contracts. It already works closely with NHS England by providing software that processes data for a variety of purposes including take-up of Covid-19 vaccines and managing the post-pandemic bounce back in elective care (surgery or treatment booked in advance).

But the prospect of it setting up an overarching data platform for NHS England has alarmed Foxglove, a UK legal campaign group that focuses on accountability in the technology industry. Foxglove's concerns, and those of similar organisations, centre on two aspects: the safety of patient data, and the nature of the company that will set up the data framework and seek to exploit it.

"A firm like that has no place being the 'operating system for the NHS' – period," says Cori Crider, a director at Foxglove, who adds that the company "makes no secret of its desire to keep profiting from war and surveillance".

Crider adds that there is not enough public information about the FDP, although documents have been circulated among would-be bidders.

According to the documents, the main five-year contract for FDP is worth £360m and the platform will deliver £3.6bn in benefits over 10 years.

“We’ve got deeper concerns about this Federated Data Platform,” says Crider. “How much confidential patient data is going to be swept in, who is going to have access, and on what terms? It’s clearly not being built just for your GP – it will serve a host of other government officials. We’ve sent a legal letter seeking answers, and received almost no detail in return.”

Phil Booth, founder of medConfidential, which campaigns for confidentiality in healthcare, says Palantir is the favourite for the contract because it already carries out some of the work envisioned in the FDP.

“Palantir is already doing many of the things which are going to be done by the platform. To move away from something that is already deeply embedded into NHS England’s systems would be a significant shift.”

He adds that it is “crazy” to amalgamate such a wide variety of NHS functions into a single monolithic system. “NHS England proposes swapping out all of the complex data flows across a whole host of life-critical systems just by buying one company’s product off the shelf. This single platform, the idea of one thing to rule them all, is odd. You cannot just slap in all the data and expect the entire ecosystem’s architectures to align and integrate.”

Palantir was co-founded in 2003 by Thiel, 54, a co-founder of PayPal and early investor in Facebook. Some initial funding came from In-Q-Tel, the venture capital arm of the Central Intelligence Agency – the US foreign intelligence service – reflecting the company’s origins as a tool to combat terrorism. Palantir’s software programs process huge amounts of data, enabling clients to identify previously undetectable patterns and connections or, as the company puts it, convert “massive amounts of information into knowledge that reflects their world”.

It is deeply embedded in the US public sector. Other US government clients include the tax-collecting Internal Revenue Service, the US financial watchdog and the Department for Health and Human Services. It also has a contract with the US army to modernise its battlefield intelligence system

and is reportedly working with the Pentagon on Project Maven, its artificial intelligence programme.

It helps several western governments combat terrorism and governments account for more than half of its revenue, with clients including the UK Ministry of Defence. Despite surging revenues – up 41% to \$1.5bn last year – it has posted annual net losses of \$520m, \$1.2bn and \$580m since 2019.

Its most controversial contracts in recent years have been with the US Immigration and Customs Enforcement Agency (ICE). It works with an ICE subdivision called Homeland Security Investigations (HSI). HSI tackles drug smuggling, money laundering and human trafficking, among other forms of criminal activity that might break US immigration and customs laws.

Palantir says it has never had a contract with the ICE unit responsible for deportations, Enforcement and Removal Operations or ERO. But a US immigrant rights group, Mijente, says its technology [played a role](#) in raids on food-processing plants in Mississippi in 2019 in which 680 undocumented immigrants – described as “removable aliens” in the [official press release](#) – were arrested.

Thiel, 54, is a libertarian billionaire who has used his fortune to [support rightwing candidates](#) in the US, including Trump’s successful bid for the presidency in 2016. His other Republican endorsements include Hillbilly Elegy author JD Vance, who is running for the Senate in Ohio, and Blake Masters, a senatorial midterm candidate for Arizona who warns of “widespread wokeness” [on his website](#). Speaking at a bitcoin conference in April, Thiel described ESG – which stands for environmental, social and corporate governance and is a [cornerstone of responsible investing principles](#) – as a “virtue signalling, hate factory term” while describing cryptocurrency’s supporters as a “revolutionary youth movement”.

Palantir’s co-founder and chief executive, Alex Karp, 54 is a Joe Biden supporter who [told the New York Times in 2020](#) that his leftwing upbringing and dual heritage – of a Jewish father and African American mother – would make him a natural target in the wake of a far-right powergrab. “Who’s the

first person who is going to get hung? You make a list, and I will show you who they get first. It's me. There's not a box I don't check."

However, Palantir's listing on the New York Stock Exchange in 2020 was accompanied by a letter from Karp that slammed the Silicon Valley community. Around the same time Palantir announced it was moving its headquarters from California to Denver, Colorado.

"Our company was founded in Silicon Valley. But we seem to share fewer and fewer of the [technology sector](#)'s values and commitments," Karp wrote. "Our software is used to target terrorists and to keep soldiers safe ... We have chosen sides, and we know that our partners value our commitment."

The head of Palantir's London office is Louis Mosley, grandson of Oswald Mosley and nephew of the late former president of Formula One's governing body, Max Mosley, who became a privacy campaigner [later in life](#). Speaking to the Sunday Times in 2020, Louis Mosley said Palantir's origins were as a defender of personal privacy. "Palantir was actually started to guard against government overreach into personal privacy. Much of the software we've built is to prove those kinds of protections."

Palantir describes itself as a software company that does not mine or sell customer data. Indeed, the bidder documents for the FDP state it is a platform that will be "owned and controlled by the NHS".

An NHS spokesperson said: "Safe and secure use of patient data allows the NHS to build services that are more responsive to patients, and this software we are seeking to use for the FDP will put the NHS in control of its data and ensure that sensitive patient information is kept in a secure environment that meets the highest national standards." The spokesperson added that the NHS would run a "fair and open" procurement process for the platform.

But MedConfidential's Booth says Palantir's work outside the UK should give the NHS pause when it considers awarding the contract, due to start in November. "Is this really a company we want to have at the heart of our NHS? You cannot divorce a piece of software from the company that makes it."

This article was downloaded by **calibre** from <https://www.theguardian.com/society/2022/jun/21/palantir-concerns-over-data-firm-poised-to-be-operating-system-of-nhs>

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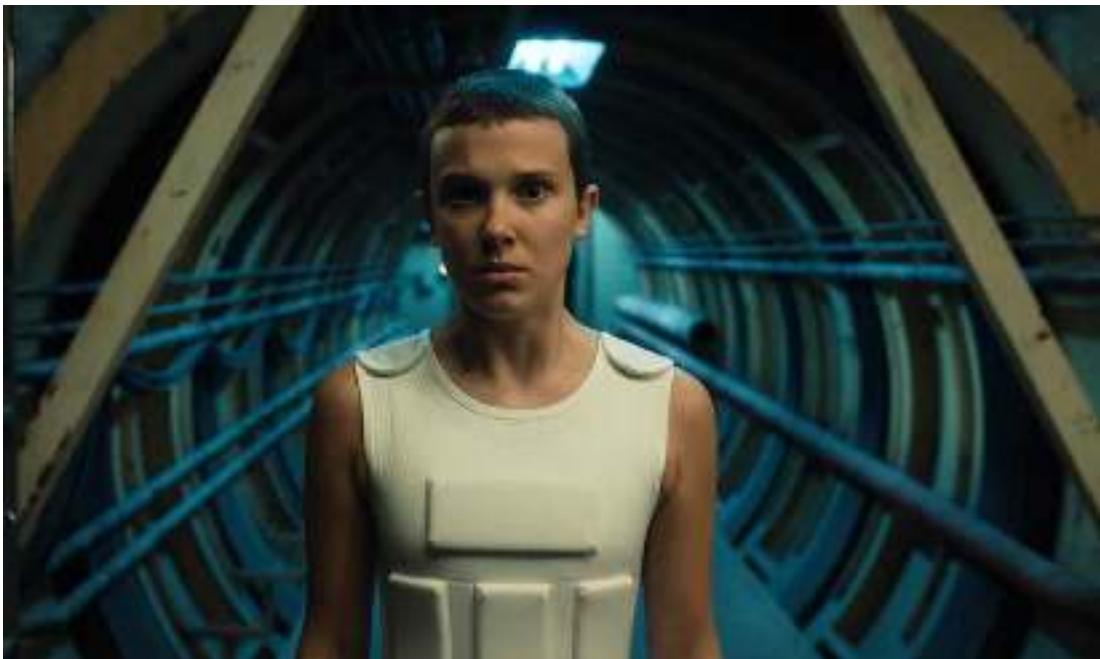
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[TV streaming](#)

Netflix and bills: which streaming services are really worth shelling out for?



Unmissable? ... Millie Bobby Brown as Eleven in Stranger Things on Netflix. Photograph: Courtesy of Netflix

Paramount+ is the latest entrant into our bewildering and expensive streaming landscape. But if you are looking to streamline your streaming services which are the easiest to ditch without feeling like you are missing out?



[Stuart Heritage](#)

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Tue 21 Jun 2022 05.00 EDT Last modified on Tue 21 Jun 2022 09.49 EDT

Remember being excited about new streaming services? A decade ago, when [Netflix](#) launched in the UK, it felt like a bracing (and cheap) antidote to expensive DVD box sets. Rather than shelling out £20 every time you wanted to watch a single season of *Breaking Bad*, you could access every episode – plus seemingly every episode of every other show that anyone liked – for £5 a month.

That golden age now seems like ancient history. Today's streaming landscape is cluttered and overly partitioned. Swarms of competing streaming services have flooded in to carve up the market, each with a hefty subscription fee, and the result can be only bad news for the viewer. Now, if you want to keep abreast of all the buzzy new shows, you require (at a minimum) Netflix, [Amazon Prime Video](#), Disney+, Apple TV+, Now and BritBox – a collection that adds up to more than £800 a year. Want to add in

sports or family accounts, or anything remotely niche on top of that? Great, but it will cost you.

During the cost of living crisis, many people have been cutting back. Netflix's share price tumbled in April when it revealed that it had lost [more than 200,000 subscribers](#) in the first quarter of 2022. The company estimates that it will lose another 2 million in the second quarter.

All of this makes it the worst possible time to launch a streaming service. Yet still new platforms appear. On 22 June, Paramount+ will become available in the UK, with its slate costing £69.90 a year. We are now in a situation where hardly anyone can afford to watch everything. Paramount+ could announce that it will livestream the birth of my next child and at this point I would have trouble justifying the outlay.

So, if you want to streamline your streaming, but don't want to give it up completely, which platforms offer the best value for money? Here is a guide.

Netflix



Netflix banker ... Ryan Gosling in *The Gray Man*. Photograph: © 2022 Netflix, Inc.

Cost: £6.99-£15.99 a month.

Best shows: Stranger Things, a retro teen-horror phenomenon now in its fourth season. [Better Call Saul](#), Breaking Bad's peerless prequel. Squid Game, a dark South Korean drama – nay, phenomenon – with a staggeringly high body count. Heartstopper, an achingly gorgeous LGBTQ+ love story.

Best films: [The Power of the Dog](#), an Oscar-winning revisionist western. Uncut Gems, an unbearably stressful Adam Sandler drama. The Mitchells vs the Machines, a riotous, joyful animation about a robot uprising. The Adam Project, a big, fun sci-fi comedy starring Ryan Reynolds. The Ballad of Buster Scruggs, a delightful Coen brothers anthology.

Best hidden gem: [Standing Up](#), Fanny Herrero's long-awaited follow-up to the beloved Call My Agent. Following a clutch of aspiring standup comedians in Paris, the series is full of warmth, heart and sharply defined characters. A complete joy.

Coming up: The Gray Man, Netflix's biggest movie so far. A globe-trotting action thriller, starring Ryan Gosling and Chris Evans, directed by the Russo Brothers of Marvel fame. Netflix really needs this film to work, so expect to be bored senseless with trailers.

Verdict: It might be losing pace to younger rivals, but Netflix still has an enviably large catalogue. It would benefit from some of the big legacy franchises that have migrated to other services, but you can still justify a subscription. Hopefully the long-promised ad-supported version will drive down prices in the near future, too.

Amazon Prime Video



Comedy gold ... Jean Smart in Amazon Prime's Hacks. Photograph: Amazon Prime Video

Cost: OK, this is tricky. Technically, a subscription costs £7.99 a month, but this also gets you free next-day delivery for many Amazon products. However, expect to find several hidden extras. Amazon offers about 50 additional channels – for sport, reality TV, foreign channels, movies, documentaries, etc – and these tend to cost between £5 and £10 a month each. Plus, some films and TV shows have to be bought on top of the subscription. There is basically no upper limit to the cost.

Best shows: Hacks, a beautifully observed Jean Smart comedy about an ageing Las Vegas performer. [The Boys](#), an audacious superhero satire that is the platform's buzziest show. Undone, a mind-blowing rotoscoped sci-fi drama about mental illness. Hunters, a series in which Al Pacino hunts Nazis. Clarkson's Farm, a show in which Jeremy Clarkson attempts an agricultural side-hustle.

Best films: [Sound of Metal](#), Riz Ahmed's deaf-drummer drama. One Night in Miami, a fizzy civil rights movie. Everybody's Talking About Jamie, a lovely musical adaptation.

Best hidden gem: Sea Oak, a dark comedy about Glenn Close dying and wreaking a terrible revenge on everyone around her, created by the Booker-prize-winning author George Saunders. Amazon commissioned it as a pilot, then bewilderingly neglected to make it into a series.

Coming up: Brace yourself for a very big deal. In September, Amazon will launch [The Lord of the Rings: The Rings of Power](#), a wildly ambitious Tolkien prequel series that will reportedly be the most expensive TV series in history. Again, you will hear about this one ad nauseam.

Verdict: A strange one. There are long stretches of time where Prime Video seems like an afterthought, a semi-neglected sideshow to all the commerce and logistics of its parent company. Based on its current offerings, it is hard to know who Prime Video is for. Perhaps The Lord of the Rings will change all that.

Apple TV+



Warmhearted ... Brendan Hunt (left), and Jason Sudeikis in *Ted Lasso* on Apple TV+. Photograph: AP

Cost: £4.99 a month.

Best shows: [Severance](#), a Kaufmanesque workplace sci-fi. Ted Lasso, a warmhearted football sitcom. Mythic Quest, a video-game-development sitcom by the creator of It's Always Sunny in Philadelphia. [The Morning Show](#), a ludicrously operatic #MeToo drama starring Reese Witherspoon and Jennifer Aniston. For All Mankind, a wildly ambitious alternative-universe drama.

Best films: [Coda](#), this year's best picture Oscar winner. The Tragedy of Macbeth, Joel Coen's stirring Shakespeare adaptation. Greyhound, in which Tom Hanks plays a naval captain in the second world war.

Best hidden gem: Physical, a bizarrely undiscussed comedy drama in which Rose Byrne discovers herself through the medium of aerobics in the 1980s.

Coming up: Killers of the Flower Moon, the next Martin Scorsese movie.

Verdict: For a while, thanks to a shaky launch that included a terrible Jason Momoa series, Apple TV+ looked destined to become the streaming service that was easiest to avoid. But in the past few months, it has managed to find its feet with a procession of some of the best-reviewed TV shows in recent memory. For a fiver a month, Apple TV+ is pound for pound the best-value platform available.

Disney+



The gang's all here ... *Avengers: Infinity War* and every other Marvel film on Disney+. Photograph: null/PR Company Handout

Cost: £7.99 a month.

Best shows: [The Dropout](#), a magnificent retelling of the Theranos scandal. *WandaVision*, a genre-bending Marvel series that felt like an extension to, rather than a competitor of, the Marvel Cinematic Universe. *The Mandalorian*, an epic space western that takes Star Wars to a new place. *Only Murders in the Building*, Steve Martin's riotous and forensically plotted murder-mystery. [Dopesick](#), a harrowing pharmaceutical drama.

Best films: Every Marvel film, every Star Wars film, every Disney film, every Pixar film.

Best hidden gem: [Reservation Dogs](#), Taika Waititi's thoughtful, low-key sitcom about life on a Native American reserve.

Coming up: A Cars spin-off, a Willow spin-off, a Pinocchio remake, a Big Hero 6 spin-off, loads of Marvel shows, loads of Star Wars shows.

Verdict: As you may have guessed from the above, your enjoyment of Disney+ will probably hinge on how much you enjoy watching [Disney+](#) properties being spun off into infinity. If you can't imagine your life without

Star Wars or The Avengers, a subscription will be mandatory. At the same time, however, you can't help feeling it would benefit greatly from some new ideas.

Now



One of the best shows of all time ... Succession on Now. Photograph: HBO

Cost: £9.99 a month to watch TV shows, £9.99 a month to watch films, plus £33.99 a month to watch sport.

Best shows: Barry, Bill Hader's incredibly dark hitman comedy. [Succession](#), one of the best shows of all time. Yellowjackets, an all-female Lost-style drama that may well be about cannibalism. The Sopranos. The Wire. Curb Your Enthusiasm.

Best films: Dune, Ghostbusters: Afterlife and Pig. Many new cinema releases eventually end up on Now.

Best hidden gem: Girls5eva, a tremendous comedy about a reforming girl group. It is produced by Tina Fey, so expect more gags per minute than anything else on television.

Coming up: Season four of Westworld, a show that manages to be simultaneously beloved and impenetrable.

Verdict: A tricky one. The most expensive streaming service, Now is basically Sky in fancy clothes. It has possibly the best selection of any service (thanks to its deals with HBO and NBC), but its movie offerings are noticeably lighter than they were a year ago (thanks to other platforms nabbing the good stuff). Also, it is worth noting that HBO and NBC have their own streaming services in the US. If they migrate over here, Now's appeal will evaporate.

BritBox



Skippable ... Carry on Screaming on BritBox. Photograph: Studiocanal Films/REX/Shutterstock

Cost: £5.99 a month.

Best shows: [The Beast Must Die](#), a Jared Harris thriller. Lambs of God, an Australian drama about abandoned nuns. Spitting Image, a revived version of the satirical puppet show.

Best films: Trainspotting, Bent, all the Carry On films.

Best hidden gem: The Dry, an Irish comedy drama about a recovering alcoholic.

Coming up: To the Manor Born.

Verdict: BritBox is by far the most skippable streaming platform. There are several reasons. First, its original programming is nowhere near grabby enough to make people want to part with money. Second, the bulk of its offering comes in the form of old BBC and ITV shows, and as such should probably be made available on BBC iPlayer and ITV Hub, which are free.

Paramount+



Coming soon to Paramount+ ... Chiwetel Ejiofor and Naomie Harris in The Man Who Fell to Earth. Photograph: Rico Torres/Showtime

Cost: £6.99 a month.

Best shows: All the new Star Trek shows. South Park. [Halo](#), a video-game adaptation. The First Lady, a drama about three American first ladies. Super Pumped, a drama about Uber.

Best films: The Star Trek movies, Paw Patrol: The Movie, most films made by Paramount.

Best hidden gem: It's hard to say pre-launch, but probably The Man Who Fell to Earth, a new series starring Chiwetel Ejiofor and Naomie Harris.

Coming up: Paramount+ hasn't launched yet, but expect many Showtime favourites – Billions, Dexter – to be cordoned off here. If you want to see what happens on the next series of Yellowjackets, chances are you will need a Paramount+ subscription.

Verdict: At the moment, the thought of parting with yet more money to watch another streaming service is galling. There is a good chance that Paramount+ will represent the moment where households dig their heels in and refuse to shell out any more. True, this will mean missing out on the big, prestigious Showtime shows that have traditionally been available as part of a Now subscription. But times are hard and money isn't limitless. Besides, at the end of the day, it is just TV.

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2022.06.21 - Opinion

- Someone must tell Britain about the real cost of war in Ukraine – does Johnson have the authority?
- When stressed, we ‘catastrophize’ – but we can learn to calm our irrational fears
- Pacificism is the wrong response to the war in Ukraine
- The Tories may relish a fight over Rwanda deportations, but that doesn’t mean they will win

OpinionUkraine

Someone must tell Britain about the real cost of war in Ukraine – does Johnson have the authority?

[Gaby Hinsliff](#)



After the last time the prime minister asked us to do something painful for the greater good, the public may not be too impressed



‘It’s not Ukraine’s fault that we have a moral vacuum for a leader.’ Boris Johnson and Volodymyr Zelenskiy in Kyiv, 17 June 2022. Photograph: Ukraine Presidency/ZUMA Press Wire Service/REX/Shutterstock

Tue 21 Jun 2022 03.00 EDT Last modified on Tue 21 Jun 2022 08.45 EDT

Whenever Boris Johnson is in the doghouse at home, there’s one place he can always expect a warm welcome. So it is perhaps no surprise he [abandoned a planned speech](#) to restless northern Tory MPs in favour of flying to Ukraine last week, for another firm handshake with its heroic wartime president. Yet, cynical as the timing of this particular photo opportunity looks, Johnson’s warning of the dangers of “Ukraine fatigue” setting in as the war grinds on was salutary and fair. What he has yet to do, however, is spell out exactly what being in it for the long haul – which could [now mean years](#), according to Nato’s secretary general Jens Stoltenberg – actually involves.

The days when solidarity with [Ukraine](#) meant putting a blue and yellow flag on your social media profile and watching TikToks of farmers merrily stealing Russian tanks are over. Britain is not strictly speaking at war, but ours is now a wartime economy. This country has entered a new and unfamiliar form of conflict which does not risk the lives of British soldiers, but effectively puts our economic wellbeing on the frontline instead. Withstanding the economic storm now buffeting us, as war pushes the price

of both oil and wheat ever higher, is the contribution most ordinary Britons didn't quite realise we were going to be making to the war effort.

Life is already tough for millions thanks to the soaring fuel and [food prices](#), which have driven up what would have been rocketing inflation anyway (caused globally by countries roaring back to life post-pandemic, and exacerbated in Britain by Brexit). But it's going to get tougher when the weather gets cold enough to put the central heating on. This is something Vladimir Putin is undoubtedly factoring in to his calculations about how long European solidarity will hold before someone cracks and tries to push Ukraine towards a "[bad peace](#)".

The new chief of the army's [call for British troops](#) to get "fighting fit" for another war in Europe should correctly be read, meanwhile, not as a sign that anyone is about to deploy, but as a warning to the Treasury that planned cuts to the army would be a false economy. For Putin, this isn't just a battle over territory in Ukraine but a means of probing for weakness within Nato, and none of Ukraine's neighbours will be safe unless the alliance demonstrates its willingness to defend them if necessary. But it's unclear how all this is going to be paid for, with Gordon Brown arguing that planned corporation and fuel tax rises [may have to be ditched](#) to avoid pushing inflation any higher, and plenty of other pressing domestic demands on the chancellor's purse. Ukraine and levelling up may soon be competing, in other words, for more than just space in Johnson's diary.

An autumn of strikes and painful public-sector pay negotiations meanwhile looms, as squeezed workers understandably push for pay rises. Lecturing people on the [need for restraint](#), as the chief secretary to the Treasury Simon Clarke did yesterday, may work if this is a very temporary blip (especially if the message is clearly aimed at higher earners who can afford to be noble). But what if this new form of economic warfare means living with higher fuel and food costs for the longer term?

Vulnerable people will obviously have to be protected, as they were in last month's emergency package of help with fuel bills. But we would also have to rethink everything from food security to public transport and how we heat our homes. That means not ditching net-zero policies as some Tory

backbenchers want, but doubling down on them, for the sake of the planet but also of our own resilience in a world where the price of oil may not be falling any time soon. Hints that Downing Street is looking at emergency measures to boost home insulation this autumn, helping people use less gas, would be the kind of win-win idea we are going to need. But that's the easy bit.

Rishi Sunak's budget this autumn is inexorably becoming a wartime one, something the Treasury has understood. Listening to the chancellor fielding questions at a session on the cost of living in Bishop Auckland earlier this month, I was struck that he responded to a question about the cost of petrol by saying Britain had "taken a collective decision to stand up to Putin"; that we weren't sacrificing our troops on Ukrainian soil as we may once have done but instead making collective sacrifices at home. But wartime sacrifice requires public consent, which this government has yet to secure explicitly.

Does it even have the moral authority to try? The last time Johnson asked the nation to do something painful for the greater good, he was standing at a lectern flanked by worried-looking doctors and telling everyone to stay at home. To put it mildly, given what we now know was happening in Downing Street while the rest of us were in lockdown, it's hard to imagine another plea for noble sacrifice going down well.

But it's not Ukraine's fault that we have a moral vacuum for a leader. If Stoltenberg is right about the crisis grinding on for years, then it is something Johnson's successor will probably be grappling with too. There is no painless form of war, no matter how cold or hot it runs, nor how far away it seems. Sooner or later, someone has to level with the public about the fact that freedom only ever comes at a price.

- Gaby Hinsliff is a Guardian columnist
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| [Section menu](#) | [Main menu](#) |

OpinionHealth

When stressed, we ‘catastrophize’ – but we can learn to calm our irrational fears

[Sophie Brickman](#)

Our primitive brains summon up worst-case scenarios to protect us from danger. In today's world, that can be debilitating



When we feel out of control, we shift down to our primitive coping mechanisms, ramping up our fear responses. Photograph: RapidEye/Getty Images

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The first day I returned to work after maternity leave, I walked to the office racked with a fear I knew to be highly unlikely: that our new, and loving, caregiver would push the stroller across the street at the precise moment a reckless driver ran the light. I imagined the sound of tires screeching, the sickening crunch. I started to sweat, and my heart rate quickened. And then,

when I got to the office, I took a deep breath, told myself to pull it together, and did.

What I was doing, I later learned, is common to new parents. In a heightened emotional state, you're more prone to what psychologists call "catastrophizing", or experiencing "intrusive thoughts" – imagining the worst-case scenario, however improbable it might be. They came at me full-throttle when I became a mother; according to studies, I'm not alone. By some estimates, [more than 70%](#) of new mothers have them. One close friend catastrophizes, but in reverse – once the danger has passed, once the baby has been released from the doctor with just a normal virus, not the dreaded MIS-C, she'll sit with the fear of what could have happened.

In moderation, while they're certainly not fun, these fantasies are healthy and normal. They are rooted deep in our bodies, an adaptive trait and evolutionary defense mechanism that helps us prepare for the worst and protect our most valuable possession. If I stay inside the cave and obsess about a mastodon attacking my baby while gulping back my cave wine and binge-watching cave paintings, the lower the chances I wander out on to the tundra and have a tusked encounter, in other words.

What isn't healthy? Being bombarded with such a relentless onslaught of tragic events that the condition of simply living in today's world makes these feelings chronic. So chronic, our brains' ability to process uncertainty and anxiety might be diminishing – as we speak.

First, some stress stats: according to a [March poll](#) released by the American Psychological Association, inflation, supply chain problems, global uncertainty and Russia's invasion of Ukraine, on top of a two-year pandemic, have pushed America's stress to "alarming" and "unprecedented levels" that will "challenge our ability to cope", APA's CEO said. And unhealthy behaviors that began in Covid's first year – more drinking, less exercise – "became entrenched" in the second, suggesting that the path towards a collective recalibration may be a far way off. That goes for parents ("[Parents Aren't All Right](#)," blared a recent Axios article), and non-parents, too.

One way I was able to turn these stats into something more vivid – beyond tallying up my glass-of-wine-and-fistful-of-gummy-bear-consumption-per-week – was to speak to a neurologist who has found herself particularly concerned about what all this might be doing to our neural functions.

“The whole world – but certainly we see it very vividly in America – has had brain changes due to chronic stress, which makes us less capable of making decisions that can give us a healthy future, both at an individual and cultural level,” Dr Amy Arnsten, a professor of neuroscience and psychology at Yale medical school, told me. I’d reached out after coming across [a YouTube video](#) she posted during the first year of the pandemic that clearly delineates how the brain processes uncontrollable stress, and how that has been exacerbated during Covid.

The nuts and bolts: there are more primitive parts of the brain (like the amygdala) that control our basic functions, like our heart rate, or the immediate rush of fear we feel when a snake slithers across our path; and more evolved regions (like the prefrontal cortex) that execute top-down control, and allow us to focus, plan ahead, and inhibit bad impulses. I have my prefrontal cortex to thank for the statistical reality I was able to summon, that first day back from maternity leave, that assuaged my fear of a skipped light and a vigorously pushed stroller.

When we get stressed or feel out of control, we shift down to our primitive coping mechanisms, ramping up our fear responses and shutting off the prefrontal cortex. The higher the levels of arousal or stress, the stronger those primitive circuits get, the less affected you feel by things that might normally give you pleasure, and the more things feel threatening or sad.

As Arnsten explained to me, your brain is wired to activate its fear system if it sees someone else afraid. So when horrifying news blows up our phones, we instinctively empathize. Combine that with the new normal of living in a constant state of Covid-related uncertainty, and a political environment that can feel hopeless and intransigent, and you get a perfect neurological storm that has her worried.

“You are losing the very circuits that enable you to self-regulate, to be rational,” Arnsten told me, “and in a small-grained way not to be irritable,

which is really important for family health.”

Can we get those circuits back? Research suggests yes, if we spend time in calm environments in which we feel in control. There are active ways to combat our new reality, many of which we know but don’t pursue: exercise can strengthen the prefrontal cortex, deep breathing can calm one’s arousal systems. Seeking out joy and humor, in the forms of books or music, can help. Another simple suggestion: “Do something that helps you feel more efficacious,” Arnsten said, “even if it’s very small. Often times, helping someone else can help jumpstart that.”

Before we hung up, Arnsten mentioned one large caveat. In 2011, Mount Sinai School of Medicine researchers put three cohorts of rats – young, middle-aged and aged – through stressful situations (which, for a rat, means being restrained by wire mesh), and determined that “aging modulates the capacity for experience-dependent spine plasticity in PFC neurons”. Spines, in this case, refer to “dendritic spines”, which protrude from a neuron’s dendrite, and receive input. You lose them during chronic stress exposure. In layperson’s terms, the study concluded that the older you are, the harder it is to weather the negative effects of chronic stress exposure and respond rationally – if you’re a rat.

“Now that I’m an oldish rat,” Arnsten told me with a chuckle, “I’m hoping they didn’t wait enough in the study; that connectivity did, in fact, return with time.”

For the older rats among us, here’s to hoping.

- Sophie Brickman is a contributor to the New Yorker, the New York Times and other publications, and the author of [Baby, Unplugged: One Mother’s Search for Balance, Reason, and Sanity in the Digital Age](#)

OpinionUkraine

Pacifism is the wrong response to the war in Ukraine

Slavoj Žižek

The least we owe Ukraine is full support, and to do this we need a stronger Nato



‘The US strategy to counter-act through Europe is far from self-evident.’
Photograph: Francisco Seco/AP

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For me, John Lennon’s mega-hit Imagine was always a song popular for the wrong reasons. Imagine that “the world will live as one” is the best way to end in hell.

Those who cling to pacifism in the face of the Russian attack on [Ukraine](#) remain caught in their own version of “imagine”. Imagine a world in which tensions are no longer resolved through armed conflicts ... Europe persisted

in this world of “imagine”, ignoring the brutal reality outside its borders. Now it’s the time to awaken.

The dream of a quick Ukrainian victory, the repetition of the initial dream of a quick Russian victory, is over. In what looks more and more as a protracted stalemate, Russia is slowly progressing, and its ultimate goal is clearly stated. There is no longer any need to read between the lines when Putin [compares](#) himself with Peter the Great: “On the face of it, he was at war with Sweden taking something away from it … He was not taking away anything, he was returning … He was returning and reinforcing, that is what he was doing … Clearly, it fell to our lot to return and reinforce as well.”

More than focus on particular issues (is [Russia](#) really just “returning”, and to what?) we should read carefully Putin’s general justification of his claim: “In order to claim some kind of leadership – I am not even talking about global leadership, I mean leadership in any area – any country, any people, any ethnic group should ensure their sovereignty. Because there is no in-between, no intermediate state: either a country is sovereign, or it is a colony, no matter what the colonies are called.”

The implication of these lines, as one [commentator](#) put it, is clear: there are two categories of state: “The sovereign and the conquered. In Putin’s imperial view, Ukraine should fall into the latter category.”

And, as it is no less clear from Russian official statements in the last months, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Finland, the Baltic states … and ultimately [Europe](#) itself “fall into the latter category”.

We now know what the call to allow Putin to “save his face” means. It means accepting not a minor territorial compromise in Donbas but Putin’s imperial ambition. The reason this ambition should be unconditionally rejected is that in today’s global world in which we are all haunted by the same catastrophes we are all in-between, in an intermediate state, neither a sovereign country nor a conquered one: to insist on full sovereignty in the face of global warming is sheer madness since our very survival hinges on tight global cooperation.

But Russia doesn't simply ignore global warming – why was it so mad at the Scandinavian countries when they expressed their intention to join Nato? With global warming, what is at stake is the control of the Arctic passage. (That's why Trump wanted to buy Greenland from Denmark.) Due to the explosive development of China, Japan and South Korea, the main transport route will run north of Russia and Scandinavia. Russia's strategic plan is to profit from global warming: control the world's main transport route, plus develop Siberia and control Ukraine. In this way, Russia will dominate so much food production that it will be able to blackmail the whole world. This is the ultimate economic reality beneath Putin's imperial dream.

Those who advocate less support for Ukraine and more pressure on it to negotiate, inclusive of accepting painful territorial renunciations, like to repeat that Ukraine simply cannot win the war against Russia. True, but I see exactly in this the greatness of Ukrainian resistance: they risked the impossible, defying pragmatic calculations, and the least we owe them is full support, and to do this, we need a stronger Nato – but not as a prolongation of the US politics.

The US strategy to counteract through Europe is far from self-evident: not just Ukraine, Europe itself is becoming the place of the proxy war between US and Russia, which may well end up by a compromise between the two at Europe's expense. There are only two ways for Europe to step out of this place: to play the game of neutrality – a short-cut to catastrophe – or to become an autonomous agent. (Just think how the situation may change if Trump wins the next US elections.)

While some leftists claim that the ongoing war is in the interest of the Nato industrial-military complex, which uses the need for new arms to avoid crisis and gain new profits, their true message to Ukraine is: OK, you are victims of a brutal aggression, but do not rely on our arms because in this way you play in the hands of the industrial-military complex ...

The disorientation caused by the Ukrainian war is producing strange bedfellows like Henry Kissinger and Noam Chomsky who "come from opposing ends of the political spectrum – Kissinger serving as secretary of state under Republican presidents and Chomsky one of the leading leftwing intellectuals in the United States – and have frequently clashed. But when it

comes to the Russian invasion of Ukraine, both recently advocated for Ukraine to consider a settlement that could see it dropping claim to some land to achieve a quicker peace deal.”

In short, the two stand for the same version of “pacifism” which only works if we neglect the key fact that the war is not about Ukraine but a moment of the brutal attempt to change our entire geopolitical situation. The true target of the war is the dismantlement of the European unity advocated not only by the US conservatives and Russia but also by the European extreme right and left – at this point, in France, Melenchon meets Le Pen.

The craziest notion floating around these days is that, to counter the new polarity between the US and China (which stand for the excesses of western liberalism and oriental authoritarianism), Europe and Russia should rejoin forces and form a third “Eurasian” block based on the Christian legacy purified of its liberal excess. The very idea of an “Eurasian” third way is a form of today’s fascism.

So what will happen “when voters in Europe and America, faced with soaring energy costs and broader inflation driven by sanctions against Russia, might lose their appetite for a war that seems to have no end, with needs that are only expanding as both sides head for a protracted stalemate”? The answer is clear: at that point, the European legacy will be lost, and Europe will be de facto divided between an American and a Russian sphere of influence. In short, Europe itself will become the place of a war that seems to have no end ...

What is absolutely unacceptable for a true leftist today is not only to support Russia but also to make a more “modest” neutral claim that the left is divided between pacifists and supporters of Ukraine, and that one should treat this division as a minor fact which shouldn’t affect the left’s global struggle against global capitalism.

When a country is occupied, it is the ruling class which is usually bribed to collaborate with the occupiers to maintain its privileged position, so that the struggle against the occupiers becomes a priority. The same can go for the struggle against racism; in a state of racial tension and exploitation, the only way to effectively struggle for the working class is to focus on fighting

racism (this is why any appeal to the white working class, as in today's alt-right populism, betrays class struggle).

Today, one cannot be a leftist if one does not unequivocally stand behind Ukraine. To be a leftist who "shows understanding" for Russia is like to be one of those leftists who, before Germany attacked the Soviet Union, took seriously German "anti-imperialist" rhetoric directed at the UK and advocated neutrality in the war of Germany against France and the UK.

If the left will fail here, the game is over for it. But does this mean that the Left should simply take the side of the west, inclusive of the rightist fundamentalists who also support Ukraine?

In a speech in Dallas on 18 May 2022, while criticizing Russia's political system, the ex-president Bush said: "The result is an absence of checks and balances in Russia, and the decision of one man to launch a wholly unjustified and brutal invasion of Iraq." He quickly corrected himself: "I mean, of Ukraine," then said "Iraq, anyway" to laughter from the crowd, and added "75", referring to his age.

As many commentators noted, two things cannot but strike the eye in this rather obvious Freudian slip: the fact that the public received Bush's implicit confession that the US attack on Iraq (ordered by him) was "a wholly unjustified and brutal invasion" with laughter, instead of treating it as an admission of a crime comparable to the Russian invasion of Ukraine; plus Bush's enigmatic continuation of his self-correction "Iraq, anyway" – what did he mean by it? That the difference between Ukraine and Iraq doesn't really matter? The final reference to his advanced age doesn't affect in any way this enigma.

But the enigma is dispelled the moment we take Bush's statement seriously and literally: yes, with all differences taken into account (Zelenskiy is not a dictator like Saddam), Bush did the same thing as Putin is now doing to Ukraine, so they should be both judged by the same standard.

On the day I am writing this, we learned from the media that WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange's extradition to the US has been approved by the UK home secretary, Priti Patel. His crime? Nothing other than to render public

the crimes confessed by Bush's slip of tongue: the documents revealed by WikiLeaks revealed how, under Bush's presidency, "the US military had killed hundreds of civilians in unreported incidents during the war in Afghanistan, while leaked Iraq war files showed 66,000 civilians had been killed, and prisoners tortured." Crimes fully comparable with what Putin is doing in Ukraine. From today's hindsight, we can say that WikiLeaks disclosed dozens of American Buchas and Mariupols.

So while putting Bush on trial is no less illusory than bringing Putin to the Hague tribunal, the minimum to be done by those who oppose Russian invasion of Ukraine is to demand Assange's immediate release. Ukraine claims it fights for Europe, and Russia claims it fights for the rest of the world against western unipolar hegemony. Both claims should be rejected, and here the difference between right and left enters the stage.

From the rightist standpoint, Ukraine fights for European values against the non-European authoritarians; from the leftist standpoint, Ukraine fights for global freedom, inclusive of the freedom of Russians themselves. That's why the heart of every true Russian patriot beats for Ukraine.

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[Opinion](#)[Immigration and asylum](#)

The Tories may relish a fight over Rwanda deportations, but that doesn't mean they will win

[Daniel Trilling](#)

To make a success of its policy, the government must not only upset the left but also deter asylum seekers from crossing the Channel



The British home secretary, Priti Patel, addresses MPs in the House of Commons, 15 June 2022. Photograph: UK Parliament/Jessica Taylor/AP

Tue 21 Jun 2022 01.00 EDT Last modified on Tue 21 Jun 2022 11.39 EDT

Nationalism is always an unfinished project. It might promise to restore a nation's sovereignty, or to win a people's independence, or to preserve cherished traditions – but these are cast as goals to come. And rightwing populists, who define themselves against an anti-national elite, are

constantly in need of enemies whom they can accuse of standing in the way of that project being fulfilled.

You can see these populist overtones in the way the government is spinning last week's failed deportation flight to Rwanda. Over the weekend, Downing Street insiders briefed journalists that the row over the flight was a "[dividing line par excellence](#)" that would revive Boris Johnson's flagging support. Rather than a sign of government incompetence, the flight – which was cancelled after court challenges – was part of a successful "[wedge week](#)". In this telling, disputes over refugees, rail strikes and the Northern Ireland protocol would divert attention from such trivialities as spiralling poverty and government corruption, and remind voters who the real enemy was.

This was less a sober assessment of reality and more a nod to Tory-supporting media outlets about where to direct their readers' anger. Not that they need much encouragement: the Mail has already obliged, [enthusiastically reporting](#) on government plans to "rip up Labour's Human Rights Act" and thwart the European court of human rights. The Times has [outed](#) a "Corbynite" campaigner who challenged the Rwanda flight in court. On Monday, the Sun [told readers](#) that this week's strikes were taking Britain back to – guess where – the 1970s.

These tactics may not be subtle, but they need to be taken seriously. Deportation flights have taken on great symbolic power in British politics. Successive governments have been routinely organising charter flights to deport people – foreign national offenders, visa overstayers, asylum seekers whom the British state rejects – since the days of Tony Blair. But Johnson's government has given them ever-greater prominence, turning them into a symbol of how effectively the state can control its borders. (It's worth remembering that the incident that precipitated [the resignation of Johnson's first ethics adviser](#) was his refusal to sack the home secretary, Priti Patel, over bullying allegations after a row on the night of a charter flight to Jamaica in February 2020.)

There are already signs that the Rwanda row is having the effect the government would like. As the political sociologist Paula Surridge points out, [polling by YouGov](#), carried out in April [and again last week](#), suggests

that support for the policy among Conservative voters has risen from 59% to 74%, with a majority now strongly in favour. Progressives, [cautioned the Spectator's Stephen Daisley](#), should not cheer on the manner in which the flight was blocked: court challenges on human rights grounds, accompanied by protests that held up Home Office vans leaving a detention centre near Heathrow. Making a success of flights to Rwanda “is effectively a war now,” one Conservative MP [reportedly declared](#) last week.

Yet the government’s position is less secure than it seems. The Rwanda policy, while ostentatiously brutal, is also an attempt to resolve a weakness on Johnson’s right flank. To succeed on the government’s terms it not only needs to upset the left, but actually deter asylum seekers from crossing the Channel in small boats – an issue that has long exercised rightwing talking heads such as [Nigel Farage](#) and Douglas Murray.

This is unlikely to happen, at least any time soon. The policy is founded on the erroneous assumption that asylum seekers crossing the Channel are, [in the words of Patel](#), “economic migrants” who choose Britain as a destination as casually as one might pick a holiday. Rather, as [reports from northern France](#) repeatedly show, these are generally refugees who are set on reaching Britain because of family ties, language or a conviction that it’s the only place where they’ll really be safe. It should come as no surprise, given the history – and the [snail’s pace](#) of the official Afghanistan resettlement scheme – that the largest group by nationality [are currently Afghans](#).

The fact that people are taking dangerous boat journeys is a genuine problem – but it’s a problem for the migrants themselves, as last November’s [deadly sinking](#) showed us. What the government won’t admit, however, is that the swiftest way to undermine the people-smugglers’ business model would be either to set up asylum processing facilities in France, or to give people visas so they can come to the UK directly. That would probably mean accommodating more refugees overall. But as the immigration barrister and author Colin Yeo [points out](#), that would only bring the UK into line with countries such as France and Germany – and the relative successes of schemes for people fleeing Ukraine and Hong Kong suggest we have the capacity.

To some, arguing for this alternative may sound like a gift to Johnson's Tories. Keir Starmer's spokesperson notably [refused to say](#) whether a Labour government would scrap the Rwanda policy on taking office, while other senior Labour politicians have chosen to criticise the policy primarily on the grounds of efficiency. But public attitudes towards immigration are more complex than is often believed. [Long-term polling](#) by Ipsos and British Future, published in March, suggests that, overall, immigration is no longer the lightning-rod issue it was before the Brexit referendum.

On asylum, according to the polling, 75% of the population believes that refugees should be able to seek protection, including in Britain. Crucially, 46% would rather have a “fair” asylum system, even if it means more people given refuge in the UK – more than the 32% who would prefer a system that deters people from seeking asylum in the UK. The issue is far from settled, but there is potential for politicians and campaigners with the courage to take on Johnson’s culture war politics to build a broader coalition.

Campaigns like this take time, however – and they must not come at the expense of efforts to protect people whose lives are directly harmed by this government here and now. The protests and legal challenges that stopped the flight may well provoke a rightwing backlash. But, ultimately, this government’s culture war politics will only be defeated if enough people speak out. In the short term, these interventions have created vital breathing space for people whose rights are under threat. “I felt like I was going to die,” said Zoran, an Iranian Kurdish refugee scheduled for deportation to Rwanda last week, [about his experience](#). Mohammed, who was also due to be on the flight, said: “It felt like I was going to be executed.” For now, they have won a reprieve.

- Daniel Trilling is the author of *Lights in the Distance: Exile and Refuge at the Borders of Europe*
 - *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*
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| [Section menu](#) | [Main menu](#) |

2022.06.21 - Around the world

- Texas school shooting Heavily armed police with ballistic shields were there ‘within 19 minutes’
- January 6 hearings Donald Trump plotted fake electors scheme, panel set to show
- Uyghurs US ban on cotton from forced labour comes into force
- Can you balance on one leg? Research suggests it may be good test of longevity
- Pakistan Father-in-law charged with murder of Australian woman Sajida Tasneem

Texas school shooting

Texas school shooting: heavily armed police with ballistic shields were there ‘within 19 minutes’

Timeline published in local news reports suggests police in Uvalde had ability to confront gunman far earlier during May attack in which 21 died



Flowers and tributes left at Robb elementary school on 17 June in Uvalde, Texas. An investigation into the police response to the shooting is underway.
Photograph: Brandon Bell/Getty Images

Associated Press

Tue 21 Jun 2022 00.10 EDT Last modified on Tue 21 Jun 2022 13.02 EDT

Multiple police officers armed with rifles and at least one ballistic shield were at the site of the Robb elementary school mass shooting in [Texas](#) within 19 minutes, earlier than previously known, according to a timeline in documents reviewed by local media.

The information revealed by the Austin American-Statesman and [KVUE-TV](#) is to be presented to a public Texas Senate hearing in Austin on Tuesday.

Concerns have been raised about how police handled the 24 May shooting in Uvalde in which 19 children and two teachers were shot dead by a gunman. Officers did not confront the gunman for more than an hour, even as anguished parents outside the school urged officers to go in.

According to the outlets, which did not indicate the source of the documents, investigators said the latest information indicated officers had more than enough firepower and protection to take down the gunman long before they finally did.



Texas Department of Public Safety director Steve McCraw testifies at a Texas senate hearing at the state capitol Tuesday, in Austin, Texas.
Photograph: Eric Gay/AP

The timeline the American-Statesman and KVUE reported from the documents included footage from inside the school that showed the 18-year-old gunman casually entering a rear door at 11.33am, walking to a classroom and immediately spraying gunfire before barricading himself. Video showed 11 officers entering the school three minutes later, the outlets reported.

School district police Chief Pete Arredondo called the Uvalde police department landline and reported that their suspect had “shot a lot” with an AR-15-style rifle and outgunned the officers at the school, who he said were armed only with pistols, the outlets reported.

Four minutes later, at 11.44am, body camera video recorded the sound of more gunshots. At 11.52am, the first ballistic shield arrived as officers grew impatient to act. Arredondo struggled to find a key to the classroom door even though no one is believed to have tried opening the door, the outlets reported.

Another officer with a ballistic shield arrived at 12.03pm, and another came with a shield two minutes later. About 30 minutes before officers finally breached the classroom door, Arredondo is heard wondering aloud if the gunman could be shot through a window. At 12.46pm, Arredondo told the tactical team members to breach the door when ready, the outlets reported.

In the past week, the San Antonio Express-News reported that video surveillance footage from the school did not show officers attempting to open the door leading to the classrooms where the massacre was happening. And The New York Times reported two Uvalde city police officers told a sheriff’s deputy that they [passed up a fleeting chance to shoot the gunman](#) while he was still outside the school because they feared they would hit children.

Delays in the law enforcement response have been the focus of the federal, state and local investigation of the massacre and its aftermath. Questions about the law enforcement response began days after the massacre. Col Steve McCraw, director of the Texas Department of Public Safety, said on 27 May that Arredondo made “the wrong decision” when he chose not to storm the classroom for more than 70 minutes, even as trapped fourth graders inside two classrooms were desperately calling 911 for help.

Arredondo later said he [didn’t consider himself the person in charge](#) and assumed someone else had taken control of the law enforcement response. Arredondo has declined repeated requests for comment to the Associated Press.

On 2 June, state senator Roland Gutierrez said it was a “system failure” that Arredondo received no word of the pleas for help from people inside the school because he had no two-way radio link with city police. “I want to know specifically who was receiving the 911 calls,” Gutierrez said during a news conference.

The Uvalde school board heard from members of the public on Monday, including relatives of those killed in the attack. They took turns criticizing the police response and what they described as lax security measures at the school in general.

Lyliana Garcia, 16, is the daughter of teacher Irma Garcia, who was killed in the shooting, and Jose Garcia, who died of a heart attack two days later.

“The knowledge of being orphaned at such a young age is inconceivable,” she told the school board. “These are the consequences my family has to suffer due to the lack of due diligence. I would like to share a quote of one of my sister’s agonizing cries. She said, ‘My mom died protecting her students, but who was protecting my mom?’”

A legislative committee looking at law enforcement response completed another day of closed-door hearings in Uvalde on Monday.

After opening statements by state Representative Dustin Burrows, who is chairing the committee investigating the shooting, the committee went into executive session, blocking the public from hearing witness testimony. Burrows did not immediately emerge from the executive session on Monday afternoon to make a statement on the day’s testimony.

Burrows said that testimony would continue on Tuesday in Austin.

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January 6 hearings

Donald Trump plotted fake electors scheme, January 6 panel set to show

Committee also expected to probe Trump's pressure on officials in crucial states to corruptly reverse his election defeat



If Donald Trump was involved in the fake electors scheme, the former president may face a criminal investigation. Photograph: Evan Vucci/AP

[Hugo Lowell](#) in Washington

Mon 20 Jun 2022 21.21 EDT Last modified on Tue 21 Jun 2022 09.58 EDT

The House select committee investigating the January 6 Capitol attack is expected to show at its fourth hearing on Tuesday that [Donald Trump](#) and top advisers coordinated the scheme to send fake slates of electors as part of an effort to return him to the White House.

The panel is expected to also examine Trump's campaign to pressure top officials in seven crucial battleground states to corruptly reverse his defeat to

Joe Biden in the weeks and months after the 2020 election.

At the afternoon hearing, the select committee is expected to focus heavily on the fake electors scheme, which has played a large part in its nearly year-long investigation into Trump's effort to overturn the results of the election at the state level.

The panel will show how the fake electors scheme – [which may have been illegal](#) – was the underlying basis for Trump's unlawful strategy to have his vice-president, Mike Pence, refuse to certify Biden's win in certain states and grant him a second term.

If the 2020 election cycle had been like any other, when the electoral college convened on 14 December 2020 and Democratic electors attested to Biden's victory over Trump, that would have marked the end of any post-election period conflict.

But that year, after the authorized Democratic electors met at statehouses to formally name Biden as president, in seven battleground states, illegitimate [Republican electors arrived too](#), saying they had come to instead name Trump as president.

The Trump electors were turned away. However, they nonetheless proceeded to sign fake election certificates that declared they were the “duly elected and qualified” electors certifying Trump as the winner of the presidential election in their state.

The fake electors scheme was conceived in an effort [to create “dueling slates of electors](#) that Pence could use to pretend the election was in doubt and refuse to formalize Biden's win at the congressional certification on 6 January.

And, the select committee will show, the fake election certificates were in part manufactured by the Trump White House, and that the entire fake electors scheme was coordinated by Trump and his top advisers, including former chief of staff Mark Meadows.

“We will show evidence of the president’s involvement in this scheme,” congressman Adam Schiff, the select committee member leading the hearing alongside the panel’s chairman, Bennie Thompson, and vice-chair, Liz Cheney, said on CNN on Sunday.

Members of Trump’s legal team insist this is a distorted characterization of the scheme, saying the so-called alternate slates were put together and signed in case the states did re-certify their election results for Trump and they needed to be sent right away to Congress.

But that explanation is difficult to reconcile given that the Trump lawyer John Eastman admitted in a 19 December 2020 the Trump slates were “dead on arrival” if they were not certified, and yet still pushed Pence to reject Biden’s slates even though Trump slates were still not certified.

The fake electors scheme is important because it could be a crime. The justice department is investigating whether the Republicans who signed as electors for Trump could be charged with falsifying voting documents, mail fraud or conspiracy to defraud the United States.

If Trump was involved in the scheme, and the justice department pursues a case, then the former US president may also have criminal exposure. At least one federal grand jury in Washington [is investigating the scheme](#) and the involvement of top Trump election lawyers, including Rudy Giuliani.

The select committee is also set to closely focus on Trump’s pressure campaign on leading Republican state officials in the weeks and months after the election, according to a committee aide who previewed the hearing on a briefing call with reporters.

Among other key flash points that the panel intends to examine include [Trump’s now-infamous 2 January 2021 call](#) with Georgia’s secretary of state, Brad Raffensperger – who will testify live at the hearing – when Trump asked him to “find” votes to make him win the election.

“I just want to find 11,780 votes, which is one more than we have,” Trump said during the conversation, a tape of which was obtained by the

Washington Post and House investigators working for the select committee.

The select committee will describe Trump pressuring other state officials to investigate election fraud claims his own White House and campaign [lawyers knew were false](#), relying on testimony from the Arizona house speaker, Rusty Bowers.

And the panel will additionally hear testimony from Shaye Moss, a Georgia election worker in Fulton County, who was falsely accused by Giuliani and others of sneaking in “suitcases” of ballots for Biden – a conspiracy theory debunked by election officials.

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| [Section menu](#) | [Main menu](#) |

Uyghurs

US ban on cotton from forced Uyghur labour comes into force

Fashion industry told to avoid cotton from Xinjiang, which accounts for 84% of China's exports of the product



A worker gathers cotton yarn at a textile plant in Xinjiang. Photograph: Mark Schiefelbein/AP

[Fleur Britten](#)

Tue 21 Jun 2022 01.00 EDT Last modified on Tue 21 Jun 2022 01.02 EDT

The fashion industry has been told it must wean itself off cotton from China's [Xinjiang](#) region, as a new law comes into force giving US border authorities greater powers to block or seize goods linked to forced labour in China.

The Uyghur Forced Labor Prevention Act (UFLPA), which comes into force today, assumes that any product partly or wholly made in Xinjiang, north-

west China, is linked to the region's labour camps. Since 2017, the Chinese authorities have detained as many as one million [Uyghurs](#) and subjected them to forced labour.

The fashion industry will be particularly affected by the new law. About 20% of the world's cotton comes from [China](#), and 84% of that comes from Xinjiang.

The UFLPA has designated cotton a "high priority for enforcement", along with tomatoes and polysilicon. Any British or EU fashion brand exporting to the US will also be subject to it, and failure to provide adequate certification or supply-chain details may result in fines of up to \$250,000 (£205,000).

However, the ban poses big problems for the industry. Liv Simpliciano of Fashion Revolution said Xinjiang cotton is ubiquitous in supply chains. "The difficulty is that at the ginning stage [when fibres are separated from their seeds], cotton from disparate locations is mixed together, making it impossible to trace the provenance," she said.

A number of technology companies, among them TrusTrace, SupplyShift and TextileGenesis, plan to use blockchain and artificial intelligence to trace supply chains for fashion labels. Brands can use the platforms to log all their purchase orders and certifications.

In order to prove conclusively an absence of Xinjiang cotton, brands would need to show a "complete digital chain of custody", said Shameek Ghosh, chief executive of TrusTrace – "where a brand is fully in control of its supply chain from the farm onwards".

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While fashion has historically been notoriously cagey about its supply chains, there is now a strong business case for full transparency. A recent report by the financial thinktank Planet Tracker said that implementing traceability "can improve net profit on average by 3%-7% for apparel

companies”. And that is before any fashion stock has been impounded by border forces.

Because of General Data Protection Regulation, TrusTrace is not alerted if Xinjiang cotton is found in a brand’s supply chain. “Only the brand is informed,” said Ghosh. “They wouldn’t use a platform like this [if they’d be exposed].”

Blockchain technology is not without its problems, however. “If you’re relying on brand discretion to ratify their sourcing practices, then what’s the efficacy going to be?” asked Philippa Grogan of Eco-Age. “Also, blockchain technology is not regulated, so it creates a risk environment – the lack of regulatory oversight makes it vulnerable to market manipulation.”

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| [Section menu](#) | [Main menu](#) |

Health

Balancing on one leg may be useful health test in later life, research suggests

People who cannot stand on one leg for 10 seconds are found to be almost twice as likely to die within 10 years



Balance tends to be well preserved until the sixth decade of life, when it starts to wane relatively rapidly. Photograph: Getty Images

[Andrew Gregory](#) Health editor

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Mon 20 Jun 2022 18.30 EDT Last modified on Tue 21 Jun 2022 00.10 EDT

If you have difficulty standing on one leg, it could be a sign of something more serious than overdoing it at the office summer drinks party. Middle-aged and elderly people who cannot balance on one leg for 10 seconds are almost twice as likely to die within 10 years than those who can, research suggests.

How well a person can balance can offer an insight into their health. Previous research, for instance, indicates that an inability to balance on one leg is linked to a greater risk of stroke. People with poor balance have also been found to perform worse in tests of mental decline, suggesting a link with dementia.

Now an international group of experts from the UK, US, Australia, Finland and Brazil have completed a first-of-its-kind, 12-year study examining the relationship between balance and mortality. Although the research was observational and cannot establish cause, its findings were striking.

An inability to stand on one leg for 10 seconds in middle to later life is linked to a near doubling in the risk of death from any cause within the next 10 years. The results were published in the British Journal of Sports Medicine.

The findings are so stark that the researchers, led by Dr Claudio Gil Araujo of the Clinimex exercise medicine clinic in Rio de Janeiro, suggest a balance test should be included in routine health checks for older people.

Unlike aerobic fitness, muscle strength and flexibility, balance tends to be well preserved until the sixth decade of life, when it starts to wane relatively rapidly. However, balance assessment typically is not included in health checks of middle-aged and older people, possibly because there is no standardised test for it. Until now there had been little hard data linking balance to clinical outcomes other than falls.

A total of 1,702 people aged between 51 and 75 and with stable gait were followed between 2008 and 2020 for the study. At the start, participants were asked to stand on one leg for 10 seconds without any additional support. To standardise the test, participants were asked to place the front of their free foot on the back of the opposite lower leg while keeping their arms by their sides and their gaze fixed straight ahead. Up to three attempts on either foot were allowed.

One in five (21%) failed the test. Over the next decade, 123 died of various causes. After accounting for age, sex, and underlying conditions, an inability to stand unsupported on one leg for 10 seconds was associated with an 84% heightened risk of death from any cause.

The researchers said the study had limitations, including that the participants were all white Brazilians, which means the findings may not be more widely applicable to other ethnicities and nations.

Nevertheless, the researchers concluded that the 10-second balance test “provides rapid and objective feedback for the patient and health professionals regarding static balance” and “adds useful information regarding mortality risk in middle-aged and older men and women”.

This article was downloaded by **calibre** from <https://www.theguardian.com/society/2022/jun/20/balancing-on-one-leg-useful-health-test-later-life-research>

[Pakistan](#)

Father-in-law charged with murder after Australian woman Sajida Tasneem killed in Pakistan

Tasneem was allegedly killed in front of her father after being taken to northern Pakistan from Perth with her three children



Sajida Tasneem, an Australian woman allegedly murdered by her father-in-law in Pakistan. Photograph: Facebook

[Shah Meer Baloch](#) in Islamabad

Mon 20 Jun 2022 20.20 EDTFirst published on Mon 20 Jun 2022 20.16 EDT

An Australian woman has allegedly been bludgeoned to death by her father-in-law with an axe in northern [Pakistan](#) after an argument about moving back to Australia with her children.

Sajida Tasneem was allegedly killed in front of her father at a home she shared with her in-laws in the city of Sargodha, 250km south of Pakistan's capital, Islamabad, on 11 June.

Tasneem's father, Sher Muhammad Khan, said his son-in-law, Ayub Ahmed, had forced his daughter to travel to Pakistan with her three children from their home in Perth, Western Australia.

Khan told the Guardian that when his daughter arrived in Pakistan, his son-in-law then returned to Perth.

Tasneem's father-in-law, Mukhtar Ahmad, allegedly confiscated Tasneem's passport.

"After my daughter's return, Ahmad started demanding all the documents," Khan said. "On his repeated insistence the documents were handed over to him."

He told police that on 11 June he allegedly witnessed Ahmad hurling abuse at his daughter. About 1.45pm he had found them in a bathroom.

Ahmad allegedly stuffed a cloth in Tasneem's mouth and threatened to kill Khan if anyone tried to stop him.

"I feared for our lives and did not move."

It is alleged Ahmad hit Tasneem on the head with an axe. She died at the scene.

A police deputy superintendent, Syed Saqlain Jaffer, said Mukthar Ahmad had been arrested and charged with murder.

Jaffer told the Guardian: "The crime tool, the axe through which the murder was committed, has also been recovered. It shows the involvement of Ahmad."

He added: "The investigation is ongoing. We are investigating the presence of other family members at the crime scene."

Khan said Tasneem's three children were now with him, and the Australian embassy had been in touch.

Australia's Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade confirmed its officials "have been in contact with the family of an Australian woman killed in Pakistan" and offered its condolences.

"The family is being provided consular assistance. Owing to our privacy obligations we will not provide further comment."

With Ben Doherty

In Australia, the national [family violence counselling service](#) is on 1800 737 732. In the UK, call the national [domestic abuse helpline](#) on 0808 2000 247, or visit [Women's Aid](#). In the US, the domestic violence hotline is 1-800-799-SAFE (7233). Other international helplines may be found via [www.befrienders.org](#).

This article was downloaded by **calibre** from <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2022/jun/21/father-in-law-charged-australian-woman-sajida-tasneem-killed-in-pakistan>

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- [Live UK consumer confidence hits record low, as people cut back on food shopping](#)
- [Full report Retail sales fall as shoppers in Great Britain cut back on food spending](#)
- [Live Russia-Ukraine war: Kherson car bomb kills pro-Russian official](#)
- [Monarchy Charles to tell Commonwealth leaders dropping Queen ‘for each to decide’](#)

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UK and US consumer confidence hits record low; Britons cut back on food shopping – as it happened

Retail sales across Britain dropped in May and consumer morale continues to slide

- [Larry Elliott: Retailers face long difficult summer, with consumer confidence at rock bottom](#)
- [UK consumers are gloomier than at height of pandemic or in 2008 financial crisis](#)
- [Petrol and diesel prices at fresh records](#)
- [Retail sales fell in May as people cut back on food shopping](#)

Updated 2d ago

[Graeme Wearden](#)

Fri 24 Jun 2022 10.44 EDTFirst published on Fri 24 Jun 2022 02.18 EDT



Rising inflation has forced customers to cut back on food shopping, or switch to cheaper items. Photograph: SolStock/Getty Images

Graeme Wearden

Fri 24 Jun 2022 10.44 EDTFirst published on Fri 24 Jun 2022 02.18 EDT

Key events

- [2d ago Closing summary](#)
- [2d ago Campaign calls for 1m UK consumers to stop paying energy bills](#)
- [2d ago US consumer confidence at record lows](#)
- [2d ago Strikes threatened at largest exam board](#)
- [2d ago Pakistan imposes 'super tax' in effort to get IMF loan package moving](#)
- [2d ago Analysis: Retailers face long difficult summer, with consumer confidence at rock bottom](#)
- [2d ago Petrol and diesel prices reach new records again](#)

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From 2d ago

06.14

Analysis: Retailers face long difficult summer, with consumer confidence at rock bottom



Larry Elliott

With consumer confidence at rock-bottom levels it hardly comes as a shock that retailers had a tough month in May, our economics editor Larry Elliott writes.

The real surprise was that the 0.5% drop in the volume of spending reported by the ONS was not worse.

GfK's monthly survey of how consumers are feeling stretches back to 1974 and so includes some previous periods when times have been hard: the manufacturing wipe out of the early 1980s, the housing crash of the early 1990s and the global financial crisis of 2008 among them.

In all that time, consumers have never been as gloomy as they are now.

Cost-of-living drives consumer confidence to record low. And it's not been without stiff competition over recent years. [@GfK](#)
<https://t.co/YPCc5ymbm1> pic.twitter.com/FWj7inSTjE

— Alistair McQueen (@HelloMcQueen) [June 24, 2022](#)

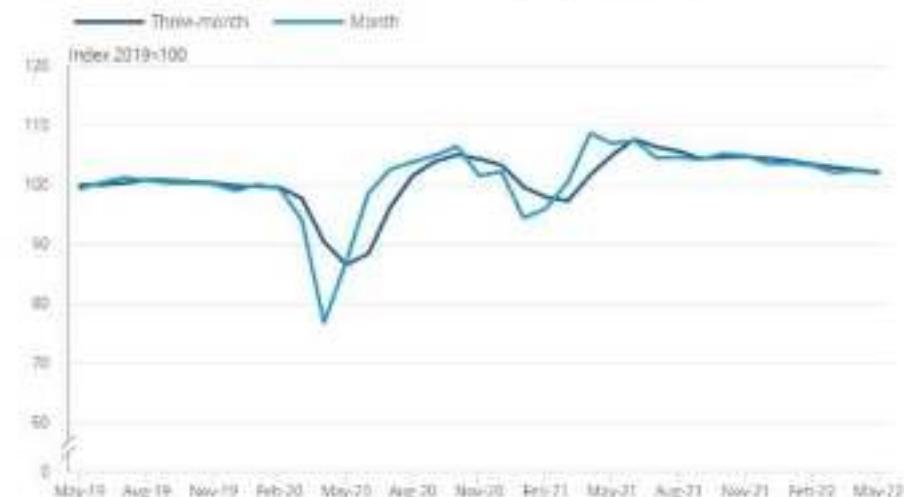
The reason for the pessimism is obvious: prices are rising a lot faster than wages, eating into spending power. Food sales have been especially hard hit as shoppers place self-imposed spending limits at supermarket check-outs.

Retail sales have been on a downward trend for the past year, but as **Martin Beck**, chief economic adviser at the **Item Club** has pointed out, initially the weakness was the result of consumers shifting spending from goods to services as lockdown restrictions were lifted.

But five falls in retail sales in the past seven months can't be put down to a rotation effect. Consumers are not just being hit by higher prices of food: [energy bills went up in April as did taxes](#). A long difficult summer for retailers looks inevitable.

Figure 1: Retail sales volumes continue a downward trend since summer 2021

Volume sales, seasonally adjusted, Great Britain, May 2019 to May 2022



UK retail sales Photograph: ONS

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Updated at 06.42 EDT

[2d ago](#)[10.44](#)

Closing summary

The UK's stock market is soaring as the week draws to a close, on hopes that central banks may not hike interest rates as rapidly as feared.

Perhaps ironically, signs that economic growth is cooling appears to be giving nervous investors some reassurance.

Commodity prices have dropped this week, business surveys have shown slower growth, and cash-strapped consumers are cutting back as [confidence craters in the UK](#) and [the US](#).

That cocktail may ease inflationary pressures, and mean central banks don't need to slam the brakes on quite so hard.

So with traders looking ahead, the [FTSE](#) 100 index is now up 2.5% or 172 points at 7194, its highest in around a week.

Speciality chemicals group **Croda** (+5.5%), veterinary medicine group **Dechra Pharmaceuticals** and equipment rental business **Ashtead** (+5.2%) are leading the risers.

Here's today's main stories:

Have a lovely weekend, we'll be back on Monday. GW

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2d ago**10.31**

Campaign calls for 1m UK consumers to stop paying energy bills

Alex Lawson

A campaign is urging 1 million UK consumers to stop paying their energy bills from October in protest at record price hikes.

Run by a group of activists who are operating anonymously for fear of repercussions from energy firms, the [Don't Pay](#) campaign launched last Saturday and has already gathered 4,000 social media followers. They say they are hoping for a rerun of the poll tax protests that helped bring down Margaret Thatcher's government when 17 million people refused to pay.

The manifesto, emblazoned in black and yellow on the group's website, says:

“Millions of us won’t be able to afford food and bills this winter. We cannot afford to let that happen. We demand a reduction of bills to an affordable level. We will cancel our direct debits from 1 October if we are ignored.”

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2d ago**10.28**

Another late development... US new home sales rose 10.7% last month, to a seasonally-adjusted rate of 696,000, beating forecasts.

The median sales price for a new home **fell** to \$449,000 from a record high \$454,700, which could signal some heat coming out of the market.

University of Michigan's consumer confidence sentiment survey for May comes out lower than estimates at 50, as May's new home sales surges to 696,000. pic.twitter.com/0skNf5l0Xp

— Yahoo Finance (@YahooFinance) [June 24, 2022](#)

Stock market are pushing higher, with the S&P 500 index now up 2%, and strong gains in Europe as well.

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[2d ago](#)[10.18](#)

US consumer confidence at record lows

US consumer confidence has hit its lowest level on record, mirroring the slump in morale in the UK this month.

The **University of Michigan's** gauge of consumer sentiment has fallen to just 50 this month, down from May's level of 58.4, and even worse than the initial reading of 50.2 earlier in the month.

The June figure is the lowest reading on record, going back to the late 1970s, and follows inflation hitting 40-year highs and record gasoline prices at the pumps.

Joanne Hsu, director of the survey, explains:

“Inflation continued to be of paramount concern to consumers; 47% of consumers blamed inflation for eroding their living standards, just one point shy of the all-time high last reached during the Great Recession,”

“Consumers across income, age, education, geographic region, political affiliation, stockholding and homeownership status all posted large declines,”

The Index of Consumer Sentiment plummeted from 58.4 in May to 50.0 in June, the lowest reading on record, according to preliminary data from the University of Michigan and Thomson Reuters. This was slightly lower than the preliminary estimate of 50.2.
pic.twitter.com/byUOTA2SB8

— Chad Moutray (@chadmoutray) [June 24, 2022](#)

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[2d ago](#) [10.09](#)

The Bank of England's chief economist has played down concerns that quantitative easing stimulus programmes are to blame for soaring inflation.

In a speech titled “What did the monetarists ever do for us?”, Huw Pill argues that the UK’s elevated inflation is largely due to external shocks, rather than excess money growth in the past.

Pill is telling an audience at the Walter Eucken Institut in Freiburg, Germany:

Higher international energy and goods prices have raised UK inflation via the usual direct and indirect effects. The overshoot of the 2% inflation target is substantial largely because the magnitude of these external shocks has been substantial.

Aggregate GDP is only now reaching pre-pandemic levels, lending credence to the view that it is weakness in supply rather than strength in demand that is driving the current strength of inflation.

Given the tightness of the UK labour market and perceived strength of pricing power in large parts of the corporate sector, the threat exists that higher headline inflation leads to second round effects in prices, wages

and costs that exacerbate the magnitude and, crucially, the persistence of the target overshoot.

Bank of England chief economist Huw Pill talks monetarism at Germany's Walter Eucken Institut - but says it's not a signal of a new policy stance at the BoE! pic.twitter.com/F2s3KqqRxe

— David Milliken (@david_milliken) [June 24, 2022](#)

And channelling **Life of Brian**, Pill concludes:

I doubt that monetarism will be (re) embraced by either the academic or central bank communities in the coming years. But – just like the Romans in the famous Monty Python sketch – maybe our understanding of how the monetary policy transmission mechanism has, does and will work owes more to them than we typically care to admit.

If you're looking for a meaty Friday afternoon read on monetary policy, [the speech is online here](#).

Interesting how Pill spells out that the BoE's inflation and growth models essentially take as given that inflation expectations remain well-anchored - so policymakers have to be especially vigilant if they're not pic.twitter.com/JBj2xU3uN5

— David Milliken (@david_milliken) [June 24, 2022](#)

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[2d ago](#)[09.42](#)

UK airlines aren't the only ones struggling to serve customers this summer.

[Deutsche Lufthansa](#) is canceling a total of 3,100 flights after a wave of coronavirus infections worsened staffing shortages, adding to Europe's travel chaos as the crucial summer vacation period gets under way.

[Bloomberg has the details:](#)

Germany's flagship airline on Friday announced it will scrap 2,200 domestic and European routes in July and August, on top of 900 cancellations [unveiled](#) earlier this month.

That's around 4% of the carrier's capacity during that period, according to a spokesperson. Lufthansa fell as much as 3.4% in Frankfurt.

Lufthansa cancels 2,200 flights after a wave of coronavirus infections worsened staffing shortages, adding to Europe's travel chaos
<https://t.co/rkjB83gIpW> via [@business](#) [@WillWilkesNews](#) [@rweiss5](#) [#Italy](#)

— Alessandro Speciale (@aspeciale) [June 24, 2022](#)

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[2d ago09.41](#)



The floor at the New York Stock Exchange in New York. Photograph: Seth Wenig/AP

Stocks in New York have opened higher, as Wall Street shakes off some of last week's fears over rising interest rates.

The **S&P 500** index of US stocks has jumped by 1.2%, or 46 points, to 3,842 in early trading.

The **Dow Jones industrial average** of 30 large companies has gained 1%, while the tech-focused **Nasdaq Composite** is 1.5% higher.

Markets have recovered some ground in the last few days, after their worst week since March 2020.

It seems that fresh signs of economic slowdown have cooled fears about aggressive rate hikes from central bankers. With commodity prices down this week, price pressures could be easing, while the latest PMI surveys of purchasing managers have signalled demand has been tailing off.

Neil Wilson of Markets.com explains:

Recession fears mean the market has dialled back its expectations for just how far the Fed will go, which is helping growth stocks to

mount a defence

PMIs are declining and lower commodity prices has the market more focused on slowdown than searing inflation, which seems on-balance net positive for stocks.

□ U.S. Opening Bell □

□ Nasdaq Comp gained 119.12 points, or 1.06%, to 11,351.31

□ S&P 500 opened higher by 26.02 points, or 0.69%, at 3,821.75

□ Dow rose 169.58 points, or 0.55%, at the open to 30,846.94
pic.twitter.com/UAvYBoOYDi

— PiQ □ (@PriapusIQ) [June 24, 2022](#)

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[2d ago](#)[09.14](#)

Strikes threatened at largest exam board



Richard Adams



Photograph: David Jones/PA

Unions say A-level and GCSE results may be disrupted by strike action being threatened at AQA, England's largest examination board, after unions rejected a new pay offer, our education editor Richard Adams reports.

Unison is currently balloting 160 staff at AQA over industrial action this summer while Unite is also considering a ballot, although a spokesperson for AQA said there was “no chance” of exam results being delayed because many of the staff being balloted were not directly involved in exam marking.

The unions say staff have already rejected a 3% pay offer, while talks over the dispute through the conciliation service Acas failed to reach agreement.

Lizanne Devonport, Unison’s north west regional organiser, said:

“No one wants to cause disruption to students and teachers in the first summer back in exam halls since the pandemic but the employees feel like they’ve been left with no choice.

AQA must come back to the negotiating table, make a serious offer and stop threatening its dedicated staff.”

AQA said its pay offer included additional increases for lower-paid staff, so that the average pay rise would be 5.6%.

But the unions say that their members have endured years of below-inflation pay settlements, and claimed that AQA’s current offer involves “fire and rehire” of staff accepting new conditions.

Earlier this week, leaders of the country’s largest teaching union say they will ballot their members on strike action later this year unless the government agrees to an “inflation-plus” pay rise.

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Updated at 09.14 EDT

2d ago**08.41**



The closed Underground entrance at Waterloo Station earlier this week, during strike action by Tube and railway workers in London. Photograph: Anadolu Agency/Getty Images

The prospect of a summer of strike action has risen further today, as London Underground staff in the RMT union voted to continue with strikes in a dispute over pensions and job cuts.

More than 90% of the union's members on the tube who voted, on a 53% turnout, backed continuing industrial action.

The RMT was legally required to obtain support to renew its mandate for strikes, after the latest [24-hour stoppage on Tuesday](#) closed virtually all tube services in the capital.

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[2d ago](#)[08.33](#)

Crude oil prices have risen today, with Brent crude up over \$2 per barrel at \$112.

That still leaves oil down for the week, though, as fears of recession hit commodity prices. That ought to feed through to petrol pumps, although the weaker pound has made oil imports more expensive too.

Craig Erlam, senior market analyst at **OANDA**, says slowdown concerns could push oil lower:

The prospect of a recession has made waves across financial markets and commodities haven't been immune. Oil prices have undergone quite a significant correction over the last couple of weeks as traders adapt to the increased recession risks, one of the few things that could partially address the imbalance in the market.

Oil prices are paring losses at the end of the week but a little more two-way price action may be on the cards. Risks remain more tilted to the upside as a result of the tightness in the market but if we continue to see recession risks rise around the world, that could change.

Daily Market Insight

Growing fears of a potential incoming recession caused by hawkish policy conducted by numerous central banks is providing downside to the Brent crude benchmark. Though tight global oil supply is offsetting any downside. [#UtilityInsights pic.twitter.com/5M87QCJBOP](#)

— Inspired PLC (@InspiredPLC) [June 24, 2022](#)

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[2d ago](#) [07.48](#)



Philip Oltermann

German consumers could face a tripling of gas prices in the coming months after Russia's throttling of deliveries to Europe, a senior energy official has said.

Moscow reduced the flow of gas through the Nord Stream 1 pipeline by 40% last week, citing technical reasons that Berlin dismisses as a pretext, prompting a four- to sixfold rise in market prices, said the head of Germany's federal network agency, Klaus Müller.

Such “enormous leaps in price” were unlikely to be passed down entirely to consumers, Müller said, but German citizens had to brace themselves for dramatically rising costs.

He told public broadcaster ARD:

“A doubling or tripling is possible.”

[Here's the full story](#), by our Berlin correspondent Philip Oltermann:

As well as worrying German households, this won't help business morale recover from its fall this month ([see earlier post](#))

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[2d ago](#) [07.20](#)

Pakistan imposes ‘super tax’ in effort to get IMF loan package moving

Pakistan’s government is imposing a one-off ‘super tax’ on its largest companies, in an attempt to restart stalled negotiations with the International Monetary Fund .

Finance minister Miftah Ismail said today that an extra one-time 4% tax will be levied on all industry for one year, to raise 400 billion Pakistani rupees (£1.5bn). Large-scale industries will face a 10% super-tax.

Pakistan hopes the move will help unlock a new tranche of IMF funds which are needed to avert a balance of payment crisis, as rising food and fuel prices push it into economic crisis.

Ismail told parliament this today that:

“Let me share this good news that this country isn’t heading toward a default anymore.

“We’ve taken very difficult decisions.”

The 10% tax will be levied on 13 big industries, companies and corporations, including sugar, steel, cement, oil and gas, fertilizer, cigarettes, chemical, automobiles, banks, textile, LNG terminals and beverages, which have earnings exceeding 300 million Pakistani rupee

Their tax rates will go from 29% to 39%,” Ismail tweeted:

Just to clarify: the super tax of 4% will be applicable to all sectors. But for the specified 13 sectors, another 6% will be added for a total of 10%. So their tax rates will go from 29% to 39%. This is a one-time tax needed to curtail the previous four record budget deficits.

— Miftah Ismail (@MiftahIsmail) [June 24, 2022](#)

The news sent shares tumbling, with the benchmark **Karachi 100** index down 4% - on a day when global markets are generally higher.

Earlier this month, a minister in Pakistan's newly elected government appealed to the nation to drink less tea to help save on imports -- a call which was not warmly received.

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[2d ago](#) [07.01](#)

Copper isn't the only metal that had a bad week ([see earlier post](#))

Other industrial metals also tumbled, with nickel down around 13% this week and tin 25%, its biggest weekly slump since at least 2005.

Fears of an economic downturn are hurting commodity prices, which had boomed earlier this year, driving up inflation.

“There is a risk of further losses,” said independent analyst **Robin Bhar**.

“A sharp economic slowdown or recession seems to be on the cards.”

More and more disinflation showing up across the economy. Commodities quietly off 12% from the high.
pic.twitter.com/vcJntCtHjL

— Cullen Roche (@cullenroche) [June 24, 2022](#)

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[2d ago](#)[06.14](#)

Analysis: Retailers face long difficult summer, with consumer confidence at rock bottom



Larry Elliott

With [consumer confidence at rock-bottom levels](#) it hardly comes as a shock that retailers had a tough month in May, *our economics editor Larry Elliott writes.*

The real surprise was that the [0.5% drop](#) in the volume of spending reported by the ONS was not worse.

GfK's monthly survey of how consumers are feeling stretches back to 1974 and so includes some previous periods when times have been hard: the

manufacturing wipe out of the early 1980s, the housing crash of the early 1990s and the global financial crisis of 2008 among them.

In all that time, consumers have never been as gloomy as they are now.

Cost-of-living drives consumer confidence to record low. And it's not been without stiff competition over recent years. [@GfK](#)
<https://t.co/YPCc5ymbm1> pic.twitter.com/FWj7inSTjE

— Alistair McQueen (@HelloMcQueen) [June 24, 2022](#)

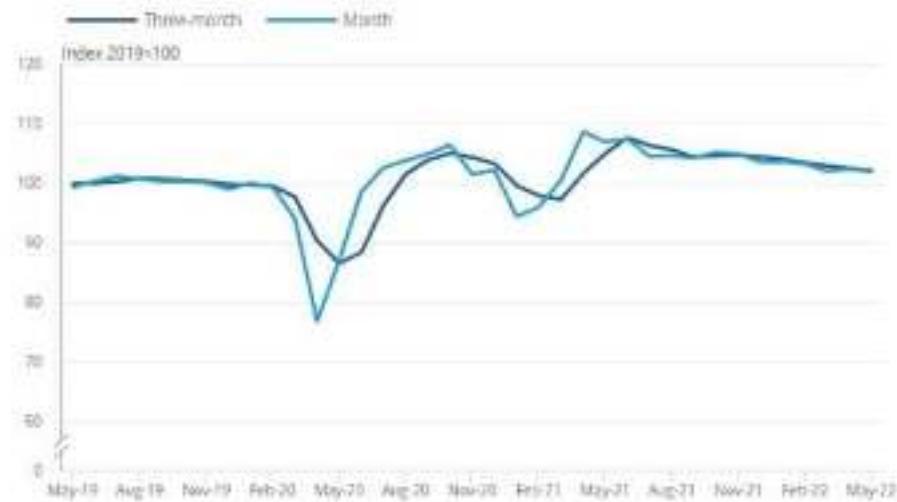
The reason for the pessimism is obvious: prices are rising a lot faster than wages, eating into spending power. Food sales have been especially hard hit as shoppers place self-imposed spending limits at supermarket check-outs.

Retail sales have been on a downward trend for the past year, but as **Martin Beck**, chief economic adviser at the **Item Club** has pointed out, initially the weakness was the result of consumers shifting spending from goods to services as lockdown restrictions were lifted.

But five falls in retail sales in the past seven months can't be put down to a rotation effect. Consumers are not just being hit by higher prices of food: [energy bills went up in April as did taxes](#). A long difficult summer for retailers looks inevitable.

Figure 1: Retail sales volumes continue a downward trend since summer 2021

Volume sales, seasonally adjusted, Great Britain, May 2019 to May 2022



UK retail sales Photograph: ONS

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Updated at 06.42 EDT

[2d ago](#)[06.07](#)

Petrol and diesel prices reach new records again



Petrol and diesel pumps are seen at a Shell petrol station in Portland, United Kingdom. Photograph: Finnbarr Webster/Getty Images

UK motorists continue to be hit by record fuel prices at the pumps, as hopes of an end to rising prices are dashed.

The average price of petrol hit 190.22p yesterday, while diesel also moved up another half a penny to 198.46p, closing on the £2 per litre mark.

Petrol across the UK averaged 190.22p a litre yesterday to pass yet another record-breaking milestone along a trail of pump price misery. Yet, wholesale prices feeding through to retailers have been falling for more than a fortnight, notes the AA.

— simon read (@simonnread) [June 24, 2022](#)

With both fuels once again setting new records, full tanks now cost £104.62 and £109.15 respectively (based on a typical 55-litre family car).

RAC fuel spokesman **Simon Williams** calls it “another miserable milestone” -- and criticises retailers for not passing on falling wholesale petrol prices.

“The cost of petrol at the pumps should really have stopped rising by now and should in fact be going into reverse. For some strange reason, the supermarkets continue to push unleaded higher very much against the trend on the wholesale market.

Drivers have every right to be angered by this. While there is no doubt wholesale costs increased dramatically a few weeks ago this is not the case now, so pump prices must start to fall for fuel retailers to retain credibility with their customers as well as not attracting the negative attention of the Competitions and Markets Authority.”

The CMA began a “swift high-level review of competition in the fuel retail market” this month, after being urged to investigate the sector by business secretary Kwasi Kwarteng.

The AA reported earlier this month that wholesale petrol costs had fallen from their peak, which raised hopes that rising petrol prices might “grind to a halt”.

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[Newest](#)[Newest](#)

[Previous](#)

1
of
3

[Next](#)

[Oldest](#)[Oldest](#)

| [Section menu](#) | [Main menu](#) |

Retail industry

Almost half of adults in Great Britain cut back on food spending – ONS

Smaller grocery bills amid rising cost of living behind 0.5% drop in retail sales in May, statistics body says

[Tough summer ahead for shops as consumer confidence hits rock bottom](#)



The ONS says said the 1.6% decrease in the volume of food sales appears to be linked to inflation, which hit a 40-year-high of 9.1% in May. Photograph: Matthew Horwood/Getty Images

[Larry Elliott](#) *Economics editor*

Fri 24 Jun 2022 11.21 EDTFirst published on Fri 24 Jun 2022 02.49 EDT

Almost half the adults in Great Britain are cutting back on the amount of food they buy as the cost of living crisis forces them to trim their weekly supermarket shop, the latest official figures have shown.

In stark evidence on the effect of rising inflation on spending patterns, the [Office for National Statistics](#) said 44% of adults surveyed last month said they were buying less food – up from 18% at the start of the year.

The ONS said the decrease in food shopping was having a marked impact on the UK's shops and online sellers – with smaller grocery bills the main factor behind a [0.5% drop in retail sales](#) in Great Britain last month.

However, department stores and household goods outlets also reported a reluctance of consumers to spend as a result of a higher cost of living.

The UK's statistics agency said the 1.6% decrease in the volume of food sales appeared to be linked to inflation, which as measured by the consumer prices index hit a [40-year-high of 9.1% in May](#).

The British Retail Consortium, which represents retailers, said shoppers were spurning premium brands for cheaper options as they sought to make stretched household budgets go further.

Helen Dickinson, the BRC's chief executive, said: “Households reined in spending as the cost of living crunch continued to squeeze consumer demand. Many customers are buying down, particularly with food, choosing value range items where they might previously have bought premium goods.

“High-value items such as furniture and white goods were also impacted as shoppers reconsidered major purchases during this difficult time.”

A year ago, annual inflation was running at 2.1%, just above the government's 2% target but has steadily increased over the past 12 months. The Bank of England forecasts a peak of above 11% later this year.

[Retail graphic](#)

Retail sales growth in April was also revised down from an original estimate of 1.4% to 0.4%, while in the three months to May – a better guide to the underlying trend than a single month's figures – spending was down by 1.3% on the previous quarter.

The volume of sales in the quarter ending in May was 2.8% lower than in the same period of 2021, although still up on pre-pandemic levels.

The ONS said the fall in retail sales was more marked when spending by motorists on petrol and diesel was excluded. On this basis, retail sales were down by 0.7% on the month and 1.5% over the quarter.

Food sales graphic

Heather Bovill, the ONS deputy director for surveys and economic indicators, said: “Retail sales fell in May driven by a decline in food sales. Feedback from supermarkets suggested customers were spending less on their food shop because of the rising cost of living.

“More workers returning to the office may have contributed to increased fuel sales this month, while shoppers buying outfits for summer holidays helped boost clothing sales.

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“These rises were offset by falls for household goods and department stores, with retailers in these areas reporting consumer reluctance to spend due to affordability worries and higher prices.”

Lynda Petherick, the retail lead at Accenture in the UK and Ireland, said the fall in sales would come as no surprise to a retail sector grappling with rapidly rising costs and pressure to keep prices low for struggling households.

“Inflation remains a key issue for retail businesses, who are having to grapple with growing supply chain costs, as well as keeping their stores afloat and staff well compensated. For consumers, rising costs for staple goods mean many don’t have excess money to spend on discretionary items,” Petherick said.

| [Section menu](#) | [Main menu](#) |

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Kyiv orders troops to pull out of Sievierodonetsk – as it happened

This live blog is now closed. We will be returning in a few hours to bring you all the latest developments

- [Last Ukrainian forces in Sievierodonetsk ordered to withdraw](#)
- [Why the west risks condemning Ukraine to slow strangulation](#)
- [Zelenskiy urges Glastonbury crowd to help end war in Ukraine](#)

Updated 1d ago

[Maya Yang](#) and (earlier) [Léonie Chao-Fong](#), [Martin Belam](#) and [Samantha Lock](#)

Fri 24 Jun 2022 19.00 EDTFirst published on Fri 24 Jun 2022 00.14 EDT



A Ukrainian soldier amid the rubble of a building in Kharkiv. Photograph: Sergey Bobok/AFP/Getty Images

[Maya Yang](#) and (earlier) [Léonie Chao-Fong](#), [Martin Belam](#) and [Samantha Lock](#)

Fri 24 Jun 2022 19.00 EDTFirst published on Fri 24 Jun 2022 00.14 EDT

Key events

- [1d agoSummary](#)
- [2d agoSummary](#)
- [2d agoToday so far...](#)
- [2d agoLast Ukrainian forces in Sievierodonetsk ordered to withdraw](#)
- [2d agoZelenskiy addresses crowds at Glastonbury](#)
- [2d agoToday so far ...](#)
- [2d agoKremlin: occupied Kherson car bomb attack 'nothing but act of terrorism'](#)

Show key events only

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From 2d ago

[09.41](#)

Last Ukrainian forces in Sievierodonetsk ordered to withdraw



Peter Beaumont

The last Ukrainian forces fighting in the heavily contested eastern city of Sievierodonetsk have been ordered to withdraw in order to avoid being encircled, as fears grow that the neighbouring city of Lysychansk could also fall to [Russia](#) within days.

The anticipated loss of Sievierodonetsk is the latest battlefield reverse for Kyiv after its defeat in the port city of Mariupol. According to some estimates about 12,000 civilians remain in Sievierodonetsk, out of a prewar population of 160,000.

All three bridges offering escape routes west over the Siverskyi Donets River to the twin city of Lysychansk have been destroyed in fighting, and the mayor, Oleksandr Striuk, says the humanitarian situation is critical.

The Luhansk governor, Serhiy Haidai, said on Friday: “The situation right now is as such that staying at these destroyed positions just for the sake of being there doesn’t make sense.” He said Ukrainian forces had “received the order to retreat to new positions and continue fighting there”, but did not give further details.

Russians were also advancing toward Lysychansk from Zolote and Toshkivka, and Russian reconnaissance units had been conducting forays on

the city edges but were driven out by its defenders, he added.

Haidai said Sievierodonetsk had been “nearly turned to rubble” by continual bombardment. “All critical infrastructure has been destroyed. Ninety per cent of the city is damaged, 80% [of] houses will have to be demolished.”

Read more of Peter Beaumont’s report here: [Last Ukrainian forces in Sievierodonetsk ordered to withdraw](#)

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[1d ago](#)[19.00](#)

Summary

It's 2am in Kyiv. Here's where things stand:

- **The Canadian senate passed prime minister Justin Trudeau’s budget on Thursday, allowing it to seize and dispose of assets sanctioned as a result of Russia’s invasion of Ukraine.** The Canadian government will now be allowed to seize and dispose of assets of people and entities that have been sanctioned due to the invasion. The government will then be able to use the funds to support Ukraine.
- **The European Council on Friday has approved 9 billion euros of financial aid to Ukraine.** In a [statement](#) made by Polish prime minister Mateusz Morawiecki at the European Council summit in Brussels, he said, “There is a war in Ukraine, and there is nothing to pay nurses, teachers, police, border guards, or many other public services.”
- **Ukraine’s main domestic security agency said on Friday it had uncovered a Russian spy network involving Ukrainian lawmaker Andriy Derkach who was previously accused by the United States of being a Russian agent.** The State Security Service (SBU) said Derkach, whose whereabouts were not made clear, set up a network of

private security firms to use them to ease and support the entry of Russian units into cities during Moscow's Feb. 24 invasion.

- **Over 3,000 dolphins in the Black Sea have died as a result of the Russian invasion of Ukraine, according to Ukrainian scientists working in the “Tuzlovsky Lymans” reserve, a national nature park.** NEXTA reports that the “work of sonar and explosions prevent them from finding food” and that dead dolphins have been increasingly found on the coasts of Bulgaria and Romania, in addition to Ukraine.
- **It would require Ukraine a decade to rebuild infrastructure of its Black Sea ports, whose blockade by Russia is preventing global grain exports, according to Ukraine’s deputy agriculture minister.** “For alternative routes, it would take 10 years of investment to try to build the necessary infrastructure to replace this Black Sea port infrastructure, which we spent about 20 years building, starting in 2000,” Taras Vysotskiy said on Friday.
- **Russia has condemned the European Union’s decision to accept Ukraine and Moldova as membership candidates.** Maria Zakharova, spokeswoman for the Russian foreign ministry said, “With the decision to grant Ukraine and Moldova the status of candidate countries, the European Union has confirmed that it continues to actively exploit the CIS on a geopolitical level, to use it to ‘contain’ Russia,” referring to Russia’s sphere of influence within the Commonwealth of Independent States consisting of former Soviet states.
- **Mass kidnappings have been occurring in Melitopol, said the mayor of the southeastern Ukrainian city.** “More than 500 people have been abducted in the last four months,” Ivan Fedrov said, adding that mass kidnappings have resumed in the Russian-occupied territory last week.
- **Russia has launched 70 missiles at Odesa since February 24, the southwestern city’s regional prosecution has said.** According to the prosecution, the majority of the missiles have targeted residential areas and public utilities.

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. I'll be back tomorrow, thank you.

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[1d ago 18.54](#)

Footage has emerged of the ruins in central Popasna in the Luhansk region of Ukraine, Euromaidan Press reports.

After two months of intensive fighting against Russian forces, Ukrainian troops left the city in early May, leaving behind numerous buildings that have been destroyed by the Russian military.

Video of ruins of central Popasna, Luhansk Oblast

Ukrainian troops left the city on 8 May after two months of heavy fighting. Most of the buildings in the city have been destroyed by the multiple Russian artillery, rocket, missile, aircraft attacks.<https://t.co/IkHelKzsO2> <pic.twitter.com/TkV9xcXYX8>

— Euromaidan Press (@EuromaidanPress) [June 24, 2022](#)

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[1d ago 18.17](#)

The Canadian senate passed prime minister Justin Trudeau's budget on Thursday, allowing it to seize and dispose of assets sanctioned as a result of Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

The Canadian government will now be allowed to seize and dispose of assets of people and entities that have been sanctioned due to the invasion. The government will then be able to use the funds to support Ukraine.

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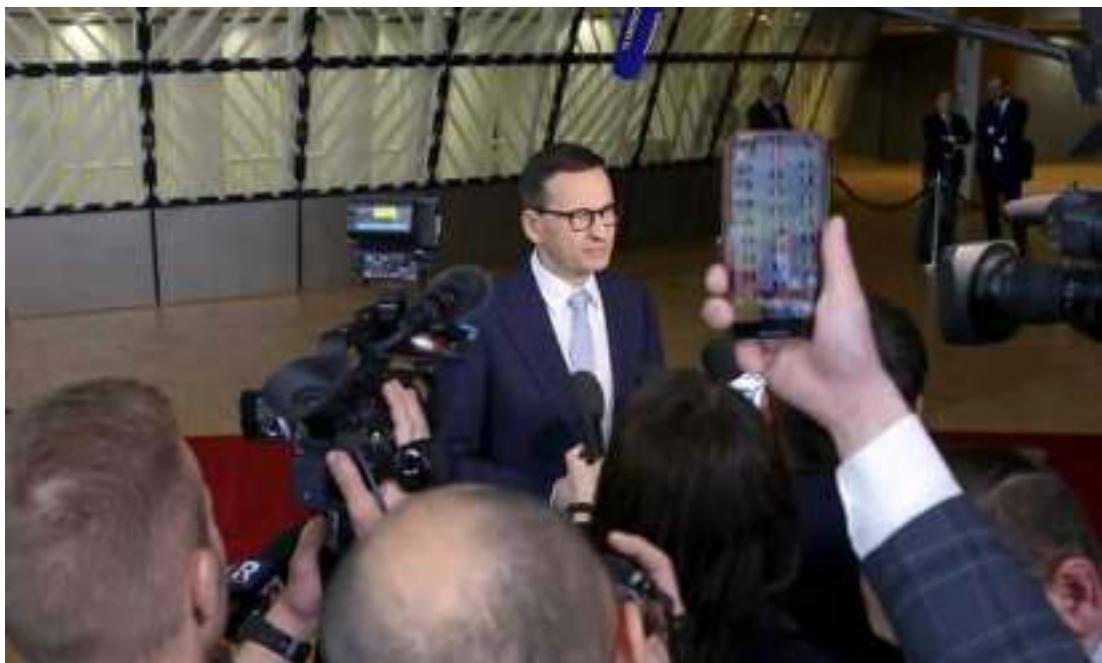
1d ago **17.44**

The European Council on Friday has approved 9 billion euros of financial aid to Ukraine.

In a [statement](#) made by Polish prime minister Mateusz Morawiecki at the European Council summit in Brussels, he said, “There is a war in Ukraine, and there is nothing to pay nurses, teachers, police, border guards, or many other public services.”

Morawiecki added that European countries such as his are continuing to provide military assistance to Ukraine.

“The advantage [of Russia] in artillery, according to the allies and our own sources is 1:8, 1:10. How difficult it is to fight such an overwhelming enemy force. That is why Poland, as well as the United States, Great Britain, and the Baltic States, are doing everything possible to help Ukraine get the weapons,” he said.



Polish Prime Minister Mateusz Morawiecki talks to the media as he arrives at the second day of a EU Summit in Brussels, Belgium, 24 June 2022.
Photograph: Albert Zawada/EPA

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[1d ago](#) [17.08](#)

Ukraine's main domestic security agency said on Friday it had uncovered a Russian spy network involving Ukrainian lawmaker Andriy Derkach who was previously accused by the United States of being a Russian agent.

Reuters reports:

The State Security Service (SBU) said Derkach, whose whereabouts were not made clear, set up a network of private security firms to use them to ease and support the entry of Russian units into cities during Moscow's Feb. 24 invasion.

Derkach could not immediately be reached for comment. He has previously denied wrongdoing and said he has been targeted for exposing corruption.

*In a statement, the SBU cited testimony from Derkach's **parliamentary aide Ihor Kolykhayev**. It said he was arrested at the beginning of the war, and accused him of being a go-between between Derkach and Russia's military intelligence agency.*

Kolykhayev said Derkach's security firms "had to ensure the passage of (Russian) vehicles, get into armoured vehicles with Russian flags, and thus ensure (the Russian army's) peaceful entry into the city."

The SBU said Derkach received sums of \$3-4 million every several months in order to fulfil the plan.

Derkach was sanctioned by the U.S. Treasury in September 2020 for what it said were attempts to influence the 2020 U.S. presidential election.

The Treasury's sanction announcement at the time said Derkach had been "an active Russian agent for over a decade."



Ukrainian lawmaker Andriy Derkach attends a news conference titled “Publication of facts of pressure of U.S. Embassy on Ukraine’s law enforcement agencies to interfere in electoral process in U.S.”, in Kiev, Ukraine October 9, 2019. Photograph: Gleb Garanich/Reuters

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[1d ago](#)[16.43](#)

Over 3,000 dolphins in the Black Sea have died as a result of the Russian invasion of Ukraine, according to Ukrainian scientists working in the “Tuzlovsky Lymans” reserve, a national nature park.

NEXTA reports that the “work of sonar and explosions prevent them from finding food” and that dead dolphins have been increasingly found on the coasts of Bulgaria and Romania, in addition to Ukraine.

At least 3,000 dolphins have died in the Black Sea because of the war, according to scientists of [#Ukrainian](#) "Tuzlovsky Lymans" reserve. The work of sonar and explosions prevent them from finding food. Dead dolphins are increasingly found on coast, even in [#Bulgaria](#) and [#Romania](#). pic.twitter.com/C3FZzW7bWD

— NEXTA (@nexta_tv) [June 24, 2022](#)

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[1d ago](#)[16.11](#)

It would require Ukraine a decade to rebuild infrastructure of its Black Sea ports, whose blockade by [Russia](#) is preventing global grain exports, according to Ukraine's deputy agriculture minister.

“For alternative routes, it would take 10 years of investment to try to build the necessary infrastructure to replace this Black Sea port infrastructure, which we spent about 20 years building, starting in 2000,” **Taras Vysotskiy** said on Friday.

Since the Russian invasion in February, millions of tonnes of wheat and other grain have been stuck in Ukrainian ports, prompting international concern surrounding food prices and hunger.

“These alternative routes are important” but can only carry around a third of Ukraine’s exports, he said.

Ukraine’s Western allies are looking for ways to unblock the ports, particularly Odessa, the main point of departure for the country’s agricultural produce.

“Without very concrete guarantees allowing ships to enter and leave safely, we cannot allow such actions,” Vysotskiy said, adding that Russia was not ready to provide these assurances.

Meanwhile, about 20 million tonnes of grain from last year’s harvest are still stuck in Ukraine, he said. However, he noted that the grain could be “stored very efficiently for up to two years” under the right conditions.

“10 to 15 percent of the port infrastructure was destroyed by rockets from Russia,” Vysotskiy also said, referring to a recent Russian strike

on one of the country's biggest grain terminals in Mykolaiv.

Vysotskiy said that Kyiv had “evidence that about half a million tonnes were stolen from the regions partially occupied,” referring to Kherson, Zaporizhzhia and Lugansk.

“We have received evidence from satellite images showing grain has been transported to Syria,” Vysotskiy added.

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[1d ago](#) [15.31](#)

Russia has condemned the European Union’s decision to accept Ukraine and Moldova as membership candidates.

Maria Zakharova, spokeswoman for the Russian foreign ministry said, “With the decision to grant Ukraine and Moldova the status of candidate countries, the European Union has confirmed that it continues to actively exploit the CIS on a geopolitical level, to use it to ‘contain’ Russia,” referring to Russia’s sphere of influence within the Commonwealth of Independent States consisting of former Soviet states.

Although it could take years for the countries to join the European bloc, the decision to accept them as candidates is a symbol of the EU’s intention to reach deep into the former Soviet Union.

“They are not thinking of the negative consequences of such a step,” she added.

By expanding to Ukraine and Moldova, two former Soviet republics, Zakharova said, the EU was sacrificing its democratic ideals at the expense of “unrestrained expansion and the political and economic enslavement of its neighbours.”

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[1d ago](#)[15.00](#)

Mass kidnappings have been occurring in Melitopol, said the mayor of the southeastern Ukrainian city.

“More than 500 people have been abducted in the last four months,” Ivan Fedrov said, adding that mass kidnappings have resumed in the Russian-occupied territory last week.

⚡Mayor: Russian occupiers kidnap people in Melitopol.

According to Mayor Ivan Fedorov, mass kidnappings resumed in Russian-occupied Melitopol in Zaporizhzhia Oblast last week. “More than 500 people have been abducted in the last four months,” he said.

— The Kyiv Independent (@KyivIndependent) [June 24, 2022](#)

Fedorov also said that Russian forces have been extracting harvest grain from the city’s silos.

“As for the latest crops, the rucists announce the following harvesting criteria: they either take 50% or 70% of the crops. They also announce the price at which they are willing to buy – less than \$80 per tonne. This is less than the actual cost price. Meanwhile, only one person was authorized by the occupiers to run such negotiations and buy out the crops,” he [said](#).

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[2d ago](#)[14.38](#)

Russia has launched 70 missiles at Odesa since February 24, the southwestern city’s regional prosecution has said.

According to the prosecution, the majority of the missiles have targeted residential areas and public utilities.

Since February 24 Russia launched 70 missiles at Odesa targeting mainly residential areas and public utilities: Odesa regional prosecution
[#StopRussia #RussianWarCrimes pic.twitter.com/XEaZTMaXMU](#)

— Stratcom Centre UA (@StratcomCentre) [June 24, 2022](#)

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Commonwealth of Nations

Charles tells Commonwealth leaders dropping Queen is ‘for each to decide’

Prince of Wales says at summit any move by members to become a republic can be ‘without rancour’

Prince Charles tells Commonwealth: dropping Queen is 'for each to decide' – video

[Jamie Grierson](#) and [Rajeev Syal](#)

Fri 24 Jun 2022 07.03 EDTFirst published on Fri 24 Jun 2022 04.57 EDT

The Prince of Wales has told Commonwealth leaders that keeping the Queen as head of state or becoming a republic is “a matter for each member country to decide”.

Charles made the comments during the opening ceremony of a summit of Commonwealth prime ministers and presidents in [Rwanda](#). He said he believed such fundamental changes could be made “calmly and without rancour”.

His observations are likely to be interpreted as an acknowledgment of [forces already in motion](#) as a number of Caribbean nations have suggested they may drop the British monarchy and elect their own heads of state.

Barbados took the historic move of replacing the Queen as head of state in November last year and [elected its first president](#) during a ceremony witnessed by the prince.

He is representing the Queen at the Commonwealth heads of government meeting (Chogm), where his visit has been overshadowed by a row over reported comments he made criticising the government’s scheme to send asylum seekers to Rwanda.

The prince's office at Clarence House has refused to be drawn on comments made by Boris Johnson, who on Thursday [appeared to take a swipe](#) at the royal and those who had attacked his plans to forcibly remove asylum seekers to Rwanda.

The prime minister said before a meeting with Charles on Friday: "People need to keep an open mind about the policy, the critics need to keep an open mind about the policy."

In response, a Clarence House spokesperson said: "As we have said previously, we will not be commenting on supposed remarks made in private except to say that the prince is politically neutral. Policy is a matter for government."

In the end, the hyped meeting after the opening ceremony lasted 15 minutes. Before the summit began the prince and Johnson had met briefly, with the prime minister nodding his head in deference and smiling as he shook Charles's hand.

Johnson, who was asked to say what had happened in his meeting with Charles, said: "I'm not going to go into what happened with the conversation obviously, you know, it did take place. I don't discuss conversations either with Her Majesty the Queen, or with the heir to the throne. You wouldn't expect that but it was a good old chinwag and we certainly covered a lot of ground."

In his address at the opening ceremony, Charles said: "The Commonwealth contains within it countries that have had constitutional relationships with my family, some that continue to do so, and increasingly those that have had none.

"I want to say clearly, as I have said before, that each member's constitutional arrangement, as republic or monarchy, is purely a matter for each member country to decide. The benefit of long life brings me the experience that arrangements such as these can change, calmly and without rancour."

The Duke and Duchess of Cambridge's visit to the Caribbean in March appeared to raise the issue of other realms – nations where the Queen is head of state – breaking away from the British monarchy.

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Jamaica's prime minister, Andrew Holness, who has travelled to Rwanda for Chogm, suggested to the couple that his country may be the next to become a republic.

A few days after Prince William and Kate left Belize, that country's minister for constitutional and political reform, Henry Charles Usher, reportedly told Belize's parliament: "Perhaps it is time for Belize to take the next step in truly owning our independence. But it is a matter that the people of Belize must decide on."

Before the opening ceremony in Rwanda's capital, Kigali, Charles, who has been joined by the Duchess of Cornwall, was to meet the Rwandan president, Paul Kagame, and the first lady, Jeannette Kagame, the Commonwealth secretary general, Patricia Scotland, and Johnson and his wife, Carrie.

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2022.06.24 - Spotlight

- 'He died in his 30s living the life he had dreamed of' Artist Eric Ravilious
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‘He died in his 30s living the life he had dreamed of’: artist Eric Ravilious



A detail from Eric Ravilious's *HMS Glorious in the Arctic, April 1940*. The aircraft carrier was sunk two months later, with the loss of 1,207 crew.
Photograph: Imperial War Museum/foxtrotfilms.com

He was the first war artist to die on active service in the second world war – and one of the greatest. Now, a new film, featuring Alan Bennett and Ai Weiwei, uncovers his complicated life

[Claire Armitstead](#)

[@carmitstead](#)

Fri 24 Jun 2022 03.00 EDT

On 2 September 1942, a plane on a search-and-rescue mission off the coast of Iceland crashed into the sea, killing its pilot and 39-year-old passenger. The passenger was Eric Ravilious, whose final letter to his wife, three days earlier, had extolled the deep shadows and leaflike cracks of the subarctic landscape. He was one of 300 artists hired by the War Artists Advisory Committee to cover the second world war, and the first to die on active service.

Back home in their dank Essex farmhouse where she was marooned with their three young children, his wife, [Tirzah Garwood](#), was struggling: she had recently been operated on for the breast cancer that would kill her nine years later. The pressures of illness and domestic life had put paid to her own successful career as an artist. But each evening, after putting her children to bed, she would sit down to type out her autobiography.

It was addressed directly to her future readers: “I hope you may be one of my descendants,” she wrote, “but I have only three children, and as I write a German aeroplane has circled around my head taking photographs of the damage that yesterday’s raiders have done, reminding me that there is no certainty of our survival.”



Artistic union ... Tirzah Garwood with her husband Eric Ravilious in the 1930s. Photograph: ESRO/The Keep

The reputation of Ravilious as an artist of any worth very nearly didn't survive at all. By the time of his death, one great mural, at Waterloo's Morley College, had been bombed into oblivion, some of his war paintings had been censored, and dozens more had been sunk at sea on their way to an exhibition on the art of propaganda in South America. For more than 30 years, most of his surviving works lay forgotten under a bed in a house that he and Garwood had once shared with the artist Edward Bawden, leaving only the mass-produced legacy of playful alphabet mugs commissioned by Wedgwood and a woodcut of top-hatted gentlemen players that for years graced the cover of Wisden Cricketers' Almanack.

But a new film, [Eric Ravilious: Drawn to War](#), sets the record straight, drawing on an impressive array of advocates – from Grayson Perry to Alan Bennett – to make a case for him as one of the great British artists, whose engravings broke new technical ground while his watercolours carried the tradition of Turner into the 20th century. The film is a passion project for its author and director, [Margy Kinmonth](#), who began to research it 15 years ago, but was repeatedly knocked back by funders who insisted nobody had ever heard of Ravilious.

Kinmonth's previous film was a 2017 documentary about the artists of the Russian revolution, but when the pandemic struck, she realised she would have to set her sights closer to home, so returned to the snippets of interviews she had already recorded with surviving members of the Ravilious family. "They call arts the tumbleweed of television," she laughs, "but fortunately cinema and art go very well together."



Margy Kinmonth (right) with Tamsin Greig, who voices Tirzah Garwood for the film. Photograph: foxtrotfilms.com

Her persistence has paid off. A circle of "friends" chipped in to help with the finance, and more than 70 cinemas have already signed up to screen a film, which is both a warts-and-all account of a passionate but unconventional marriage and a persuasive curatorial tour around a body of work whose quiet surfaces are never quite what they seem.

The nature writer Robert Macfarlane, who featured Ravilious in his bestselling book [The Old Ways](#), points to the way the artist would frame bucolic watercolours of the rolling southern English countryside with strands of barbed wire. "I think Ravilious is an example of the fatal Englishman, along with the mountaineer [George Mallory](#) and the poet [Edward Thomas](#): they didn't have to go to war or climb Everest, and all of them died in their 30s living out lives they had dreamed of as children. It's

this old, fatal love for the landscape.” The result, says Macfarlane, is that “both Thomas and Ravilious are thought of as quaint ruralists when really they’re not – they’re modernists”.



A bucolic landscape – with barbed wire ... Chalk Paths, by Eric Ravilious.
Photograph: foxtrotfilms.com

A Wiltshire landscape that is one of the artist’s best-known works shows [a jaunty red van](#) approaching the junction of a road that stretches towards an ominous future (it was created for Artists Against Fascism). A domestic scene of a deserted outdoor tea table beneath an umbrella is titled Tea at Furlongs but could be called Munich 1938, reflects Alan Bennett in the film, quoting WH Auden’s prewar poem The Witnesses: “Something is going to fall like rain / And it won’t be flowers.” Most strikingly, a letter to Garwood describing his shock at witnessing the drowning of a young airman in a military exercise is juxtaposed in the film with a painting of biplanes seen through a window bobbing benignly on the sea.

The Chinese artist Ai Weiwei admits he knew nothing about Ravilious until Kinmonth approached him because of his installation [History of Bombs](#) at the Imperial War Museum. “I was curious to know how a war artist worked, so I accepted the invitation to participate in the project,” he says. He was astonished by what he discovered. “His expression is very calm, and he has

such an innocent and almost naive painting style. I was deeply moved by the authenticity, attention to detail, and humanitarianism expressed in his artworks about war. He is able to observe and express in an extraordinary way. Although a lot of his works are watercolour paintings that seem like an understatement, they are profound, rigorous and meticulous. I think that Ravilious is one of the best artists in the UK.”

The film begins and ends with the doomed plane bleating out a mayday signal that was never heard, before looping back to Ravilious’s childhood in the Sussex countryside where he took pleasure in sketching commonplace objects – a brush and bucket, his father’s collar and tie, as well as the planes flying over the chalk hills. He went on to get a scholarship to the Royal College of Art, and was teaching at Eastbourne School of Art when he met Garwood, a colonel’s daughter who was studying wood engraving, and whose parents were snobbishly opposed to their relationship.

The story is semi-dramatised, with the task of voicing Garwood falling to Tamsin Greig, whom Kinmonth approached after seeing her in a play at Hampstead theatre. Greig was also unfamiliar with Ravilious’s work. “The reason I was drawn to the film is because really it’s a love story between two human beings who share a similar passion, but there is a cost in the partnership of two artists, which someone has to bear,” she says. “They’re trying to hold together the wildness of creativity but also living within the constraints of societal systems.”



Two Women in a Garden, by Eric Ravilious. Photograph: Fry Art Gallery/foxtrotfilms.com

In her autobiography, [Long Live Great Bardfield](#), Garwood is open about the impact on her of two affairs that Eric publicly pursued, starting while she was pregnant with the first of their three children. Her account is painful but never self-pitying. “I like that combination of deep feeling that’s written on a very thin epidermis,” says Greig. “I find Margy’s storytelling very tender and elegiac.”

Part of the story is told by Ravilious and Garwood’s daughter, Anne, who was a babe in arms when her father was killed (in her autobiography, Garwood recalled the effort of trying to lift her to wave a final goodbye) and just 10 when her mother also died. As Kinmonth points out, the film would not have been anything like as layered had she not made available the couple’s personal correspondence and all the letters between her father and his two lovers, which she inherited after their deaths.

For all the turbulence and injustice of their relationship, there is a balance between Ravilious and Garwood as artists that is made clear in two of their pictures. Both were of third-class train carriages travelling across the countryside. But whereas Ravilious’s watercolour carriage is empty, giving

centre stage to the white horse carved into the hillside beyond, Garwood's woodcut is crammed with passengers.

Poignantly, it falls to the couple's granddaughter, Ella Ravilious, now a curator at the Victoria & Albert Museum in London, to read out Garwood's passage bequeathing her book to posterity, should it have survived. "If you are not one of my descendants," the passage continues, outside the film, "then all I ask of you is that you love the country as I do, and when you come into a room, discreetly observe its pictures and its furnishings, and sympathise with painters and craftsmen." This might be the story of a great man, but it is a tale told by women.

[Eric Ravilious – Drawn to War](#) is in cinemas across the UK and Ireland from 1 July

This article was downloaded by **calibre** from <https://www.theguardian.com/film/2022/jun/24/he-died-in-his-30s-living-the-life-he-had-dreamed-of-artist-eric-ravilious>

January 6 hearings

Trump feeling fallout of Capitol attack hearings as allies abandon ship

Analysis: The smooth and efficient proceedings with testimonies from Republicans has reportedly infuriated Trump



Donald Trump has reportedly been glued to the televised congressional hearings detailing his attempts to overturn the 2020 election result.
Photograph: Evan Vucci/AP



[David Smith](#) in Washington

[@smithinamerica](#)

Fri 24 Jun 2022 02.00 EDT Last modified on Fri 24 Jun 2022 16.28 EDT

Somewhere in Bedminster, New Jersey, on Thursday afternoon, it seems quite possible that an elderly man was sitting in front of a television howling with rage.

Donald Trump, who spends summers at his Bedminster golf club, is a TV guy, a ratings guy. So the widely televised hearings of the congressional committee investigating the January 6 attack on the US Capitol [hit him where it hurts](#).

The former US president has reportedly been glued to them – and has not liked what he's seen. As the panel has presented a carefully crafted case against Trump as the leader of a failed coup, he is said to be livid that there is no one in the room to speak up for him.

Trump “has tuned into every hearing” and has grown increasingly irate – to “the point of about to scream at the TV”, according to a close adviser – with what he views as the “lack of defense by his Capitol Hill allies”, [the Washington Post reported](#).

He is possibly aware that, while the hearings come too late to force his resignation and may or may not cause the [justice department to press criminal charges](#), they seem to be inflicting greater political damage than anyone imagined.

[Thursday's fifth hearing](#) served up more of the same in the Cannon Caucus Room which, somewhat reminiscent of a grand ornate ballroom with curtains closed and lights on, is bringing a gravitas to the nailing of Trump that no trickle of media revelations or tell-all memoirs can.

Photographers crowded around the witnesses just as the panel's chairman, congressman [Bennie Thompson](#), brought down the gavel, a now ominous sound for Trump, and spoke of “a brazen attempt to use the justice department to advance the president’s personal political agenda”.

Trump’s consternation is likely to have only intensified when [Republican Liz Cheney](#) summed up his central role in the conspiracy to overturn the election, then another Republican, Adam Kinzinger, questioned former justice department officials. “Today President Trump’s total disregard for the constitution and his oath will be fully exposed,” Kinzinger said.

Trump asked DoJ to 'just say election was corrupt', January 6 hearing told – video

Once again, all went smoothly and efficiently. There were no interruptions, objections, points of order or spoiling tactics. And that is said to have made Trump furious. He is especially critical of Kevin McCarthy, the minority leader in the House, for boycotting the committee instead of giving pro-Trump [Republicans](#) a voice on it.

Trump [told Punchbowl News](#), “In retrospect, I think it would have been very smart” to put more Republicans on the committee. “The Republicans don’t have a voice. They don’t even have anything to say.”

McCarthy apparently gambled that this would allow Republicans to write off the hearings as illegitimate, partisan and an attempt to distract from more pressing issues such as inflation. But the presence of Cheney, Kinzinger and more than a dozen Republican witnesses has undermined that argument.

Moreover, McCarthy, who wants to be speaker of the House of Representatives, may have forgotten that Trump pays attention to TV, where the hearings are inescapable and will run into next month, prolonging the agony. Even if they are not penetrating the Trump base, they are penetrating Trump himself.

And his formidable political instincts – which served him well against Hillary Clinton and warned him early that Joe Biden posed the biggest threat to his re-election – will now be warning Trump that the January 6 committee's contribution to the history books poses a threat to his hopes of a 2024 presidential run.

The hearings have painted a portrait of a man detached from reality, peddling paranoid conspiracy theories and putting himself before his country. Kinzinger noted: “He was willing to sacrifice our republic to prolong his presidency. I can imagine no more dishonourable act by a president.” They have also highlighted a callous, cruel streak that saw him make baseless allegations with no regard for how [they would ruin individual lives](#).

A source close to Trump [told NBC News](#): “I look at this and say there is nobody in America who is watching this – even with all that’s going on in the world with Joe Biden – and saying, ‘Donald Trump should be the next president of the United States’. Nobody.””

Trump’s [chequered record of endorsements](#) in this year’s Republican primary elections have also raised questions over whether he still has a tight grip on the “Make America great again” movement. The hearings could turn him into damaged goods and give even Maga diehards some reasons to look for more electable alternatives.

[Frank Luntz](#), a political consultant and pollster, said: “I see people no longer drinking the Kool-Aid. I see people moving away from Trump for the first time. His endorsement matters more than anybody else in the Republican party by far, but he does not control the Republican party any more. He’s the loudest voice, he has the most influence, but he’s losing control every day.””

The leading challenger to Trump's throne is Ron DeSantis, the rightwing governor of Florida, who is gaining on him in opinion polls. A poll of 300 likely Republican voters in New Hampshire, the first presidential primary state, [found 39% wanted DeSantis](#) to be the next nominee, while 37% favoured Trump, within the 5.5% margin of error, according to the University of New Hampshire Survey Center.

Pam Roehl, attending last week's Faith & Freedom Coalition conference in Nashville, Tennessee, [told the Associated Press](#) that she still supports Trump but increasingly finds herself in the minority among friends who have moved on. "They're like kind of: 'Get with the program. Why aren't you backing DeSantis?'" she was quoted as saying.

If the two men go head-to-head, DeSantis could point to his legislative record in Florida and would be free of the baggage of the 2020 election and the January 6 insurrection. More than three decades younger than Trump, the governor would be seen as the candidate of the future while the former president keeps harping on the past. Trump's big lie, it transpires, could prove his big liability.

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ExperienceLife and style

Experience: I lost my sight overnight

When I opened my eyes, I knew this was more than just an ordinary hangover



‘He exudes joie de vivre’: Tom McInulty with his guide dog Toby.
Photograph: Peter Flude/The Guardian

Tom McInulty

Fri 24 Jun 2022 05.00 EDT Last modified on Fri 24 Jun 2022 23.03 EDT

I was 16 when I first went to sea. Having joined the merchant navy after school, I got a round-the-world cruise as my first trip – we went to South Africa, Australia, New Zealand and sailed down the Panama Canal. For a teenager who’d grown up in Glasgow during the 1950s and 60s, it was a real adventure, and over the next 15 years I enjoyed a happy, carefree life as a ship’s steward, working long hours but playing hard during my time off.

On the evening of my 31st birthday in November 1983, we were docked in Trinidad and a group of us went ashore to celebrate. I still smoked in those

days, and by the time I tumbled into my bunk I'd worked my way through a number of rum punches. But when I opened my eyes the next morning, I knew I was suffering from more than just an ordinary hangover. Other than a vague perception of blurry smears of light, I could see nothing.

As I was helped off the ship, I tried not to panic, assuming I was suffering a temporary affliction. It would take a long time for me to give up that hope, even after I was flown back to the UK. I was examined first in Southampton, where I lived, and then later by a specialist in Glasgow. He told me he was sorry, then said I would be blind for the rest of my life.

I couldn't process what I'd heard at first; it just didn't seem to make sense. The specialist told me that the eye unit in Southampton had discovered traces of cyanide in my body, possibly from the tobacco or drinks I'd enjoyed on my birthday. Most people are able to filter out cyanide in such small quantities, but it seemed I had a hereditary condition that prevented this, and the result had been irreversible damage to my optic nerves.

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.

In the months that followed, I felt my life was over. I'd lost not only my sight, but also my independence and identity – after spending half my life travelling the world doing a job I loved, I was now trapped in my house in Southampton with no income. I was determined to keep my home, but even this had become unfamiliar to me: at first I found it difficult to make my way from one room to another, and the thought of going outside filled me with anxiety. My sister came from Scotland to help as often as she could, but I was unable to accept this bewildering new reality and started to drink heavily in an attempt to blot it out.

The turning point came when I went on a camping holiday with other visually impaired people – it made such a difference to be able to talk to people who understood my situation. In 1989, I had started a two-year course at a Royal National Institute of Blind People college in Loughborough, learning new skills. Halfway through the course I got my

first guide dog, Otis, which changed everything. Travelling through town with my cane, I'd often found it difficult to judge where kerbs were and sometimes got into a tangle with passing bikes. Now I had a friend who chaperoned me safely and at speed – it was as if all the obstacles had disappeared and the sense of regained freedom was exhilarating.

Since then, I've had four dogs, each with a personality that seemed to reflect the stage of development I was at: serious Otis; Lloyd, who was a little more laid-back; cheeky Brunel; and my current dog, Toby, who exudes joie de vivre. I'd like to think that's where I'm at, too. Shortly after leaving Loughborough, I started working again, and have enjoyed a rewarding career since with organisations that help visually impaired people.

I've taken part in fundraising challenges such as climbing Sydney Harbour Bridge and Australia's highest mountain, and [carried the Paralympic torch alongside Brunel](#). Around the time of the Queen's diamond jubilee, I met a man called Paul online – we clicked immediately. I proposed during a trip to Florida, where we swam with dolphins, and we finally got to marry during the platinum jubilee. Many of the wedding guests were friends I'd made in my merchant navy years.

In the early months after losing my sight, I questioned whether I really wanted to go on living, but I'm so glad I did. I wouldn't have missed the last 40 years for anything.

As told to Chris Broughton

Do you have an experience to share? Email experience@theguardian.com

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You be the judge: should my boyfriend close the kitchen cupboards after himself?



Photograph: Joren Joshua/The Guardian

He leaves all the cupboards and drawers open; she says it's dangerous and drives her crazy. Is it an open and shut case? The decision is yours

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

*Interviews by [Georgina Lawton](#)
[@georginalawton](#)*

Fri 24 Jun 2022 03.00 EDT Last modified on Fri 24 Jun 2022 03.05 EDT

The prosecution: Daisy

It doesn't take much energy to close a cupboard door. Donald's hazardous habit is weird

Donald, my boyfriend of three years, permanently leaves the kitchen cupboards open. I'll come home from work and the cutlery drawer will be out, the cupboard where we keep the teabags ajar, and the condiments cupboard wide open. It's a hazard. And aesthetically it makes everything look terrible.

I'm only 5ft and the open doors are just the right height to hit my head. I also bang my hips on the drawers. It hurts and could be avoided if Donald just closed them. I'm a bit of a klutz and his habit makes it worse.

He says it's my fault if I walk into things and that I should keep my eyes peeled. But if I'm just back from work and rushing around in the kitchen or trying to make a cup of tea, I don't always see them.

Before we moved in together two years ago, Donald lived with housemates. He says that no one ever called him out on it. I think that's probably because he was always able to blame someone else, but now it's just the two of us there's no escape.

I noticed his little quirk as soon as we moved in together. The first few times I thought it was me being forgetful but with Donald working from home in lockdown it became obvious who it was. My parents also commented on it when we stayed at their house. They said: "Oh, we can see Donald has been here."

It's weird. He doesn't leave wardrobe doors open or the toilet seat up. It's just in the kitchen

I've asked him why he leaves all these doors open. He says that he forgets, and he's going to open the cupboards again 10 minutes later, so why bother closing them. That makes some sense. He makes a lot of tea and gets up regularly – but he should still take more care so I don't have to close everything.

It's weird. He doesn't leave wardrobe doors open or the toilet seat up and is also tidier than me in other areas – I have more clothes and leave a lot of stuff hanging around our flat. It's just in the kitchen.

Donald should try harder. It's an easy win in our relationship. If he can't manage it, maybe we should get child locks. Or, Donald should keep the tea and coffee on the counter so he won't have to open that drawer.

The defence: Donald

I drink a lot of tea and coffee, so I like to keep the cupboard door permanently open

I see no issue with leaving kitchen cupboards open. I work from home and get up every 90 minutes to make a cuppa. On an average day I drink three cups of tea, two coffees and (after 9pm) several cups of peppermint tea. It's more efficient to keep the teabag cupboard open all day. That's my excuse and I think it's a valid one.

I know it doesn't take a lot of energy to close the doors and drawers after yourself, but I just don't think about it when I'm in work mode. After two years of working remotely I've got into the habit of leaving things ajar. I can't help it. I leave the cutlery cupboard open, as well as three cupboards containing condiments and tea and coffee.

I also spend more time in the kitchen. I'm the domestic god, while Daisy brings home more of the bacon, so the kitchen is my domain. I should be able to do what I like with it.

I don't believe Daisy's argument that she's a klutz and needs help not to bump into things. Her eyesight is better than mine – I wear glasses and she doesn't. When she's banged her hip on a drawer I am sympathetic. I will hear a gasp or "ow!" from the kitchen and feel a bit bad. But I don't think it's my fault. She should watch where she's going. If I've left a drawer open it's not to spite her. It's not my responsibility if she knocks into one.

When I go to sleep I close everything else – wardrobe doors, windows, bedroom and bathroom doors. As Daisy says, I'm very tidy.

I'm Irish and Daisy is English – maybe it's a cultural thing as we're a bit more relaxed. When I told one of my Irish friends about Daisy getting irritated by my forgetfulness, he took a picture of his kitchen with multiple drawers open and said: "Finally, I feel seen. I do it, too."

I don't agree with the child-lock suggestion. That would feel as if Daisy doesn't trust me in my own kitchen. I can try harder to close things after myself if it helps Daisy from getting injured. And I like the idea of keeping the coffee and tea out on the counter. But this whole thing is trivial.

The jury of Guardian readers

Should Donald start closing the kitchen cupboards?

Seriously? This is a no-brainer. Cupboard doors left open are obviously a hazard, so Donald should just do the safe and adult thing rather than give petulant, adolescent excuses. If he can't learn this simple task, Daisy should look for a new flatmate.

Claudia, 58

Donald feels "a bit bad" when Daisy hurts herself on the draws he leaves open? Making only his side of the bed? It sounds like he is just bull-headed. He has the sense to close cupboards before bed, but he should be doing it before Daisy gets home from work, too.

Luke, 24

Donald should close the cupboards and/or keep the tea and coffee on the counter. Daisy's ask is justified. Cupboards should be shut – otherwise they're just shelves with unnecessary obstacles.

Anton, 31

Donald is not living with his mates any more; he's living with someone he loves. He should be looking for ways to make her happy, not reinforcing his independence. Time to decide what Daisy means to him. Love is not a competition, it's a cooperation.

Joseph, 73

It would certainly irk me if my other half left drawers open. Just put the tea and coffee on the counter. Job done.

Maryam, 25

You be the judge

So now you can be the judge. In our online poll, below, tell us: should Donald close the kitchen cupboards?

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

The poll will close on Thursday 30 June at 9am BST

Last week's result

We asked if Jilly should stop walking out of arguments, as it annoys her husband Martin.

64% of you said no – Jilly is innocent

36% of you said yes – Jilly is guilty

2022.06.24 - Opinion

- What do the byelection defeats mean for the Conservatives?
- There's a simple way to unite everyone behind climate justice – and it's within our power
- Young people don't care about the strikes of the 1970s and 80s. They are worried about now
- The US supreme court just made America a more dangerous, violent place

The panelByelections

What do the byelection results mean for the Conservatives? Our panel's verdict

[David Gauke](#), [Victoria Honeyman](#), [Lewis Clarke](#), [Moya Lothian-McLean](#) and [Polly Toynbee](#)

Former Tory seats have been lost to Labour in Wakefield and the Liberal Democrats in Tiverton and Honiton

Boris Johnson says he will keep going after double byelection loss – video

Fri 24 Jun 2022 05.17 EDT Last modified on Sat 25 Jun 2022 08.11 EDT

[David Gauke](#): Dowden's resignation turns a difficult night into a crisis



Governments lose byelections, but these results are very grim for the Conservatives. Wakefield was expected to [return to Labour](#) and it did, with a

substantial (but not spectacular) 12% swing from Tory to Labour.

Tiverton and Honiton, however, is a shocker. A 30% swing to the Liberal Democrats is huge and, added to similar defeats in Chesham and Amersham and North Shropshire, suggests that they are now a threat to many Conservative seats.

What turns a very difficult night into a political crisis for the prime minister is the resignation of the party chairman, Oliver Dowden. Dowden is an astute political operator and was an early supporter of Boris Johnson in 2019 because he thought Johnson offered the best route to a Conservative general election victory. It is obvious from Dowden's resignation letter that he now thinks that Johnson's resignation is the best route to winning the next general election.

When Dowden writes of it no longer being possible to carry on with "business as usual" and that "somebody must take responsibility", it is not really his own position that he has in mind. The question now is whether other ministers will follow.

- David Gauke was Conservative MP for South West Hertfordshire, 2005-19, and secretary of state for justice and lord chancellor, 2018-19

Victoria Honeyman: For Starmer, keeping Johnson in Downing Street is a gift



The Labour victory in the Wakefield by-election was not unexpected, but it certainly contributed to the one-two punch that the electorate delivered to Johnson's government on 23 June. Wakefield had "lent" its vote to the Conservatives at the 2019 general election, but after the [conviction of the local MP](#) and recent government conduct, voters retracted their support.

Even before the allegations that led to his conviction on sexual assault charges in April 2022, Imran Ahmad Khan was accused by some of lacking diligence as a local MP. The [Sue Gray report](#) and accounts of parties in Downing Street, coupled with a lack of levelling up in the constituency, left many disappointed and disillusioned in the Conservatives nationally. Where was the change they had promised?

Wakefield – the place where I was born – is traditional Labour territory. A former mining town, it is often overshadowed in terms of funding by the larger cities that surround it, such as Leeds, where I now teach. It has big aspirations and big hopes, but the general feeling before 2019 was that Labour had taken the seat for granted. Add in Brexit and the fact that the seat supported leave, and it is easy to see why the [Conservatives](#) looked like a valid option for many voters. The hope was that Brexit would get done and its advertised benefits, coupled with the promises of levelling up funding, would benefit Wakefield. Unfortunately that hasn't been the case.

The [election of Simon Lightwood](#) is a good sign for Labour, representing a 12% swing. The Labour leadership will be able to point to Wakefield as a clear sign that their strategy to reinvent the party after the Corbyn years is working.

However, there needs to be a note of caution. While [Labour](#) did win in Wakefield, the Conservatives clearly contributed to their loss. For Starmer, keeping Johnson in Downing Street would be a gift. If the Conservatives replace him, and they may if he becomes an electoral liability, Starmer may find his uphill battle even harder to win.

- Dr Victoria Honeyman is an associate professor in British politics at the University of Leeds

[Lewis Clarke](#): There's no such thing as a safe seat any more

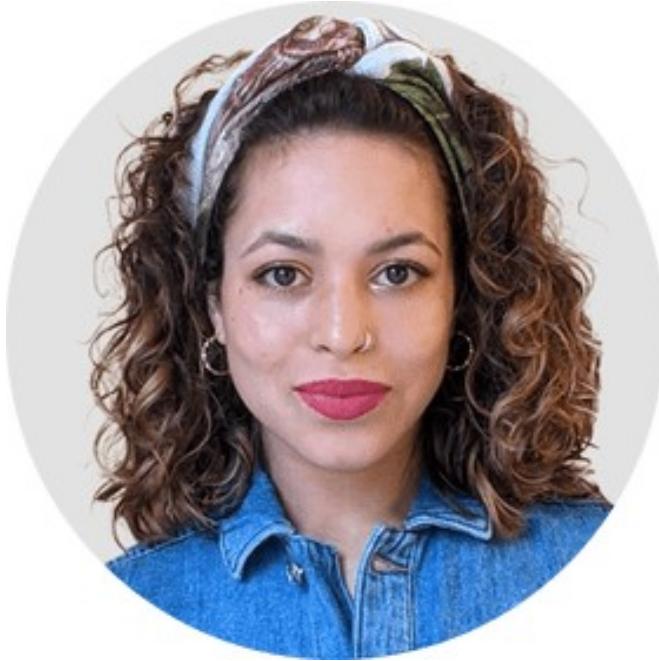


What a night for Tiverton and Honiton. A massive victory for the Lib Dems that I doubt even the most optimistic of supporters would have predicted.

It's a swansong for the constituency, which will cease to be at the next election, and there will be a huge challenge to keep the new constituency area from turning blue. Many Labour supporters and others have said they "held their noses" and voted Lib Dem to send a message to [Boris Johnson](#), but for now, the Lib Dems will be celebrating whatever reasons led to their victory, as this is a major blow to the Conservatives. Many more MPs will be looking over their shoulders, as it indicates that there really is no such thing as a safe seat any more.

- Lewis Clarke is a reporter for the Mid Devon Gazette and the North Devon Journal

[Moya Lothian-McLean: Johnson should jump – but he can't bring himself to](#)



To lose one byelection may be regarded as a misfortune. To lose two on the same day, [setting a record](#) for the largest Conservative percentage majority overturned in such a contest, is unequivocally disastrous. Boris Johnson may have survived an internal no-confidence vote, but the loss of these particular two seats are his biggest blow yet. With the former "red wall" constituency Wakefield only turning blue in 2019, and Tiverton and Honiton previously a

resolutely safe Tory seat, together their protest votes ranged across the span of the new Conservative voter coalition that delivered Johnson such a stonking mandate.

Yet like the [last prime minister](#) who presided over the ignominy of a double byelection defeat, [John Major](#), Johnson shows no signs of leaving of his own accord. Johnson is a singular political operator, one who has been [gunning to be prime minister](#) since he was at university. It is an irony that now he has achieved that, his famous self-preserving political instincts seem to have abandoned him, blinded as he is by the naked need to remain at No 10. To maintain a long-term career in parliament, and even his seat at the [next general election](#), now would be the time to jump. But he cannot bring himself to do so. The man who has “[failed upwards](#)” to the top of the political tree can’t face the fall.

- Moya Lothian-McLean is a contributing editor at Novara Media

[Polly Toynbee: Labour should let its frontbench off the leash](#)



That's a political earthquake, the ground juddering under Tory feet. Stricken in their heartlands, stripped of their temporary "red wall", nowhere feels safe. It's not only Boris Johnson who feels voter feet tramping over his political grave, but the whole party, lost, directionless, riven by its own bizarre internal passions.

A government adrift amid the worst cost of living crisis most have known has nothing on offer. The chancellor told the cabinet this week there's [no money for pay](#), as he's saving up for a cynical pre-election tax cut already factored in by voters. Lost in the past, ministers still rant about Brexit, with the Sun on [Remoaner Watch](#), while voters and Labour move on to how to rebuild bridges. Lost in reliving 1979, they think strikes rebound on Labour: they don't. The surprise is that unions waited for 12 years of freezes and stagnation that left public sector pay [4.3% lower in real terms](#).

Plan? There is none, as [Dominic Raab](#) made painfully plain on the Today programme. Stop the distractions, he kept saying, but nasty little squibs of distraction are all the government has – failing Rwanda plans, assaults on human rights – and they fill no bare fridges.

Today, the door was thrown wide open for Labour. Expect less "boring Keir" talk and more appreciation of "no drama Starmer" as Labour's strategy stolidly rolls towards No 10. Celebrate remarkable tactical voting in these byelections as the public ducks and dives our rotten electoral system.

Labour should let its frontbench off the leash a little – so they can unzip their lips just a tad more on strikes, refugees and Brexit.

But caution rules when polls show Labour is not yet trusted to run the public finances, and the lingering impact of long-Corbyn. Remember the extreme caution of Blair and Brown pre-1997 and be thankful Starmer has not tied his hands as they did when they [fixed themselves](#) to John Major's lethal two-year total spending freeze. Instead Labour talks expansion, with a [£28bn-a-year investment plan](#) in good green jobs. Impatience is the left's nature, but today shows patience pays off.

- Polly Toynbee is a Guardian columnist

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| [Section menu](#) | [Main menu](#) |

[**Opinion**](#)[**Debt relief**](#)

There's a simple way to unite everyone behind climate justice – and it's within our power

[**George Monbiot**](#)



Cancelling poor nations' historic debts would allow their governments to channel money into climate adaptation



In Argentina, the International Monetary Fund has pushed for the development of the giant Vaca Muerta shale gas basin. Photograph: Emiliano Lasalvia/AFP/Getty Images

Fri 24 Jun 2022 03.00 EDT Last modified on Fri 24 Jun 2022 09.40 EDT

It has proved too easy to stop people uniting around the crucial issues of our time. Those who demand better pay and conditions for workers and justice for poor people have been pitched by demagogues and corporate lobbyists against those who demand a habitable planet.

For years, we have struggled with the question of how to overcome this division and create a social and environmental justice platform that could unite vast numbers of the world's people. Only one thing was clear: any such campaign had to be led by activists from poorer nations. Now, I believe, the breakthrough has arrived.

Developed by campaigners in some of the world's most exploited countries, it's a brilliant idea: simple but systemic. Rich nations owe a massive [climate debt](#) to poorer nations: for the devastating impacts of the fossil fuels we have burned. Yet they have no intention of paying for the loss and damage they have caused. Poor countries are deemed to owe massive financial debts to the rich nations, yet they cannot pay them without destroying their

economies and their ecosystems. The proposal is simultaneously to cancel both the climate and the financial debts, liberating the money poorer nations need to take climate action. [Debt for Climate](#), mobilising labour, social and climate movements in 28 countries, will be launched by campaigners during the [G7 summit in Germany](#), which starts on Sunday.

To understand this proposal better, let's begin with the poorer world's debt, now largely forgotten in the rich world. The powerful campaigns to cancel it in the 1990s have all but vanished from public view. This is not because the crisis has abated. Far from it: between 1990 and 2019, external debt in the global south (the poorer nations) rose on average from roughly [90% of their GDP to 170%](#). The pandemic has accelerated the crisis: 135 out of 148 nations in the poorer world are now classed as "[critically indebted](#)".

Campaigners often talk of "odious debts", which means loans agreed by dictatorships, that provide no benefit to the nation. But all the debts deemed to be owed by poor nations to the rich world and its corporations could be seen this way. The idea that the global south, looted and enslaved for centuries, should owe money to its exploiters is grotesque.

An analysis in the journal [Global Environmental Change](#) suggests that \$10tn of value is extracted from poorer countries by richer ones every year, in the form of raw materials, energy, land and labour. That's 70 times as much money as would be needed to end extreme poverty worldwide. This extraction provides rich nations with a quarter of their GDP: much of our apparent wealth depends on exploitation.

Debt is imperialism by other means. It's equivalent to the [hut taxes](#) imposed by the British in their African colonies. These taxes, often levied in currencies Africans did not possess, forced them to surrender their resources or their labour to colonial projects. Today, foreign debt forces nations to hand their assets to rich countries and multinational companies.

For example, a report from Green New Deal suggests that debt has been used by the World Bank as a means of obliging [Senegal](#) to allow US, Australian and British companies to exploit its oil and gas. In Argentina, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) has reportedly pushed for the development of the giant [Vaca Muerta](#) shale gas basin, using similar

leverage. Impoverished and coerced by debt, poorer nations have little choice but to allow destructive industries to exploit them. Campaigners have a term for this: debt trap diplomacy.

It's not just extraction that these debts enable, but also austerity. An [analysis by Oxfam](#) suggests that 85% of the Covid loans made by the IMF to poorer nations were connected to austerity programmes: the fund is using the power of debt to push nations into cutting wage bills and spending less on public services and support for poor people.

While poorer nations must surrender their wealth, they must also suffer the climate breakdown imposed on them by the rich. An [analysis](#) by Jason Hickel, in The Lancet Planetary Health, suggests that the former G8 nations are responsible for 85% of the CO2 emissions responsible for dangerous levels of heating. Yet the overwhelming [majority](#) of the deaths caused by climate breakdown happen in the global south. This represents a massive climate debt that cannot be expressed purely in financial terms.

Forced austerity and forced exploitation of fossil fuel reserves are threads that could draw together climate and social justice campaigns all over the world. Debt for Climate proposes a global revolt against debt and austerity, tied to the prevention of climate breakdown. It calls on poor world governments to refuse to honour their debts, and to channel the money they would otherwise have had to pay into public services, climate adaptation and a just transition out of fossil fuels. It calls on activists in the rich world to demand the cancellation of debt and an end to austerity, both at home and abroad, and reparations for the devastating loss and damage caused by our greenhouse gas emissions.

By reviving the question of who owes what to whom, huge constituencies, labour and green, north and south, can develop a common platform. Climate campaigns are indivisible from global justice.

- George Monbiot is a Guardian columnist

| [Section menu](#) | [Main menu](#) |

OpinionIndustrial action

Young people don't care about the strikes of the 1970s and 80s. They are worried about now

[Eve Livingston](#)

Low pay and insecure work are issues that overwhelmingly affect them. That's why the denigration of unions is not working



Young people paint 'strike' banners on the RMT picket line at Sheffield train station. Photograph: Richard Saker/The Guardian

Fri 24 Jun 2022 01.00 EDT Last modified on Fri 24 Jun 2022 09.51 EDT

This week, on the first day of rail strikes across the UK and under the threat of industrial action from refuse workers, teachers and lawyers, The Sun emblazoned its front page with the headline: "We regret to announce that this country is returning to the 1970s." Later that day, in a now much-

memed exchange, Sky News presenter Kay Burley [told the RMT union general secretary](#), Mick Lynch, that she understood what picketing entails “because I very well remember the picket lines of the 1980s”. And trailing his interview with Lynch a week earlier, the BBC’s Nick Robinson [wrote on Twitter](#): “Is he a champion of workers … or a politically motivated dinosaur?”

While some paint trade unions as outdated and irrelevant, the truth is that it is they who are out of touch. Today’s industrial disputes are about very current demands for higher pay in the face of inflation, after a year of wage stagnation. That’s why it’s not members of a certain age balloting for strike action, but a new generation of energised trade unionists.

In a poll conducted by Savanta ComRes at the outset of the rail strikes, a larger proportion of 18- to 34-year-olds than any other age group [said the strikes](#) were “absolutely justified”. It’s no surprise that this demographic thinks so: young workers today are [more likely](#) than their counterparts to be in insecure jobs, to be paid low wages, and to face a lack of career progression at work. If any group can identify the inherent inequality built into our workplaces, it’s them.

Young people face an uncertain and unequal future as they run to keep up with ever-increasing outgoings. University has left them saddled with a lifetime of debt and the high cost of home ownership has left many paying extortionate rents. In the background, the existential threat of climate change looms.

In response, climate strikes have been called; tenants’ unions have been established and a new form of trade unionism has emerged. Young people are doing the work to challenge the inequality they see all around them and to secure their own futures.

Unions such as the Independent Workers of Great Britain and United Voices of The World have been established within the last decade, specifically to build a trade unionism that can meet the challenges of today’s workplaces. Alongside diverse members of all ages, each union is made up of large

numbers of young workers in jobs ranging from food delivery couriers to yoga instructors, charity workers and childminders.

Within the traditional trade union movement, too, campaigns such as Unite Hospitality are working to gain a foothold in restaurants, bars and cafes that have never before seen so much as a union flyer. Meanwhile, their counterparts in the Bakers, Food and Allied Workers union have successfully organised young staff in fast food and pub chains such as Wetherspoon's, McDonald's and Greggs.

And they are winning: from [TGI Fridays](#) and [Pizza Express staff](#) securing fair tips to Wetherspoon's workers forcing a U-turn on furlough pay during the pandemic, a new generation of trade unionists are illustrating that age-old tactics are still fit for the 21st century.

None of this is to say that unions don't need to evolve. There is work to do on diversifying membership and revitalising union democracy. But to consign the labour movement to the past is to erase the work young trade unionists are doing every day to fight against today's working conditions and force change for the future.

Perhaps it is inevitable that, for those who were there, the strikes of the 1970s-80s will frame their views on unions and industrial action. But it is telling that many who weren't even born at the time have come to the same conclusion as a generation ago: the only thing that has ever changed ordinary people's lives for the better is workers coming together to show their strength and just how valuable their work is.

- Eve Livingston is a journalist specialising in politics, social affairs and inequalities
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[**Opinion**](#)[**US supreme court**](#)

The US supreme court just made America a more dangerous, violent place

[**Jill Filipovic**](#)



This nihilistic decision will propel the US further toward mass gun violence and a culture of death



‘The devastating truth is that the current court is made of up of a majority of nihilistic right-wing radicals seeking to impose their vision of a heavily-armed male-dominated Christian theocracy on the rest of us.’ Photograph: Susan Walsh/AP

Fri 24 Jun 2022 02.30 EDT

The conservative justices of the [US supreme court](#) just made America an even more dangerous, even more violent place.

The decision in New York State Rifle & Pistol Assn, Inc v Bruen took on a simple and commonsense New York state law requiring individuals to have a license in order to own a gun, and requiring people who want to carry a concealed pistol or revolver out in public to demonstrate a particular need to be toting a secret gun around. That law has been on the books in New York [since the early 1900s](#).

The supreme court just invalidated it in a decision that is an extreme expansion of the largely invented and now near-limitless individual right to own and carry deadly weapons. And it doesn’t bode well for future efforts to impose any restrictions on guns whatsoever – to make it as difficult to get a gun as to get, say, a driver’s license or an abortion. This radical, nihilistic

decision potentially calls a great many state gun laws into question – and will propel the US further toward mass gun violence and a culture of death.

The case was brought by two New York men who, according to the opinion, “both applied for unrestricted licenses to carry a handgun in public based on their generalized interest in self-defense”. The court, in an opinion written by Justice Clarence Thomas, held that “New York’s proper-cause requirement violates the Fourteenth Amendment by preventing law-abiding citizens with ordinary self-defense needs from exercising their Second Amendment right to keep and bear arms in public for self-defense”.

Only in America does a “generalized interest in self-defense” give an individual the nearly unlimited right to own a deadly weapon and the right to put everyone else in a community at risk; only in America is the supposed right to carry a hidden deadly weapon in public an “ordinary self-defense need” that supersedes the rights of everyone else to be safe from gun violence.

In no other wealthy democracy is any of this “ordinary”.

And in no other wealthy democracy are America’s rate of gun violence ordinary.

This case comes on the tail of two decades of an increasingly conservative supreme court radically expanding access to guns. And as gun access has radically expanded, so has gun violence. Last year saw a staggering number of gun deaths: [more than 20,700](#), and that’s excluding suicides, which in 2020 accounted for [more than half](#) of gun deaths. There were hundreds of mass shootings last year and a far greater number of the handgun killings that have now simply become part of the fabric of American culture, so commonplace that they often don’t even make the nightly news.

What’s particularly striking about this case, though, is that the court largely sets aside any concern for public safety. After all, there are good public safety reasons why a state may not want to grant any individual the legal right to carry a concealed gun in public for no reason other than they want one. [More guns equal more gun violence](#) – that’s a clear calculus, bolstered

by decades of research, at this point undeniable (except by the people who are politically motivated to deny facts and reality).

New York has long concluded, pretty reasonably, that it does not want any random person carrying a gun on the subway, or into a school, or into a grocery store. Having a bunch of armed people around increases the chances of any conflict turning deadly; it increases the chances of an accident turning deadly; it just about guarantees that people with no need for a gun who are simply macho, insecure, paranoid and prone to violence will be able to get their hands on one and enjoy the freedom of carrying it anywhere they wish.

The supreme court, in an opinion signed by the institution's self-styled "states' rights" conservatives, has said that states do not have the right to regulate guns in this way.

This decision comes roughly a month after a man armed with a weapon of war murdered 19 children and two adults in Uvalde, Texas, as the police sat impotently outside. It comes roughly a month after the murder of 10 people at a Buffalo, New York, grocery store by a white supremacist. In the wake of those two shootings – simply the latest mass slaughters of African Americans and schoolchildren – American politicians have done absolutely nothing to rein in our out-of-control gun culture and our astounding rates of gun violence.

More Americans have been killed by guns since 1968 than soldiers have died [in all of America's wars combined](#). An astounding 1.5 million Americans died by gunfire between 1986 and 2017. In the US, nearly 80% of homicides are gun-related; in the UK, it's 4%. And for every 100 US residents, there are more than 120 guns – the highest rate of civilian gun ownership anywhere in the world (Yemen, with about 53 guns for every 100 people, ranks a distant second).

Over and over again, the US relives the now-famous headline from [The Onion](#): "'No Way To Prevent This,' Says Only Nation Where This Regularly Happens."

The reality is that while mass shootings are devastating and shocking, handguns toted around by individual citizens wreak more widespread, if

quieter, havoc. Part of what the New York law is trying to prevent is the violent escalation of the kinds of altercations that have already become much more pitched during Covid: People screaming at customer service workers; aggressive drivers fueling road-rage incidents; patients and family members threatening and attacking healthcare workers; adults losing their minds at school board meetings. These kinds of rage incidents are typically not pre-planned, but they can turn deadly fast if one party (or more) is armed. A law may not keep a gun out of the hands of a careful and premeditated killer. But a law like New York's has kept guns out of the hands of average if violence-inclined citizens while they are in public. That reality is no longer.

The devastating truth is that the current court is made of up of a majority of nihilistic rightwing radicals seeking to impose their vision of a heavily armed male-dominated Christian theocracy on the rest of us. This gun case is only a taste of where we're headed: toward more violence, more death and fewer individual rights – aside, of course, from the ability to own, conceal, and carry just about anywhere as many weapons of death and destruction as one pleases.

- Jill Filipovic is the author of OK Boomer, Let's Talk: How My Generation Got Left Behind
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2022.06.24 - Around the world

- [Haiti Dozens of inmates starve to death as malnutrition crisis engulfs prisons](#)
- [Screentime Primary schoolchildren spent 83 minutes a day more on screens during pandemic, study says](#)
- [US Senate breakthrough clears way for toughening US gun laws](#)
- [US Supreme court overturns New York handgun law in bitter blow to gun-control push](#)

[Haiti](#)

Haiti: dozens of inmates starve to death as malnutrition crisis engulfs prisons

Prison in Les Cayes that ran out of food two months ago reports deaths as UN urges government to tackle food and water crisis



The Croix-des-Bouquets prison in Port-au-Prince. The country's severely overcrowded prison system has long struggled to provide food and water to inmates. Photograph: Dieu Nalio Chery/AP

Associated Press in Port-au-Prince

Thu 23 Jun 2022 16.21 EDT Last modified on Fri 24 Jun 2022 00.32 EDT

At least eight inmates have starved to death at an overcrowded prison in [Haiti](#) that ran out of food two months ago, adding to dozens of similar deaths this year as the country's institutions crumble.

Hunger and oppressive heat contributed to the inmates' deaths reported this week by the prison in the south-west city of Les Cayes, Ronald Richemond,

the city's government commissioner, said on Thursday. He said the prison houses 833 inmates.

"Whoever can help should help immediately because the prisoners are in need," he said.

The United Nations security council released a report last week saying 54 prison deaths related to malnutrition were documented in [Haiti](#) between January and April alone.

It urged Haiti's government "to take the necessary measures to find a long-lasting solution to the prison food, water and medicine crisis".

The country's severely overcrowded prison system has long struggled to provide food and water to inmates. It blames insufficient government funds, and the problem has worsened in recent months, leading to a new rise in severe malnutrition and deaths.

By law, prisons in Haiti are required to provide inmates with water and two meals a day, which usually consist of porridge and a bowl of rice with fish or some type of meat.

But in recent months, inmates have been forced to rely solely on friends or family for food and water, and many times they are unable to visit because gang-related violence makes some areas impassable, said Michelle Karshan, co-founder of the non-profit Health Through Walls, which provides healthcare in Haiti's prisons.

"These deaths are very painful," she said. "The internal organs start to fail one by one ... It's a horrible thing to witness."

Health Through Walls has launched several programs to target the problem long term, including starting a garden at a prison in northern Haiti that produces spinach and other crops, along with a chicken coop and a planned fish farm.

"But that's one prison," Karshan said. "The bottom line is the prison system has to take responsibility. They can't sit back ... They're the government."

Les Cayes and other cities in Haiti's southern region also have been affected by a spike in [gang violence](#) that has [blocked the main roads leading out of Haiti's capital](#), making it extremely difficult to distribute food and other supplies to the rest of the country, said Pierre Espérance, executive director of Haiti's National Human Rights Defense Network.

In addition, a water pump that the Les Cayes prison relies on has long been broken, forcing relatives and friends of inmates to carry buckets of water from long distances, Richmond said.

Les Cayes, like surrounding cities, is also still struggling to recover from a 7.2 magnitude earthquake that struck south-west Haiti in August, killing more than 2,200 people and destroying or damaging thousands of buildings.

Richmond said some of the prison cells were destroyed and have not been rebuilt, forcing authorities to cram even more people into a smaller space.

The cell occupancy rate in Haiti stands at more than 280% of capacity, with 83% of inmates stuck in pre-trial detentions that in some cases can drag on for more than a decade before an initial court appearance, according to the UN. Many prisoners take turns sleeping on the floor while others simply stand or try to make hammocks and attach them to cell windows, paying someone to keep their spot.

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Children

Primary-age children's screen time went up by 83 minutes a day during pandemic – study

Global analysis finds increase most sharp among age group, prompting concerns about impact on health



The sharp rise in screen time is associated with poorer diets, poor eye health, deteriorating mental health, and behavioural problems, researchers said.
Photograph: Rocklights/Alamy

Andrew Gregory Health editor

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Fri 24 Jun 2022 02.00 EDT

Screen time [during the Covid pandemic](#) increased the most among primary schoolchildren, by an extra hour and 20 minutes a day on average, according

to the first global review of research.

The sharp rise in screen time was associated with poorer diets in children, poor eye health, deteriorating mental health including anxiety, and behavioural problems such as aggression, irritability and increased frequency of temper tantrums, researchers said.

The findings have prompted calls for action to curb the harmful impact on the health of millions of children.

The biggest daily increase in screen time was among those aged between six and 10. But “significant” increases were seen among all age groups including adults, according to Anglia Ruskin University, which led the global analysis of studies.

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“This review found that all age groups increased their total screen time,” the researchers wrote in eClinicalMedicine, which is part of the Lancet Discovery Science journal. “Primary-aged children reported largest increases, followed by adults, adolescents, and young children. Leisure screen time also increased in all age groups, with primary-aged children reporting the largest increases, followed by adults, young children and adolescents.”

Researchers found that overall more time spent looking at screens such as the television or computer was associated with a negative impact on diet, sleep, mental health and eye health.

Primary schoolchildren recorded the largest increases, of 83 minutes a day. Next it was adults, with 58 minutes, and adolescents (aged 11 to 17), with 55 minutes. [Children](#) under five had the lowest increase in screen time, going up by 35 minutes, although even this increase is not insignificant.

“This study is the first of its kind to look systematically at peer-reviewed research papers on increases in screen time during the pandemic and its

impact,” said [Prof Shahina Pardhan](#), the senior author and director of the Vision and Eye Research Institute at Anglia Ruskin University.

She said: “By bringing together numerous studies, we get a much more accurate picture of screen time among the population and its associated health repercussions. As with any study of this type, there are degrees of variability between the research looked at.

“However, the overall picture provides clear evidence that screen time should be reduced wherever possible to minimise potential negative outcomes. These include adverse dietary behaviours, sleep, mental health and eye health effects.

“It is also important that non-sedentary activities are promoted to mitigate the risks of increased screen time.”

Researchers analysed 89 studies from countries including the UK, US, Australia, France, Chile and Israel. The analysis focused on increases in screen time before and during the pandemic, in detail, covering a total sample size of more than 200,000 people.

The study also looked at the types of screen time, and found that leisure screen time, or screen time not related to work or study, also increased in all age groups. Children between the ages of six and 10 once again showed the biggest increase.

As well as harmful effects on children, the research further identified links between more screen time and negative outcomes for adults. These included adverse effects on diet, eye health and mental health, such as anxiety, depression and loneliness, and on general health, including fatigue, decreased physical activity and weight gain.

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US gun control

Senate breakthrough clears way for toughening US gun laws

Bill's passing hailed as 'long overdue step' while package falls far short of more robust restrictions Democrats sought



Firearms for sale in Atlanta, Georgia. The \$13bn package passed by the US Senate includes measures to toughen background checks for the youngest gun buyers and keep firearms from more domestic violence offenders.
Photograph: Erik S Lesser/EPA

Associated Press

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The [US Senate](#) has easily approved a bipartisan gun violence bill that seemed unthinkable just a month ago, clearing the way for final congressional approval of what will be lawmakers' most far-reaching response in decades to mass shootings.

After years of GOP procedural delays that derailed Democratic efforts to curb firearms, Democrats and some Republicans decided that congressional inaction was untenable after last month's rampages in New York and Texas. It took weeks of closed-door talks but a group of senators from both parties emerged on Thursday with a compromise embodying incremental but impactful movement to curb bloodshed that has come to regularly shock – yet no longer surprise – the nation.

The \$13bn measure would toughen background checks for the youngest gun buyers, keep firearms from more domestic violence offenders, and help states put in place red-flag laws that make it easier for authorities to take weapons from people judged to be dangerous. It would also fund local programs for school safety, mental health and violence prevention.

The election-year package fell far short of more robust gun restrictions Democrats have sought for years, including bans on the assault-type weapons and high-capacity ammunition magazines used in the slayings in Buffalo, New York and Uvalde, Texas. Yet the accord let leaders of both parties declare victory and demonstrate to voters that they know how to compromise and make government work, while also leaving room for each side to appeal to its core supporters.

"This is not a cure-all for all the ways gun violence affects our nation," said the Senate majority leader, Chuck Schumer, whose Democratic party has made gun reform a goal for decades. "But it is a long-overdue step in the right direction. Passing this gun safety bill is truly significant, and it's going to save lives."

The Senate minority leader, Mitch McConnell, in a nod to the second amendment right to bear arms that drives many conservative voters, said: "The American people want their constitutional rights protected and their kids to be safe in school. They want both of those things at once, and that is just what the bill before the Senate will have accomplished."

The day proved bittersweet for advocates of curtailing gun violence. Underscoring the enduring potency of conservative clout, the right-leaning

supreme court issued a decision expanding the right of Americans to carry arms in public. The justices struck down a New York law that has required people to prove a need for carrying a weapon before they get a license to do so.

The vote on final passage was 65-33.



Minority leader Mitch McConnell, centre, near the Senate chamber before the vote. Photograph: Michael Reynolds/EPA

Hours earlier, senators voted 65-34 to end a filibuster by conservative GOP senators. That was five more than the 60-vote threshold needed. The House planned to vote on the measure on Friday and approval seemed certain.

On that vote, 15 Senate Republicans joined all 50 Democrats, including their two allied independents, in voting to move ahead on the legislation.

Yet that vote highlighted the risks Republicans face by defying the party's pro-gun voters and firearms groups like the National Rifle Association. Senators Lisa Murkowski of Alaska and Todd Young of Indiana were the only two of the 15 up for re-election this fall. Of the rest, four are retiring and eight don't face voters until 2026.

Tellingly, GOP senators voting “no” included potential 2024 presidential contenders like Tom Cotton of Arkansas, Ted Cruz of Texas, Josh Hawley of Missouri and Tim Scott of South Carolina. Some of the party’s most conservative members voted “no” as well, including Rand Paul of Kentucky and Mike Lee of Utah.

While the Senate measure was a clear breakthrough, the outlook for continued congressional movement on gun curbs is dim.

Less than a third of the 50 GOP senators backed the measure and solid Republican opposition is certain in the House. Top House Republicans urged a “no” vote in an email from the No 2 GOP leader, representative Steve Scalise of Louisiana, that called the bill “an effort to slowly chip away at law-abiding citizens’ second amendment rights”.

Both chambers – now narrowly controlled by Democrats – could be run by the GOP after November’s midterm elections.

The president, Joe Biden, said in a statement that Uvalde residents told him when he visited that Washington had to act.

“Our kids in schools and our communities will be safer because of this legislation. I call on Congress to finish the job and get this bill to my desk,” Biden said.

Senate action came one month after a gunman killed 19 students and two teachers in Uvalde. Just days before that, a white man was accused of being motivated by racism as he killed 10 Black grocery shoppers in Buffalo. Both shooters were 18 years old, a youthful profile shared by many mass shooters, and the close timing of the two slaughters and victims with whom many could identify stirred a demand by voters for action, lawmakers of both parties said.

The talks were led by Democratic senators Chris Murphy and Kyrsten Sinema and Republicans John Cornyn and Thom Tillis. Murphy represented Newtown, Connecticut, when an assailant killed 20 students and six staffers

at Sandy Hook elementary school in 2012, while Cornyn has been involved in past gun talks after mass shootings in his state and is close to McConnell.

Murphy said the measure would save thousands of lives and was a chance to “prove to a weary American public that democracy is not so broken that it is unable to rise to the moment”.

“I don’t believe in doing nothing in the face of what we saw in Uvalde” and elsewhere, Cornyn said.

The bill would make the local juvenile records of people aged 18 to 20 available during required federal background checks when they attempt to buy guns. Those examinations, currently limited to three days, would last up to a maximum of 10 days to give federal and local officials time to search records.

People convicted of domestic abuse who are current or former romantic partners of the victim would be prohibited from acquiring firearms, closing the so-called “boyfriend loophole”.

That ban currently only applies to people married to, living with or who have had children with the victim. The compromise bill would extend that to those considered to have had “a continuing serious relationship”.

There would be money to help states enforce red-flag laws and for other states without them for violence prevention programs. Nineteen states and the District of Columbia have such laws.

The measure expands the use of background checks by rewriting the definition of the federally licensed gun dealers required to conduct them. Penalties for gun trafficking are strengthened, billions of dollars are provided for behavioral health clinics and school mental health programs, and there is money for school safety initiatives, though not for personnel to use a “dangerous weapon”.

| [Section menu](#) | [Main menu](#) |

US gun control

US supreme court overturns New York handgun law in bitter blow to gun-control push

Biden says ruling ‘should trouble us all’ as conservative majority strikes down law requiring ‘proper cause’ to carry guns in public

'Reckless and reprehensible': US supreme court strikes down New York gun law – video

[Ed Pilkington](#) and [Martin Pengelly](#) in New York

Thu 23 Jun 2022 12.33 EDTFirst published on Thu 23 Jun 2022 10.35 EDT

The [US supreme court](#) has opened the door for almost all law-abiding Americans to carry concealed and loaded handguns in public, after the conservative majority struck down a New York law that placed strict restrictions on firearms outside the home.

The governor of New York, a Democrat, said the ruling was “not just reckless, it’s reprehensible”. Pointing to recent mass shootings in New York and Texas, a leading progressive group called the ruling “shameful and outrageous”.

Joe Biden said: “This ruling contradicts both common sense and the constitution and should deeply trouble us all.”

On the left, outrage is growing over the court’s rightward march. Earlier this week, the court handed down a ruling which attacked the [separation of church and state](#). As soon as Friday, it is expected to undermine or remove the right to [abortion](#), guaranteed since 1973, and to reduce the federal government’s ability to cut emissions contributing [to the climate crisis](#).

The New York law struck down on Thursday required anyone wanting to carry a handgun in public to prove that they had a “proper cause” to do so. The decision in New York State Rifle & Pistol Association v Bruen renders the law an unconstitutional violation of the second amendment right to bear arms.

In his ruling, Justice Clarence Thomas [wrote](#): “Apart from a few late-19th-century outlier jurisdictions, American governments simply have not broadly prohibited the public carry of commonly used firearms for personal defense. Nor have they generally required law-abiding, responsible citizens to ‘demonstrate a special need for self-protection distinguishable from that of the general community’ to carry arms in public.”

The New York law, Thomas wrote, also violated the 14th amendment, which made second-amendment rights applicable to the states.

Biden pointed to the longevity of New York gun laws and to past supreme court acceptance of the need to regulate gun ownership.

The president said: “Since 1911, the state of New York has required individuals who would like to carry a concealed weapon in public to show a need to do so for the purpose of self defense and to require a license. More than a century later, the United States supreme court has chosen to strike down New York’s long-established authority to protect its citizens.”

Biden added: “As the late [conservative] Justice [Antonin] Scalia recognised, the second amendment is not absolute. For centuries, states have regulated who may purchase or possess weapons, the types of weapons they may use and the places they may carry those weapons. The courts have upheld these regulations.

“I call on Americans across the country to make their voices heard on gun safety. Lives are on the line.”



Biden said the ruling ‘contradicts common sense and the constitution’.
Photograph: Drew Angerer/Getty Images

The ruling has profound implications for the safety and conduct of up to 83 million people in New York and seven other states plus Washington DC with similar “proper cause” laws. They include heavily populated states, such as California and New Jersey, which account for roughly three out of every four Americans.

Just weeks ago, an 18-year-old carrying a legally bought assault-style rifle shot and killed 10 people in a racist attack on a supermarket in a majority Black neighborhood in Buffalo, New York.

Ten days later, another 18-year-old broke into an elementary school in Uvalde, Texas, and killed 19 children and two adults before being shot dead by law enforcement.

Democratic and Republican senators have since agreed a framework for gun reform. On Thursday Mitch McConnell, the Republican leader in the Senate, said the proposals did not “lay one finger on the second amendment” and would make the country safer. But any gun legislation inevitably faces strong headwinds, with the potential to blow all the way to the court McConnell helped pack with conservatives.

In his dissent to the New York ruling, Stephen Breyer, a liberal justice soon to retire, wrote: “In 2020, [45,222](#) Americans were killed by firearms. Since the start of this year there have been [277](#) reported mass shootings – an average of more than one per day.

“Gun violence has now [surpassed](#) motor vehicle crashes as the leading cause of death among children and adolescents. Many states have tried to address some of the dangers of gun violence just described by passing laws that limit, in various ways, who may purchase, carry, or use firearms of different kinds.

“The court today severely burdens states’ efforts to do so.”

Rahna Epting, executive director of the progressive group [MoveOn](#), lamented “a shameful and outrageous decision”, adding: “The conservative-packed supreme court, in concert with Republicans in Congress, is ensuring our schools, our grocery stores, and our churches will continue to be targets of violence and not the sanctuaries and safe places they should be.”

The court has steadily undermined gun laws, recognising a right to keep guns at home for self-defense in 2008 and extending that right two years later.

In the New York case, two men sued the state. Under the “proper cause” law, the men could secure unlimited permission to carry concealed guns in public only if they could demonstrate a special need for self-protection. Lawyers argued that carrying a firearm outside the home was a “fundamental constitutional right. It is not some extraordinary action that requires an extraordinary demonstration of need.”

Civil rights and gun safety groups attempted to sway the court. The American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) argued that lifting controls on guns in public places would harm first amendment rights such as assembly, association and speech. Gun control advocates warned that scrapping the law could hit relations between police and citizens because anyone in contact with law enforcement would be more likely to be legally armed.

On Thursday, the governor of New York, Kathy Hochul, said: “The supreme court is setting us backwards in dealing with gun violence … This decision is not just reckless, it’s reprehensible.” Hochul also said she was “prepared to call the legislature back into session to deal with this”.

Letitia James, the New York attorney general, said she would not be deterred “from standing up to the gun lobby and their repeated efforts to endanger New Yorkers”.

A leading representative of that lobby, Wayne LaPierre of the National Rifle Association, joined Republicans celebrating “a watershed win” and said: “The right to self-defense and to defend your family and loved ones should not end at your home.”

But Keechant Sewell, the New York City police commissioner, warned gun owners: “If you carry a gun illegally in New York City, you will be arrested. Nothing changes today.”

Epting, of MoveOn, said: “It is hard to imagine a supreme court more out of touch with the people. Commonsense policies to reduce gun violence are supported by nine out of 10 Americans. This court … is now nothing more than the political arm of the most extreme elements of the Republican party.”

Pointing to McConnell’s unprecedented denial of even a hearing to Barack Obama’s third nominee – Merrick Garland, now attorney general – and the confirmation of three justices under Donald Trump, Epting said Republicans “stole seats and packed this court to enact what voters have repeatedly rejected at the ballot box.

“It is far past time we expand the court, reform it, and restore balance to our judicial system.”

Headlines monday 20 june 2022

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Rail industry

Great Britain faces biggest rail strike in 30 years

Disruption to start on Monday evening before RMT action begins in much of northern and south-west England, Wales and Scotland

- [Which trains will be running where and when?](#)



The strikes are expected to cause travel chaos across Great Britain this week. Photograph: Andy Rain/EPA

Gwyn Topham Transport correspondent
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The biggest rail strikes in three decades are due to start on Monday night, bar an unlikely late breakthrough in talks, with trains cancelled across Great

Britain for much of the week.

Talks between senior rail industry figures and union leaders were taking place through the day to try to avoid industrial action, although with little optimism from either side or government that any agreement could be reached.

The first of three 24-hour walkouts by 40,000 [RMT](#) members, including signallers, maintenance and train staff, will start just after midnight on Tuesday morning, with only one in five trains running on strike days and halting services altogether in much of northern and south-west England, Wales and Scotland.

The strikes, over pay and attempts to reform the rail industry with post-Covid work patterns hitting commuter revenues, will cause six days of disruption, with trains limited to one an hour between 7.30am and 6.30pm on major intercity and urban routes. Services will start later and be reduced on subsequent days.

The action is being taken by [Network Rail](#) employees and onboard and station staff working for 13 train operators in England. The RMT said thousands of jobs were at risk in maintenance roles and that ticket office closures were planned, on top of pay freezes during a time of high inflation.

The walkout by signallers will have most impact, particularly in rural areas, leading to line closures in places such as Wales, where there is no direct dispute with the train operator. Most operators have told passengers to travel only if necessary on strike days. Northern Rail has advised passengers not to travel for the whole week.

While Conservatives have attempted to associate the union-backed Labour party with the strikes, Labour has pointed out that the transport secretary, [Grant Shapps](#), and other ministers have refused to take part in talks.

Unions asked to meet ministers, saying the Treasury and Department for [Transport](#) control contracts and funding. Shapps said it was up to employers

to negotiate, although train operating companies have been told they cannot offer pay rises, according to industry insiders and unions.

The shadow transport secretary, Louise Haigh, speaking on the BBC Today programme on Monday, said it was imperative that the government stepped in. She said: “Not only are they boycotting the talks, they are actually hobbling them.”

However, Simon Clarke, the chief secretary to the Treasury, told the BBC: “There’s no point giving false hope, if you like, that these strikes can be avoided. At this stage it is likely that they will proceed.”

The business secretary, Kwasi Kwarteng, is set to table legislation to allow agency workers to step in during strikes, which could be enacted by late July to apply to future industrial action. The RMT said it would be impossible to draft in people to replace skilled rail workers and a spokesperson said it was “playing to the gallery”.

Shapps said on Sunday it was [“crazy” to suggest](#) that the Tories wanted rail unions to go on strike, after Labour accused the government of encouraging the walkouts to go ahead in order to stoke division. He said the strikes were “unnecessary” and a result of trade union leaders “gunning for” a fight, accusing the [RMT](#) of planning to “punish millions of innocent people”.

Last week, Shapps told rail staff they risked [“striking yourself out of a job”](#). Network Rail bosses estimate the stoppages will cost the industry about £150m in lost revenue.

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Talks have been ongoing between Network Rail and the RMT but bosses admitted there was little hope of a breakthrough.

The walkouts are on 21, 23 and 25 June and a [special timetable will be in operation](#) from Monday, with some evening services curbed, until Sunday. About 20% of trains will run on mainlines and urban areas.

Adding to the commuter misery, a separate London Underground strike will also bring much of the capital's transport to a halt on Tuesday. About 10,000 members of the RMT will walk out for 24 hours, closing most tube lines. Transport for London has advised people to avoid travelling on all of its services if possible, with buses likely to be crowded and slow on jammed roads.

The London overground and Elizabeth lines will also continue to be affected by the national rail strike throughout the week.

Other unions may join the rail strike later in the summer, in a move that could halt services altogether. The TSSA union, which represents control room staff and managers who step in to run contingency signalling, is balloting members at Network Rail and announced strike votes at more train operators last week.

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Rail strikes will go ahead as RMT leader says government ‘actively prevented settlement to dispute’ – as it happened

General secretary Mick Lynch confirms strike action will proceed, as transport secretary Grant Shapps says rail unions to blame

- [Statement from RMT leader Mick Lynch saying strikes going ahead](#)
- [Lynch says ‘transport austerity’ provoked strike action](#)
- [Shapps says fewer passengers, not cuts, cost rail industry £2bn](#)
- [Labour accuses Shapps of ‘grave dereliction of duty’](#)
- [Clarke says workers should not expect pay rises to match inflation](#)
- [Clarke rejects claims Brexit to blame for staff shortages at airports](#)
- [No 10 unable to explain initial reluctance to deny Carrie FCO job story](#)

Updated 6d ago

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

Mon 20 Jun 2022 14.59 EDTFirst published on Mon 20 Jun 2022 04.21 EDT



Passengers in London walk past a travel information board, ahead of a planned national strike by rail workers. Photograph: Toby Melville/Reuters

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

Mon 20 Jun 2022 14.59 EDTFirst published on Mon 20 Jun 2022 04.21 EDT

Key events

- [6d agoSummary](#)
- [6d agoShapps says falling passenger numbers, not government cuts, to blame for £2bn shortfall in rail funding](#)
- [6d agoLabour accuses Shapps of 'grave dereliction of duty' for not getting involved in talks to try to avert strike](#)
- [6d agoGrant Shapps says rail unions to blame for this week's strikes](#)
- [6d agoLynch says further strikes coming and he urges Labour to 'ride that wave of resistance'](#)
- [6d agoRMT leader blames 'transport austerity' as he explains why union has 'no choice' but to strike](#)
- [6d agoRMT leader Mick Lynch says Tory government has 'actively prevented settlement to dispute'](#)

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From 6d ago

[10.31](#)

Rail strike to go ahead after last-minute talks fail to resolve dispute, RMT union says

The rail strikes are to go ahead after last-ditch talks failed to resolve a dispute over pay, jobs and conditions, the [RMT](#) union has said.

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[6d ago](#)[14.53](#)

Summary

That's all for today, ahead of the first day of this week's strike for **RMT** staff on the rail network and on the **London Underground**.

Tomorrow's strike will be the biggest strike on the railways since 1989.

- **The RMT** general secretary, **Mick Lynch**, said the union had “no choice” over striking and that the government was not allowing rail companies to negotiate freely.
- **Lynch** said a “wave” of industrial action was coming amid the cost of living crisis and said the Labour party should find a way to “ride that wave of resistance”.

- Last-minute offers by train operating companies (TOCs) had been rejected today, he said in a statement.
- The transport secretary, **Grant Shapps**, told the House of Commons that the strike was being organised by “some of the best-paid union barons representing some of the better paid workers in this country”.
- **Shapps** added that there was no place for the government in negotiations.
- The shadow transport secretary, **Louise Haigh**, accused Shapps of a “dereliction of duty” by not intervening.
- The **TUC** and the UK’s body representing recruiters had told the government to drop plans to lift a ban on agency staff filling in for workers who are out on strike.

Away from tomorrow’s industrial action

- **Criminal barristers** have voted for strike action over legal aid funding, that will begin next week.
- Downing Street has confirmed it asked the Times to withdraw a story that made allegations that **Boris Johnson** offered his now-wife, **Carrie**, a job while was foreign secretary.
- The **TSSA** rail union said it would be “outraged” if the government closed all ticket offices in England.
- **Johnson** successfully underwent an operation on his sinuses.

That’s all for today, thanks for following along. Here’s our story this evening on tomorrow’s strikes.

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Updated at 14.59 EDT

6d ago **13.42**

The Labour leader, **Keir Starmer**, is still ahead in one poll on who would be the best person to be prime minister compared with **Boris Johnson**.

His comparative ratings have dropped by 1%, according to pollster Redfield and Wilton Strategies, but still has a lead of four points over the prime minister. The “don’t know” option accounts for almost a third of respondents.

At this moment, which of the following individuals do you think would be the better PM for the UK? (19 June)

Keir Starmer: 37% (-1)

Boris Johnson: 33% (-)

Don't know: 30% (+1)

Changes +/- 12 June pic.twitter.com/7hKAUv8q1G

— Redfield & Wilton Strategies (@RedfieldWilton) [June 20, 2022](#)

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Updated at 13.44 EDT

[6d ago](#) [13.39](#)

The RMT general secretary **Mick Lynch** has just finished speaking to **Marr**.

He said that unless the transport secretary, **Grant Shapps**, is willing to help settle the dispute, he should “get out of the way” and give train companies what they need to come to an agreement. Lynch said that every time that a deal with train companies looks possible, they need to then refer to the Treasury and Department for Transport.

“I believe that if the companies were operating under normal negotiating conditions, we would have a settlement to this dispute already.”

He added: “We will talk to the train companies this week. If there is a settlement to be done, we will be a constructive partner in this. If Grant Shapps can’t help he needs to get out of the way.

“The government is stopping a settlement to this dispute. They need something to cover up all the other ills and sins that they have committed.”

Earlier in the interview he said that there was an “element of class tension” in the UK, where people were becoming poorer year-on-year.

“There is plenty of affluence and plenty of money in this society, and people on low wages and on modest wages are becoming poorer, because their wages just aren’t keeping up with the cost of living,” **Lynch** said.

“Railway companies are making profits right now. Their directors are being paid massive salaries. Everyone seems to be getting richer apart from the people doing the work, and that has got to be addressed.”

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Updated at 13.45 EDT

[6d ago](#)[13.18](#)

Business minister **Paul Scully** is on **Andrew Marr’s** drivetime show on LBC, where he is being asked about the strikes.

He tells Marr that there is no place for the government in the negotiations between employers and employees, and that FirstGroup, a train operator that runs significant franchises including Great Western Railway and Avanti West Coast said today it agrees.

However Marr then asks Scully, who is also the minister for London, why he and his social media team are calling it **Keir Starmer’s** strike, despite him having no part in the dispute at all.

Scully replies: “He is trying to play it both ways in terms of his response to the strike. I have seen Wes Streeting saying he would be going out on strike, they are trying to have it both ways.”

The Conservative MP had earlier said a ban on striking in essential services is “worth looking at”.

Andrew Marr: 'Some of your colleagues think there should be a legal ban on striking in essential services. Do you agree with that?'

Tory Small Business Minister Paul Scully: 'Well, in terms of essential services, I think that's worth looking at! [@AndrewMarr9](#) | [@scullyp](#) pic.twitter.com/woMPrTmwwn

— LBC (@LBC) [June 20, 2022](#)

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Updated at 13.22 EDT

[6d ago](#) [13.12](#)

My colleagues **Clea Skopeliti** and **Jedidajah Otte** have been speaking to people today about their views on the strikes.

One man is planning on cycling 13-miles into central Manchester tomorrow as he can't travel by train, and in another case the head of a NHS mental health team in south London says the whole group will be affected by the action, because many of them live far away from their workplace due to the cost of rents. However, both support the strikes.

You can read more here:

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[6d ago](#) [13.00](#)

The **Trades Union Congress (TUC)** and **Recruitment and Employment Confederation (REC)** have told the government to drop its plan to lift the ban on agency workers filling in during strikes.

The two bodies issued a joint statement asking ministers to “abandon its proposal to repeal the ban on agency workers filling in for employees who are on strike”.

They said the plan was unworkable and that they “opposed it in the strongest possible terms”.

They added:

Using agency staff to cover strikes will only prolong the conflict between employers and their staff. Strikes are industrial disputes within a single industry or firm.

Government needs to step up and do the work around resolving industrial disputes rather than inserting a third party in the form of agency workers into a dispute. That does nothing to solve the underlying issues between the company and their staff. This will only prolong the dispute and inflame tensions. Negotiations should be the obvious priority – rather than potentially putting the safety of agency workers and company employees at risk

The proposal is not practical. There are currently 1.3 million vacancies in the UK, a record high. REC data shows that the number of candidates available to fill roles has been falling at record pace for months. In this tight labour market, agency workers are in high demand and can pick and choose the jobs they take.

Agency staff are very unlikely to choose a role that requires them to cross a picket line versus one that doesn’t. Additionally, many roles that may be on strike require technical skills or training. Training agency workers to do these jobs would be expensive and time-consuming.

Only recently government ministers came out to condemn what P&O Ferries did. Surely that example cannot have been forgotten so soon? That case showed how unfair these situations can be for agency workers, as well as the negative attention they and the agencies would receive.

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Updated at 13.35 EDT

[6d ago](#)[12.52](#)

Taxi-app **Uber** says it is expecting a “significant” surge in demand during the stoppage this week.

It has said that users will see pricing increase, when fares rise at times of high demand when there aren’t enough available taxis. The company caps surge pricing during periods of significant disruption.

A spokesperson has told PA Media: “We are expecting significant increases in demand as a result of strike action across the rail network next week.

“We are informing drivers of the expected increase in demand to help ensure there are enough cars out on the road.”

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Updated at 13.00 EDT

[6d ago](#)[12.48](#)

A reminder that it’s not just rail staff striking this week, as the latest meeting in **West Yorkshire** between Unite and bus company Arriva over pay has ended without a deal.

Passengers have been without any services in part of the county for three weeks so far, with the union saying it will continue for “an undisclosed period of time”.

The mayor of West Yorkshire, **Tracy Brabin**, tweeted:

Sadly todays talks between Unite & Arriva have ended without a deal.
I’ve spoken to both sides in the strongest terms making the case that

this must now come to a positive conclusion for the sake of the people of West Yorkshire. I'm grateful to both parties that it now feels...1/2

— TracyBrabin (@TracyBrabin) [June 20, 2022](#)

...as if a deal is finally within sight. Negotiations are hard but I know there is a solution that will protect the interests of drivers, passengers and everyone in Wakefield, Dewsbury, Heckmondwike in their third week without bus services.

— TracyBrabin (@TracyBrabin) [June 20, 2022](#)

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Updated at 12.49 EDT

[6d ago](#)[12.43](#)



Andrew Sparrow

The **London Chamber of Commerce and Industry** has said the rail strikes will deliver a double blow to the capital. In a statement Richard Burge, the

LCCI chief executive, said:

Strikes are a lose-lose situation and will hit London's economy with a double blow. First, there is the short-term hit of fewer visitors to the city, reduced footfall, and less tourism spending. This comes at a time when businesses, particularly those in the hospitality sector, have already fought so hard to recover from the pandemic. The second hit is the damage done to London's reputation as a global city for business. Continued transport disruption creates risks to future foreign direct investment and could deter international partners from doing business in the UK.

The railways are an industry that, from top to bottom, had no job losses and no furlough throughout the pandemic, and unlike the NHS, they had little to do and low exposure to Covid. The solidarity that they were shown then, now needs to be repaid. We urge all parties involved in the dispute to re-engage and find a resolution that will end this reoccurring economic self-harm.

That's all from me for this evening. My colleague **Harry Taylor** is taking over now.

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[6d ago](#) [12.32](#)

Another Labour MP, **Lloyd Russell-Moyle**, has tweeted about his response to an inquiry from the Daily Telegraph about his decision to accept donations from the [RMT](#).

The [@Telegraph](#) asked me the same (RMT members donated 2.5p per member: £2k to my campaign at last election). The cleanest money in politics.

To the telegraph I say “I'd note your newspaper is owned by a

billionaire who lives in a castle on a channel island"
<https://t.co/bYlIZNgYcv>

— Lloyd Russell-Moyle MP · (@lloyd_rm) [June 20, 2022](#)

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[6d ago](#) [12.29](#)

Keir Starmer has been visiting Nato Allied Maritime Command, he says.

Visiting NATO Allied Maritime Command, I spoke to our troops about the situation in Ukraine and the need to bolster Britain's defence and security at home and abroad.

Labour's commitment to NATO is unshakeable. We stand with our allies against Putin's illegal war in Ukraine.
pic.twitter.com/utjsb8yWxP

— Keir Starmer (@Keir_Starmer) [June 20, 2022](#)

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[Newest](#) [Newest](#)

[Previous](#)

1
of
5

[Next](#)

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| [Section menu](#) | [Main menu](#) |

Public sector pay

UK minister warns public workers to brace for real-term pay cuts amid rail strikes

No 10 urges private sector firms against giving out pay rises as inflation feared to rise above 10%



RMT walkouts will result in only one in five trains running on strike days.
Photograph: Andy Rain/EPA

[Peter Walker](#) and [Aubrey Allegretti](#)

Mon 20 Jun 2022 09.08 EDTFirst published on Mon 20 Jun 2022 04.16 EDT

Most public sector workers should expect a real-terms pay cut this year, a minister has said ahead of the biggest rail strikes in 30 years, with Downing Street warning private employers against giving out pay rises.

With inflation feared to potentially rise above 10% by the end of the year, No 10 urged private sector firms not to hike wages as it would make the issue worse.

Simon Clarke, the chief secretary to the Treasury, said the government would “continue to support” negotiations between rail companies and unions but did not have a direct role in trying to prevent the biggest rail strikes in three decades, which were due to start on Monday night.

“I do think it’s important that we send a message this week that industrial action is likely to proceed, and therefore people make sensible preparations now, because there’s no point giving false hope, if you like, that these strikes can be avoided. At this stage it is likely that they will proceed,” he told BBC One’s Breakfast programme.

Ministers have faced calls to do more to try to prevent three planned 24-hour walkouts this week by RMT members, the first of which starts just after midnight on Tuesday morning. This will result in only one in five trains running on strike days, halting services altogether in much of northern and south-west England, Wales and Scotland.

No 10 said on Monday afternoon it “wouldn’t be helpful” for ministers to join the negotiations at this stage, and government sources have indicated they believe union leaders are just “flexing their muscles”.

Downing street also urged private sector organisations to show restraint in awarding pay rises.

Boris Johnson’s spokesperson said that given inflation was nudging double digits, “we need to, as a country, avoid doing anything that would stoke inflationary pressures further”.

They said there were “a number of factors that could stoke inflation that people need to be mindful of” and that “pay rises could be one of those areas that could be of detriment and it’s important that people understand the balance we are trying to strike”.

Johnson's spokesperson also admitted that his pledge of a "high-wage" economy remained more of an objective given the "short- to medium-term inflationary pressures".

They said: "The government needs to adapt to some of the global challenges we're seeing caused by exiting a pandemic and war in Europe. But that does not change our ambition."

Clarke, in an interview with Sky News, said: "The government doesn't sit as part of those talks for a very good reason. We don't intervene in the specific process between an employer and the unions representing employees, but we are there to provide the support and the enabling framework for those talks to succeed. Ultimately, we don't control all the levers that need to be held here."

The strike has been called over [feared job losses amid restructuring](#), and concerns that inflation forecast to reach 11% this year would mean staff getting a real-terms pay cut. Other professions, including teachers, could take potential action over below-inflation pay rises.

Clarke said people should not have "unrealistic expectations" about pay, and that those in the public and private sectors should brace themselves for real-terms pay cuts this year.

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"In the current situation with inflation, which is a real issue, we do have to be very, very sensitive," he told Sky.

"If we start having pay awards that take us close to double digits, then we are going to see this problem prolong. That is just the economic reality of where we find ourselves at the moment."

John Leach, the assistant general secretary of the RMT union, said members would seek "justice for themselves".

"They kept this country moving through the pandemic, they keep the railways moving every single day and it's that kind of grit and determination

that's going to mean that they will stick with this negotiation and justice for themselves in that regard, right through to the end," he told BBC Radio 4's Today programme.

This article was downloaded by **calibre** from <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2022/jun/20/uk-minister-warns-public-workers-to-brace-for-real-term-pay-cuts-amid-rail-strikes>

| [Section menu](#) | [Main menu](#) |

Rail industry

Tell us: how are you dealing with the rail strikes?

We would like to hear about the lengths travellers and commuters are going to get around the train strikes in England, Scotland and Wales

- [British rail workers: share your views on the train strikes](#)



Commuters at Vauxhall Railway Station. Photograph: Maureen McLean/REX/Shutterstock

Guardian community team

Mon 20 Jun 2022 04.56 EDT Last modified on Tue 21 Jun 2022 03.40 EDT

More than 40,000 staff from Network rail and 13 train operators are [expected to take part in walkouts on 21, 23 and 25 June](#). A special timetable will be in operation from 20 to 26 June.

We would like to hear about the lengths people are going to get around the train strikes this week. For example, how will you make the journey to work, take your children to exams, or travel to festivals this week?

Share your experiences

You can get in touch by filling in the form below or contact us [via WhatsApp](#) by [clicking here](#) or adding +44(0)7766780300. Your responses are secure as the form is encrypted and only the Guardian has access to your contributions.

One of our journalists will be in contact before we publish, so please do leave contact details.

If you're having trouble using the form, click [here](#). Read terms of service [here](#) and privacy policy [here](#).

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2022.06.20 - Spotlight

- [A new start after 60 ‘I became a vegan at 82 and found a new sense of freedom’](#)
- [‘Children ask why I’ve got a wonky face’ Life with Justin Bieber’s Ramsay Hunt syndrome](#)
- [Ireland The forgotten ‘weird sisters’ of WB Yeats who helped forge Irish identity](#)
- [Insecurity was my biggest motivator’ How Dragons’ Den’s Steven Bartlett became a ‘happy sexy millionaire’](#)

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[A new start after 60](#)[Life and style](#)

A new start after 60: ‘I became a vegan at 82 and found a new sense of freedom’



‘I’m feeling more and more my own person’ ... Sykes. Photograph: Jill Mead/The Guardian

Frances Day says she was ‘very much the old-fashioned wife’. But after her husband died she found herself getting bolder and allowing her thoughts to

travel

[Paula Cocozza](#)

[@CocozzaPaula](#)

Mon 20 Jun 2022 02.00 EDT

Frances Day's husband died during the first wave of the Covid-19 pandemic, so there was no funeral. "It was a horrid, horrid time. I was on my own. It took a long time for me to get fairly steady," she says. Her 82nd birthday passed, and as the summer wore on, she thought: "I've got to do something. I don't want my life to end now. I want to have a few adventures. Let's start with veganism."

Day has three children, two of whom are vegans, so she was no stranger to the idea – but for decades it had been personally unthinkable. Her late husband had traditional tastes.

Occasionally she used vegan ingredients when the children visited; she bought vegan mincemeat and made crumbles with vegetable spread. Her husband ate them without realising, because: "If ever he heard the word 'vegan', he would refuse to eat it."

She describes herself as "very much the old-fashioned wife – I would never think of doing anything my husband didn't want". After dementia confined him to one room, she cared for him, taking him food on a tray. He wouldn't notice that while she cooked him eggs, she had stopped eating them, that she bought herself vegan cheese.

I can't really enjoy looking at lambs. I just think, there they are skipping around fields, not knowing what fate befalls them

When she told her three children: "I'm going to try to lead a vegan lifestyle", they were "very, very pleased". They bought her [vitamin B12](#), essential to a vegan diet.

Day's father, who served in the RAF, was "very strict. I was keen to get married and get away from home," she says. At teaching college, she agreed to become a maths teacher, to meet a shortage, though her passions were geography and art. "I just wanted to please people," she says.

At 21, she married for the first time, and was often alone with two children while her husband worked away. The solitude sounds tough. "Well," she says, "I quite enjoyed that. I was free. I'm sure this is what in my life I've always wanted – a certain amount of freedom." At the time, the playgroup movement was gaining momentum, and with other young women – "forward-looking and keen" – she helped to form the first one in her town.

At 34, she and her husband divorced. Her third child came along in her second marriage, when she was 37. "It would bring us all together," she says. The family spent time in Singapore and Hong Kong, and one memorable evening in Malaysia has stayed in her mind.

Day's family went "to watch turtles coming up the beach to lay their eggs in the dark. A lot of young men were chasing them and sitting on them, these giant turtles." It distressed her children, and maybe, she thinks, this is where the seeds of veganism were planted.

Now Day finds that she "can't really enjoy looking at lambs. I just think, there they are skipping around fields, not knowing what fate befalls them. It's absolutely awful."

When did she notice her thoughts and feelings change? "Since my husband died," she says, "I feel more free to let my thoughts travel."

Have there been other consequences of her move to veganism? "I've got a bit bolder. I would never have opened my mouth in public. Now I do." At her local social group, "they all know I'm vegan and have got used to me looking suspiciously at the backs of packets of biscuits." One fellow attendee recently made vegan cupcakes.

Now Frances, soon to turn 84, says that hers is "a vegan household ... I'm feeling more and more my own person. Probably more than I ever was. It's

taken a long time. I think, I can't have that much time left. I'm going to make the most of it." What does she want to do? "Be kind and helpful and a good friend to the few I've got, be there for anybody who needs me. And point out a way that I think is healthy and gentle."

- [Tell us: has your life taken a new direction after the age of 60?](#)
-

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| [Section menu](#) | [Main menu](#) |

Health

‘Children ask why I’ve got a wonky face’: life with Justin Bieber’s Ramsay Hunt syndrome

The singer’s dramatic video has shed light on a little-known and often misdiagnosed condition. Unless treated quickly, it can have life-changing consequences

Justin Bieber cancels shows after half of face left paralysed by virus – video



[Amy Fleming](#)

Mon 20 Jun 2022 05.00 EDT Last modified on Mon 20 Jun 2022 11.14 EDT

Matt Carney, a stage manager who lives in Bedford, was at work in 2017 when he experienced the first of a series of mysterious symptoms. “We’d just started a performance of *Hairspray*, and almost with the first beat of the overture an intense earache started – like no earache I’ve ever had before.” Painkillers had no effect and when he was driving home later, his face felt

strange in a way he couldn't put his finger on. Within two days, he says, "it was completely paralysed on the right side".

Anyone who has seen the news recently might correctly guess that Carney's condition was Ramsay Hunt syndrome – a complication from the chickenpox virus – thanks to [Justin Bieber's post on Instagram announcing that he has it](#). In a short video, Bieber demonstrated that he can only smile, nostril-twitch and blink on one side of his face. But before Bieber's post, the syndrome was little known – it isn't even mentioned on the NHS website. It is commonly misdiagnosed as [Bell's palsy](#), which also manifests as facial paralysis on one side, meaning that patients miss out on rapid treatment with antiviral drugs, which, if administered within the first 72 hours, could save them from chronic, life-changing symptoms.

For Carney, now 33, the worst part was being unable to blink. "I had to put drops in my eye every 20 minutes to stop it drying out, and to manually blink by pulling my eyelid down with my fingers. I was having to tape it closed at night to be able to sleep. Just walking outside, even on a still summer's day, there was enough of a breeze to dry my eyes out within seconds."

There's the chance that if I'd had the antivirals early on, I might have avoided the paralysis altogether

Matt Carney

After an initial Bell's palsy diagnosis, it wasn't until day four that he had an attack of what doctors later suspected was vertigo, and went to hospital, where he was finally diagnosed with Ramsay Hunt syndrome – too late for the antiviral meds.

Charles Nduka, consultant plastic surgeon at Queen Victoria hospital in East Grinstead, West Sussex, and Guy's and St Thomas' hospital in London, founded the charity Facial Palsy UK in 2012 to raise awareness of the condition whose long-term effects his team see daily, but to little avail. While it's hard to get accurate data because misdiagnosis is so common – the reported incidence of Bell's palsy is 20-30 per 100,000, for Ramsay Hunt

syndrome it is around five cases per 100,000 – he estimates that in the UK there are about 25,000 new cases of sudden-onset facial palsy a year, and maybe a third of those affected will be left with chronic facial symptoms. Ironically, he says, he even developed the condition himself during lockdown.



Matt Carney: 'If I cough, my right eye cries, which was an absolute pain when I had Covid.' Photograph: Facial Palsy UK

It is caused by the varicella zoster virus, which, after a bout of chickenpox, becomes dormant in the body – in the case of Ramsay Hunt syndrome, in nerve cells. It is, essentially, a shingles infection affecting the facial nerve after the dormant virus is activated, "when your immune system is down," says Nduka. "Patients who we see will have some preceding physical or emotional stress, such as cancer, chemotherapy, immunotherapy, moving house or stress in their workplace."

Nduka had been working hard during the pandemic, he says. "I was giving a talk on facial palsy when my face started twitching, and I had this horrible sensation on the side of my tongue and an awful taste, which is one of the early symptoms – altered taste because the facial nerve also supplies the front part of the tongue. I knew what it was and was able to get treatment

early on, and managed to abort the onset.” He had another minor flare-up a year later, but again, he says, “I was able to hit it early.”

Unlike the sudden onset of a stroke, the facial paralysis with a palsy develops gradually. The key symptoms that make Ramsay Hunt syndrome stand out from Bell’s palsy are, Nduka says, ear, face or head pain, a rash or blisters – often painful – in or around the ear, scalp, hairline or inside the mouth, altered taste on half of the tongue, hearing loss or tinnitus on the affected side and dizziness or vertigo. Sometimes, however, the rash may be hidden internally, and the facial paralysis appears first, meaning that, even if the doctor is familiar with the syndrome, they might disregard that diagnosis. This is why Nduka encourages treating any new facial palsy with antivirals – which he says are cheap and have few side-effects – to be on the safe side.

Both forms of sudden-onset facial palsy – Bell’s and Ramsay Hunt – are treated with steroids, too. “The facial nerve runs through a bony tunnel in the skull, so if it gets inflamed there is no room for it to swell, so it will cut off its own blood supply and stop working,” says Nduka. “The steroids are there to reduce the inflammation and therefore reduce swelling and allow the nerve to recover earlier.” Early treatment with antivirals and steroids, he says, increases recovery rates in cases of Ramsay Hunt syndrome from about 50% to about 70%. “If patients do not receive prompt treatment with a combination of steroids and antivirals,” he says, “it’s a coin flip as to whether they will recover fully.” Nduka says he really wants doctors to be aware of the condition.

It’s nine years since Deborah Lack’s Ramsay Hunt syndrome was misdiagnosed as Bell’s palsy. Now 42 and based in Hertfordshire, she still has tinnitus and at her most recent checkup – the first in four years, thanks to Covid – found no improvements in her facial movement. Other than give her Botox to relieve tightness in her facial muscles, she says, “they said to me: ‘Nothing else can be done for you.’ They want to start the Botox again, to see where we are in another six months, and the next step would be to have reanimation surgery: they take some nerves out of one area of your body and then put them in your face to try to get the eye and the smile going again. Obviously, there’s no guarantees.”



Deborah Lack: ‘I’m one of the most expressive people you could ever meet, and I can’t even pucker my lips.’ Photograph: Facial Palsy UK

Lack used to run a dance school, but she gave it up after she developed the condition. “I work with children, and children are so honest,” she says. “What’s wrong with your face? Why have you got a wonky face? Why is one eye smaller than the other? There’s only so much you can take.”

These days, she says, “at rest, if I wasn’t tired or stressed out, then you probably wouldn’t notice. I’ve even learned how to pluck my eyebrows in a different way to make sure that my eyebrows are level. I can’t even pucker my lips.”

This makes everyday things like spitting after brushing her teeth, or drinking from sports bottles, impossible. “You can dribble as well, and if I’m out to eat I often put my hand in front of my mouth because I’m aware that one side can be open,” she says. For family photographs, she always stands at an angle to hide her affected side.

Nduka says the condition can lead to blindness in the affected eye, and the long-term symptoms can have serious mental health consequences. “Fundamentally, your face is what makes you human,” he says. “It allows you to interact with strangers, which is unique to humans.”

Facial rehabilitation can include a combination of approaches, he says, “such as neuromuscular retraining, biofeedback training – learning how to sense the face. It’s a long process and it requires a lot of time and patience.” Patients with weakness on one side may experience exaggerated movements on the other as it tries to compensate for the lack of movement.

If therapy hasn’t been successful enough, surgery is an option – for instance weighting the eyelid with platinum to help it close properly, “releasing” overactive muscles, or, “if the smile muscles aren’t quite working,” Nduka says, “we can apply a nerve graft to those muscles..”

Carney considers himself lucky that he got all his movement back. After two or three months, he recalls, “it started to come back on its own, but I then realised that I had some strange movements and stiffness of the muscles.” He was referred to a specialist physio who helped, but, he says, “if I close my left eye, my right eyebrow goes up, and if I smile – a really big smile – then my right eye closes up a bit. And the bizarre one is, if I cough, my right eye cries, which was an absolute pain when I had Covid.”

He still has tinnitus, which comes and goes, but you probably wouldn’t notice he’s had the condition now. “It has taken a few years to get to that point,” he says. “There’s the chance that if I’d had the antivirals early on, I might have avoided the paralysis altogether.” It’s just unfortunate that we’ve had to wait for [Justin Bieber](#), he says, “to be able to bring it to people’s attention”.

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Ireland

The forgotten ‘weird sisters’ of WB Yeats who helped forge Irish identity

Overlooked except for a scornful reference in Ulysses, Elizabeth and Lily ran a vibrant women-only arts and crafts enterprise



Lily and Elizabeth Yeats in 1900. The sisters' Cuala Press bolstered a fragile national confidence in newly independent Ireland. Photograph: The Board of Trinity College Dublin



Rory Carroll *Ireland correspondent*

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Mon 20 Jun 2022 01.00 EDT

In [Ireland](#), Elizabeth and Lily Yeats are remembered if at all as the “weird sisters” – a fleeting, scornful reference in James Joyce’s *Ulysses*.

The novel did not name them or elaborate on their alleged weirdness, just as a male-dominated view of Irish history overlooked them except as minor players in an artistic movement.

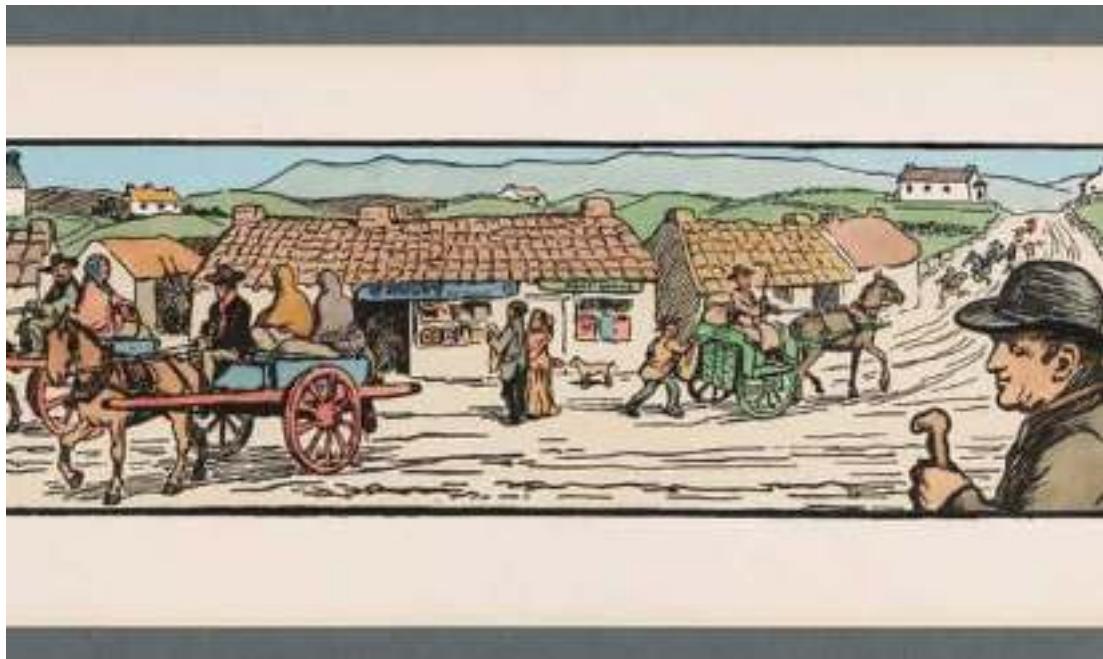
They ran an arts and craft enterprise, Cuala Press, from 1908 to 1940, but Elizabeth and Lily were chiefly known as the sisters of two famous brothers – the poet William Butler Yeats and the painter Jack Yeats. They lived in the shadow of their male siblings, and the jibe in [Ulysses](#), before fading into obscurity.



The Yeats sisters with staff at Cuala Press. Photograph: The Board of Trinity College Dublin

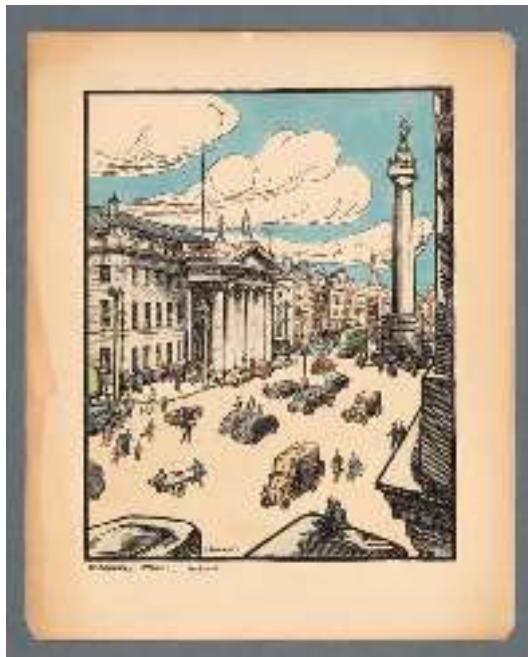
Now, however, an academic project has shone a light on the sisters' unrecognised role in reforging Irish identity in the 20th century – an idealised version of [Ireland](#) that enchanted Hollywood and which lives on in some tourism imagery.

After Ireland won independence from Britain in 1921 the Cuala Press bolstered fragile national confidence – and impressed foreigners – with vibrant images of a prosperous Dublin and thriving rural traditions. It was a rebuttal to racist British tropes of a land populated by feckless, simian-like hooligans.



The Village, a Cuala Press hand-coloured print. Photograph: The Board of Trinity College Dublin

“Their reach was pretty incredible,” said Angela Griffith, an art historian at Trinity College Dublin. “The material they produced was being sold in Ireland, the UK, the US. It was part of the zeitgeist.”



A Cuala Press hand-coloured print of Dublin’s O’Connell Street in the early 20th century. Photograph: The Board of Trinity College Dublin

The Cuala Press employed only women and produced handcrafted books, cards and prints that won glowing reviews at exhibitions in Paris, London, Chicago and elsewhere, seeding a romanticised image of Irishness that verged on propaganda. It was echoed in films such as *The Quiet Man*, a 1952 romantic comedy directed by John Ford that starred John Wayne and Maureen O'Hara, and tourism brochures showing ruddy people in scenic settings.



The Post Car, a Cuala Press hand-coloured print. Photograph: The Board of Trinity College Dublin

Griffith and Billy Shortall, a colleague at the Irish Art Research Centre in Trinity College, are leading an effort to collect, conserve, digitise and publish Cuala Press images.

Drawing on an archive donated by the Yeats family and 111 hand-coloured prints donated by Vin Ryan, the founder of the Schooner Foundation, in 2017, the project put the first [images online](#) last month.

“They may seem quaint and chocolate-boxy now, but they were quite radical. They were challenging what came before,” Shortall said, referring to negative British portrayals of Irishness. “They were promoting the idea of Irish self-determination.”

The fledgling Irish state established a stable, sovereign country against the odds but the Cuala Press images elided social ills such as poverty and emigration.

The Yeats sisters did not openly champion sexual equality but gave a powerful example, said Griffith. “They employed and trained women, ran their own business and actively demonstrated their own agency.”



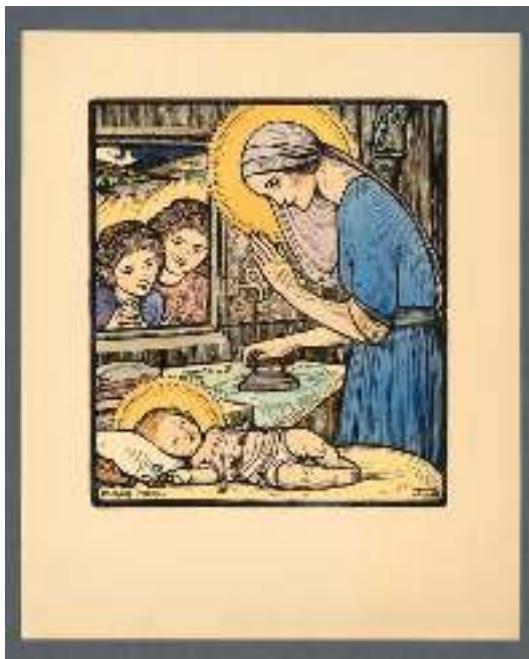
Elizabeth Yeats, seated, and two employees work at Dun Emer press, a predecessor to Cuala Press, in Dublin in 1904. Photograph: The Board of Trinity College Dublin

History, however, overlooked their contribution. A plaque at the Yeats family home in Chiswick, London, mentions only male members. Cuala Press commissioned mostly female artists but dictionaries and biographies tend to record only the males, said Griffith. To be branded “weird” in Joyce’s masterpiece would have undermined them, she said.

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The sisters lapsed further into obscurity after the 1970s when rustic and religious images – such as the Virgin Mary ironing beside a ginger-haired

Christ – felt anachronistic in a country keen to project a modern, cosmopolitan image. “The sisters became footnotes,” said Griffith.



Our Lady Ironing, a hand-coloured print by the Cuala Press artist Beatrice Glenavy. Photograph: The Board of Trinity College Dublin

Shortall and Griffith hope that putting Trinity College’s archive of images online will alert museums, galleries and private individuals around the world to the importance of any Cuala Press prints they may possess. “There is plenty more out there,” said Griffith.

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Interview

‘Insecurity was my biggest motivator’: how Dragons’ Den’s Steven Bartlett became a ‘happy sexy millionaire’

[Sirin Kale](#)



‘I want to do my own potential justice’ ... Steven Bartlett at home.
Photograph: Linda Nylind/The Guardian

He’s an entrepreneur, a successful podcaster and a TV star – and still only 29. He explains what drives him, why he is happy to interview controversial guests and how he deals with critics



Mon 20 Jun 2022 01.00 EDT

I am sitting in what Steven Bartlett’s team semi-seriously refers to as the Matt Hancock chair. It is upholstered in the same plush fabric that swathes much of the millionaire marketing mogul, social media entrepreneur and podcaster’s penthouse flat in London. Above me is a crystal rainfall chandelier; in the corner of the room, Bartlett’s French bulldog, Pablo, snores under a painting of the Irish mixed martial artist Conor McGregor, emblazoned with the legend: “My success isn’t a result of arrogance – it’s a result of self-belief.”

It was in this chair that Hancock gave [his first, stomach-churning interview](#) since the restriction-breaking extramarital affair that led to his resignation as health secretary in June 2021. It was a scoop for which veteran lobby journalists would have chewed off Bartlett’s arm – Hancock insisted the relationship was never about “casual sex” and said he broke the Covid rules

because he fell in love – and yet Bartlett is not excited by the prospect of interviewing more politicians. “They’ve asked and I’ve said no,” he says airily.

Why are politicians lining up at the door of a 29-year-old independent podcaster? Because Bartlett’s [The Diary of a CEO](#) regularly tops the UK charts, pulling in 6.6m streams a month and more than £1m a year in advertising. Despite this – and Bartlett’s roster of high-profile guests, including Molly-Mae Hague, Craig David, Liam Payne and Piers Morgan – he says: “I don’t think of myself as an interviewer or a podcast host.”

I had expected Bartlett to be all throbbing ego. He is, after all, the man who dropped out of university at 18 and later founded Social Chain, a social media marketing agency that was valued at €186m (£160m) in a public listing in 2019, making Bartlett a multimillionaire at 27. After leaving Social Chain in 2020, Bartlett became the youngest dragon on the BBC investment show Dragons’ Den. He has 2.2 million followers on social media, a ripped musculature that [he displays proudly online](#) and a habit of posting motivational quotes on his Instagram page (sample: “To embrace tomorrow you must let go of yesterday”). In his bestselling 2021 memoir, Happy Sexy Millionaire, Bartlett boasted: “I’m currently in the best shape of my life … have millions of followers, millions of \$\$\$ in the bank … [and was] able to build a global business at 21 years old.”



Working it ... speaking at a startup conference in Newcastle in 2019.
Photograph: Thomas Jackson/Alamy

But in person, Bartlett is likable and polite, apologising four times for keeping me waiting as he finished a call and seemingly as keen to hear my views as he is to share his own. His hand is grotesquely swollen, but he is waiting until our interview is over to seek medical attention. “I hurt it lifting [the comedian] Lee Mack at Soccer Aid last night,” Bartlett says, sighing. (Bartlett is a huge football fan – in his free time, he uses the app Footy Addicts to find kickabouts in local parks, turning up unannounced, to the bemusement of his fellow players. “They say: ‘Aren’t you that kid from Dragons’ Den? I listen to your podcast!’”)

He was born in Botswana to a black Nigerian mother and a white British father and raised in an all-white neighbourhood in Plymouth. His parents’ relationship was dysfunctional: he says that his mother once chased his father through the house with a kitchen knife and screamed at her husband constantly (his parents are still together). Does his candour get him into trouble? “I made a decision at some point in my life that I was going to be honest with all this stuff,” he says. “I think I have a good relationship with my parents.”

Bartlett's mother was a serial entrepreneur – “the hardest working person I know” – but her businesses failed. Money was tight and Bartlett was often ashamed that he didn't have the same gadgets or clothes as his middle-class peers. School was a struggle. “My brothers were really smart and studious and I was falling asleep in class all the time,” he says. He was one of the only people of colour in his school and straightened his hair to fit in. “A lot of people ask me: ‘Why are you so motivated?’” he says. “The answer to that is based on a lot of underlying context about shame. Insecurity was my biggest motivator when I was younger.”

Do I think hard work matters? Yes. Do I think hard work at the expense of your health and wellbeing is a good idea? No

After school, he dropped out of Manchester Metropolitan University and co-founded Wallpark, an advertising platform, but struggled to bring traffic to the site. “We had run out of money and I saw this Facebook page called ‘Things Manchester Students Don't Say’,” he says. “At the time, brands wouldn't go near social media. I remember being curious about what would happen if I posted my website there.” His instincts were spot on. “We could market something on social media and it would do phenomenally better than all the other channels,” he says.

Bartlett then picked up social media marketing work after cold-emailing what he describes as “awful, low-tier clients”. After working as a consultant, a client suggested he start a company, which became Social Chain. He launched The Diary of a CEO in 2017, while he was a jetsetting executive, and the early episodes have a late-night, confessional air about them. Bartlett, speaking without notes in the early hours, talks about the stress of being responsible for hundreds of people, many of them decades older than him.

What becomes apparent from speaking to Bartlett is that, despite his personal brand being connected to his identity as an incredibly successful young CEO, he didn't really enjoy running a business. “When I left Social Chain, I said to my girlfriend: I'm never going to be a CEO again, ever,” he says. Managing a large company was “brutal, but I don't think I allowed myself to admit it”.

He resigned from Social Chain in 2020 after a disagreement with the board about the direction of the company. “One of the things that I’m good at, and I enjoy, is the top level strategy of where we are going, the vision,” he says. “And I could no longer make those decisions, because I didn’t own enough of the company.” He initially wrote a strongly worded resignation email, but deleted it and wrote one instead from a “place of gratitude … these people had basically changed my entire life and believed in me.”



On the ball … tussling with Mo Farah at Soccer Aid this month. Photograph: Alex Davidson/Getty Images

The day he handed in his notice, Bartlett cried, but he was relieved. “I just felt really free,” he says. “You can feel free and lost at the same time. Because your purpose and identity has been wrapped up in this thing.” He has subsequently co-founded two more companies – Flight Story, which builds retail investor strategies, and Thirdweb, which helps developers without coding knowledge build blockchain-related apps – but he is not involved in the day-to-day management, preferring to consult on strategy, fundraising and growth.

Despite his complicated feelings about the business that made him wealthy, Bartlett has become a guru for a generation of young, individualistic, financially motivated aspiring entrepreneurs. Earlier this year, they packed

out theatres for the bombastic live version of Bartlett's podcast. Bartlett, a musical theatre nut, recounted his life story from a spotlit stool, accompanied by a gospel choir directed by a former Hamilton producer. (He has seen the Lin-Manuel Miranda show eight times.) The Telegraph [described it](#) as “the most bonkers night I have seen in the theatre”. Predictably, it was a sellout. “I had the time of my life,” says Bartlett, misty-eyed.

If Bartlett has a message, it is this: individuals should take responsibility for their actions, work towards long-term goals and believe in themselves; be realistic about their talents, but remember that few situations can't be ameliorated through sheer effort. It is not a new message, echoing self-help tomes from Max Weber's 1905 tract *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* to Napoleon Hill's 1937 personal development manual *Think and Grow Rich*. But Bartlett's genius has been to update the message via pithy social media graphics and search-engine-optimised YouTube videos for the eroded attention span of a 21st-century audience.

Without a sense of purpose, humans aren't typically very happy

If, at times, Bartlett's message is contradictory – he urges people to believe that they “are enough”, but also to identify and work on their weaknesses – his message of incessant self-improvement falls on receptive ears. His young fans aspire to “financial freedom” – the trending euphemism in startup circles for getting rich – and having a strong personal brand, like their hero. They view professional careers, acquired after years of study, as relics of the past; being a serial entrepreneur is the goal. Bartlett views university as [a money-wasting racket](#), but he acknowledges: “Had I been smart enough to be a doctor, I think my views of the education system would be different.”

Fans listen to The Diary of a CEO to glean business advice from influencers such as Hague, a former Love Island contestant who told Bartlett in January that “we all have the same 24 hours in a day”, [prompting a social media firestorm](#). The backlash surprised Bartlett, because the broader sentiment she articulated – which distils 21st-century hustle culture – has been [uttered repeatedly by guests on his podcast](#) and, to some extent, by Bartlett. But he also questions this idea. “It's nuanced,” he says. “Do I think hard work

matters? Yes. Do I think hard work at the expense of your own health and wellbeing is a good idea? No. Do I think you should just endlessly hustle, hustle, hustle to become a successful entrepreneur? No.”

He tells me that he is striving for “balance” in his life and is not materialistic; as proof, he shows me his rusting ear studs. “Five pounds from Topman.” His ultimate aim is to “do my own potential justice”. But isn’t all this unending personal development just exhausting? Why can’t we just be our mediocre, unevolved selves? “From what I’ve seen, without a sense of purpose, humans aren’t typically very happy,” he says. I tell him that I don’t set personal goals. He is flabbergasted. Surely I must have some, he begs. Reluctantly, I concede that I would like to buy a house at some point. He laughs, exultant.



Hot seat ... Bartlett on Dragons' Den. Photograph: BBC

Bartlett’s critics claim that, for all his grandiose self-mythologising, he is vague on the details of how exactly he became successful, preferring to hide behind unoriginal aphorisms. In an excoriating [New Statesman article](#) in March, Bartlett was described as “more of a bluffer than a prodigy”. The article concluded that Bartlett “got lucky” by founding Social Chain at a time when social media marketing was taking off and that the business advice offered in Happy Sexy Millionaire is generic and unhelpful. A thin

smile twitches across Bartlett's lips when I ask him about the write-up, which he read. "I'm sure there was a lot of luck involved in my journey," he responds.

He insists Happy Sexy Millionaire was not intended as a business manual. "In different forums, I can give business advice," he says. "If I'm in the boardroom talking about how to scale, or technical aspects of how to raise a round, or how to honour investors, I can do that ... Do I talk about that on my social media channels or in my podcasts in detail? No."

I suggest that his fans might welcome specifics about how he landed big clients at Social Chain and then serviced their accounts. "I can go and get you my laptop and show you those pieces of work," Bartlett offers, suddenly animated. "They are 200-page insight pieces into customer engagement, customer demographics, where customers are, how they behave."

Despite the criticism, Bartlett clearly knows what he is talking about in relation to business. His observations in Dragons' Den are astute; his interviews on The Diary of a CEO, with executives in particular, are frequently superb.

He is less sure-footed with regard to challenging controversial guests. In his interview with Hague, who had recently been announced as the creative director of the fast-fashion brand Pretty Little Thing, he failed to ask her about accusations of illegally low wages being paid in the supply chain of Pretty Little Thing's parent company, Boohoo. "I didn't know whether she was the person to talk on that topic," he says.

I suspect that the broader issue is one that plagues the industry in general. A blockbuster podcast needs high-profile guests, but they may not be willing to submit themselves to a grilling. This may matter less when Bartlett is interviewing business executives or pop stars, but it does matter when he is confronted with a media-trained politician, such as Hancock, or a professional contrarian, such as Morgan.

In their discussion, Bartlett asked the former health secretary: "One of the decisions that was made, and ultimately criticised, was this whole care home stuff – what's your view on that?" Hancock launched into a defence of his

policy of [discharging untested Covid patients into care homes, later ruled unlawful](#), that a more robust interviewer would have dismantled in minutes. Does Bartlett think he pushed Hancock hard enough? “Honestly, I did my best,” he says. “I don’t consider myself to be a journalist.”

His decisions to book Morgan, as well as the author [Jordan Peterson](#), whose work is beloved by men’s rights activists, have proved contentious. “I don’t ever want to get to a situation where we don’t have conversations with those who we disagree with,” he says. “Because I think much of our progress as a people has come from breaking our echo chambers and having difficult, uncomfortable conversations and being willing to listen.”

But these conversations were not particularly difficult or uncomfortable. He thanked Peterson for changing his life and allowed Morgan to go on a largely uninterrupted rant about cancel culture, defend his bullying of the Duchess of Sussex and falsely position himself as a trans ally. Does he accept that, by booking such guests, he sanitises their views for a wider audience? “I don’t know if it’s sanitising their views,” he says. “You can have a conversation with me and not agree with everything I live by and stand for.”

Bartlett is still finding his feet as an interviewer, despite the runaway success of *The Diary of a CEO*. “I have moments where, afterwards, I say: ‘I wish I had challenged that person more,’” he says. As we are wrapping up, he asks me for feedback on what he should be doing better. I suggest he could go harder on people. Ever the self-optimiser, Bartlett appears to consider my proposition. Perhaps he is a Paxman in the making.

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2022.06.20 - Opinion

- Only a tiny minority of rural Britons are farmers – so why do they hold such sway?
- I negotiated a Northern Ireland deal that worked. Johnson's Putinesque strategy will wreck it
- Fathers deserve the right to bond with their babies. Our parental leave system is a mess
- A geeky brown girl in a big white world? Ms Marvel is my kind of superhero

OpinionFarming

Only a tiny minority of rural Britons are farmers – so why do they hold such sway?

[George Monbiot](#)



The government pretends that farming and the countryside are synonymous – and our environment suffers as a result



‘Misleading climate claims are the livestock industry’s tobacco tactics.’
Photograph: Daniel Leal/AFP/Getty Images

Mon 20 Jun 2022 01.00 EDT Last modified on Mon 20 Jun 2022 10.48 EDT

We have a problem. The environment secretary, George Eustice – the highest green authority in the land – is, in a crucial respect, a climate denier. In an [interview](#) with the Telegraph, he claimed that “livestock, particularly if you do it with the right pastoral system, has a role to play in tackling climate change”.

Though such claims are [often made](#), there is no evidence to support them. A wide-ranging [review](#) of the data by the Oxford Martin School found no case of a livestock operation sequestering more greenhouse gases than the animals produce. Moreover, because of the very large land area required for grazing livestock, pastoral systems carry [a massive carbon opportunity cost](#) (this means the carbon that would be captured if the land were returned to wild ecosystems). According to the government’s [Climate Change Committee](#), “transitioning from grassland to forestland would increase the soil carbon stock by 25 tonnes of carbon per hectare (on average across England) … This is additional to the large amounts of carbon that would be stored in the biomass of the trees themselves.”

Misleading climate claims are the livestock industry's tobacco tactics, used to confuse, obfuscate and distract. When the UK environment secretary repeats a destructive sector's propaganda, we are not in safe hands.

But perhaps we shouldn't be surprised. Eustice is a [trustee](#) of his family's farm, which raises pigs and sheep. I often find it hard to see where his interests end and the public interest begins. Though government advisers have repeatedly called for meat consumption to be reduced for environmental reasons, Eustice [says](#) he has "no intention" of encouraging us to eat less. In a letter to people living in farmhouses in the Tiverton and Honiton constituency, where a byelection will be held this week, he boasts about tearing down environmental protections: "We've binned the three-crop rule, we've scrapped the greening requirements ... we've delayed changes to the use of urea by at least a year ... a vote for the Conservatives will be a vote to support farming."

Of the six ministers at the environment department, Defra, all but one either own farmland or were brought up on farms owned by their families. The same goes for the [chair of the parliamentary committee](#) that's supposed to hold the department to account. It's entirely right that farmers should be represented in government. It's entirely wrong that they should be represented in Defra to the exclusion of almost everyone else.

Government [figures](#) show that there are 115,000 people, across all categories, working on English farms. They comprise [0.2%](#) of the total population, and 1.2% of the rural population. If you include everyone who might be involved in farming, including farmers' spouses, partners, directors and managers, the total reaches 306,000, which means 0.5% of the total population, and 3% of the rural population. In other words, using the most generous definition of farmers and farmworkers, 97% of rural people are not employed by the industry. But as far as government policy is concerned, farming and the countryside are synonymous. If you're not a farmer, your interests are overlooked, your voice unheard. You're a second-class rural citizen.

This agricultural hegemony helps to explain the government's [disastrous food strategy](#), published last week. Farming already enjoys an extraordinary range of derogations from planning laws, often to the great detriment of

local people, who can do nothing to prevent their views from being ruined and their air and rivers from being poisoned. The new food strategy proposes even greater exemptions from public accountability for giant greenhouses, “vertical farms” and other agroindustrial infrastructure.

Instead of seeking to reduce meat consumption, the strategy concentrates on feeble technofixes for single aspects of the problem, such as feed additives that seek to reduce the amount of methane burped by cattle. It says it will remove “bureaucracy” and make regulations more “proportionate”: both codewords for cutting public protections. Someone in government stripped out all the effective environmental measures the strategy was expected to announce. It postpones any decision to encourage the rewilding of unproductive grazing land, which is essential to reversing wildlife decline and was recommended by the lead adviser, Henry Dimbleby.

These failures reflect a general reversal of Johnson’s environmental commitments, feeble as they were, in response to one of the most pernicious lobby groups in the UK, the National Farmers’ Union (NFU). The NFU manages to position itself on the wrong side of almost every issue. If you want to fight the rules that are meant to protect our rivers from agricultural pollution, it’s your champion. If you want first to resist and then undermine the ban on the most deadly biocides invented, neonicotinoids, the NFU is there for you. If you want to torpedo the rules intended to protect the soil, you have a friend. The environment department, Defra, occupies 17 Smith Square, London SW1; the NFU, 18 Smith Square, London SW1. It scarcely matters which door you enter: you’ll hear the same story.

Now the government’s flagship green policies – Environmental Land Management schemes, which are supposed to replace the disastrous European subsidy system – are under threat. Astonishingly, and disgracefully, the Labour party has formed an alliance with the NFU, Steve Baker, Jacob Rees-Mogg and other members of the Tory hard right in opposing this genuine – perhaps unique – Brexit opportunity. When a party pays insufficient attention to any issue, it is swept along on the currents of power, and becomes aligned with the most potent and dangerous corporate lobby groups.

We need farmers. We also need to ensure that, like any other sector, they are properly regulated, and their particular interests cannot override the wider public interest. I'm often accused of being anti-farmer. But I simply want to see the same standards applied to farming as to any other industry. I want to see the rational use of public money and the land it affects. After all, there would be almost no livestock grazing – the farm practice with by far the highest ratio of destruction to production – in this country if it were not for subsidies. Given that we pay for this land to be used, shouldn't we have a say in what happens to it?

I want to see Defra diversified and clear lines drawn between private and public interests. I want to see the lobbying power of the NFU curtailed. I want to see a government that represents all those who live in rural areas, rather than one group to the exclusion of others. Is any of this too much to ask?

- George Monbiot is a Guardian columnist
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OpinionNorthern Ireland

I negotiated a Northern Ireland deal that worked. Johnson's Putinesque strategy will wreck it

[Peter Hain](#)

The 2007 settlement I worked on aimed to deepen the peace process – the vandals now in charge of Britain don't care about it



A protester in support of the Northern Ireland protocol in London, June 2022. Photograph: Vuk Valcic/Zuma Press Wire/Rex/Shutterstock

Mon 20 Jun 2022 03.00 EDT Last modified on Mon 20 Jun 2022 12.17 EDT

There is something Putinesque about the government's framing of its [Northern Ireland](#) protocol bill. It is almost the opposite of what Boris Johnson, his man in Belfast, Brandon Lewis, and the hardline backbenchers he's appeasing claim it to be.

Leave to one side that it trashes Britain's reputation. That it was conceived in London as a solution to the Northern [Ireland](#) Brexit conundrum. That it reneges on the withdrawal agreement Johnson and his lieutenant, David Frost, negotiated with the EU. Never mind that it breaks an international treaty the UK signed. Forget very old-fashioned notions of truth, sticking to your word, trust and obeying international law.

Instead focus upon its real purpose: [dog-whistling to Johnson's base](#) by triggering a humongous row with the old villain Brussels because that worked so well in the 2016 Brexit referendum. And keep that going – if at all possible – all the way to the next general election.

Johnson chatters that the protocol breaches the Good Friday agreement, yet it's his own bill amending it that is opposed by all of the main Northern Ireland political parties [except the Democratic Unionist party](#), by the business community which fears yet more disruption and instability, and by civil society groups that have been trying to make the protocol work.

It's not the EU that has been gridlocking the negotiations to get rid of the protocol's rough edges, it's Johnson's failure along with first Frost and now Liz Truss to negotiate seriously.

Having myself negotiated as a government minister with the EU, all the parties in Northern Ireland and in the UN security council – winning good deals for Britain – I know that building trust is key to getting concessions from the other side. But Johnson et al have destroyed trust in Brussels, Belfast, Dublin and Washington DC.

Why should Brussels make the concessions necessary when it suspects Johnson will simply pocket these and up the ante yet again? The EU is far from blameless in all this mess, but it is very ready to make changes. It's offered to do so, including a willingness to explore "red and green channels" respectively for goods heading into the EU across the Irish border, and those confined to Northern Ireland alone. There's a deal to be done. We've taken shedloads of evidence in our [protocol on Ireland/Northern Ireland subcommittee](#) in the Lords confirming that.

The question is: does Johnson really want one? Or does he prefer the parallel universe blame game that resonates with his supporters but won't solve the problem, because to do so would irrevocably mean compromises like the ones he and Frost made in signing the protocol in the first place?

The truth is Northern Ireland always was going to be Brexit's achilles heel. Because after Brexit, Europe's external frontier had to be somewhere. For England, it would be Calais. For Northern Ireland, it would be either across the island of Ireland – toxic, unthinkable and undeliverable in Brussels, Dublin and Washington DC because it would ditch the Good Friday peace process. Or in the Irish Sea, which [Boris Johnson](#) casually opted for "to get Brexit done".

'Let's call a spade a spade': EU resumes legal action against UK over new NI protocol bill – video

What might be the solution? Start with the roots of the problem. Johnson's dogmatists insisted upon a hard [Brexit](#) that required the UK to "take back control" and break free from EU rules, whether on food safety or manufacturing standards. Yet the integrity of the EU's single market requires those rules be respected and legally enforceable.

So Johnson's very own Brexit means there has to be some sort of customs and regulatory border between Great Britain and Northern Ireland. And control of it under the supposedly iniquitous protocol has been delegated by the EU for the very first time to a non-member state – the UK.

Remember also that there have long been light-touch controls on movement of plants and livestock from Great Britain into Northern Ireland – a "border" of sorts necessitated by the island of Ireland being a single, distinct biosphere.

Some give and take could resolve the current problems over food products coming from Great Britain into Belfast or Larne in a manner that did not leave unionists understandably feeling their identity was being threatened by being separated from the rest of the UK.

Time-consuming paperwork could readily be replaced by electronic fast-tracking of goods if London was willing to share data in real time with Brussels, something Johnson has so far refused to do.

According to legal advice we've seen in our Lords committee, amendments to the protocol are possible within the withdrawal treaty. And if trust is rebuilt – a big ask given Johnson's dishonesty and posturing – I'm sure the EU could agree to them.

But how can it be reasonably expected to do so when the bill gives UK ministers massive unilateral powers to change anything they deem necessary in the protocol – an international treaty?

Then there's the “democratic deficit”. The DUP complains that rules will be made in Brussels over which Northern Ireland has no say. Fair point. The answer is to give Northern Ireland ministers and legislators consultative rights both in Brussels institutions, through the Joint EU-UK committee overseeing the protocol, and through adapting existing cross-border bodies in Dublin.

Remember that Northern Ireland voted in 2016 to stay in the EU, not for Brexit. Out of five main political parties, only one backed Johnson's hard Brexit: the DUP. Polls show most people in Northern Ireland support the protocol. All the parties want it amended, its implementation smoothed, so that Northern Ireland – now with much faster economic growth than England, Scotland or Wales – can continue to enjoy the best of both worlds in the UK and EU single markets as the protocol delivers.

But remember also that Johnson's express objective is for the UK to diverge from EU regulations. That means Northern Ireland diverging increasingly from the rest of the UK – unsettling for the DUP, but then it voted for it.

What pains me most is that the current batch of Tory leaders don't really give a fig for Northern Ireland, don't even understand it, and don't know how to play the “honest broker” role John Major extolled and Tony Blair exemplified.

I genuinely felt that the 2007 devolution settlement I helped negotiate under Blair had ended the horror and cemented hope. We felt that by bringing the old blood enemies, the DUP and Sinn Féin, Ian Paisley and Martin McGuinness, to share government together, the [Good Friday agreement](#) would be locked in, over time deepening peace, stability and inclusive democracy. Sadly, while the vandals now in charge of Britain run amok, I'm not so sure any more.

- Lord Hain is a former secretary of state for Northern Ireland
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| [Section menu](#) | [Main menu](#) |

[Republic of Parenthood](#)[Father's Day](#)

Fathers deserve the right to bond with their babies. Our parental leave system is a mess

[Rhiannon Lucy Cosslett](#)



My partner took proper time off and was able to truly connect with our son. Other countries prioritise this. Why not us?



'It shouldn't be such an immense privilege to get to bond with your child.'

Photograph: Danny Lawson/PA

Mon 20 Jun 2022 05.00 EDT Last modified on Mon 20 Jun 2022 13.23 EDT

I racked my brains trying to work out what to get my husband for his first Father's Day. A fart-themed mug and a book of dad jokes don't really cut it, after all the weeks and weeks of hands-on fathering. And I mean proper fathering. The Father's Day gift economy, themed as it is around activities that you do away from your children – golf and drinking whisky – hasn't really caught up with modern dadding.

In two weeks, my husband goes back to full-time work, after nearly four months of shared parental leave, and I will become a full-time parent. In this country, most dads go back after the measly two weeks of statutory paternity leave, so our experience is not typical. The culture enables this. My husband has been told socially that there is not much point taking this time, that he won't be able to interact with the baby – who will only be interested in his mother – and will "just be changing nappies". No one mentioned bonding.

He has been there, in every sense. He was there in the neonatal intensive care unit with his shirt off, holding the baby against the beat of his heart so that the boy knew from his first hours on this earth that he was loved and

protected. He fed me, when I was struggling to feed the child, and sat in on more breastfeeding consultations than anyone should have to. He fed the baby, too, from bottles, right from the beginning, which had not been our plan, but which has only enhanced their closeness and liberated me. He's done the night feeds and the rocking to sleep and the post-jab Calpol. They bowl around the neighbourhood together, the baby strapped to his chest in a way that Piers Morgan would hate. He can make our child smile with the widest, purest grin I've ever seen. And yes, he's had a fair bit of baby shit up his arm, too.

All dads should have this, I think, if they want it. It shouldn't be such an immense privilege to get to bond with your child. In her book *The Life of Dad: The Making of a Modern Father*, Dr Anna Machin says that bonding between father and infant is a two-stage process. The first stage happens at birth, is underpinned by oxytocin, and "relies upon the biological connection between father and child provided by genetic relatedness". The second stage comes much later, because "it is based upon conjoined lives and interactions and is promoted by the much more powerful bonding chemical beta-endorphin, leading to a more profound and much deeper love". Take the time at the beginning, however, and it feels to me as though the second stage can be reached much more rapidly.

For many dads, the stuff about feeling like a spare part isn't incorrect. If they aren't around full-time for long, they might feel like the secondary parent right from the beginning, "standing outside ... this woman's world", as Kate Bush has it in *This Woman's Work*, her moving and daring song about fatherhood. "Dads who are thrown back into the office after a couple of weeks never get the chance to bond with their children, which is horrible," my colleague Alex Hern told me (he took six months to be his daughter's primary caregiver). "That's the part that is unimaginable to me; it just feels, from the privileged vantage point of not having had to do that, like such an awful thing to inflict on a new parent.

"There's a huge difference between 'looking after' your baby and 'being in charge of' your baby, and it was crucial for my relationship with my partner for me to have been in charge of my daughter for long enough that I stopped asking how she had done things, and started doing things my way. It means

we've come out the other side of leave with an approach to parenting that blends both our experiences.”

This is backed by the research. Sociology professors Paul Hodkinson and Rachel Brooks, whose book *Sharing Care* examines the experiences of fathers who have taken more of an active role in sharing care for their children, [conclude that](#) “the sharing of parental leave from early in babies’ lives may make it easier for caregiving fathers to take on full responsibility for emotional and organisational aspects of care later on”. This would help alleviate the disproportionate care burden that continues to fall on women.

Though we’ve enjoyed shared parental leave, it was unpaid, so we have taken a large financial hit and I’ve been writing this column throughout. As a policy, it has been a failure, with only 3-8% of eligible couples taking it (the UK government has yet to publish the results of its long-promised consultation on this policy). It is [still not available to the self-employed](#).

It’s also unnecessarily confusing, and took me a couple of weeks to get my own head around it, simply because it was so poorly explained by most websites. According to a new survey from Pregnant Then Screwed, just half of dads believe their employer understands how shared parental leave works. It breaks down the numerous ways in which men are discouraged from taking the time, from the financial hit (cited by more than half of dads as the reason for not taking shared parental leave) to discrimination in the workplace (16%).

The fact that the shared parental leave policy involves “taking” leave from your female partner is spectacularly ill-conceived, with women not wanting to relinquish their time and some dads not wanting to “deprive” their partners of it. As for our pathetic two weeks of paternity leave, 97% of respondents do not believe that two weeks is long enough, and one in four dads say that they continued to work while on paternity leave with half saying that there was an expectation from their employer that they would, which is unlawful.

Though companies are starting to offer enhanced parental leave to men, if the UK is to catch up with the many other countries that offer properly paid, ringfenced paternity leave, we need to rip up the shared parental leave policy

and start again. This is one of the demands of the Pregnant Then Screwed [March of the Mummies](#), a national protest for parents on 29 October (its other demands are good quality affordable childcare for all children and flexible working as the default).

If men want more time with their children, they are going to have to fight for it alongside their partners. The key to this, I think, is to start framing paternity leave as crucial bonding time for men and their children, which they are currently being denied. As my husband says, it's been one of the most rewarding times of his life. It should be a right, not a privilege.

What's working

I took the baby swimming last week (his dad is taking him this week), and watching six babies and their parents – a mix of mums and dads – discover the joys of the water was almost unbearably cute and completely worth the screaming fit he threw in the changing room afterwards.

What's not

Due to hot weather I've spent days consigned to a dark room, breastfeeding under a fan. Send ice lollies or, even better, cooler temperatures.

- Rhiannon Lucy Cosslett is a Guardian columnist and author
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OpinionTelevision

A geeky brown girl in a big white world? Ms Marvel is my kind of superhero

[Saima Mir](#)

I've waited almost 40 years for a character like Kamala Khan. Disney's beautiful new series finally gives women of Pakistani heritage their moment in the sun



'I can't stop humming the soundtrack' ... Ms Marvel, starring Iman Vellani.
Photograph: AP

Mon 20 Jun 2022 02.00 EDT Last modified on Mon 20 Jun 2022 03.06 EDT

As a geeky, bespectacled brown girl with a monobrow, I never thought I would see myself on screen. So watching [Ms Marvel](#) has been an emotional experience. I grew up in the 90s, and was a comic book geek in the days before comics were cool. The days when HMV stocked Marvel T-shirts,

when Athena sold DC posters, and 13-year-old me couldn't believe her luck when she found a Wolverine ring binder in a discount shop in Bradford.

You'll understand how deep my love is when I tell you that one of the reasons I married my husband is because he knew what an adamantium exoskeleton was, and that he unequivocally agreed to name our third son after the Ragin' Cajun, Gambit.

I've waited almost 40 years to watch a girl like me don a superhero outfit. The fact that this hero comes with a kameez and dupatta has been worth the wait, and I can't stop humming the soundtrack.

I tucked into biryani as I watched episode one. Being able to relate to Kamala Khan's conversations with her Urdu-speaking parents, and the complexities of being a brown Muslim kid in a big white world was something I'd never experienced before. And when the song [Ko Ko Korina](#) came on, I knew the creators had done their research. This was clever storytelling, devoid of stereotypes and unashamedly steeped in what it's like to be a second-generation Pakistani girl.

It has never been cool to be of Pakistani heritage, so the fact that this beautiful Disney series – with high production values, kind words, loving parents and a girl who loves superheroes – has been created by two women feels like success for all of us. Women of our heritage have been forced to the sidelines for far too long. But all that is changing and it's time to take centre stage.

Saima Mir is a journalist, writer and author of the novel [The Khan](#)

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

| [Section menu](#) | [Main menu](#) |

2022.06.20 - Around the world

- [Swimming Transgender women barred from female competitions after Fina vote](#)
- [Space oddity Spirals of blue light in New Zealand night sky leave stargazers ‘kind of freaking out’](#)
- [Sudan Museums seek return of artefacts taken by British colonisers](#)
- [Wildlife ‘Fluffy’ crab that wears a sponge as a hat discovered in Western Australia](#)
- [January 6 hearings Liz Cheney’s condemnation of Trump’s lies wins over Democrats](#)

Swimming

Transgender women swimmers barred from female competitions by Fina

- Athletes must prove they have ‘not experienced male puberty’
- New policy follows the report of a scientific panel



Lia Thomas became the first trans athlete to win an NCAA swimming title in March. Photograph: John Bazemore/AP

[Sean Ingle](#)
[@seaningle](#)

Sun 19 Jun 2022 15.08 EDT Last modified on Mon 20 Jun 2022 05.45 EDT

Swimming’s world governing body, Fina, has voted to bar transgender women from elite female competitions if they have experienced any part of male puberty, in a seismic decision that sets it apart from most Olympic sports.

The decision, decided by 71% of the vote of 152 national federations at the world championships in Budapest, followed a report from a Fina scientific panel that found trans women retained a significant advantage over cisgender female swimmers even after reducing their testosterone levels through medication.

In a new 34-page policy document, Fina said that male-to-female transgender athletes could now compete in the women's category only "provided they have not experienced any part of male puberty beyond Tanner Stage 2 [which marks the start of physical development], or before age 12, whichever is later".

Commenting on the policy the Fina president, Husain al-Musallam, said: "We have to protect the rights of our athletes to compete, but we also have to protect competitive fairness at our events, especially the women's category at Fina competitions."

Fina has promised to create a working group to establish an "open" category for trans women in some events as part of its new policy.

"Fina will always welcome every athlete," added Musallam. "The creation of an open category will mean that everybody has the opportunity to compete at an elite level. This has not been done before, so Fina will need to lead the way."

The vote makes swimming the second Olympic governing body, after World Rugby in 2020, to introduce a ban on scientific grounds. Most other sports have used testosterone limits as a basis for allowing trans women to compete in the women's category, a stance that has promoted inclusion but has been criticised on unfairness grounds.

There has been widespread unease in the sport after Lia Thomas, who had been a moderate college swimmer as a male competitor, was able to [win a NCAA national college title](#) in the US this year. Others have argued that Thomas is a trailblazer whose success and identity should be celebrated, not restricted. However this vote means that Thomas will no longer be able to compete in the women's category at the Paris Olympics as intended.

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The British former swimmer Sharron Davies welcomed the news, [tweeting](#): “I can’t tell you how proud I am of my sport, Fina and Fina president for doing the science, asking the athletes/coaches and standing up for fair sport for females. Swimming will always welcome everyone no matter how you identify but fairness is the cornerstone of sport.”

Karen Pickering, another former international swimmer for Britain, [added](#): “I was at the Fina congress for the presentation, discussion and vote and I can vouch for the care and empathy displayed for any athletes who won’t now be able to compete in the category their gender ID may align to … but competitive fairness to women’s category must be protected.”

This article was downloaded by **calibre** from <https://www.theguardian.com/sport/2022/jun/19/transgender-swimmers-barred-from-female-competitions-after-fina-vote>

| [Section menu](#) | [Main menu](#) |

[New Zealand](#)

Spirals of blue light in New Zealand night sky leave stargazers ‘kind of freaking out’

Social media abuzz with pictures and theories about formations thought to be from exhaust plume of SpaceX rocket



A spiral of blue lights as seen from Stewart Island/Rakiura, New Zealand, on Sunday. Theories on social media about its origins ranged from aliens to foreign rockets to commercial displays. Photograph: Alasdair Burns/Twinkle Dark Sky Tours

Tess McClure in Auckland

[@tessairini](#)

Sun 19 Jun 2022 21.38 EDT Last modified on Sun 19 Jun 2022 21.49 EDT

New Zealand stargazers were left puzzled and awed by strange, spiralling light formations in the night sky on Sunday night.

Around 7.25pm Alasdair Burns, a stargazing guide on Stewart Island/Rakiura, received a text from a friend: go outside and look at the sky. “As soon as we actually went outside, it was very obvious what it was he was referring to,” Burns said.

He saw a huge, blue spiral of light amid the darkness. “It looked like an enormous spiral galaxy, just hanging there in the sky, and slowly just drifting across,” Burns said. “Quite an eerie feeling.”

Burns snapped a few images of the lights on long exposure, capturing the spiral from his phone. “We quickly banged on the doors of all our neighbours to get them out as well. And so there were about five of us, all out on our shared veranda looking up and just kind of, well, freaking out just a little bit.”

The country’s stargazing and amateur astronomy social media groups lit up with people posting photographs and questions about the phenomenon, which was visible from most of the South Island. Theories abounded – from UFOs to foreign rockets to commercial light displays.

“Premonition from our orbital black hole,” said one stargazer. “Aliens at it again,” commented another.

The reality was likely a little more prosaic, said Prof Richard Easther, a physicist at Auckland University, who called the phenomenon “weird but easily explained”.

Clouds of that nature sometimes occurred when a rocket carried a satellite into orbit, he said.

“When the propellant is ejected out the back, you have what’s essentially water and carbon dioxide – that briefly forms a cloud in space that’s illuminated by the sun,” Easther said. “The geometry of the satellite’s orbit and also the way that we’re sitting relative to the sun – that combination of things was just right to produce these completely wacky looking clouds that were visible from the South Island.”

Easter said the rocket in question was likely the Globalstar launch from [SpaceX](#), which the company sent into low-earth orbit off Cape Canaveral in Florida on Sunday.

Burns had guessed the spiral was likely a rocket, having read about a similar phenomenon in 2009, when a [Russian missile launch caused huge blue spirals](#) over Norway. Even knowing the likely source, he said, it was a confronting sight. “None of us had ever seen anything like that before. It was spectacular.”

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| [Section menu](#) | [Main menu](#) |

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[Sudan](#)

Sudanese museums seek return of artefacts taken by British colonisers



The Charge of the 21st Lancers at Omdurman, 1898. Photograph: Culture Club/Getty Images

Items include armour, banners, and two skulls taken from Omdurman battlefield

[Jason Burke](#) and [Zeinab Mohammed Salih](#) in Khartoum

Mon 20 Jun 2022 04.40 EDT Last modified on Tue 21 Jun 2022 00.08 EDT

Museum officials in Sudan are hoping for the return of priceless artefacts and body parts taken by British soldiers, colonial administrators and travellers, saying they could help bring peace to the unstable east African country.

The items include valuable armour, weapons and clothing, and the banners of fighters who resisted the British force that invaded and colonised [Sudan](#) more than 120 years ago.

The most controversial items may be two skulls taken from the battlefield where Sudanese warriors tried to hold off the advancing British and Egyptian army. During the engagement at Omdurman in 1898, British commanders used early machine guns and artillery to inflict thousands of casualties on lightly armed enemies.

In Khartoum, the repatriation of the human remains of those who fought at the battle is seen as particularly significant.

“We have to have a big campaign. These people are our brothers, our heroes. They unified and defended our country. It is a very special story of resistance to imperialism ... Their descendants should see this all here,” said Dr Eglal el-Malik, the director of conservation at the National Corporation for Antiquities and [Museums](#).

Trophy hunting on battlefields by British soldiers was common during colonial campaigns and there are thousands of items from Sudan in British collections. The victories there were of particular significance to Victorian Britain as they were seen as avenging the murder of Gen Charles Gordon in Khartoum in 1885. Colonial rule by the UK lasted until 1956.

The two skulls, [held by the Anatomical Museum in Edinburgh](#), were taken by the explorer Reginald Koettlitz and Henry Wellcome, the pharmaceutical pioneer and businessman, and are among [large numbers of human remains removed](#) by western Europeans from Africa. These were often used in

pseudoscientific research to support racist theories during and immediately after the rush to colonise the continent at the end of the 19th century.



Muhammad Ahmad, whose successor led the Mahdist army during the battle of Omduram in 1898. Photograph: unknown

Other items in British museums linked to the battle of Omdurman include a banner of leaders of Sudanese fighters, now in [Durham University's Palace Green Library](#), and a spectacular padded coat and armour in the [Royal Armouries collection](#).

Many other museums in the UK hold similar objects taken in the aftermath of the British victories. Sudanese officials said they would like to see many of the items on display in a new museum to open in Omdurman in the coming weeks, which will tell from a new perspective the story of how the British colonised Sudan.

“I want to show the real detail of the battle of Omdurman and I cannot do that without all the items. It is very important for the Sudanese people to know,” Ahmed Mohammed, a curator, told the Guardian.

Mohammed insisted that the museum – [being restored with a British Council grant](#) – could provide adequate security and the right conditions for any artefacts returned from the UK or elsewhere.

Some items are already back in Sudan. A British family whose ancestors took items from the Omdurman battlefield recently returned a Sudanese “dervish” warrior’s robe.

But all concerned recognise significant practical and legal obstacles. El-Malik said she was against hasty repatriation of items.

“There are lots of Sudanese [people] want these items back now [but] they need to be aware of the legal issues. The reality is we have so many difficulties [in Sudan]. It would be great if we had all these things back now but [they are] in a good situation where it is and so many people see it. So we have to be reasonable.”

A spokesperson for Durham University said a final list of loan requests from Sudan was still under discussion. “We work closely with the National Corporation of Antiquities and Museums in Sudan, including currently on loan requests for several items from the Sudan Archive to be displayed in Sudan. They and we recognise this is not without difficulties,” the spokesperson said.

Prof Tom Gillingwater, of the Edinburgh Anatomical Museum, said the institution worked with many communities around the world to facilitate the return of remains and artefacts but it had not yet received any formal request for the return of the Omdurman skulls.

“Anatomical remains are now utilised for research into the history of genetics, diets and the movement of people. We take our colonial legacy – and its contemporary impact – very seriously, and are continuing to examine ways to address these important issues,” he said.



Dr Eglal el-Malik, the director of conservation at the National Corporation for Antiquities and Museums. Photograph: Jason Burke/The Guardian

El-Malik described those in charge of British museums as “friends, colleagues … [and] very helpful on the whole”.

There are huge numbers of archaeological and other valuable items from Sudan overseas, including a bust of the Roman emperor Augustus that is in the British Museum, and a priceless collection of gold jewellery looted from royal tombs by an Italian adventurer in the 1930s, which has ended up in Germany.

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The issue of restitution of heritage items taken by force or otherwise removed by colonial invaders, administrators and adventurers is a sensitive one, with pressure on western institutions mounting in recent years. Last year Germany became the [first country to hand back Benin bronzes](#) looted by British soldiers in the late 19th century. France has also indicated a significant shift in policy.

Sudan has been wracked by conflict for decades. A military coup last year dashed hopes of a swift transition to democracy after the fall of the veteran

dictator Omar al-Bashir in 2019.

Sudanese officials stress they are not seeking the return of any archaeological objects that went overseas under lawful agreements, or any items they could not keep safe.

The National Museum in Khartoum is being rehabilitated with a \$1m grant from the Italian government. Work is also being done on a museum in the south-western region of Darfur.

“The situation here is not suitable. For the moment they should stay where they are, but of course eventually we would like to have them in our museum,” said Ghalia Gharelnabi, the acting director of the National Museum.

This article was downloaded by **calibre** from <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2022/jun/20/sudanese-museums-seek-return-of-antiquities-taken-by-british-colonisers>

[Australia news](#)

‘Fluffy’ crab that wears a sponge as a hat discovered in Western Australia

Family found a *Lamarckdromia beagle* specimen washed up on the beach in Denmark in southern WA

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A newly discovered ‘fluffy’ species of sponge crab found off Western Australia’s south coast. Photograph: Colin McLay/Courtesy of the WA Museum.

*[Donna Lu](#)
[@donnadlu](#)*

Mon 20 Jun 2022 04.53 EDT Last modified on Mon 20 Jun 2022 12.18 EDT

A “fluffy” crab discovered off the coast of [Western Australia](#) has been named after the ship that carried Charles Darwin around the world.

The new species, *Lamarckdromia beagle*, belongs to the *Dromiidae* family, commonly known as sponge crabs.

Crustaceans in this family fashion and use sea sponges and ascidians – animals including sea squirts – for protection. They trim the creatures using their claws and wear them like hats.

Dr Andrew Hosie, a curator of crustacea and worms at the Western Australian Museum, said sponge crabs had hind legs that were specially adapted for holding their protective hats.

“The sponge or ascidian just keeps growing and will mould to the shape of the crab’s back,” he said. “It will never attach … it forms a nice cap that fits quite snugly to the top of the crab.”

Similar to how hermit crabs use shells for protection, the sponges help *Dromiidae* crabs to camouflage from predators such as octopuses and other crabs.

The sponges can be bigger than the crab itself, and also provide a chemical deterrent. “Some of the compounds that these sponges are producing are very noxious,” Hosie said. “There’s not a lot of active predators that would be interested in munching through a sponge just to get to a crab.”

A family living in Denmark, Western Australia found a *Lamarckdromia beagle* specimen washed up on the beach and sent it to the Western Australian Museum for identification.

Hosie and Colin McLay, a marine biologist associated with Canterbury University in New Zealand, then described the crab as a new species – one of three sponge crabs in the *Lamarckdromia* genus.



'Fluffy' sponge crab (*Lamarckdromia beagle*). Photograph: Colin McLay/Courtesy of the WA Museum.

Comparing the new crab to others in the museum's collection, they discovered several *Lamarckdromia beagle* specimens that were previously unidentified or misidentified. The earliest *L beagle* specimen they found dates from December 1925.

Hosie said it wasn't clear why *Lamarckdromia beagle* was so fluffy. "The sponge or the ascidian that these things carry should offer it all the camouflage it needs," he said. "I expect that having the extra fluffy legs means that the outline is even more obscured."

"The hair doesn't help with holding the sponge down. It's not like it's Velcro, unlike some ... spider crabs that will put seaweed on their back – their hair is hooked and stiff like Velcro."

The crab's name commemorates the [HMS Beagle](#), whose second voyage between 1831 and 1836 led to Charles Darwin's theory of natural selection. The ship carried Darwin to King George Sound – the site of Albany on Western Australia's south coast – in 1836.

"Also because it's tanned, it's kind of like a beagle colouration," Hosie said.

Lamarckdromia beagle was described with other new species in a paper published in the journal [Zootaxa](#), which detailed 31 species of sponge crab known to be found in Western Australian waters.

“Discovering new species in Western Australia is not an unusual thing,” Hosie said. “The amount of things we don’t know we’ve got in Australian waters is still very high.”

This article was downloaded by **calibre** from <https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2022/jun/20/fluffy-crab-that-wears-a-sponge-as-a-hat-discovered-in-western-australia>

| [Section menu](#) | [Main menu](#) |

January 6 hearings

Liz Cheney's condemnation of Trump's lies wins over Democrats

The Republican vice-chair of the January 6 committee has played hardball on Trump and his allies in hearings – and the left has shown admiration for her



Liz Cheney during a January 6 select committee hearing at the Capitol on 16 June. Photograph: J Scott Applewhite/AP

[Joan E Greve](#) in Washington DC

[@joanegreve](#)

Mon 20 Jun 2022 03.00 EDT Last modified on Mon 20 Jun 2022 08.01 EDT

Liz Cheney voted for Donald Trump's agenda [93% of the time](#) during his presidency. The Wyoming congresswoman has [an A rating](#) from the National Rifle Association gun rights group, and she [has called](#) for the defunding of Planned Parenthood over the group's abortion services. She

also comes from a Republican political dynasty, as her father, Dick Cheney, served as vice-president under George W Bush.

In short, Cheney is no Democrat.

But as the Republican vice-chair of the January 6 select committee, Cheney has played a crucial role in presenting the case against Trump and his lies about the 2020 election, which culminated in the deadly attack on the Capitol, and that has won her a legion of strange bedfellow fans on the left.

Even Democrats who disagree with Cheney on almost every other policy issue have expressed admiration for her clear-eyed condemnation of Trump's antidemocratic crusade.

"We can differ with Representative Cheney and other [Republicans](#) on policy," said Christina Harvey, executive director of the progressive group Stand Up America. "But at the end of the day, we're all Americans. We all care deeply about this country. And we believe that our democracy must be defended."

There is little doubt that Cheney has played hardball on Trump, his allies and enablers. During the committee's first primetime hearing earlier this month, Cheney delivered a stark message to fellow Republican lawmakers: history will remember your misdeeds.

"In our country, we don't swear an oath to an individual, or a political party," Cheney said. "I say this to my Republican colleagues who are defending the indefensible: there will come a day when Donald Trump is gone, but your dishonor will remain."

Cheney's performance during the hearings has provided solace to fellow conservatives who feel the Republican party has strayed far from its roots and morphed into a personality cult worshipping Trump.

Capitol riot: House committee shown dramatic evidence of 'attempted coup' – video report

Michael Steele, the former Republican National Committee chairman who has become a vocal critic of Trump, said Cheney has offered a welcome contrast to “these little petty, pathetic whiners who don’t even have the manhood to stand up to a 76-year-old punk”.

“She has performed in a way that surpasses anything I think anyone would have expected, given the pressure that she has been under,” Steele said. “She’s holding up a mirror to both Trump and the party and reflecting back on them what we all saw … It’s really an indictment coming from a fellow Republican.”

But it is with Democrats that the new Cheney fan club is most marked. Harvey’s group recently conducted a survey among its members and asked them to name political figures who inspire them. Cheney’s name came up repeatedly in the responses, with one member from Wisconsin describing her as “the only light in an otherwise pitch-dark Republican cellar”.

While acknowledging that she wished Cheney would also support Democrats’ voting rights bills and other election reforms, Harvey expressed admiration for her willingness to stand up to members of her own party.

“Would I also like Liz Cheney to support the John Lewis Voting Rights Act and the Freedom to Vote Act? Yes, I absolutely would,” Harvey said. “But I give her a tremendous amount of credit right now for the courage that she is showing, in trying to protect the very fact that our system of government is a democracy.”

Cheney has paid a heavy political price on the right for her work with the January 6 committee and her criticism of Trump. Cheney was stripped of her House leadership role last year, just a few months after she and nine of her Republican colleagues voted to impeach Trump for incitement of insurrection.

Cheney now faces the serious threat of a primary challenge, as candidate Harriet Hageman has attacked the incumbent over her anti-Trump views. Trump has endorsed Hageman, and he [traveled to Wyoming last month](#) for a rally in support of her campaign.

“There is no Rino [Republican In Name Only] in America who has thrown in her lot with the radical left more than Liz Cheney,” Trump said at the rally. He added: “As one of the leading proponents of the insurrection hoax, Liz Cheney has pushed a grotesquely false, fabricated, hysterical, partisan narrative.”

Trump’s words appear to have struck a chord with her constituents. A Super Pac aligned with Hageman’s campaign [released a poll](#) this month showing Cheney trailing her primary opponent 28% to 56%.

At this point, Cheney’s hopes of winning another term in Congress appear bleak, and they are unlikely to improve after her noteworthy performance in the January 6 committee hearings. But even if Cheney does not return to the House next year, she could continue to play a vital role as a Republican counterpoint to Trump.

Steele said he considered Cheney’s primary race to be a “win-win” situation for her. Either she beats Hageman and returns to the House emboldened, or she loses and she boosts her political profile as a bold conservative willing to stand up to Trump regardless of the consequences, Steele argued.

“If she loses, the sky’s the limit. Now you have completely ostracized this woman to the point that she owes you absolutely zero,” Steele said. “I hope she considers looking at the presidency in 2024. The opportunities to continue the discussion about our country and the right direction for democracy become even greater.”

This article was downloaded by **calibre** from <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2022/jun/20/liz-cheney-jan-6-hearings-republican-party>.

Headlines saturday 25 june 2022

- [Live Johnson says change in his character ‘not going to happen’ as pressure mounts after byelections](#)
- [Full story Johnson rules out ‘psychological transformation’](#)
- [‘The country would be better off’ Senior Tories call on PM to quit](#)
- [‘Go now’ What the papers say about byelection defeats](#)

[Skip to key events](#)

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

Boris Johnson says change to his character ‘not going to happen’ as pressure mounts over byelection defeats – as it happened

This live blog has now closed, you can [find our latest political coverage here](#)

Updated 15h ago

[Harry Taylor](#) (now) and [Tom Ambrose](#) (earlier)

Sat 25 Jun 2022 11.02 EDTFirst published on Sat 25 Jun 2022 02.32 EDT

Boris Johnson: people were fed up with hearing about things I stuffed up – video

[Harry Taylor](#) (now) and [Tom Ambrose](#) (earlier)

Sat 25 Jun 2022 11.02 EDTFirst published on Sat 25 Jun 2022 02.32 EDT

Key events

- [15h ago](#)[Summary](#)
- [20h ago](#)[More than 12,000 people have crossed Channel in small boats in 2022](#)
- [21h ago](#)[Foreign secretary has '100%' support for PM after byelection defeats](#)
- [23h ago](#)[PM dismisses idea of 'psychological transformation' on his part](#)
- [24h ago](#)[Analysis: PM's rebels see opportunities](#)
- [24h ago](#)['Go now!': what the papers say](#)
- [24h ago](#)[Pressure mounts on Johnson](#)

Show key events only

Live feed

Show key events only

From 23h ago

[03.16](#)

PM dismisses idea of 'psychological transformation' on his part

Husain asks whether **Johnson** is approaching the byelection defeats with an attitude of “more of the same” rather than admitting he needs to change.

“If you are saying you want me to undergo some sort of psychological transformation, your listeners know that is not going to happen,” he says.

“I want to get on with changing and reforming our systems and economy. If we’re going to have an argument about politics, let’s have an argument about how the railways run, that is a subject of engrossing fascination for people up and down the country because of the rail strikes.”

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Updated at 03.35 EDT

[15h ago](#)[10.58](#)

Summary

Here's a roundup of today's politics news and developments.

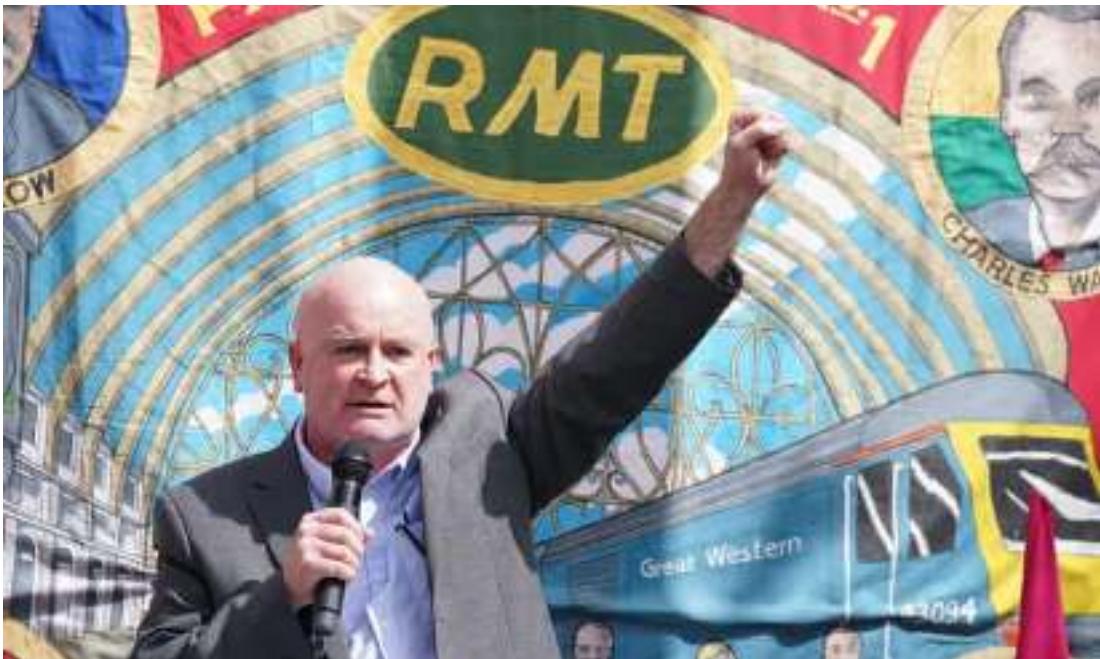
- **Boris Johnson** has said that he won't undergo "some sort of psychological transformation" in response to criticism from parts of his party after two byelection defeats on Friday.
- **Johnson** refused to give examples of when he would consider resigning, beyond public and political appetite for supporting the Ukrainian government during the conflict with Russia.
- Foreign secretary **Liz Truss** has said she has “100%” faith in the prime minister, as does the cabinet.
- The third day of rail strikes this week have got underway, meaning about a fifth of normal services are running.
- **RMT** general secretary **Mick Lynch** has said transport secretary **Grant Shapps** should “tone down the rhetoric” and “get on with the job”.
- An opinion poll of 2,000 people, conducted before the strike action took place, backed the **RMT** and three out of five people said the government should intervene to get a settlement.
- Its assistant director general **Eddie Dempsey** told a rally at King’s Cross station in London that current proposals will mean rail workers would have to accept “being poor, losing jobs and protecting profits of private companies.”
- The number of people who have arrived in Britain in small boats from the French coast has now reached more than 12,000. According to the Ministry of Defence, 231 people arrived on Friday in five boats.
- **Boris Johnson** planned to spend £150,000 on buying a treehouse for his son Wilf at Chequers, according to a story in the Times.

That's all for today, thank you for following along. Enjoy the rest of your Saturday, and if you've not had your fill of live blogs, a reminder that our Glastonbury live coverage continues.

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Updated at 11.02 EDT

16h ago **10.45**



RMT general secretary Mick Lynch during his speech at a rally outside King's Cross station in London. Photograph: Dominic Lipinski/PA

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Updated at 10.57 EDT

[16h ago](#)[10.30](#)

Eddie Dempsey, assistant director general of the **RMT**, has told the protest outside King's Cross that the insistence from train operating companies and the government that they must “modernise” means accepting being poor and job losses.

We are being told in our industry that we must modernise and when they say we must modernise what they mean is we must be poor, we must lose our jobs and we must do that to protect the profits of private companies that have been robbing the British people for years.

Enough is enough.

We think modernisation means you go to work and get paid a wage you can live on.

Our society is broken, our economy is broken and we are the people who are going to fix it.

We say that if you are working class in this country, you deserve a house you can live in, a wage you can take care of your family on and protections when you get old.

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Updated at 10.58 EDT

16h ago 10.23

A cost-of-living protest has been held in **Northern Ireland** over “spiralling costs”, kicking off a six-month campaign in the run-up to Christmas.

At noon on Saturday, hundreds of demonstrators assembled at the main gate to the Stormont Estate, and marched up to Parliament Buildings for the demonstration organised by the Northern Ireland committee of the Irish Congress of Trade Unions (ICTU).

Assistant general secretary of ICTU **Owen Reidy** told PA Media that wages and state supports were already behind where they needed to be before the inflation crisis hit.

He said: “Forget about this year – over the last decade wages have fallen behind in Northern Ireland. If you look at inflation in the Republic it’s about 7%, but it’s about 9.1% across the UK, and they reckon it’s going to go to about 11.1% before the year is out.

“Teachers, civil servants, other public sector workers are going to be lodging pay claims over the next number of weeks and months, and private sector workers at firm level are trying to bargain with their employers.

“But again, you have to have a government in Westminster that cares and is interested, and quite frankly, they’re not, and you have to have an Executive that’s able to respond.”

Sinn Féin secured a historic victory in last month's assembly elections, emerging as the largest party in Northern Ireland for the first time.

However, the DUP has blocked attempts to restore the power-sharing Stormont assembly or to form an executive as part of its protest against the protocol, which has created a trade border in the Irish Sea in order to avoid a hard border on the island of Ireland.

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Updated at 11.00 EDT

[16h ago 10.08](#)

As the RMT rally continues in London (see 14:52), a recap of the union president **Mick Lynch**'s comments about transport secretary **Grant Shapps** earlier.

Earlier he said that Shapps should “tone down the rhetoric and get on with his job”.

Lynch's comments came as 24-hour rail strikes [entered a third day](#), causing major disruption on train services across Great Britain.

The transport secretary had accused the union of telling a “total lie” over claims he was “wrecking” negotiations by refusing to allow Network Rail to withdraw redundancy threats.

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Updated at 11.01 EDT

[17h ago 09.52](#)



People holds banners and placards as they attend an RMT rally outside King's Cross station in London. Photograph: Matt Dunham/AP

The **RMT** rally is under way outside King's Cross station in central London, with a crowd of trade union supporters turning out.

Hackney North and Stoke Newington MP and former shadow home secretary **Diane Abbott** criticised the [Labour](#) party for not showing more support for railway workers in the dispute.

She said: “I do not understand the argument that Labour should not be here because we are not meant to pick a side. I thought when you join Labour, you are picking a side, on the working-class side.”

RMT president **Alex Gordon** also backed an end to outsourcing to private companies, from the stage outside the train station.

“Victory to the cleaners,” he said.



People look on with a placard urging pay rises for railway workers at the rally outside King's Cross station. Photograph: Matt Dunham/AP

Other speakers include the comedian and actor **Rob Delaney**.

The former Labour leader **Jeremy Corbyn** has been seen [at a similar protest in Newcastle](#), alongside the film director **Ken Loach**.

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Updated at 11.02 EDT

[17h ago](#) 09.32

Conservative MP **Andrew Bridgen** is now speaking to Sky News. He has said he will run to become part of the 1922 Committee, which governs the parliamentary party of the Tories, in a bid to get the rules changed to allow another confidence vote on **Boris Johnson's** leadership.

He's asked by Sky how likely it is the cabinet will tell Johnson he needs to go.

“The cabinet will come to their own decisions, but the Conservative party needs to have integrity, courage and show leadership and I’m not seeing a lot of that from the cabinet at the moment. So the only other way is to change the rules of the 1922 Committee.”

Bridgen says a vote could take place in a fortnight, and if there are enough supporters within the committee of his proposals, then another confidence vote could take place. He says that the Conservatives should be prioritising a route to smaller government, cost savings and reducing taxes.

“The longer [Johnson] is in office, the more damage he will do to the party and to the country and for a large part of the population that is unacceptable.

“The prime minister has lost the trust of a huge swathe of our electorate and a lot of Conservative voters. They don’t have to switch over to the Labour party ... but Conservative voters can just put Labour in by stopping at home and refusing to come out and vote and that’s what we saw in those two by-elections. We can’t have that threat hanging over the country when we can avoid it.

“Changing the rules of the 1922 Committee or even threatening it, is something Boris Johnson did for Theresa May.”

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Updated at 09.45 EDT

17h ago08.54

As ever, politicians are being spotted at the Glastonbury festival. **Andy Burnham** did a roundtable discussion earlier today on “politics in crisis”, which was chaired by the Guardian’s **John Harris**.

Manchester mayor **Burnham** told the audience at the Left Field stage: “Britain needs to get rid of the old ways, get around a table and agree a programme for political change, a collaborative spirit. Then we’ll have a progressive government at the next general election.”

He added: “Good, safe housing should be a general rule in this country. Social care should be provided on NHS terms. And we need to renationalise rail and buses.” He also referenced the “silent mental health crisis – brought about by the nature of life now where people are worrying themselves to sleep”.

Thanks [@johnharris1969](#) for chairing our [@GlastoLeftField](#) State of the Nation: Politics in Crisis session, with [@metecoban92](#) [@AndyBurnhamGM](#) and Francis Foley [@CompassOffice](#) and thanks to the audience their excellent questions and energy! [#Glastonbury](#) [#glastonburyfestival2022](#) pic.twitter.com/YFsdZIcvoY

— Shaista Aziz □ (@shaistaAziz) [June 25, 2022](#)

Environmental activist **Greta Thunberg** will address festivalgoers from the Pyramid stage at just after 5pm today.

The festival has had memorable visits from politicians in recent years. [Labour](#) leader **Jeremy Corbyn** addressed crowds in 2017 at “peak Corbyn” weeks after losing in the general election, where crowds sang his name.



Jeremy Corbyn with Glastonbury founder Michael Eavis in June 2017.
Photograph: Grant Pollard/Invision/AP

A year earlier his former deputy **Tom Watson** was pictured at a train station, worse for wear, as the Labour party launched into an internal war after the Brexit vote.

Tom Watson, Labour's Deputy leader, returns to London following a night at Glastonbury. pic.twitter.com/s1gDmzA156

— Laura Hughes (@Laura_K_Hughes) [June 26, 2016](#)

Further back **Billy Bragg** [gave a tour to a future London mayor and prime minister](#) in 2000, as **Boris Johnson** visited while doing a piece for the Spectator. Not the likeliest of festival couples.

Bragg told the festival newspaper the [Glastonbury Free Press](#): “It just goes to show you have to be careful who you elevate to positions of celebrity. Then, he was that guy off Have I Got News For You.”

My colleagues over at Worthy Farm are liveblogging the performances and festival goings-on today. You can follow them here.

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Updated at 09.47 EDT

[18h ago](#)[08.20](#)

Boris Johnson would not give a figure by which Channel crossings need to come down before it is known the Rwanda migrant policy has worked, PA Media reported.

He told BBC Radio 4's Today:

I'm not going to give you a figure.

He said the “humane policy” is about “breaking the business model of those who criminally abuse and cheat people crossing the Channel in unseaworthy

vessels”.

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[19h ago](#)[07.50](#)

Liverpool Labour MPs Ian Byrne, Dan Carden, Kim Johnson and Paula Barker joined a rally in support of the RMT outside the city's Lime Street station.

Addressing the crowd, Byrne said: “It is a privilege to be able to speak today, show my solidarity to the RMT striking membership and thank this magnificent union for everything they have done for our class this week.”

He said a photograph of himself and other Labour MPs on a picket line earlier this week, which was published on the front page of the Daily Mail newspaper, now has “pride of place” in his office.

The Liverpool West Derby MP said: “We must use this moment to begin to rebalance the scales of injustice which is waged against the working class.

“This is the moment when the country is saying ‘enough is enough’.”

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[Newest](#)[Newest](#)

[Previous](#)

1
of
4

[Next](#)

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| [Section menu](#) | [Main menu](#) |

Boris Johnson

Boris Johnson says he is not going to undergo ‘psychological transformation’

PM says he must ‘humbly and sincerely’ accept criticism but that bad byelection results are common for governments

- [Follow all today’s UK political news – live updates](#)

Boris Johnson says he cannot pretend byelection losses are a good result – video

Rajeev Syal in Kigali

Sat 25 Jun 2022 04.48 EDT Last modified on Sat 25 Jun 2022 06.42 EDT

Boris Johnson has said he is not going to undergo any “psychological transformation” as pressure is piled on his leadership following the [Conservatives’ double byelection defeat](#).

The prime minister said he must “humbly and sincerely” accept any criticism he received in his job, but argued every government was “buffeted” by bad byelection results mid-term.

His comments came amid claims of new attempts from backbench MPs seeking to unseat him after losing the two byelections in Wakefield and in Tiverton and Honiton and the [resignation of his party co-chair Oliver Dowden](#). Reports have claimed some MPs are seeking to change 1922 Committee rules so they can hold another vote of confidence.

Johnson, speaking from the Rwandan capital, Kigali, to BBC Radio 4’s Today programme, said his role was to look at exactly what happened and “think which criticisms really matter”.

When it was put to him that Dowden had resigned saying business could not continue as usual, Johnson said: “If you’re saying you want me to undergo some sort of psychological transformation, I think that our listeners would know that is not going to happen. What you can do, and what the government should do, and what I want to do, is to get on with changing and reforming and improving our systems and our economy.”

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Asked about his comment on Friday that he expected voters to beat him up, Johnson told Sky News: “Well, I was speaking metaphorically and what I mean is that when you’re the leader of a country, in good times and in bad, you have to think about the criticisms that you get. And you have to recognise that inevitably when you’re the head of a government that’s taking the country through a big inflationary price spike caused by the increasing cost of energy, people are frustrated.

“People are filling up their cars and cursing as they do so. I understand that, we have to help them – and I understand people’s frustration.”

MPs who want to remove the prime minister are seeking election to the 18 most senior posts on the 1922 Committee, which dictates how to conduct confidence votes in Tory party leaders, the [Telegraph claimed](#).

At present Johnson is protected from another leadership vote for a year, after winning a poll this month – despite 41% of Tory MPs voting for his removal.

Dowden’s resignation has led to concerns others could follow this weekend.

As the scale of the defeats in Wakefield and Tiverton and Honiton sank in – both with worse than expected swings against the [Conservatives](#) – a string of senior Tories added their voices to those calling for Johnson to go.

The prime minister is not due to return to the UK until Thursday evening, after attending a G7 summit in Germany and a Nato meeting in Spain.

This article was downloaded by **calibre** from <https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2022/jun/25/boris-johnson-not-undergo-psychological-transformation-byelections>

| [Section menu](#) | [Main menu](#) |

[Boris Johnson](#)

‘The country would be better off’: senior Tories urge Boris Johnson to quit

Ex-leader Michael Howard among Conservatives to call for resignation after byelection catastrophes

- [UK politics: live updates](#)

Boris Johnson under pressure to resign after byelection defeats – video report

[Heather Stewart](#), [Rowena Mason](#) and [Rajeev Syal](#)

Fri 24 Jun 2022 14.07 EDT Last modified on Sat 25 Jun 2022 02.45 EDT

Conservative grandes are urging Boris Johnson to quit after [a historic double by-election defeat](#), as rebellious MPs began plotting new ways to oust him.

The former Conservative leader Michael Howard was among those who demanded the prime minister stand down after the losses in Tiverton and Honiton and Wakefield which prompted [the immediate resignation of the party’s co-chair, Oliver Dowden](#).

In his pointed resignation letter, widely regarded as a call to others to act, Dowden told the prime minister: “We cannot carry on with business as usual. Someone must take responsibility.”

Johnson’s critics are hoping to secure a majority on the executive of the influential 1922 Committee of Tory backbenchers, in the hope they can change the party’s rules to allow a fresh confidence vote without waiting for a year.

As the scale of the twin defeats sunk in – both with worse-than-expected swings against the [Conservatives](#) – a string of senior Tories added their voices to those calling for Johnson to go. Asked whether the prime minister should quit, Howard said: “I do”.

“The party and more importantly the country would be better off under new leadership,” he added. “Members of the cabinet should very carefully consider their positions. It may be necessary for the executive of the 1922 Committee to meet and to decide to change the rules so another leadership election could take place.”

Former foreign secretary Malcolm Rifkind suggested discontented ministers could act together to persuade Johnson to step aside.

“I think it is hugely in the public interest that preferably the prime minister seeks their views. If he’s not willing to see their views, because you might be rather worried of what they might say to him, then they must, at least in some number, come together and go and see him,” he said.

Johnson struck a defensive tone at a press conference in the Rwandan capital of Kigali, where he is attending the Commonwealth Heads of Government summit, refusing to admit anything about his own behaviour was to blame for the byelection calamities.

“I genuinely, genuinely don’t think the way forward in British politics is to focus on issues of personalities whether they are mine or others,” he said. “No doubt people will continue to beat me up and say this or that and to attack me.”

He added: “In the end, voters, journalists, they have no one else to make their complaints to. I have to take that. But I also have to get on with the job of delivering for the people of this country and that’s what I was elected to do.”

The prime minister is not due to return to the UK until Thursday evening, after attending a G7 summit in Germany and a Nato meeting in Spain.

Keir Starmer claimed the Tory party was “absolutely imploding” after Labour won Wakefield with a 12.7% swing – enough to secure a majority government if replicated nationwide.

In Tiverton and Honiton, the 24,239 Tory majority the Liberal Democrats swept aside was the largest ever overturned in a by-election. “Boris Johnson has deceived the British people and taken them for granted for far too long,” said the Lib Dem leader, Ed Davey, at a victory rally.

“He has lost the confidence of his own party. He has lost the confidence of the people of Tiverton and Honiton – a seat his party has held for more than 100 years. And he has lost the confidence of the country,” he added.

Andrew RT Davies, the Conservative leader in Wales, also broke ranks to criticise the prime minister for the first time, telling BBC Radio Wales: “Each and every day the prime minister gets up, like any leader, they have to look in the mirror and ask themselves can they continue to deliver for their country and for the people who have put them into office?”

Andrew Bridgen, one of Johnson’s most persistent Tory critics, told the Guardian he would be putting himself up for election to the 1922 executive on a specific platform of changing the rules to allow another vote of confidence. More than 40% of Johnson’s MPs voted against him earlier this month, but another challenge is usually not allowed for a year.

Bridgen said the 1922 election could be regarded as a “stalking horse” bid to change the prime minister. “The 1922 is a vote of the party. If the places are filled with people who are pro-rule change, a sensible person in No 10 might think the game is up,” he said.

Former Brexit minister Steve Baker echoed the call for Johnson’s cabinet to act. “Like so many backbench MPs, I am looking to the cabinet for leadership, especially from those who aspire to be seen to provide it,” he said.

Another senior party figure who has until now supported Johnson told the Guardian: “It wouldn’t do him any harm if he wanted to look in the mirror.

He needs to ask himself, ‘have I got the stomach for this, and am I going to be able to do this. Is it me?’”

Most of the cabinet remained silent through Friday. The chancellor, Rishi Sunak, tweeted: “We all take responsibility for the results and I’m determined to continue working to tackle the cost of living.”

A Conservative party source dismissed claims that cabinet members had been slow to offer support as “barrel-scraping” – and that Johnson had spoken to his health secretary, Sajid Javid, and others.

“He has spoken to Saj, [Stephen] Barclay and others. [Dominic] Raab and Priti [Patel] were on the media before nine,” the source said.

This article was downloaded by **calibre** from <https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2022/jun/24/boris-johnson-must-quit-senior-tories-say-michael-howard-oliver-dowden>

Politics

‘Go now’: what the papers say about Tories’ double byelection defeats

Pressure mounts on Boris Johnson to quit as papers report on moves by Tory rebels to take control of key backbench committee

- [UK politics: live updates](#)



UK newspaper front pages on 25 June.

Martin Farrer

Fri 24 Jun 2022 21.57 EDT Last modified on Sat 25 Jun 2022 04.15 EDT

The crisis engulfing Boris Johnson’s premiership could be reaching the terminal stage, judging by the press reaction to the Tories’ humiliating double byelection losses in Wakefield and Tiverton and Honiton.

The **Daily Telegraph**, the traditional voice of the Conservative party, carries a splash with the headline “Tory rebels plot next move to unseat PM”, and reports that the prime minister’s “enemies to push for control of 1922 committee after by-election defeats”.

□The front page of tomorrow's Daily Telegraph:

'Tory rebels plot next move to unseat PM'[#TomorrowsPapersToday](#)

Sign up for the Front Page newsletter<https://t.co/x8AV4Oomry>
pic.twitter.com/Zakw7zbuBH

— The Telegraph (@Telegraph) [June 24, 2022](#)

The **Times** has a very similar lead story under the headline “PM faces new Tory threat” and quotes one minister as saying that some disgruntled ministers facing the sack in a forthcoming government reshuffle could resign and lead “pre-emptive strikes” against Johnson.

Saturday's TIMES: “PM faces new Tory threat”
[#TomorrowsPapersToday](#) pic.twitter.com/ZZzsD15a39

— Allie Hodgkins-Brown (@AllieHBNews) [June 24, 2022](#)

[“Tory grandees tell Johnson after historic defeat: just go”](#), is the main story in the **Guardian**, focusing on the words of the Tory party chair, Oliver Dowden, who quit in the wake of the byelection defeats and wrote in a stinging resignation letter: “We cannot carry on with business as usual. Someone must take responsibility.”

Guardian front page, Saturday 25 June 2022: Tory grandees tell Johnson after historic defeat: just go pic.twitter.com/gkdHEzZU2V

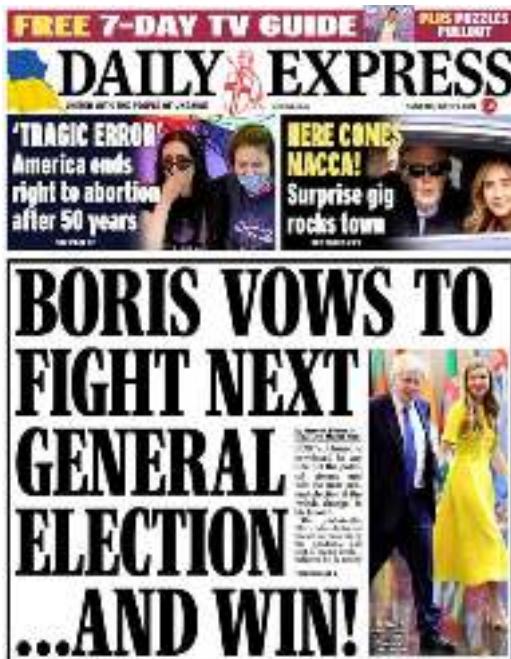
— The Guardian (@guardian) [June 24, 2022](#)

The **Mirror** says “Go now”, echoing the call of former Tory leader Michael Howard that the party would be “better off” if Johnson resigned.

Saturday's front page: GO NOW [#TomorrowsPapersToday](https://t.co/eEFOS35T11) pic.twitter.com/5i7OJYYdNM

— The Mirror (@DailyMirror) [June 24, 2022](#)

The **Express** strikes a defiant tone with the headline “Boris vows to fight next general election ... and win!”.



Page one of Saturday's Express

But the fear raging through Tory ranks is highlighted by the **Mail** splash, which is on Sajid Javid demanding that Labour and the Lib Dems “come clean” about what he says is an unofficial coalition designed to oust Boris Johnson. “Javid: tell public the truth about anti-Tory pact”, says the headline.

Saturday's [@DailyMailUK](#) [#MailFrontPages](#)
pic.twitter.com/8mJPbvCtzQ

— Daily Mail U.K. (@DailyMailUK) [June 24, 2022](#)

The **FT** reports “Johnson faces fresh crisis as Tories lose two by-elections and their party chair”, but the lead on its front page is on the big news from America: “Top US court scraps Roe vs Wade in heavy blow to abortion rights”.

Just published: Front page of the FTWeekend, UK edition, for Sat/Sun 25/26th June pic.twitter.com/eFU8HSiu1S

— Financial Times (@FinancialTimes) [June 24, 2022](https://twitter.com/FinancialTimes/status/1539811340000000000)

The **i** also leads on the abortion story but carries what it calls an “exclusive” front page story saying “Johnson threatened with new vote of no confidence”.



The **i**'s front page

The **Scotsman** says “Tories plot as Johnson told ‘go now’ for good of party”.

SCOTSMAN On Saturday: “Tories plot as Johnson told ‘go now’ for good of party” [#TomorrowsPapersToday](https://pic.twitter.com/ZYi9VTRhOv) pic.twitter.com/ZYi9VTRhOv

— Allie Hodgkins-Brown (@AllieHBNews) [June 24, 2022](https://twitter.com/AllieHBNews/status/1539811340000000000)

The **Yorkshire Post**, whose region includes many Tory MPs whose majorities are vulnerable at the next general election, leads with “PM braced for ‘attacks’ from voters”.

Weekend YORKSHIRE Post: “PM braced for ‘attacks’ from voters”
[#TomorrowsPapersToday pic.twitter.com/XUA8Qde3Gk](#)

— Allie Hodgkins-Brown (@AllieHBNews) [June 24, 2022](#)

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| [Section menu](#) | [Main menu](#) |

2022.06.25 - Spotlight

- [Cocaine, class and me Everyone in this town takes drugs, all the time – they're part of the civic culture](#)
- [Summer reading The 50 hottest new books for a great escape](#)
- ['Shopping is a nightmare' How ADHD affects people's spending habits](#)
- ['Everything's so different' Wimbledon and the future of grass-court tennis](#)

| [Next](#) | [Section menu](#) | [Main menu](#) |

Cocaine, class and me: everyone in this town takes drugs, all the time – they're part of the civic culture

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| [Section menu](#) | [Main menu](#) |

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[Summer reading](#)

Summer reading: the 50 hottest new books for a great escape



Illustration: Monsie

From pageturning thrillers and comic novels to an antidote to doomscrolling – our pick of the best new fiction and nonfiction. Plus 10 brilliant paperbacks, and 10 great reads for children and teens

- [Summer reading: Authors recommend their favourite recent reads](#)

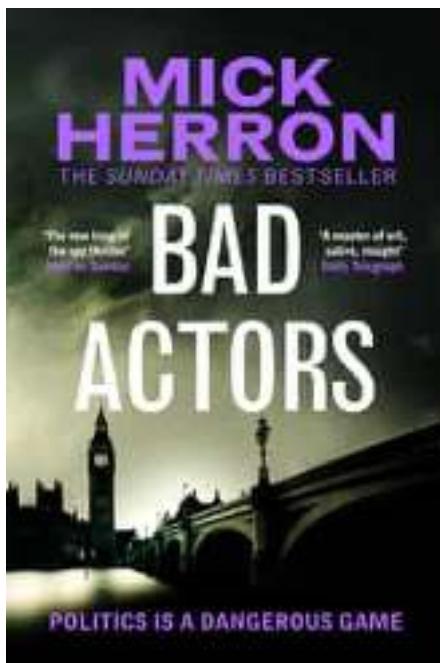
[Justine Jordan, David Shariatmadari and Imogen Russell Williams](#)

Sat 25 Jun 2022 04.00 EDT Last modified on Sat 25 Jun 2022 10.42 EDT

Fiction

[The Exhibitionist by Charlotte Mendelson](#)

Longlisted for the Women's prize, this is a darkly funny portrait of a dysfunctional family bent out of shape over decades by its narcissistic artist patriarch – and of what happens when his wife will no longer squash her own creative energies. Wise, waspish and emotionally astute, it's addictive reading.



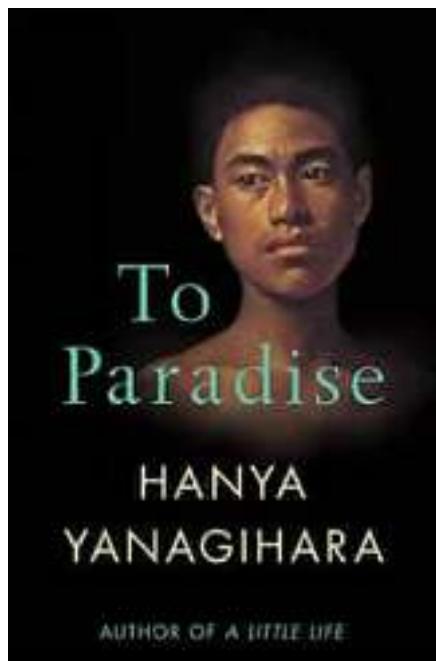
Bad Actors by Mick Herron

Herron is on playful form in the eighth outing for his ragtag gang of demoted MI5 operatives. The Russians are still playing dirty, and a member of a thinktank goes missing, in a skewering of political cynicism and incompetence that features a familiar eminence grise at the heart of

government. Fast, funny, furious and worth the admission for the unimprovable line, “Never bring a spork to a knife fight”.

Companion Piece by Ali Smith

Smith follows her seasonal quartet with a sideways look at the harm lockdown did to us all – the loss, sadness, isolation and increased intolerance – that is studded with natural magic and hints on how to close social distance through moments of connection and community.



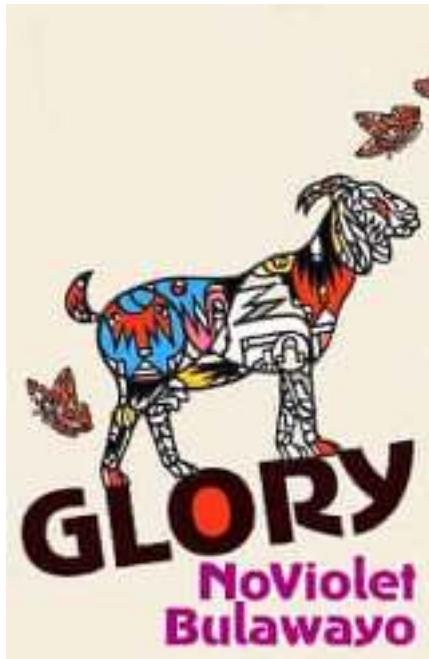
To Paradise by Hanya Yanagihara

The magisterial follow-up to *A Little Life* offers three books in one. A fragile, wealthy young man looks for love in a gender-queered 19th-century New York; a young Hawaiian is plagued by childhood memories at the height of the Aids crisis; pandemics shape a bleak future in the grip of totalitarianism. Yanagihara weighs up damage and privilege – social, emotional, political, colonial – in a gripping, immersive ride through alternative Americas.

The Twyford Code by Janice Hallett

The Appeal, about murder in a gossipy amateur-dramatics community, was told through emails; this tricksy but tender follow-up makes clever use of voice transcription. Ex-con Steven has always loved codes and puzzles; now

he must solve the mystery of a missing childhood memory, following clues dotted through the books of an Enid Blyton-esque children's author. There are games within games in this ingenious treasure hunt, but real emotion at its centre.

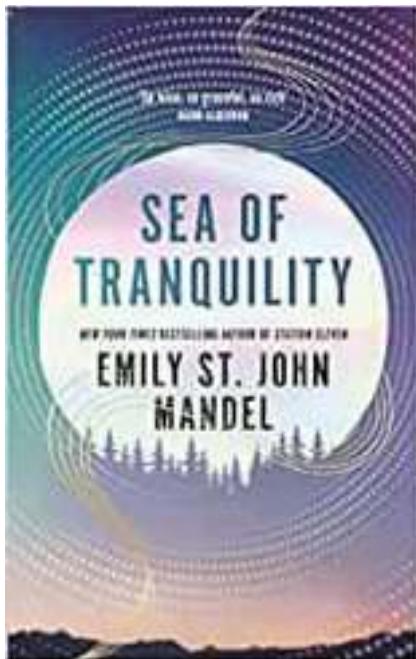


Glory by NoViolet Bulawayo

In this Zimbabwean successor to Animal Farm, inspired by the fall of Robert Mugabe, the toppling of Old Horse and his wife, Marvellous the Donkey, and the chaos that ensues, are related through a chorus of animal voices. A gloriously rambunctious satire of tyranny, oppression and rebellion, with global relevance.

Vladimir by Julia May Jonas

The wife of an English literature professor disgraced for sleeping with his students finds herself smitten by a beautiful younger colleague in this deliciously dark American debut. A boisterous campus novel with an outrageously acerbic narrator, it delivers uncomfortable truths about internalised misogyny and creative frustration.



Sea of Tranquility by Emily St John Mandel

How does a distant inexplicable event in a Canadian forest link to contemporary New York, and then to a 23rd-century investigation into the laws of physics? An elegantly told yarn from the author of Station Eleven encompasses time travel, pandemics, moon colonies and the tribulations of author tours.

The Candy House by Jennifer Egan

Would you upload your memories if it gained you access to other people's? The companion novel to A Visit from the Goon Squad is a clever, endlessly inventive exploration of our increasingly connected, surveilled society and the individual yearning for privacy and meaning.

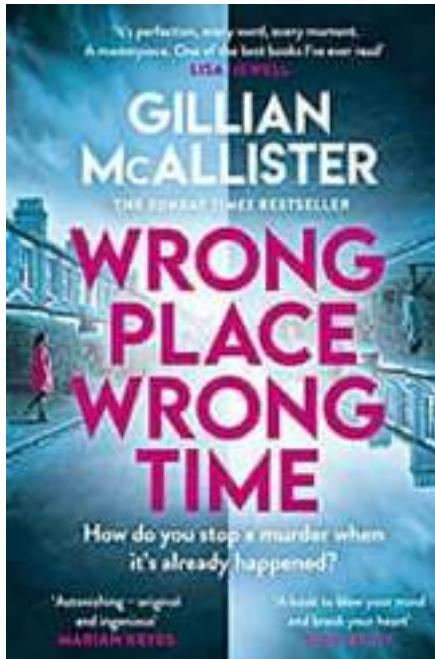


You Made a Fool of Death with Your Beauty by Akwaeke Emezi

The multitalented Emezi has written a thoroughly modern beach-read romance, featuring deep traumas, forbidden love, brilliant friendships, high-life adventures and plenty of raunch.

Young Mungo by Douglas Stuart

The follow-up to the Booker-winning Shuggie Bain again focuses on a gay boy growing up in an impoverished, oppressive Glasgow. Mungo finds love and hope across the religious divide in a fervent, gritty and emotionally engrossing novel.



Wrong Place, Wrong Time by Gillian McAllister

How can you prevent a murder that's already happened? In this page-turning time-loop thriller, a woman watches her beloved teenage son knife a stranger in the street – and then wakes up on each new day further in the past, searching for clues to his motivation and a way to change the future. An intelligent puzzle full of heart and good sense.

Trespasses by Louise Kennedy

This exceptional debut novel, the story of a secret affair in 1970s Belfast between a young Catholic and an older married Protestant, illuminates ordinary lives in extraordinary times. Kennedy brings a sure, light touch to devastating material.

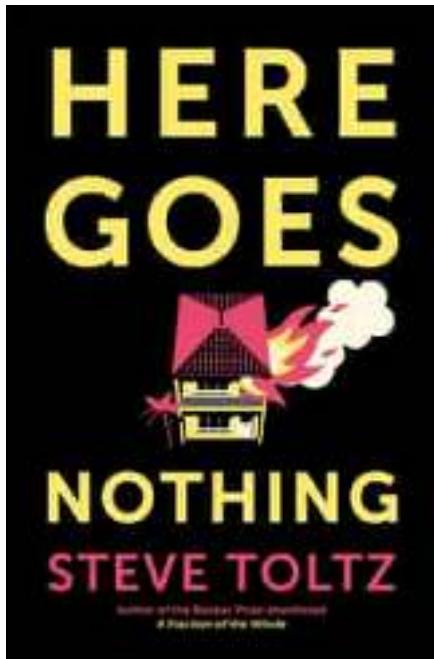


[**Reward System** by Jem Calder](#)

Dating, drinking, working, floundering ... Precarious young lives in thrall to the algorithm in these up-to-the-minute tales from an impressive new voice.

Amy & Lan by Sadie Jones

A child's-eye view of an experiment in living, in which city families band together to set up a rural smallholding. Jones brilliantly ventriloquises Amy and her best friend Lan, growing from young kids into teenagers. She conveys their passionate attachment to the freedom of their unconventional upbringing and deep connection to nature, along with the adult doubts and betrayals happening off stage.

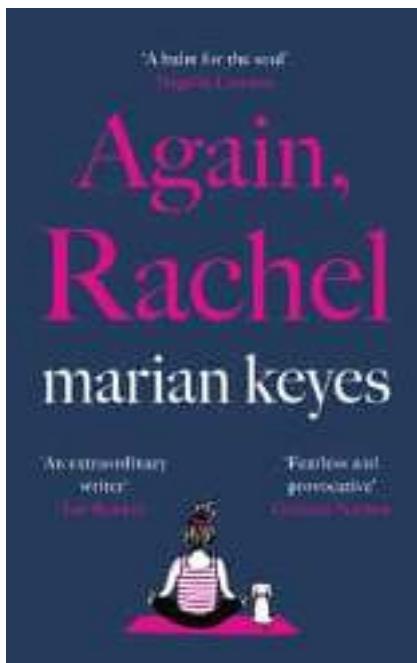


Here Goes Nothing by Steve Toltz

A cynical unbeliever finds himself in the afterlife; meanwhile, back on Earth, his murderer is cosying up to his widow and a pandemic threatens civilisation itself ... The latest novel from the author of *A Fraction of the Whole* sizzles with black comedy and anarchic energy.

The Anomaly by Hervé le Tellier, translated by Adriana Hunter

A plane and all its passengers somehow duplicate after in-flight turbulence. So who, and what, is real? This high-concept SF thriller is enormous fun: a French prize winner spiced with Oulipian theory and literary in-jokes, riddling away at existential questions in the guise of a breakneck page-turner.

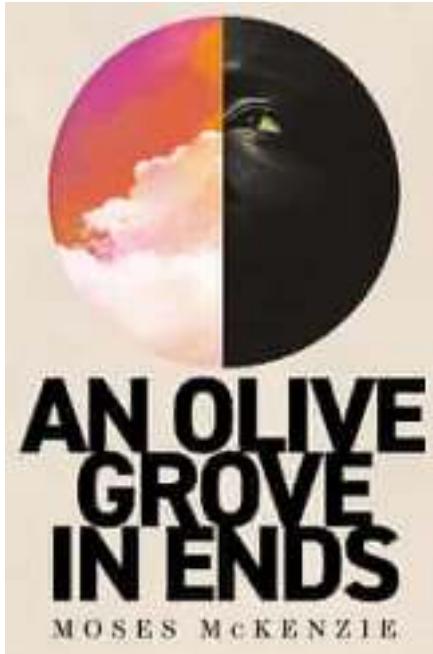


Again, Rachel by Marian Keyes

A quarter of a century on from Rachel's Holiday, this witty sequel reunites readers with Keyes's much-loved heroine as she explores the trials and transformations of midlife.

Fight Night by Miriam Toews

Excluded from school for scrapping, nine-year-old Swiv must care for her troubled, pregnant mother and her irrepressible grandmother – and accept their care for her, however infuriating, in return. As ever, Canadian novelist Toews swirls together tragedy and humour in a love letter to spirited women.



[**An Olive Grove in Ends**](#) by Moses McKenzie

A young Black Bristolian is determined to escape inner-city poverty and shut-down expectations: but will drugs, violence, faith or love be the route to fulfilment? A gripping, full-octane debut told with flair and style.

[**Homesickness**](#) by Colin Barrett

It's been eight years since the prize-winning *Young Skins*, but this second short-story collection is worth the wait. Funny, devastating, slow-burning, these understated tales of misfits and misadventures in smalltown Ireland are written with a casual grace.

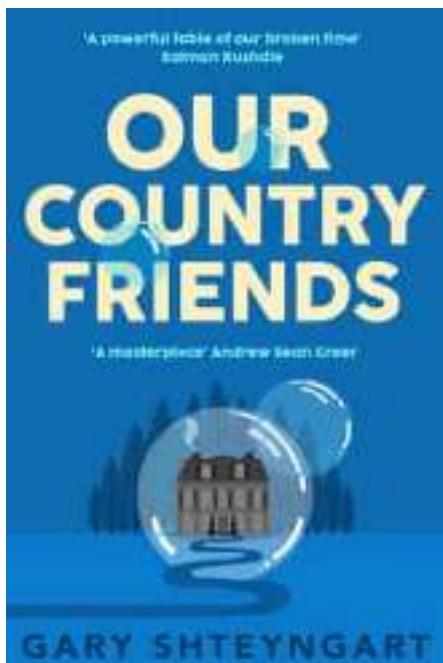


I'm Sorry You Feel That Way by Rebecca Wait

Toxic mothers, absent fathers, angry sisters and enraging brothers – this sharp, wise comedy explores difficult family dynamics, from all-too-relatable emotional patterns to the inexplicable agonies of mental illness; yet it's also one of the funniest novels you'll read this year.

Love Marriage by Monica Ali

Clashes of culture, personality, expectations: this is a warm and witty panorama of modern Britain from the author of *Brick Lane*, seen through the rocky engagement of two doctors and the explosive combination of their very different families.



[Our Country Friends](#) by Gary Shteyngart

By turns poignant, absurd and darkly comic, [Shteyngart](#)'s “lockdown novel” is always – like the Chekhov it riffs on – deeply human. The group of friends that flee to a house in upstate New York aim to elude the virus, but they can't escape the entanglements and rivalries that have defined their relationships – and are brought into sharp relief by the arrival of a famous stranger.

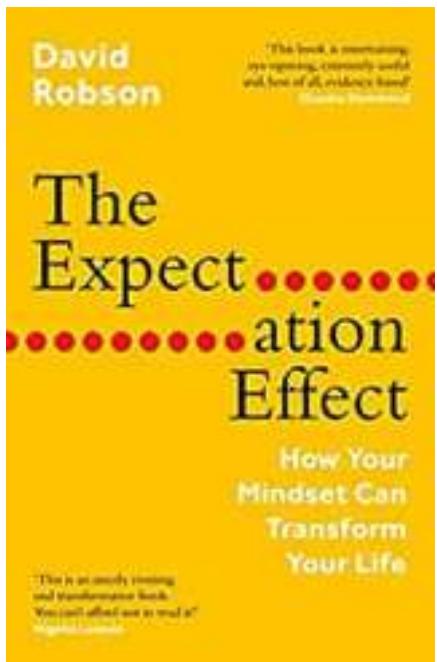
[The Secret Lives of Church Ladies](#) by Deesha Philyaw

Nominated for a national book award in the US, these touching short stories focus on the sex lives of various Black women in the southern US, along with all their desire, shame and fear. Philyaw expertly treads the line between humour and heartbreak in stories you'll want to wolf down.



Illustration: Monsie

Nonfiction



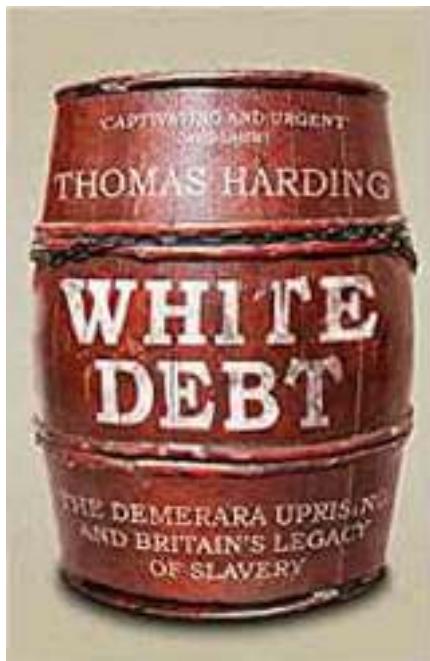
The Expectation Effect: How Your Mindset Can Transform Your Life
by David Robson

Does worrying about dementia make you more likely to get it? What if

stress isn't the problem so much as the fear of what it might be doing to us? Robson surveys the latest counterintuitive research on how our expectations shape us – with tips on how to apply its insights to our own lives.

The Journey of Humanity by Oded Galor

In an age of seemingly relentless bad news, economist Oded Galor provides an antidote to doomscrolling. His faith that our future is relatively rosy is grounded in data about economic development that suggest technological progress and declining fertility mean that not only will we be able to feed the world, we'll soon be able to fix it.



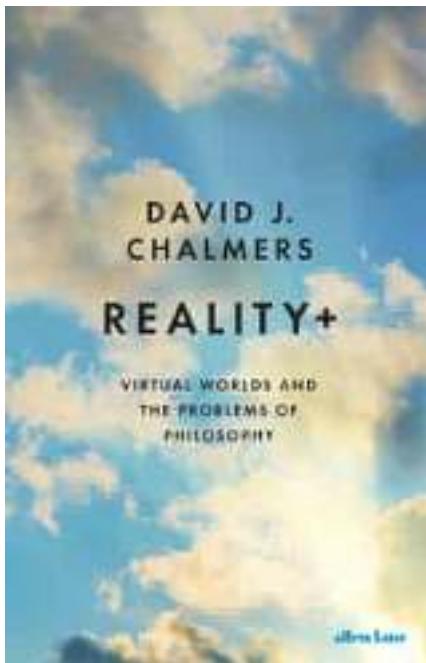
White Debt: The Demerara Uprising and Britain's Legacy of Slavery by Thomas Harding

Harding's ancestors benefited from the slave trade, but were also victims of Nazi persecution. "If I was willing to identify as a victim in my father's family, to receive reparations from the German government, then surely I had better understand Britain's role in slavery," he writes. His book shines a light on a pivotal moment in colonial history.

How Civil Wars Start: And How to Stop Them by Barbara F Walter

A chilling warning from a leading US political scientist. Looking around the world, Walter delineates the tell-tale signs of anocracy, a transition stage

between democracy and autocracy that nation states enter before civil war begins. America, she warns, is edging perilously close.

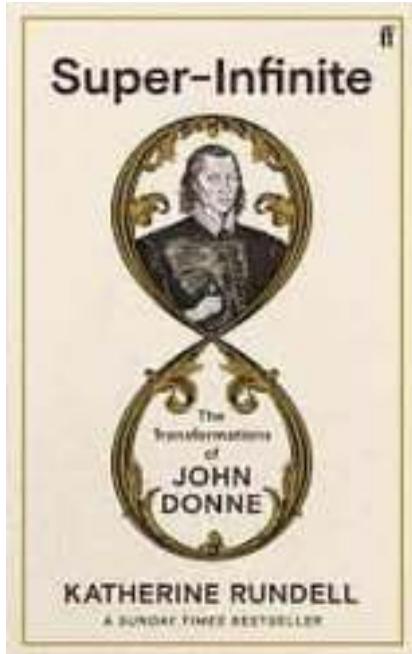


Reality+: Virtual Worlds and the Problem of Philosophy by David Chalmers

A brilliantly engaging philosopher tackles the question of whether or not we're living in a simulation, and asks if that would even matter: the virtual worlds created by computers, he argues, could be just as fulfilling and meaningful as "real" life.

Everything Is True: A Junior Doctor's Story in a Time of Pandemic by Roopa Farooki

A searing account of the first 40 days of the UK's pandemic lockdown from a first-hand witness. Farooki, a novelist, finished medical school a matter of months before coronavirus emerged – and found herself on the frontlines of an unprecedented medical emergency.

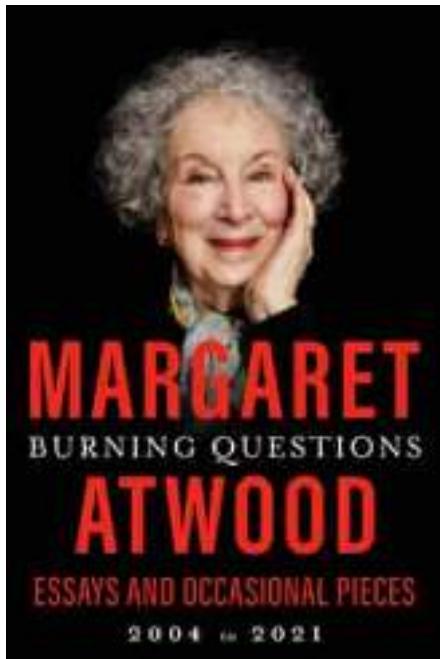


[Super-Infinite: The Transformations of John Donne](#) by Katherine Rundell

Donne broke new ground writing about sex, love, faith and death; this sparkling biography of the metaphysical poet turned preacher illuminates an era of plague, persecution and great existential change.

[The Go-between: A Memoir of Growing Up Between Different Worlds](#) by Osman Yousefzada

A beautifully observed memoir of growing up in a conservative Muslim community in Birmingham, in the 1980s. As a child, Yousefzada has access to secret worlds: watching his mother sew in a back room of their house was, he says, “like watching a magician”. He grew up to design dresses for Beyoncé and Lady Gaga.

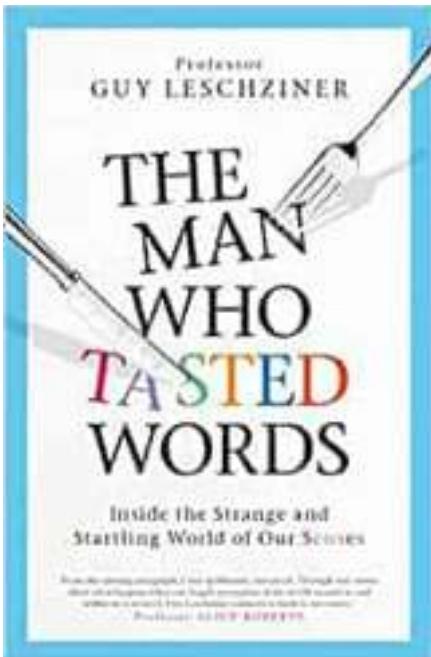


Burning Questions: Essays and Occasional Pieces 2004–2021 by Margaret Atwood

Atwood's third volume of essays begins in 2004 and runs until 2021. Her panoptic gaze takes in the aftermath of 9/11, the Obama years, the financial crisis, Trump, #MeToo and the Covid-19 pandemic, the writing shot through with wisdom and wit.

Bitch: A Revolutionary Guide to Sex, Evolution and the Female Animal by Lucy Cooke

Is the female of the species more demure than the male? Not according to zoologist Lucy Cooke, who surveys the extraordinary sexual behaviour of myriad animals, from lemurs to insects, upturning decades of scientific bias in the process.

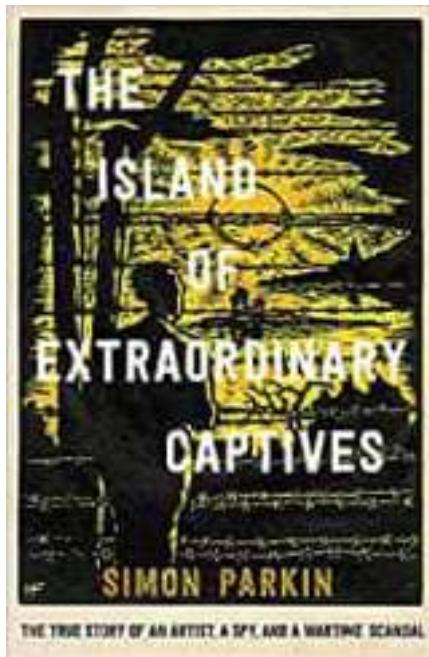


The Man Who Tasted Words: Inside the Strange and Startling World of Our Senses by Dr Guy Leschziner

Neurologist Guy Leschziner vividly describes what happens when our senses malfunction, as in the bizarre case of James, who tastes a full English breakfast when he hears the words “Tottenham Court Road”. Just as compelling, though, is the science behind everyday sight, smell, taste, hearing and touch. A latter-day Oliver Sacks, Leschziner brings the strangeness of our human faculties to life.

The Palace Papers by Tina Brown

A rollicking ride through the last few decades of intrigue and scandal in the house of Windsor, based on more than 100 interviews with courtiers and assorted other subjects. Even die-hard republicans will find Brown’s pacy prose and juicy insights into the personalities at the heart of this bizarre institution difficult to resist.

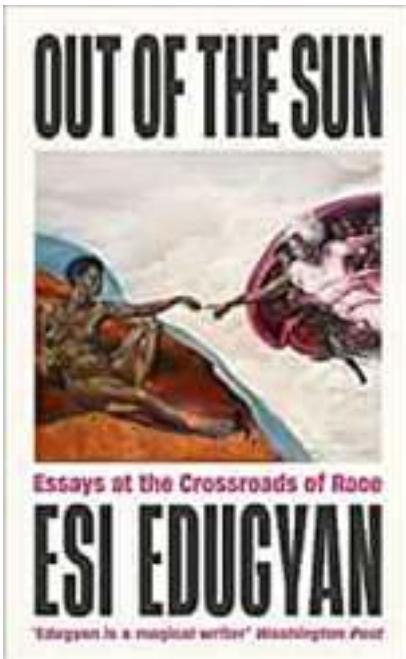


The Island of Extraordinary Captives: A True Story of an Artist, a Spy and a Wartime Scandal by Simon Parkin

As a result of Britain's policy of internment during the second world war, a clutch of European intellectuals were thrown together in the unlikely surroundings of the Isle of Man. There they instituted an informal "university", with lectures on Greek philosophy, Shakespeare and the industrial use of synthetic fibres. Parkin follows the young German-Jewish refugee Peter Fleischmann as he navigates this strangely rarified world.

Metaphysical Animals: How Four Women Brought Philosophy Back to Life by Clare Mac Cumhaill and Rachael Wiseman

Oxford during the second world war was a crucible of a new kind of philosophy – and its greatest exponents were female. Mac Cumhaill and Wiseman tell the story of the work, life and loves of Elizabeth Anscombe, Iris Murdoch, Philippa Foot and Mary Midgley, who sought to bring a new emphasis on human values to their field.

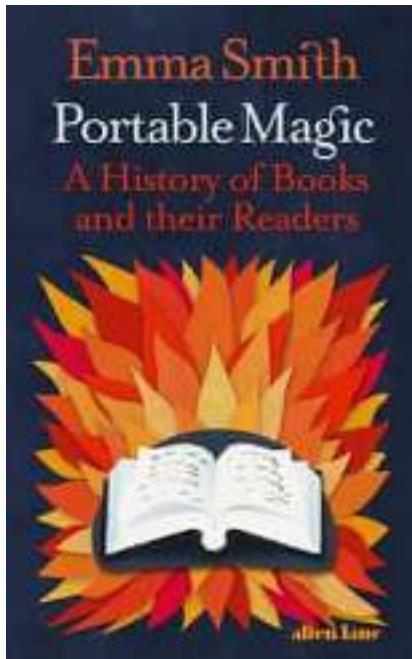


[Out of the Sun](#) by Esi Edugyan

Edugyan's elegant essays on Black identity and representation deal in empathy and nuance rather than polemic. She considers Marie-Joseph Angélique, the enslaved woman accused of burning down Montreal who is now said to haunt it, the questions raised by Rachel Dolezal's claim of "transracialism", and artist Kehinde Wiley's portraits in the grand European manner, which centre Black people rather than white aristocrats.

[In the Margins: On the Pleasures of Reading and Writing](#) by Elena Ferrante

In a series of essays, the famously elusive author of the Neapolitan novels sheds light on her literary development, from her school notebooks onwards. At first she strives for realism, seeking to render her mother's aquamarine ring, for example, as purely and directly as possible. Eventually, through reading, she comes to understand that "the teller is always a distorting mirror".

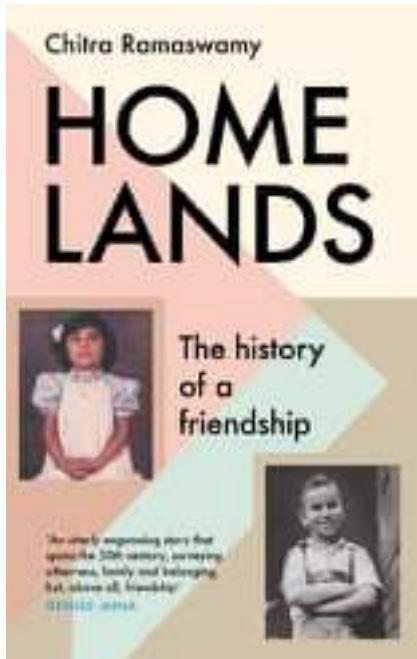


Portable Magic: A History of Books and Their Readers by Emma Smith

Smith explores the physicality of books through the ages – “bookhood”, as she puts it – in this homage to the tactile pleasures of reading. From Madame de Pompadour’s insistence on being painted against a backdrop of books (an early example of the [shelfie](#)), to Joe Orton and Kenneth Halliwell’s witty defacement of covers in their local library, it is filled with historical nuggets.

The Premonitions Bureau by Sam Knight

One of the eeriest books of the year tells the story of John Barker, a psychiatrist with an interest in the paranormal. In the aftermath of the Aberfan disaster, which various people claimed to have foreseen, Barker solicits premonitions from members of the public to see how many come true. A number of “seers” do seem to have uncanny abilities – which gives Barker pause when one of them begins to make ominous predictions about his own fate.

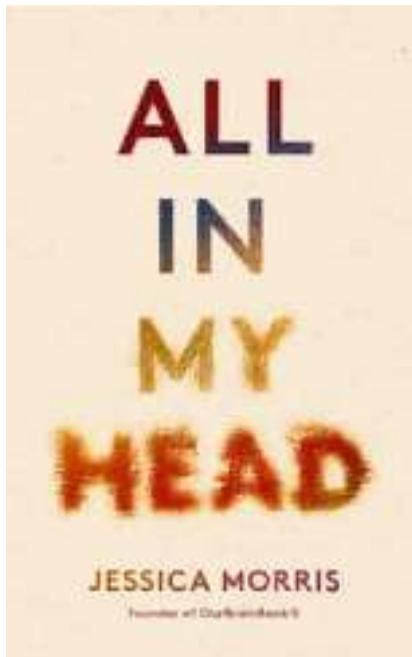


Homelands: The History of a Friendship by Chitra Ramaswamy

Sent on assignment to interview 97-year-old Holocaust survivor Henry Wuga, journalist Chitra Ramaswamy is fascinated by his past, and the two become firm friends. The resulting memoir, which tells Ramaswamy's own story, too, is an exploration of migration, belonging and what constitutes a home.

I Heard What You Said by Jeffrey Boakye

Drawing on his experience as a teacher, Jeffrey Boakye shows how schools have consistently let down Black boys and girls, leaving them disillusioned and demotivated. But Boakye also argues that the system short-changes all students by failing to prepare them for life in a multicultural society. His prescription is a form of radical listening: to hear what makes pupils feel included and reframe teaching around it.

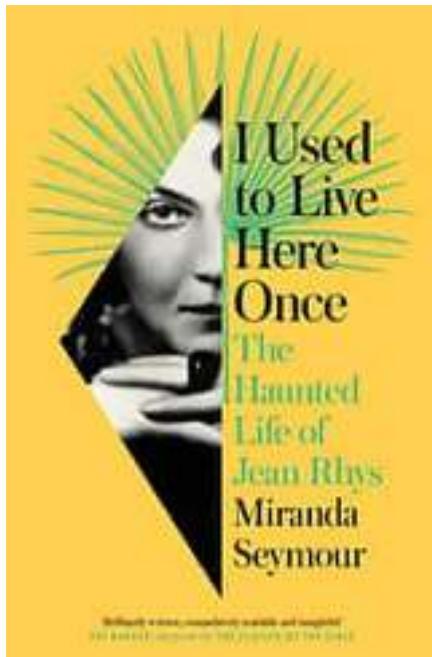


[All in My Head](#) by Jessica Morris

A brain tumour diagnosis blindsides Jessica Morris, a Brit living with her family in New York. But not for long: having been told her glioblastoma is incurable, she devotes her considerable nous and determination to making it treatable. She lobbies Joe Biden and sets up OurBrainBank so others can pool their experiences and aid research. But it is her unvarnished account of what it means to face her own mortality that makes All in My Head so moving.

[The Insect Crisis: The Fall of the Tiny Empires That Run the World](#) by Oliver Milman

They're not always easy to like (Darwin was notably unimpressed by the contribution of the revolting parasitoid wasp), but insects are essential to life on Earth. From pollination to waste disposal, pest control and nutrient recycling, they drive the biological processes that allow the natural world – and human civilisation – to flourish. As Guardian journalist Milman sets out in fascinating detail, though, they are under unprecedented threat from habitat destruction and pesticide use.

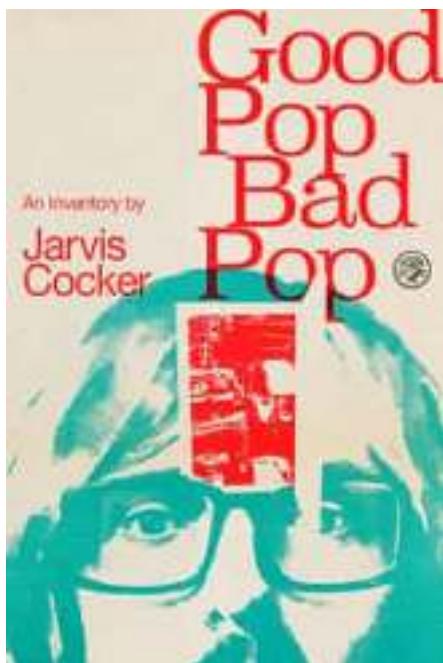


[**I Used to Live Here Once: The Haunted Life of Jean Rhys**](#) by Miranda Seymour

This new biography of the Dominica-born author of *Wide Sargasso Sea* charts her course from the Caribbean to London and Devon, via a tumultuous affair and two marriages. Seymour is careful to separate the writer from her fictional protagonists: “At the centre of Rhys’s life stood her writing, a resource that is entirely absent from the lives of the women she described in her novels.”

[**Happy-Go-Lucky**](#) by David Sedaris

As ever, Sedaris flits from subject to subject in his latest book of essays, landing most powerfully on his relationship with his father, who died in 2021. Lou, portrayed in earlier work as an occasionally mystifying but relatively affable eccentric, is revealed posthumously as a vindictive, mendacious presence in his son’s life. What made him like that, and can the scars inflicted by him begin to heal now that he’s gone?



[**Good Pop, Bad Pop: An Inventory** by Jarvis Cocker](#)

Rifling through his attic, the former lead singer of Pulp embarks on an object-by-object exploration of his influences and obsessions. Through them he tells the story of the first 25 years of his life in Sheffield, culminating with an acceptance letter from Central Saint Martins School of Art in London – and the promise of a new world.



Illustration: Monsie

Paperbacks

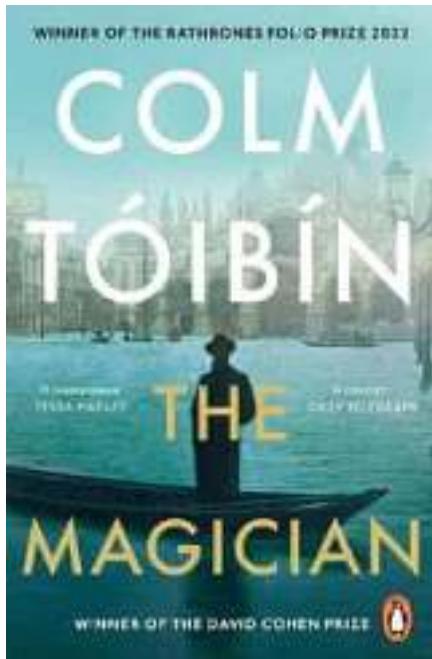


[**Open Water**](#) by Caleb Azumah Nelson

A hazy London summer is brought to life in this prize-winning debut novel about two young Black artists: sharp on race, class and masculinity, but at its heart a slow-burning love story, beautifully told.

[**My Phantoms**](#) by Gwendoline Riley

Can you escape your demons when you're related to them? This icily funny, emotionally acute portrait of a difficult mother-daughter relationship is as sharp as a knife, and just as lethal.

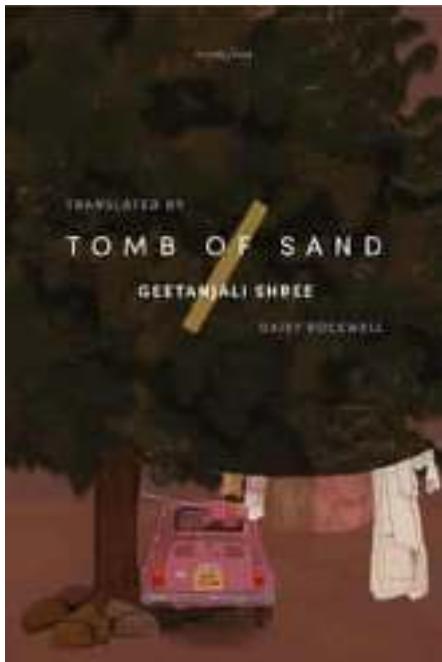


[**The Magician** by Colm Tóibín](#)

This year's Folio prize winner tells the story of German Nobel laureate Thomas Mann, the artist and the individual, set against two world wars and tumultuous global change.

[**Beautiful World, Where Are You** by Sally Rooney](#)

Love, sex, fame, anxiety: four no-longer-quite-so-young people negotiate the difficulties of modern life and what it means to be a couple.

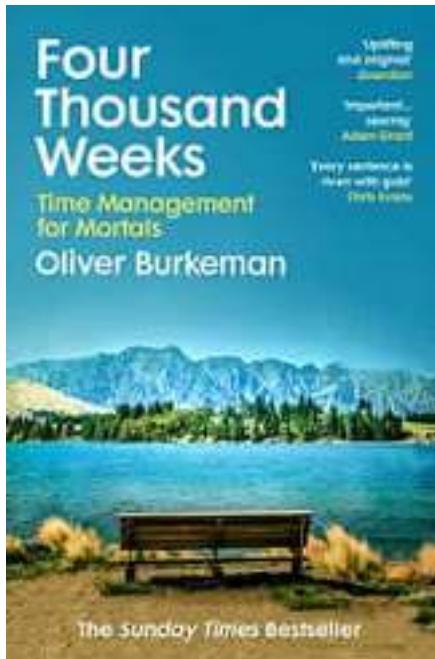


Tomb of Sand by Geetanjali Shree, translated by Daisy Rockwell

The first winner of the International Booker prize to be translated from Hindi is the exuberant tale of an 80-year-old Indian woman who reinvents herself.

The Book of Form and Emptiness by Ruth Ozeki

A troubled teenager, grieving for his father, hears the voices of the objects around him, while his mother battles her hoarding instincts and struggles to give him his freedom. This year's Women's prize winner is a wise and magical meditation on how to find out what's really important amid the overwhelm of modern life.

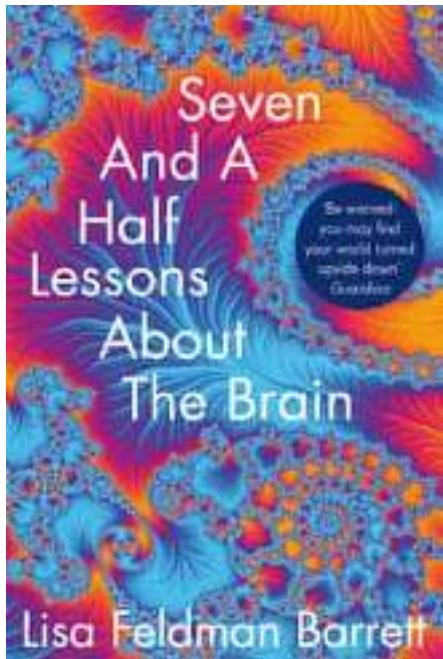


Four Thousand Weeks: Time and How to Use It by Oliver Burkeman

This refreshingly counterintuitive guide argues that rather than trying to eliminate procrastination, we should embrace it; instead of planning everything to within an inch of its life, we should understand that time is not really ours to “spend”.

Free by Lea Ypi

Raised an obedient communist, as a teenager in Albania Ypi witnesses the collapse of the regime that defined her life. Her memoir describes the vertigo of seeing everything you took for granted disappear, amid revelations of her own family’s political secrets.



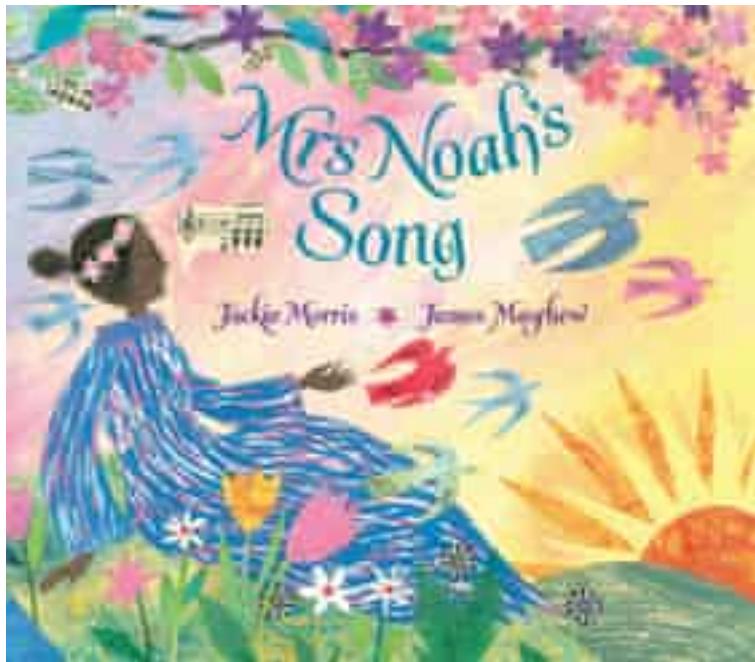
Seven and a Half Lessons About the Brain by Lisa Feldman Barrett

Billed as “the first neuroscience beach read”, this digestible guide to the mind is subtly radical; rather than received notions about our “lizard brains” and “emotion centres”, it presents a revelatory model of consciousness that will be completely new to most readers.

This Much Is True by Miriam Margolyes

Thanks to social media clips of her outrageous anecdotes on Graham Norton’s sofa, Margolyes is having something of a renaissance. That’s a good thing; admired for years for her comic turns on TV and the stage, it turns out she is also a fabulous storyteller.

Children’s and YA

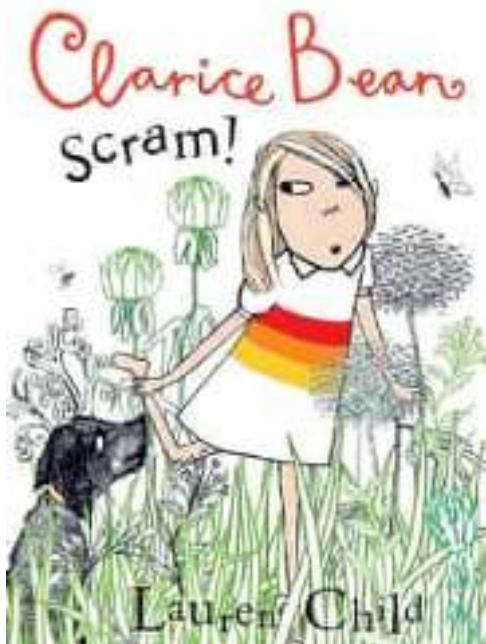


Mrs Noah's Song by Jackie Morris, illustrated by James Mayhew

Mrs Noah brings music back into the world, teaching her children to sing and sharing the wonders of the dawn chorus in this beautiful picture book, featuring poetic text and exquisite collages.

Today Will Be a Great Day! by Slimy Oddity

This slim “guide to happiness”, packed with endearing rainbow-coloured images from Instagram art collective Slimy Oddity, is full of brief but resonant statements (“Your past does not define you”; “Know that you are loved”) to give readers a gentle boost. Ideal for those with a case of the pandemic blues.

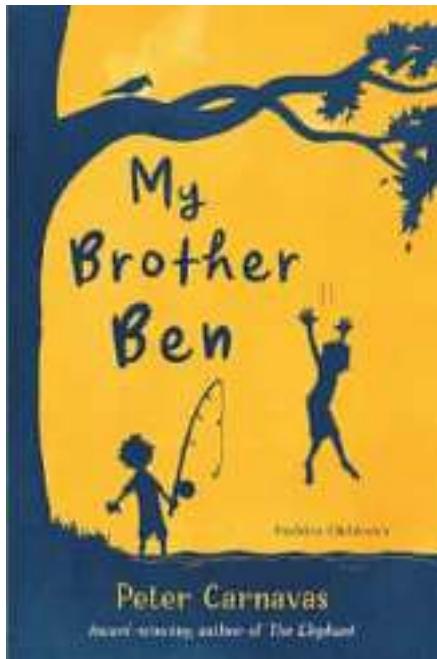


Scram! by Lauren Child

The irrepressible Clarice Bean is bored in the summer holidays – until she finds herself hiding a furry someone in the garden shed. A superbly illustrated, slyly funny story of a four-legged family secret for readers of 7+.

I Ate Sunshine for Breakfast by Michael Holland, illustrated by Philip Giordano

For junior botanists of 7+, this gorgeous “celebration of plants around the world” is filled with radiant graphic-style illustrations, complementing fascinating facts and activities. Look at lifecycles, make plant mazes or invisible ink, and learn how plants are used in everything from toothpaste to travel.

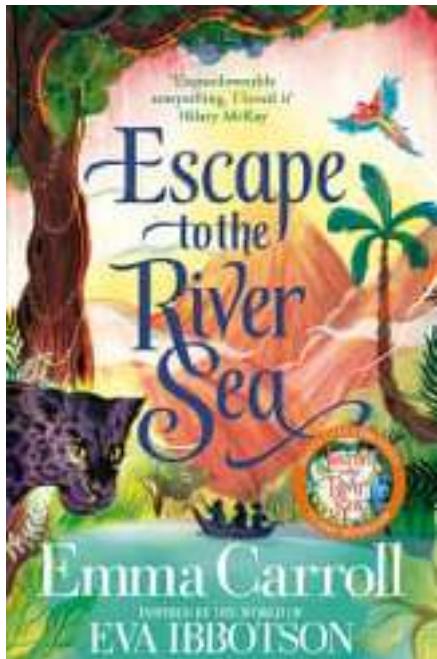


My Brother Ben by Peter Carnavas

Together, Luke and Ben spend the summer happy in their different ways: Ben leaping into Cabbage Tree Creek, Luke sketching birds and watching. When Ben starts high school, the brothers' bond changes – but though a local competition strains their relationship, nothing can destroy their abiding love in this tender, timeless story for 8+.

Sleepover Takeover by Simon James Green, illustrated by Aleksei Bitskoff

Dorky Otis is amazed to be invited to rich kid Rocco Rococo's birthday party. When he wakes up in a wedding dress to find a donkey drinking from the chocolate fountain, however, he realises something has gone badly wrong in this outrageously hilarious romp for 9+.

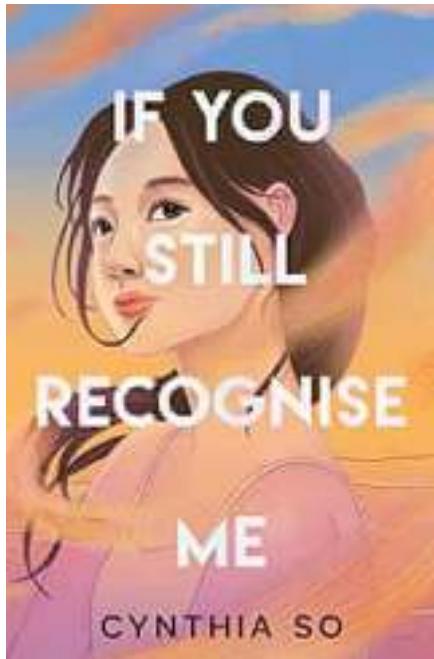


[**Escape to the River Sea**](#) by Emma Carroll

Inspired by Eva Ibbotson's much-loved Journey to the River Sea, this lush, exciting adventure follows Rosa Sweetman, a Kindertransport girl, as she travels from England to the Amazon rainforest in search of giant sloths, jaguars and a place to belong – and encounters desperate danger along the way. A thrilling, rich novel for 9+ from the queen of historical fiction.

[**Finding Jupiter**](#) by Kelis Rowe

Home in Memphis for the holidays, Ray is too busy ruling the roller-rink, creating “found poetry” and figuring out her future to have time for a summer fling – until she meets hopeless romantic Orion. But will a secret past grief part the star-crossed lovers? Strong characterisation and warm emotional depth mark out this uplifting YA debut.



If You Still Recognise Me by Cynthia So

School's finished, summer beckons, and 18-year-old Elsie has decided to tell Ada, her crush, the way she feels; but Ada lives half a world away, and Elsie's long-lost best friend Joan has just come strolling back into her life. A pitch-perfect exploration of identity, belonging and coming of age, full of acute observation and compelling slow-burn romance.

Such a Good Liar by Sue Wallman

On a private island occupied by the privileged, 17-year-old Lydia Cornwallis settles in for the summer, eager to meet the stylish Harrington sisters. There's only one small problem – Lydia isn't Lydia, and the Harrington girls have to pay for what they've done. A nail-biting YA thriller of impersonation, iron nerve and revenge, for fans of Karen M McManus and Holly Jackson.

- To explore all the books in the Guardian's summer reading list visit [guardianbookshop.com](https://www.theguardian.com/books/2022/jun/25/summer-reading-the-50-hottest-new-books-for-a-great-escape) Delivery charges may apply.

| [Section menu](#) | [Main menu](#) |

Money

‘Shopping is a nightmare’: how ADHD affects people’s spending habits

Research shared exclusively with Guardian Money shows the effects the condition can have on finances



Research commissioned by Monzo and conducted by YouGov found that those living with ADHD are four times more likely to frequently impulse-spend. Photograph: Simon Belcher/Alamy



Rupert Jones

Sat 25 Jun 2022 05.00 EDT

For most of us, popping to the supermarket is a mundane chore but for Hannah Crawford it's a task that can fill her with dread. "A supermarket is a nightmare," says the 24-year-old, who describes going to buy food as "like being a three-year-old in a sweet shop".

Crawford says it can be an overwhelming, frustrating and exhausting experience. One of the main challenges is "getting out without spending twice as much as you intended", she says, which means making meticulous lists and resisting the constant urge to impulse-buy.

She is far from alone in feeling this way. She was diagnosed with [attention deficit hyperactivity disorder](#) (ADHD) last summer, and is one of a growing number of UK adults with the condition. The total number is estimated to run into the millions, although most are undiagnosed.

Research shared exclusively with Guardian Money lays bare the challenges many with ADHD face when it comes to their personal finances.

The majority (60%) of those surveyed who are living with ADHD said they believe it has a direct cost implication for them

The research, commissioned by the digital bank Monzo and conducted by YouGov, found that those living with ADHD are four times more likely to frequently impulse-spend than those who do not have the condition.

The majority (60%) of those surveyed who are living with ADHD said they believe it has a direct cost implication for them because of its impact on day-to-day money management, which they estimated amounted to just over £1,600 a year on average.

The findings prompted charities to say that with a cost of living crisis raging and the number of people with the condition on the rise, banks should do more to support this community.

A Guardian article [published earlier this month](#) explored the increase in adult diagnoses in the US. A Guardian article [published on 18 June](#) said one in four prisoners in Britain were believed to have it. On TikTok, videos tagged [#ADHD](#) have been viewed more than 12bn times.

But until now it is thought there has been relatively little research done into the links between ADHD and people's finances.

Monzo says it was prompted to commission some by anecdotes from customers.

As a result, YouGov spoke to 506 people living with ADHD to understand their experiences of managing their personal finances, with a shorter survey involving 2,068 UK adults done to provide comparison answers. There were a number of key findings.

Two-thirds (65%) of those with ADHD say the condition makes managing their finances more difficult.

Those with ADHD are twice as likely (76%) to suffer from anxiety linked to their finances compared with the general population (38%).

According to those with the condition, spending impulsively (58%), struggling to budget (51%) and struggling to save money (49%) are the biggest issues they face.

Those with ADHD are almost three times more likely to struggle with debt (31%) compared with the general population (11%).

They are almost three times more likely to miss bill payments occasionally or often (49%) than someone without the condition (18%).

They are more than three times more likely to find it difficult to stick to a budget (50%) compared with the general population (15%).

Those with ADHD are four times more likely to impulse-spend often (48%) than someone who doesn't have it (12%).

The research also found that fewer than one in five (19%) people with the condition believe their bank gives them all the tools they need to manage their finances.

Crawford, who lives in London, had a private diagnosis – NHS waiting times are notoriously long – and pays £130 a month for prescriptions and medication.

She says the issues she and others with ADHD face “is definitely not something that's talked about – I don't see or hear a lot about ADHD and money management”.



Hannah Crawford describes going to buy food as ‘like being a three-year-old in a sweet shop’. Photograph: Carys Hughes

Crawford, who works in theatre as a producer, says she has a sense that most people have a “background programme running in their head – an abiding awareness of what’s in their bank account, how much have they spent so far that day, and upcoming bills or subscription payments. I don’t have any of those background programmes. Every time I open my bank account, it’s a total surprise to me.”

As a result, she spends a lot of time living in her overdraft by mistake, which creates stress and anxiety.

She has had a Monzo account since 2017 and says: “I try to automate as much as possible in terms of bills, direct debits and so on. You can easily put things into pots to schedule payments and upcoming bills.”

Things such as parking tickets and payment deadlines can be particularly tricky

She likes to be able to label and categorise her outgoings, which keeps budgeting more interesting, providing the “dopamine hits” her brain needs to

pay attention, and likes the fact she receives push notifications with reminders of how much she is spending throughout the day.

Things such as parking tickets and payment deadlines can be particularly tricky. She says there are regular occasions when she becomes overwhelmed by a ticket or due date, and then the cost jumps. “It’s quite scary to feel not in control like that,” she says.

Crawford says there is “quite a lot of stigma” around this whole area. “I have to really remind myself this is not something to feel ashamed about – it’s just about finding ways of making financial things easier and more approachable for people like me.”

Monzo says digital banking tools designed to give users more control and provide greater “visibility” for their finances have been widely praised by many in the ADHD community.

The most helpful banking features identified by the survey included notifications about upcoming bills and places to set money aside such as savings pots.



Siân Leigh says she used to sign up for things late at night and then forget she had done so. Photograph: Siân Leigh

Siân Leigh, 27, who was diagnosed with ADHD in September 2021, says one problem she used to have was “signing up for things late at night” and then forgetting she had done this.

Leigh, who lives in Cheshire and works as a digital marketing tutor, adds that she needs visual reminders of things – she needs to be able to “see” her finances.

“I never realised it was something I needed. With Monzo [which she has been with since 2018], everything is colourful, everything feels engaging … I’m a colour-focused person – that’s how I take information in.”

Taariq Fry, 22 – who is currently waiting for a specialist diagnosis but has been assessed by his GP – says that for him, one of the main issues is impulse-spending. “More so when I was younger – I just spent so much all the time.”

That in turn makes saving difficult and means he sometimes doesn’t have the money he needs to pay for things.

He likes getting instant notifications telling him what he has just bought, plus ones that let him know how much he has spent in a day. “[They] help me rein it in,” he says.

Fry says his advice for banks and financial firms on supporting people with ADHD is that they should “just try to make their apps better. A lot of them are just so traditional.”

Henry Shelford at the charity [ADHD UK](#) says the research “shows the scale of the challenge people with ADHD face with their personal finances, and it’s something I hear about anecdotally every day”.

He adds: “It’s more important than ever that banks consider this community and build products and services that are inclusive. Banking tools which give people control and transparency are great for everyone but they are critical for people with ADHD.”

The [three core characteristics of ADHD](#) are impulsivity, inattention and hyperactivity.

People with it can seem restless, may have trouble concentrating and may act on impulse, [the NHS says](#).

They may also have additional problems such as sleep and anxiety disorders.

In the UK, the prevalence of ADHD in adults is estimated at 3% to 4%, the [National Institute for Health and Care Excellence says](#). That would translate into about 1.8 million UK adults. Meanwhile, there have been claims from some quarters that [as many as 8% of people in the UK](#) could have it.

Traditionally it was spotted at school, and it is more commonly diagnosed in boys than in girls.

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| [Section menu](#) | [Main menu](#) |

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‘Everything’s so different’: Wimbledon and the future of grass-court tennis



Training out on Court Four at Wimbledon in the final buildup to this year's tournament. Photograph: Tom Jenkins/The Guardian

Some love it, some love to hate it, but today the grass-court swing is as strong as it has ever been since 1990



[Tumaini Carayol](#)

Sat 25 Jun 2022 03.00 EDT

Filip Krajinovic has been a professional tennis player nearly half his life. He knows himself on the tennis court as well as he knows anything else and after 14 years on the tour he was so sure grass-court tennis was not for him that he barely even tried: “Every year I find a way to skip the tournaments, just coming to [Wimbledon](#), losing first round,” he said last week. “It’s been the last 10 years like that.”

And yet, it turns out, he was completely wrong. This year, at 30, he arrived at Queen’s for his long-awaited first main-draw match on a grass court at an ATP event, and briskly reached the final. He did not turn into a serve and volley player overnight, nor did he develop a wicked backhand slice. He simply embraced the surface for the first time.

The events at Queen’s were a reminder of the absurdity of the grass-court season. Most tennis players spend their lives building their games and growing on hard courts and clay, then all of a sudden they must adjust to a completely new surface with only five weeks each year to do so. “Everything’s so different on the grass,” says Britain’s Dan Evans.

Most of those early days are spent on the floor. The American Tommy Paul recalls a match in the qualifying draw at Queen's in 2019 against Alexander Bublik, who predictably spent the afternoon peppering him with drop shots and underarm serves: "I fell, I don't know, 10 times. I was on the ground so much. It was pretty embarrassing," he says. Alejandro Davidovich Fokina had a similar experience from his first junior Wimbledon: "I fell down like 30 times."

Even playing on grass as a junior is a privilege that some pros don't have. Botic van de Zandschulp, the world No 26, had never even stepped on to a grass court until Wimbledon qualifying last year. He is still just trying to mentally move on from clay: "You try to slide in corners and you try to move like you normally do on hard court and clay but it's impossible," he sighs.

Only a special few players truly take to grass immediately: "It was good. Everybody told me that I could play well on the grass so I was like, 'OK, maybe!'" says Petra Kvitova, a two-time Wimbledon champion, of her first time on grass at a junior event in Roehampton. Then she casually shrugs. "I won Roehampton, actually."



Petra Kvitova in action on the grass at Eastbourne. Photograph: Andrew Boyers/Action Images/Reuters

With experience on grass essential to success on the surface, many of the new generation of players have struggled to adapt. The cancellation of Wimbledon in 2020 has not helped. Novak Djokovic is at his ultimate level on hard courts, but these days he is an even bigger favourite at Wimbledon. Alexander Zverev, Daniil Medvedev, Stefanos Tsitsipas, Andrey Rublev and Casper Ruud have not made a Wimbledon quarter-final between them.



A set of tennis balls seen by Court 8 at Wimbledon. Photograph: Tom Jenkins/The Guardian

Even now, as technology has improved and the bounces have become truer, precise serving on grass is still a dream. Serving dominance often means that, in some matches, just a few points make the difference: “The movement is a massive part, finishing your shot is a massive part, the ball is always very heavy, the Slazenger ball. They’re so quick – the games. It’s small margins and keeping mentally pretty sound throughout the whole matches,” says Evans.

Then there are the sore hamstrings, glutes and lower backs as players incessantly bend their knees to counter the skidding bounce: “You’d think that playing a long clay-court match would be the toughest on your legs, but a long grass match... I played a three-hour grass-court match last week, and

I was so sore. I couldn't believe it. I thought they were gonna be quick and easy matches," says Paul.

Numerous British players have produced career-best results during this grass season, with Ryan Peniston, Katie Boulter and Jodie Burrage all beating top-10 opponents. Even British players hardly grow up on grass, but they often have their first contact with the surface at a younger age. They essentially have the biggest home advantage in the sport.

"I do know some of them who probably haven't hit a ball on grass for 15 years and then go out and play really well on it," says Boulter, who first played on the surface at an under-9 tournament in Roehampton. "But then someone else, like Harriet [Dart], she played at a club with her mum from a young age and I think it gives us the upper hand with that."

Until 1974, Wimbledon, the US Open and the Australian Open were all played on grass. While it was phased out in Melbourne and New York, and at times it seemed that only the tradition of Wimbledon was keeping it alive, today the grass-court swing is as strong as it has ever been since the ATP tour began in 1990. Since the addition of a week between the French Open and Wimbledon in 2016, somehow grass-court tournaments have blossomed in continental Europe.

Whether it can ever play an even more significant role in the calendar is a different question. For those charged with holding events, the costs are a big obstacle: "It is quite a lot more expensive," says Edwin Weindorfer, tournament director in Stuttgart, a grass event. "I would say it's probably two to three times more expensive than a clay-court tournament.



Serbia's Filip Krajinovic (left) had never won a main-draw match on grass before reaching the final at Queen's in 2022. Photograph: Andrew Couldridge/Action Images/Reuters

“The maintenance is a huge difference because grass is living material and you need to maintain that the whole year.”

Marcel Hunze, the tournament director at the Libema Open in the Netherlands, the first grass-court event in continental Europe, is even more specific: “For the maintenance of a grass court is at least about €25,000 (£21,450) per court, per year.”

The popular discussion point now is whether there will ever be an ATP or WTA 1000 event on grass. The ATP CEO, Andrea Gaudenzi, has spent the last few years attempting to reshape the ATP and he has spoken of his hope for one. “Yeah, why not? I think there could be a 1000 behind the ATP and a 1000 behind the WTA,” says Hunze.

Weindorfer is the CEO of Emotion Group, a tournament management company that runs grass-court events in Stuttgart, Berlin and Mallorca. He does not see it happening. “I personally believe it is very difficult given the dimension of the costs that it costs to run a 1000. If it’s a combined one,

especially. Even if it's a 1000 tournament with a 64-player draw, you will probably need 10 to 15 grass courts and a huge stadium."

As with many issues within tennis, everyone has a different opinion about whether the grass season could and should ever take up a larger part of the calendar. "I think, at the moment, it's a perfect swing," says Weindorfer. "Four tournaments a week, 12 tournaments, six women's tournaments, six men's tournaments, then it goes into the championship. I think it's the perfect situation."



Dan Evans stretches for a return during a training match against Andy Murray on Court 1. Photograph: Tom Jenkins/The Guardian

Despite being a former Wimbledon junior champion, the mere thought of spending more time on grass is offensive to Davidovich Fokina.

"For me, one month is enough," says the Spaniard, who reached the quarter-finals at Queen's last week, waving his hands in protest. "When I have more time, it's better for me than to play on hard or clay. I will show more of my game. This month on the grass is to enjoy, to have some fun, improve a lot of things of your game, and that's it."

As she discusses the possibility of a lengthier grass-court season, a smile spreads across Kvitova's face: "I wish it could be longer," she says.

“Anytime I’m finishing Wimbledon, I’m like: ‘Hmm, it’s sad that we’re already finished.’ It seems like we just started and it’s already done.”

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| [Section menu](#) | [Main menu](#) |

2022.06.25 - Opinion

- [A harsh lesson for the Tories: you can't outrun tactical voting](#)
- [It's time to say it: the US supreme court has become an illegitimate institution](#)
- [Rewilding the Galápagos can be a model for a new way to coexist with nature](#)
- [Why Britain desperately needs a new story about ‘glorious weather’](#)

OpinionByelections

A harsh lesson for the Tories: you can't outrun tactical voting

[Peter Kellner](#)

The dramatic Tiverton and Honiton result shows how strategic anti-Conservative voting could decide the next general election



Counting begins in the Tiverton and Honiton by-election at the Lords Meadow leisure centre in Crediton, Devon. Photograph: Andrew Matthews/PA

Sat 25 Jun 2022 04.00 EDT Last modified on Sat 25 Jun 2022 07.06 EDT

Dramatic by-elections tend to produce two opposite reactions. Winners call them earthquakes, while losers detect nothing more than a routine murmur. The [dramatic results](#) in Wakefield, and Tiverton and Honiton, certainly approach the disruptive end of the Richter scale.

The reason is not just the sharp decline in Conservative support, but the ferocious way in which tactical voting compounded the Tories' misery. This makes it more likely that the party will lose power at the next election – even if the swing in Wakefield was not enough to enhance Labour's hopes of a clear majority in the House of Commons.

A very real prospect now is that the [Conservatives](#) could recover enough to regain the lead in the popular vote at the next election – but still lose too many seats to enable them to remain in office. Indeed, yesterday's contests provided a vivid illustration of this very point. Add the results from the two by-elections together, and the Tories came first overall, more than 1,400 votes ahead of the Liberal Democrats and 10,000 ahead of Labour. Yet, with the anti-Tory vote lining up in each seat behind the candidate most likely to defeat the Conservatives, Boris Johnson's party crashed to defeat in both. (Without tactical voting, the Tories would still have lost Wakefield but might have held Tiverton and Honiton.)

Past elections tell us why this matters. In 1997, around 30 Conservative MPs lost their seats [because of tactical voting](#). Indeed, the Lib Dems' national vote fell, even though they [more than doubled](#) their number of MPs.

Tactical voting went into hibernation in the 2010s. For much of the decade, Labour supporters were reluctant to vote for the party that had gone into coalition with David Cameron's Conservatives. Then, in 2017 and 2019, Jeremy Corbyn deterred Lib Dem supporters from lending their vote to Labour.

Tactical voting is now back with a vengeance. Keir Starmer is palatable to most Liberal Democrats, while Labour supporters accept that Ed Davey and the Lib Dems have moved on from the days when they voted for [Tory austerity measures](#).

Now, tactical voting would not decide Britain's next government if Labour was on course for a clear victory. It isn't; or at least, it isn't yet. The 12.7% swing to Labour in Wakefield would be just enough, repeated throughout the country, to give Labour a small overall majority. But, with rare exceptions, big by-election swings fade at the following election. There is, admittedly, time for things to change; but at the moment, Labour is on course to fall

short of the 326 seats it needs to win outright, and may well struggle to approach 300.

This is where tactical voting has the potential to decide the next election. [Think back to 2017](#). The Tories, easily the largest party, struggled to continue in office with 318 MPs. They needed a deal with Northern Ireland's Democratic Unionists to carry on. Next time, the Tories may well need at least 315 MPs; otherwise they will have to go into opposition. Labour might end up with just 260 or 270 MPs and still have enough for Starmer to become prime minister. For at least a time, there is little chance of the Liberal Democrats or Scottish National party voting to bring him down, even without a formal coalition or confidence and supply agreement, for fear of risking a fresh election and a return of Tory rule.

So: imagine the Tories recover to the point that on a straight national swing they lose between 21 and 50 of the seats they won last time, and end up with between 315 and 344 seats. They would still be able to stay in office. But add a further 30 losses from tactical voting, and they fall to 285-314. They would be out. That's why tactical voting matters. That's why the two by-elections, taken together, are so significant.

- Peter Kellner is a former president of YouGov

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[OpinionUS news](#)

It's time to say it: the US supreme court has become an illegitimate institution

[Jill Filipovic](#)



With its decision on Roe v Wade, the court has signaled its illegitimacy – and thrown the American project into question



‘Can a country be properly understood as a democracy if it subjugates half of its population?’ Photograph: Anadolu Agency/Getty Images

Sat 25 Jun 2022 02.40 EDT

As of 24 June 2022, the [US supreme court](#) should officially be understood as an illegitimate institution – a tool of minority rule over the majority, and as part of a far-right ideological and authoritarian takeover that must be snuffed out if we want American democracy to survive.

On Friday, in Dobbs v Jackson Women’s Health, the supreme court overruled its nearly 50-year precedent of Roe v Wade, the 1973 case that legalized abortion nationwide. It is difficult to overstate just how devastating this is for pregnant people, [for women as a class](#) and for anyone with even a passing interest in individual freedom and equality.

But it’s also devastating for those of us who care quite a bit about American democratic traditions and the strength of our institutions. Because, with this ruling, the supreme court has just signaled its illegitimacy – and it throws much of the American project into question. Which means that Democrats and others who want to see America endure as a representative democracy need to act.

Of the nine justices sitting on the current court, five – all of them in the majority opinion that overturned Roe – were appointed by presidents who initially lost the popular vote; the three appointed by Donald Trump were confirmed by senators who represent [a minority of Americans](#). A majority of this court, in other words, were not appointed by a process that is representative of the will of the American people.

Two were appointed via starkly undemocratic means, put in place by bad actors willing to change the rules to suit their needs. Neil Gorsuch only has his seat because Republicans, led by Mitch McConnell, blocked the ability of Barack Obama to nominate Merrick Garland – or anyone – to a supreme court seat, claiming that, because it was an election year, voters should get to decide.

And then Donald Trump appointed Amy Coney Barrett in a radically rushed and incomplete, incoherent process – in an election year.

And now, this court, stacked with far-right judges appointed via ignoble means, has stripped from American women the right to control our own bodies. They have summarily placed women into a novel category of person with fewer rights not just than other people, but than fertilized eggs and [corpses](#). After all, no one else is forced to donate their organs for the survival of another – not parents to their children, not the dead to the living. It is only fertilized eggs, embryos and fetuses that are newly entitled to this right to use another’s body and organs against that other’s will; it is only women and other people who can get pregnant who are now subject to these unparalleled, radical demands.

This raises a fundamental question: can a country be properly understood as a democracy – an entity in which government derives its power from the people – if it subjugates half of its population, putting them into a category of sub-person with fewer rights, freedoms and liberties?

The global trend suggests that the answer to that is no. A clear pattern has emerged in the past few decades: as countries democratize, they tend to liberalize women’s rights, and they expand abortion and other reproductive rights. Luckily for the women of the world, this is where a great many nations are moving.

But the reverse is also true: as a smaller number of countries move toward authoritarian governance, they constrict the rights of women, LGBT people and many minority groups. We have seen this in every country that has scaled back abortion rights, reproductive rights, and women's rights more broadly in the past several years: Russia, Hungary, Poland, Nicaragua and the United States.

The supreme court decision stems from ... the idea that a patriarchal minority should have nearly unlimited authority over the majority

The same week that the supreme court issued its decision in Dobbs, the US House of Representatives has been holding hearings to inform the public about what actually happened during the attempted coup of 6 January 2021, and to ideally hold perpetrators, traitors and seditious to account. We are only a year and a half past that disgraceful day, when an angry mob decided that they, an authoritarian, patriarchal, white supremacist minority, should rule – that any other outcome, no matter how free and fair the election, was illegitimate.

The supreme court decision stems from that same rotted root: the idea that a patriarchal minority should have nearly unlimited authority over the majority. The conservatives on the court rightly understand that individual rights and women's freedoms are incompatible with a system of broad male control over women and children, and a broader male monopoly on the public, political and economic spheres.

But that authoritarian vision is also incompatible with democracy.

And so Democrats now have a choice. They can give speeches and send fundraising emails. Or they can act: declare this court illegitimate. Demand its expansion. Abolish the filibuster. Treat this like the emergency it is, and make America a representative democracy.

- Jill Filipovic is the author of OK Boomer, Let's Talk: How My Generation Got Left Behind
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| [Section menu](#) | [Main menu](#) |

Wild worldRewilding

Rewilding the Galápagos can be a model for a new way to coexist with nature

Danny Rueda Córdova and [Leonardo DiCaprio](#)

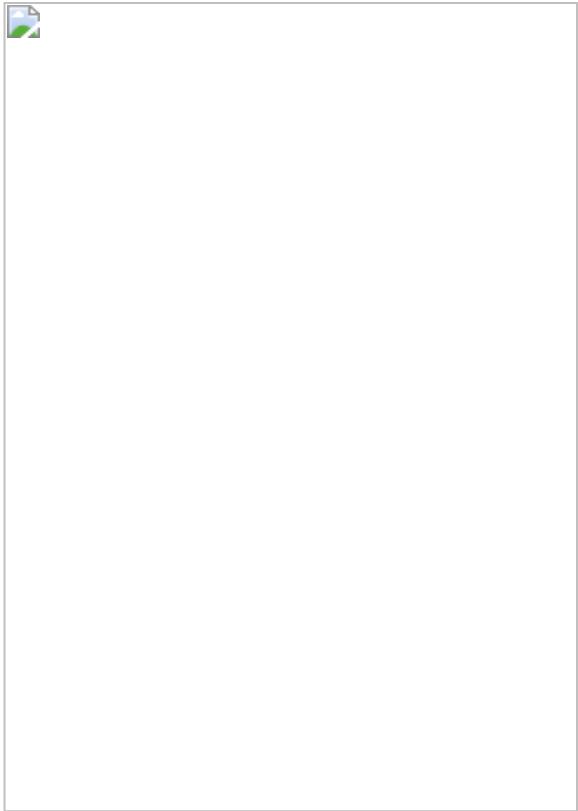
We must work with local communities to restore key species on a global scale if we are to tackle the climate and biodiversity crises gripping the world

- [Read more in our Wild world series](#)



Leonardo DiCaprio is a founding board member of Re:wild. Photograph: Étienne Laurent/EPA

Wild world is supported by



About this content

Sat 25 Jun 2022 01.00 EDT

There are few places in the world as majestic and full of wonder as Ecuador's [Galápagos Islands](#). From the rosy-hued pink iguanas on the northern rim of Wolf Volcano to the iconic Pinzón giant tortoise on Pinzón Island to the black-tipped reef sharks feeding off Floreana Island, we have both found boundless inspiration in exploring the islands that led Charles Darwin to develop his groundbreaking theory of evolution nearly two centuries ago.

We have both also witnessed a more recent rapidly evolving process in the Galápagos based on a shared vision of restoring the profusion of life that the archipelago is renowned for. This process is rewilding, a positive reframing for nature conservation. There is an idea that rewilding involves restoring nature at the expense of people, but we believe it is all about effectively integrating ourselves within the ecosystems that sustain us – to work with, rather than against, nature to create thriving and resilient ecosystems for the benefit of all.



Rewilding is helping restore the profusion of life the archipelago is renowned for, including lizards such as the marine iguana (pictured) and the rosy-hued pink iguana. Photograph: Lucas Bustamante

In short, modern rewilding is the revolutionary act of bringing together people and the planet *for* people and the planet. It does not require any futuristic technology, relying instead on our scientific understanding of wildlife and ecosystems, combined with the traditional knowledge and wisdom of local communities and Indigenous peoples, who are consistently the most effective custodians of Earth's biodiversity. In the truest sense of the word, it redresses our balance with the wild.

In the Galápagos, where non-native rats and other invasive species have decimated populations of birds, reptiles and other wildlife, it is inspiring to

see some amazing examples of local communities deciding to restore and coexist with nature, rather than exploit it.



The Fernandina giant tortoise (pictured) was recently rediscovered on the islands, while the rewilding efforts will see the return of the locally extinct Floreana giant tortoise. Photograph: Lucas Bustamante

On Floreana, for example, residents are collaborating to remove invasive species by 2024 and return 13 native species to the island where they went locally extinct, by 2027. One of those species is the Floreana giant tortoise, whose return could reshape the entire island ecosystem. As the tortoises selectively browse certain plants, they disperse the seeds of native species and create a mosaic of habitats, enabling the island to return to a savannah-like ecosystem.

This will help the return of other species that will collectively restore the ecosystem to health, offering a cascade of benefits to the local Floreana community: climate resiliency, protection of their food and water supplies, preservation of their culture, and nature-based tourism.

[Link to the Wild world series](#)

And as Floreana is transformed, the ocean surrounding it will also benefit from, among other things, nutrient cycling from seabirds and reduced

sedimentation due to the return of native vegetation.

The commitment to rewilding Floreana Island represents a shared vision of the Galápagos National Park Directorate and the local community, who have played leading roles in co-designing these projects from the start.

Re:wild and the directorate have now teamed up with local environmental organisations such as Fundación Jocotoco to replicate this powerful model to rewild the rest of the islands. Re:wild is also taking this approach beyond the Galápagos with local partners elsewhere, including across all of Latin America's Pacific archipelagos, from Mexico to Chile.



The ocean surrounding the Galápagos Islands will also benefit from the rewilding efforts. Photograph: Lucas Bustamante/Re:wild

We are seeing other promising examples of rewilding elsewhere. In Australia, reintroducing Tasmanian devils to the mainland will help engineer the entire ecosystem back to health and reduce the intensity of wildfires by helping native small mammals recover and forests to regenerate. In the Iberá wetlands of north-eastern Argentina, local communities have taken great pride in the reintroduction of jaguars, which are reinvigorating ecotourism in the region. In Indonesia, communities on Lombok Island are leading the restoration of coral reefs just a few years after a significant 2018 earthquake.

And in the Caribbean, barren islands are being returned to lush green wildlife oases that can [mitigate the impacts of extreme weather](#).

These are in microcosm what rewilding could accomplish on a global scale when done in the right places: thriving wildlife communities living in harmony with thriving human communities. We both agree that the answer to the climate and biodiversity crises gripping the world is both the most basic and ancient of ideas and the most radical to create a liveable planet by working with the wild, rather than against it.

Danny Rueda Córdova is director of the Galápagos National Park Directorate. [Leonardo DiCaprio](#) is an environmentalist, Academy Award-winning actor and founding board member of Re:wild.

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[Opinion](#)[Climate crisis](#)

Why Britain desperately needs a new story about ‘glorious weather’

[Ian Jack](#)



I remember chilly trips to the beach in Fife, and my first visit to the Mediterranean. The association of heat with pleasure is hard to shake



Illustration: Matt Kenyon/The Guardian

Sat 25 Jun 2022 01.00 EDT Last modified on Sat 25 Jun 2022 12.40 EDT

I never saw my mother in a swimsuit, and I only once remember my father in one. In Fife in the 1920s, when both of them were young, sun-worshipping had yet to catch on. When my father swam, he swam in rivers, and then warmed himself up with a brisk towelling. My mother, who never learned to swim, would enjoy a day on the sands with tea brewed over a fire and sometimes a dance or two, if anyone had a squeezebox and the rain held off.

My parents remembered these things fondly during my childhood, when we might spend a summer afternoon on the local beach – it was only a 15-minute walk away – sometimes with relatives: cousins, a grandfather, uncles and aunts. Meteorology was less reliable then, and there seemed to be little question of adults “dressing for the weather” other than carrying a tightly folded plastic mac, which removed the precautionary need for a proper raincoat neatly arranged over the forearm.

Otherwise, they kept most of their clothes on, even in my grandfather’s case the peaked cap, the bannet, that he wore every month of the year. When, near naked, we ran up the beach from the sea to join a fully dressed party of

knitters and pipe-smokers, we completed a seaside version of Manet's *Déjeuner sur l'Herbe*. Our mothers would then insist we ate what they called a "shivery bite", a sandwich of corned beef or meat paste or cheese.

On a good day, the temperature might peak at 20C (68F), though on the more frequent less-good days it might struggle to reach 13C (55F). It was the wind, bringing grey skies and rollers from the North Sea, that tended to spoil things in Fife and elsewhere on the east coast of Scotland; on the west coast the spoilers were the clouds that swept in from the Atlantic to unleash downpours on the resorts in the Firth of Clyde. Stoicism was needed wherever you were. The actor and comedian Stanley Baxter remembers the annual question from his mother to her neighbour, after the neighbour's annual Rothesay holiday: "How was the weather?" And the neighbour's annual answer: "Well, it never kept us in."

In these cool and sometimes damp surroundings, it was hard to imagine hot air as anything other than pleasurable. Most children's fiction reinforced this idea, with pictures of cake and ginger beer bottles spread out on picnic cloth, and in the distance a lighthouse, a cliff, a ship and a calm sea. Nobody in these scenes seemed to perspire and yet, thanks to the presence of short sleeves and sandals, an impression of warmth was created, somewhere in the south. Might the sun *ever* be dangerous? At the local cinema we watched a rerelease of Alexander and Zoltan Korda's *The Four Feathers*, in which Ralph Richardson loses his helmet in the desert (he is on his way to fight the Mahdist revolt) and in its absence suffers sunstroke and goes blind. But that (and later films in which crickets chirped and people sweated) did nothing to prevent a feeling that the ideal climate was more dependably sunny than the one we lived in.

Aged 25, I saw the Mediterranean for the first time. I lay on the sand and got badly burnt; and then, like many millions of other northern Europeans before and since, I decided the weather and all that came with it – food, wine, manners, architecture – came close to perfection. Really, ignoring the politics and applying the sun cream, what was not to like? The great lake around which European civilisation grew: books had been written about it.

This idealisation had consequences when global warming began to edge into our consciousness. Initially, one popular reaction was to predict the

northward march of English vineyards under the influence of benevolent sunshine. The idea that heat could be oppressive and damaging – ruinous to many forms of life, in fact – took longer to sink in.

As something to be frightened of, it seemed to belong to another age: in the imperial era of *The Four Feathers*, heat was often what the British dreaded most in the territories they conquered or annexed, and for many years they coped with it rather badly. In 18th-century Bengal, for example, the combination of pre-monsoon heat and monsoon humidity was deathly, but the British stubbornly continued to eat, drink and dress as though they lived in Berkshire. Their behaviour makes a vivid historical study in gluttony, stupidity and dissipation of all kinds. They drank torrents of madeira, champagne, burgundy and claret; wolfed down soup, roast fowl, mutton pie, lamb, rice pudding, tarts and cheese at dinner (a meal consumed at two in the afternoon, the hottest time of day); pelted each other with bread rolls at supper; vomited from carriages; and fell drunkenly into ditches, soiling their topcoats and silk waistcoats, their lace sleeves and their breeches, the whole splendid apparel already wet with sweat.

Naturally, many of them died. The records for 1780 show a surgeon expiring after “eating a hearty dinner of beef with the temperature being 98 deg F”, though privileged excess wasn’t always to blame. Along the [Grand Trunk Road](#) and other routes used by the British military, tiny clusters of graves known as “marching cemeteries” appeared at roughly 12-mile intervals, where the casualties of heatstroke were buried when their fellow marchers camped for the night.

Bengal is hotter now – the average temperature of Kolkata has risen at least 1.2C since the mid-19th century – and in May a prolonged heatwave in north India produced a record temperature in Delhi of 49.2C. France and Spain have had their [hottest May on record](#). This month, a weather station in Catalonia registered 43.1C, which is among the hottest days recorded there in any month ever. Forest fires have broken out in Europe; dairy herds suffer in India; farmers everywhere worry about crops. A friend in Delhi writes to tell me of the cruel effects on the urban poor. “At traffic lights you see bicyclists leaning away from cars, to try to duck the flow of recycled air – even hotter than the ambient air – that’s the byproduct of the air-conditioning keeping the driver nicely cool inside.”

And still we present news of heat cheerfully, ignoring the obvious like an East India merchant tucking into his six-bottle dinner. Newspapers show crowded beaches and swimmers splashing in the Serpentine, the TV weather forecasters smile when they promise us a sunny and warm weekend. (And we, too, are glad.) Saffron O'Neill, an academic at the University of Exeter, wrote recently of a conflict in the coverage, which perhaps represents a conflict in ourselves. A study of the European media, she wrote, revealed “a mismatch between the text of the articles and the accompanying visuals”. The headlines announced news of unprecedented heat and the consequences for the sick and elderly people; the photographs featured people having “fun in the sun”. The mismatch was particularly prominent in the UK, O'Neill wrote, which perhaps said something “about how British culture narrates the experience of very hot weather in our historically mild climate”.

It does, it does. I look at the forecast for Rothesay and what do I see? Cloud, some sunshine, light rain showers, a moderate breeze, a maximum of 14C. Rejoice!

- Ian Jack is a Guardian columnist
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2022.06.25 - Around the world

- [Roe v Wade World leaders condemn ruling as ‘backwards step’](#)
- [US politics Democrats hope to tap anger over Roe in midterms](#)
- [‘We will fight like hell’ States band together to protect rights](#)
- [Business Firms scramble to protect abortion access for staff](#)

[Abortion](#)

World leaders condemn US abortion ruling as ‘backwards step’

Leaders of UK, Canada, France and New Zealand denounce the overruling of Roe v Wade as WHO chief calls its ‘disappointing’

- [See all our coverage of the supreme court’s decision](#)

Overturning Roe v Wade a 'big step backwards', says Boris Johnson – video

Martin Farrer and agencies

Fri 24 Jun 2022 23.58 EDT Last modified on Sat 25 Jun 2022 05.43 EDT

The end of constitutional protections for abortions in the United States has been described as a “backwards” move by world leaders and health organisations, while handing a huge boost to pro-life groups around the world.

The Canadian prime minister, Justin Trudeau, the French president, Emmanuel Macron, and the British prime minister, Boris Johnson, all condemned [the supreme court’s overruling of the landmark Roe v Wade decision](#), while New Zealand’s prime minister, Jacinda Ardern, said the decision was “incredibly upsetting”.

“Watching the removal of a woman’s fundamental right to make decisions over their own body is incredibly upsetting,” she said.

“Here in [New Zealand](#) we recently legislated to decriminalise abortion and treat it as a health rather than criminal issue.

“That change was grounded in the fundamental belief that it’s a woman’s right to choose. People are absolutely entitled to have deeply held

convictions on this issue. But those personal beliefs should never rob another from making their own decisions.

“To see that principle now lost in the United States feels like a loss for women everywhere. When there are so many issues to tackle, so many challenges that face women and girls, we need progress, not to fight the same fights and move backwards.”

Johnson described the court ruling as a “big step backwards”, and hundreds took to the streets of London and Edinburgh to demonstrate against the decision.

Nicola Sturgeon, leader of the Scottish Nationalist party, the third biggest party in the UK parliament, said it was “one of the darkest days for women’s rights in my lifetime … this will embolden anti-abortion and anti-women forces in other countries too”.

One of the darkest days for women’s rights in my lifetime. Obviously the immediate consequences will be suffered by women in the US - but this will embolden anti-abortion & anti-women forces in other countries too. Solidarity doesn’t feel enough right now - but it is necessary. <https://t.co/T1656BPQuL>

— Nicola Sturgeon (@NicolaSturgeon) [June 24, 2022](#)

Trudeau said that “no government, politician or man should tell a woman what she can and cannot do with her body”, adding that he “can’t imagine the fear and anger” women in the US must be experiencing in the wake of the ruling.

No government, politician, or man should tell a woman what she can and cannot do with her body. I want women in Canada to know that we will always stand up for your right to choose.

— Justin Trudeau (@JustinTrudeau) [June 24, 2022](#)

The French foreign ministry urged US federal authorities “to do everything possible” to ensure American women have continued access to abortions, calling it a “health and survival issue”. France’s president, Emmanuel Macron, added in a tweet that “abortion is a fundamental right of all women”.

The former Australian prime minister Julia Gillard called on women to keep fighting for their rights and retweeted Michelle Obama’s statement in which the former US first lady said she was “heartbroken” about the decision.

I fully endorse these words and Michelle Obama’s call to all of us to keep fighting for women’s rights. <https://t.co/j7x9ua2NXv>

— Julia Gillard (@JuliaGillard) [June 25, 2022](#)

Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, head of the World Health Organization, said on Twitter that he was “concerned and disappointed” by the ruling, and that it reduced both “women’s rights and access to health care”.

The UN agency dealing with sexual and reproductive health said that whether or not abortion was legal, “it happens all too often” and global data showed that restricting access made abortion more deadly.

The United Nations population fund issued a statement following the supreme court’s decision noting that its 2022 report said that nearly half of all pregnancies worldwide were unintended and over 60% of those pregnancies might end in abortion.

“A staggering 45% of all abortions around the world are unsafe, making this a leading cause of maternal death,” the agency said.

It said almost all unsafe abortions occurred in developing countries, and it feared that “more unsafe abortions will occur around the world if access to abortion becomes more restricted”.

The court’s overturning of the landmark Roe v Wade decision “shows that these types of rights are always at risk of being steamrolled”, said Ruth

Zurbriggen, an Argentinian activist and member of the Companion Network of Latin America and the Caribbean, a group favouring abortion rights.

However, anti-abortion activists cheered the ruling, with legislator Amalia Granata tweeting: “There is justice again in the world. We are going to achieve this in Argentina too!!”

In El Salvador, anti-abortion campaigner Sara Larín expressed hope the ruling would bolster campaigns against the procedure around the globe.

Larín, president of Fundación Vida SV, said: “I trust that with this ruling it will be possible to abolish abortion in the United States and throughout the world.”

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| [Section menu](#) | [Main menu](#) |

[US news](#)

Democrats hope to tap anger over Roe in November midterms – will it work?

Analysts say more voters should turn out in the wake of the supreme court ruling – but that could help Republicans too



Nancy Pelosi speaks at her weekly press conference on Friday about the overturning of Roe v Wade. Pundits say it's not clear the ruling will help Democrats. Photograph: Mary F Calvert/Reuters

[Edward Helmore](#) in New York

Sat 25 Jun 2022 02.00 EDT Last modified on Sat 25 Jun 2022 07.35 EDT

“This fall, Roe is on the ballot,” Joe Biden told American voters in the wake of the US supreme court’s decision to scrap abortion rights.

The US president was merely echoing a chorus of [Democrats](#) urging voters to elect pro abortion-rights lawmakers in November’s midterm elections in a

bid to wrest greater control of Congress and perhaps allow abortion rights to be enshrined in legislation.

But it is also a tactic to try and inject Democratic voters with a sense of urgency and activism as the midterms approach, as currently the political establishment expect Biden and the Democrats to face a defeat at the hands of a resurgent Republican party.

Until Roe fell – triggering a slew of Republican-led states to immediately move to ban abortion – Biden and his party have appeared moribund, and down in many polls. Buffeted by immense trouble passing a domestic agenda and hit by soaring inflation, Biden's popularity has plummeted.

But will the fall of Roe help Democrats reverse course on what looks like their current path to defeat? Or could the decision also help motivate the Republican base as the supreme court's decision revealed the benefits to them of using power?

Hank Sheinkopf, a veteran Democrat strategist, said it was too soon to know how far the court's momentous decision to return the abortion issue to individual US states would go toward shaping voter's priorities in November.

"In states that Democrats do well generally, this will motivate turnout. In states where they do not do well, it will also motivate turnout – but not for the Democrats," he says. "The issue is purple states, like Michigan, Georgia and Nevada, where you have equal numbers of Democrats and Republicans."

Four months out from November, voters are signaling that their priorities are rising crime, and inflation that has seen basic living costs shoot up for money, especially when it comes to gas prices.

"If the question is will abortion help swing the election, the answer is probably not, though it could help in states where there's a reasonable balance between Democrats and Republicans," Sheinkopf says.

“The presumption is that more women will turn out – but that depends on what’s going in those states at the time. People will make their decisions based on what’s most personal to them,” he adds. “Six or seven dollars a gallon of gasoline, a sense that things are out of control as the Democrats run the country, an increase in homicides nationally, may be better motivators for a majority of voters than Roe v Wade.”

Sonia Ossorio, the president of Now [National Organization for Women] New York, said: “I don’t see how this cannot energize voters. Women are fed up. Formula shortages, childcare shortages, gas prices, losing their jobs in unprecedented numbers during the pandemic, and now having our reproductive freedom gutted by the supreme court.

“The response we’re getting is unprecedented in my two decades in the women’s rights movement.”

The court’s decision establishes political battlegrounds for abortion across the 50 states. Already, many with conservative-leaning legislatures are banning or poised to ban many or most abortions. Nearly 400 abortion-related laws have been passed across US states since 2009, with 85% designed to restrict, regulate or oppose access, [according to a Bloomberg News analysis](#).

Kelsy Kretschmer, professor of sociology at the University of California, Irvine, and co-author of [a study](#) examining women’s voting patterns, says it’s not clear that the decision will be help Democrats in a measurable way.

“A significant proportion of white women are conservative and form the backbone of the pro-life movement and this is the thing they often care the most about. For Democrats, if you lose half of white women, you don’t have a winning majority of women,” she said.

There are splits, too, over abortion rights even within Democrat-aligned voters, where conservative Democrats may oppose federal funding for abortion.

At the same time, Kretschmer says, abortion rights have always been part of the Democratic platform. “It’s a core tenet of the Democratic party and most

understand that outlawing abortion completely is a non-starter.”

But predicting how Friday’s ruling will affect November’s vote is outside the scope of prior experience. When Roe v Wade was decided in 1973, abortion did not play the public role it plays now.

“The research is quite clear that people don’t make voting decisions about abortion rights. People tend to have strong opinions one way or the other, but it doesn’t tend to affect their vote choice,” Kretschmer says.

But she points out that this was prior to this moment in which Roe vs Wade may only be among the first of the women’s rights dominos to fall or could open the way to repealing rights around contraception and marriage equality. “The hope is among Democrats and the feminist movement in general, this time will be different and enough to shake people out of complacency about it,” she said.

She added: “We’ve never really had a moment like this, where something so woven into basic political and civic life was ripped out all at once. That moment for abortion is now and we’ve just never seen it before. So the hope is just that – that this is a watershed moment.”

Nancy Pelosi, the Democratic speaker of the House, certainly sees it that way. Voting for Democrats in November, she said, is the only way to try and reverse the fall of Roe – or prevent even worse things happening.

“Be aware of this: The Republicans are plotting a nationwide abortion ban. They cannot be allowed to have a majority in the Congress to do that,” Pelosi said. “A woman’s right to choose, reproductive freedom, is on the ballot in November.”

This article was downloaded by **calibre** from <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2022/jun/25/democrats-abortion-roe-v-wade-november-midterms>

[Abortion](#)

‘We will fight like hell’: US western states band together to protect abortion rights

California, Oregon and Washington pledged to defend access and protect those seeking care as the US came to grips with losing Roe v Wade



Gavin Newsom, California’s governor, joined with governors in Oregon and Washington to make their states a haven for those seeking abortions.
Photograph: Rich Pedroncelli/AP

Gabrielle Canon
@GabrielleCanon

Sat 25 Jun 2022 01.00 EDT Last modified on Sat 25 Jun 2022 09.00 EDT

The Democratic state governors of [California](#), Oregon and Washington issued a new commitment to enshrine abortion rights across the west coast

on Friday, as the US grappled with the supreme court's ruling removing the federal right to abortion.

Calling their states a “a safe haven for all people seeking abortions and other reproductive health care services”, the California governor Gavin Newsom, [Oregon](#) governor Kate Brown and Washington governor Jay Inslee pledged to defend access to reproductive healthcare and protect those who cross their borders from other states seeking care.

They vowed to hamper out-of-state investigations or efforts to target those who receive services in their states, including barring local law enforcement from cooperating with outside agencies.

“California has banded together with Oregon and Washington to stand up for women, and to protect access to reproductive healthcare,” Newsom said in a statement. “We will not sit on the sidelines and allow patients who seek reproductive care in our states or the doctors that provide that care to be intimidated with criminal prosecution. We refuse to go back and we will fight like hell to protect our rights and our values.”

The supreme court decision on Friday to overturn Roe v Wade, [the landmark decision](#) that had protected reproductive rights in the US for nearly five decades, paves the way for a slew of states that intend to roll back abortion rights. [At least 26 states](#) are expected to ban abortion immediately or as soon as is practical after the decision, affecting 40 million people. Those who are less affluent, the young, Black and brown people, and those with children already are likely to bear the brunt of those rollbacks.



Planned Parenthood workers show support from a balcony during a march in West Hollywood, California. Photograph: Caroline Brehman/EPA

But even in liberal states where leaders have consistently voiced strong commitments to reproductive rights and rebuked the Republican-led states that led the charge to dismantle them, [key challenges to abortion access – and battlegrounds – remain.](#)

“The threat to patient access and privacy has never been more dangerous,” said Inslee, the Washington governor, noting that even as his state continues to uphold abortion rights, Republicans in the state have introduced at least four dozen bills over the last six years aimed at rolling them back. “The right of choice should not depend on which party holds the majority, but that’s where we find ourselves,” Inslee added.

Even in California, where abortion access is backed by statute and where legislators are working to enshrine [reproductive freedoms](#) into the state’s constitution, some residents still face significant barriers to get care. So-called “access deserts” cover large swaths of the state, especially in more conservative and rural areas including the central valley and in the far north. In 40% of California counties [there isn’t a single clinic](#) that provides abortions. As the state positions itself as a sanctuary for others, some

advocates are concerned that residents may struggle to find the care they need.

“As more and more people come in from out of state seeking abortions, it’s going to put more pressure on a system that’s already strained,” [said Laura Jiménez](#), the executive director of California Latinas for Reproductive Justice.

Already, some California residents have to travel hours across their county lines in order to receive care.



Abortion rights supporters gather outside Los Angeles city hall. Photograph: Caroline Brehman/EPA

High costs have also hampered access. Even without transportation expenses, an abortion can run hundreds of dollars for those without insurance. Many, especially those with complicated cases or who are farther along in their pregnancies, aren’t able to afford the costs or coordinate travel quickly. Language barriers and misinformation have only complicated the issues, spurring fear of criminalization and deportation that stops immigrants without legal status from seeking the care they need.

Still, important investments have been made in the three states to shore up their pledges, including a \$125m reproductive health package proposed by

Newsom in California to expand access. Oregon's Reproductive Health Equity Act offers free reproductive healthcare to some Oregonians and a new bill signed by Inslee this year protects professionals in the state who [provide abortions](#) from out-of-state prosecution. Advocates say there is still a lot more work to be done.

Reproductive rights are expected to be a key issue in future elections in these states and across the country. Already, Democratic lawmakers have used the [supreme court's decision](#) to fundraise, signifying the fight that lays ahead. Public opinion is on their side – [roughly 85% of Americans](#) support abortion access.

But for now, the states along the west coast will continue to offer care and position themselves as a go-to destination.

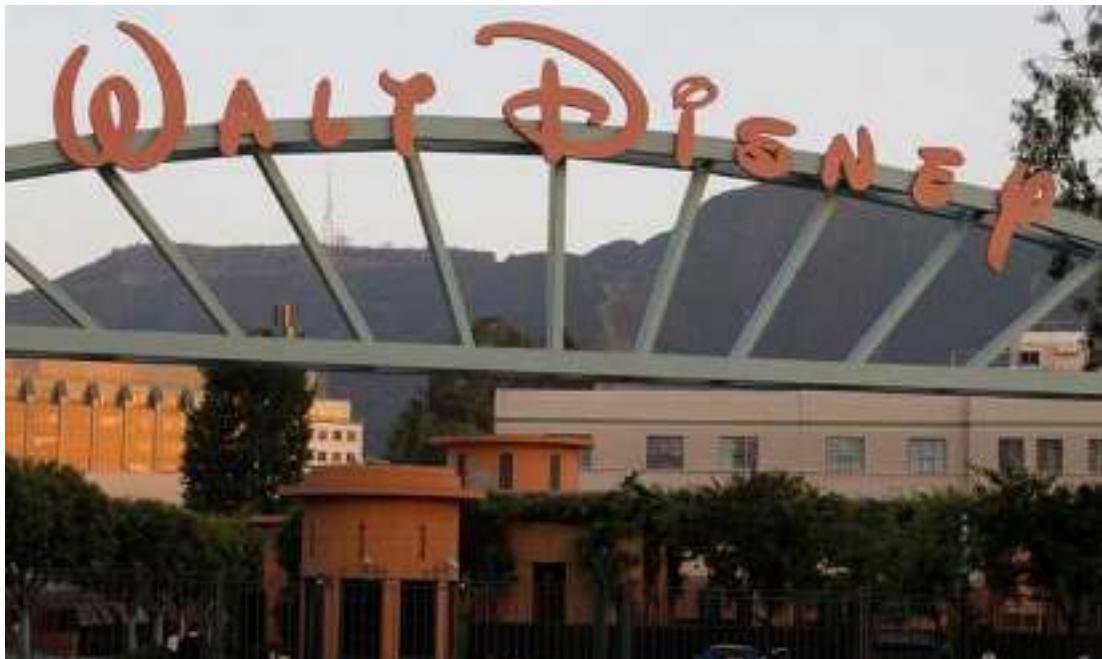
“Abortion is healthcare, and no matter who you are or where you come from, Oregon doesn’t turn away anyone seeking healthcare,” said Brown of Oregon, “For all the Americans today feeling scared, angry and disappointed – for everyone who needs an abortion and does not know where they can access safe reproductive health care: please know you are not alone, and the fight is not over.”

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Roe v Wade

Companies scramble to protect abortion access for employees after court ruling

Disney, JP Morgan, Levi Strauss, Microsoft and others are offering to cover travel expenses but face a Republican backlash



Disney said it was committed to providing its employees with healthcare ‘including family planning and reproductive care, no matter where they live’. Photograph: Fred Prouser/Reuters

[Dominic Rushe](#)

[@dominicru](#)

Sat 25 Jun 2022 01.00 EDT Last modified on Sat 25 Jun 2022 01.03 EDT

Some of America’s largest companies moved swiftly to protect their employees’ access to abortion after Friday’s supreme court decision to [end the constitutional right](#) to an abortion in the US. The moves are likely to deepen an expanding rift between conservative Republicans and corporate America.

Disney, JP Morgan, Levi Strauss and Microsoft were among the companies to tell staff they would cover employee travel expenses for abortions in light of the supreme court's decision to strike down [Roe v Wade](#), the 1973 ruling that the constitution generally protects the right to choose an abortion.

"We recognize the impact of the ruling and that we remain committed to providing comprehensive access to quality and affordable care for all of our employees, cast members and their families, including family planning and reproductive care, no matter where they live," Disney said in a statement.

In a statement Levi Strauss said: "We stand strongly against any actions that hinder the health and well-being of our employees, which means opposing any steps to restrict access to the full range of reproductive health care, including abortion.

"Protection of reproductive rights is a critical business issue impacting our workforce, our economy, and progress toward gender and racial equity. Given what is at stake, business leaders need to make their voices heard and act to protect the health and well-being of our employees."

The upending of Roe has left businesses scrambling to reassess their policies.

Jen Stark, co-director of the [Center for Business and Social Justice](#), said the ruling was "deeply destabilizing" for companies and their employees and the situation would probably get worse.

"The fall of Roe is just the end of the beginning. We will see more extreme public policy, unfortunately, at the state level and with even more extreme policy if there is a willingness at the federal level," she said.

Republican legislators are already [threatening companies](#) that have said they will offer staff assistance in getting an abortion. After Citigroup revealed it would give staff travel assistance, conservatives in Congress [asked](#) House and Senate administrators to cancel its contract with the company.

Legal scholars said Friday's ruling could open the way for attacks on other rights, including same-sex marriage, at a time when companies are facing

Republican backlash for supporting the LGBTQ community.

Disney is at [loggerheads with Ron DeSantis](#), Florida's governor and a potential Republican presidential candidate, over his "don't say gay" bill, which bans teachers from holding classroom instruction about sexual orientation or gender identity.

"Proponents of extreme policy do issue a lot of punitive rhetoric," said Stark. "Ultimately a larger story is that these moves are economically destabilizing [for corporations] and sow a lot of chaos. On that issue alone, companies' antennas are up."

Stark said companies may have tolerated extreme rhetoric in the past because they got what they needed in terms of tax and regulatory issues. Now "the collateral damage has increased, making it harder for companies to say one thing and do another, and the cost of that is going to be higher than the perception of backlash," she said.

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Table of Contents

[The Guardian 2022.06.26 \[Sun, 26 Jun 2022\]](#)

[2022.06.26 - Opinion](#)

[Women must be allowed to defend abortion as a sex-based right](#)

[The Observer view on why Britain needs Tory MPs to oust Boris Johnson](#)

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