

Evening Standard

TAMMY EYES EUROS AFTER LFA DOUBLE

CHELSEA STAR IS BIG WINNER AT LONDON FOOTBALL AWARDS » SPORT PAGE 52



MEET BBC 1'S NEW POWER PAIRING

HOW NOUGHTS + CROSSES WAS LIKE THERAPY » STAYING IN PAGE 34



DOZENS OF NEW CASES AS VIRUS SPREADS

» MAJOR OUTBREAK STARTING IN BRITAIN
» NUMBER OF GLOBAL VICTIMS TO HIT 100,000

Nicholas Cecil and Joe Murphy

ABOUT 40 new cases of coronavirus were confirmed in Britain today as the Government's chief scientific adviser said an outbreak in this country had now started.

The sharp rise means the number of cases has almost quadrupled in a week, from 40 on Monday to about 150 today. Some of this increase is due to testing and surveillance by hospitals and GPs being ramped up.

However, Sir Patrick Vallance said it was now evident that

Covid-19 is spreading here from person to person, having been largely imported from infection hotspots such as Italy and Iran. "This is a global epidemic and we would expect to see more cases in the UK," Sir Patrick told Sky News this morning. "This is the start of an outbreak clearly."

His warning came as:

● Boris Johnson announced an extra £46 million funding, drawn from aid money, for scientific research, setting a

Continued on Page 4

THE DUKE AND DUCHESS OF SUSSEX/CHRIS ALBERTON



Tale of the unexpected: the Duchess of Sussex at the National Theatre on her visit to London. She looked at a new immersive story-telling studio FULL STORY: Page 3

MEGHAN'S NEW CHAPTER FOR NATIONAL THEATRE



Disney **FROZEN** THE WEST END MUSICAL

O₂ Priority Theatre Royal Drury Lane ❄️ Begins October

INSIDE TODAY 06.03.20**Going Out****ATTEN-SHUN!**

The story of the Military Wives choir hits the big screen

» Page 29

**News in Focus****SHE'S A FIGHTER**

Boxer Ramla Ali on inspiring women and 2020 medal hopes

» Pages 24 & 25

**ES Magazine****REBEL REBEL**

British actress Imogen Poots on Weinstein, hard work and fighting sexism in Hollywood



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Comment**Susannah Butter**

Only children could save the planet — but take it from me, it's not easy growing up solo

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LIGHTS

Sunset & lighting-up: 5.50pm, rises 6.31am; Moon rise: 1.22pm, sets 5.07am
High water: London Bridge 10.43am (6.1m), 11.24pm (6.1m). Dover 8.14am (5.6m), 8.46pm (5.8m).

London's weather

TONIGHT
Dry with clear skies and gentle winds
MAX **6C**
MIN **1C**



TOMORROW
A bright start. Grey and cloudy later
MAX **12C**
MIN **9C**



SUNDAY
Sunny spells and one or two showers
MAX **13C**
MIN **3C**



MONDAY
Grey with outbreaks of rain. Strong winds
MAX **11C**
MIN **8C**



TUESDAY
Rain. Bright with showers later. Breezy
MAX **15C**
MIN **7C**



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IN BRIEF**GOVERNMENT ANNOUNCES £8m EU SETTLEMENT SCHEME FUNDING POT**

THE Home Office is providing an extra £8 million of funding to help vulnerable people apply to the EU Settlement Scheme after it came under fire over the support available. Charities and local authorities can bid for the cash to offer advice in person, online and over the phone to EU citizens already living in the UK. Immigration minister Kevin Foster said: "This new funding means no stone will be left unturned in ensuring everyone gets the help they need."

PET PROJECT FOR SMITH AS SHE HOSTS DOG GROOMING TV SHOW

SHERIDAN SMITH was today announced as the host of a new BBC show about dog grooming. Hopefuls will compete to be the UK's top dog stylist on Pooch Perfect. Actress Smith, 38, who is pregnant with her first child, owns six dogs. The show has yet to be given a broadcast date.

**SEX ATTACKER, 18, WHO PREYED ON WOMEN IS JAILED FOR 14 YEARS**

A TEENAGE sex attacker described as a "woman's worst nightmare" was jailed for 14 years. Shomari Alexander, 18, preyed on young women in the Tulse Hill area from 2018-19. The crimes were only interrupted because his victims called for help, attracting bystanders, who chased him off. At Inner London crown court, he was given an extended sentence of 14 years with an additional five years' licence. He will also remain on the sex offenders register for life.

Camilla's call to end the 'power of coercive control and violence in the home'

Robert Jobson Royal Editor

THE Duchess of Cornwall today made an impassioned plea to tackle domestic abuse and help those who suffer in silence.

With two women a week in Britain dying at the hands of their partners, Camilla, president of Women Of The World, called for urgent action to end the "power of coercive control and violence" in the home.

At the opening of the WOW Festival at the Southbank Centre this morning, the duchess said: "I find it almost impossible to think that any friend of mine might be living under that horrific threat, without my knowing it, but that is the power of coercive control and violence in the home."

"It is characterised by silence — silence from those that suffer, silence from those around them, and silence from those who perpetrate abuse. This silence is corrosive; it leaves women, children and men carrying the burden of shame."

"It prevents them from speaking out about the abuse and it prevents them from getting help. And at its worst it can be fatal."

The festival runs for three days to explore the state of gender equality across the globe and features speakers, activists and performers.

The duchess spoke at its opening session, Domestic Violence — Everyone's Problem. Afterwards she used her first ever hashtag, #Everyone'sProblem, to support a campaign to raise awareness of domestic violence and coercive control.

The initiative is led by a number of charities, including Refuge and SafeLives.

Camilla, a long-time champion in the fight to end domestic abuse, went on: "Charity begins at home. But so does domestic violence. Three-quarters of violence against women happens in a place where a woman should feel safest — her own home."

"And just imagine: one in four women in this country will suffer domestic violence in their lifetime."

She added: "We all welcome the new laws on coercive control, but laws alone cannot change behaviour. The dial is moving forward, but last



Impassioned plea: the Duchess of Cornwall with businesswoman Gina Miller and Met chief Dame Cressida Dick at the Southbank Centre today

control. The initiative is led by a number of charities, including Refuge and SafeLives.

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"And just imagine: one in four women in this country will suffer domestic violence in their lifetime."

She added: "We all welcome the new laws on coercive control, but laws alone cannot change behaviour."

"The dial is moving forward, but last

year, two women a week were killed by current or former partners in England and Wales alone. We are in 2020, and still these abused people all over the country cannot feel secure and safe at home.

"What can be done? We must bring this taboo subject out in the open and talk about it. We all need to understand what coercive control is, how insidious it is, and how it so often leads to repeated violence."

The duchess added: "Of course, it is not always men who abuse. It is not always women who are abused. Let's not forget that this is a complicated issue."

"The campaign to end domestic violence needs the voices of men as well as women challenging the cultural, economic and political context in which we all experience the world."

"We will all benefit from building a society which will simply not tolerate this heinous crime any longer."

Launched by theatre director and producer Jude Kelly in 2010, WOW festivals aim to celebrate women and girls by raising awareness of the issues that prevent them achieving their potential and discussing solutions together.

To date WOW has reached over two million people in 17 countries on six continents with more than 80 festivals and events held.

Camilla became president of WOW in 2015 having been involved with the organisation since 2010.

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International Women's Day Page 23

Chancellor delays £100bn infrastructure plans

Joe Murphy and Sophia Sleight

CHANCELLOR Rishi Sunak has postponed the £100 billion National Infrastructure Strategy to give the plans "proper time and care", Downing Street said today.

Mr Sunak tweeted this morning that his Budget next Wednesday "will lay the foundations for a decade of growth", but some flagship announcements are being held back while he considers ways to include carbon reductions.

Sir John Armitt, chairman of the National Infrastructure Commission,

said he was "disappointed" at any delay but ministers were still committed to infrastructure investment.

Sir John said: "Naturally we are disappointed about the further delay in the Government's formal response to the national infrastructure assessment, which we published over 18 months ago. However, we are encouraged by the evident focus the Government wishes to place on investing in the UK's future infrastructure. If a short delay leads to a better strategy ... it will be worth the wait."

The Prime Minister's spokesman said

of the delay: "It's appropriate we give these decisions the proper time and care they deserve." The Budget would contain "considerable investment plans", he said, adding that officials were working on the National Infrastructure Plan "as a priority" and it would follow in "the coming months".

John McDonnell, shadow chancellor, said the delay showed "absolute chaos" in government. "We are facing the threat of climate change and an economy at risk of recession ... Delaying implementation of investment is unacceptable," he said.

Facing the future: Duchess of Sussex's hi-tech trip to hologram studio at National Theatre

EXCLUSIVE

Robert Jobson Royal Editor

THE Duchess of Sussex stands next to a hologram on a private visit to the National Theatre to see a hi-tech exhibit.

Meghan, who is royal patron of the theatre, visited the Immersive Storytelling Studio yesterday afternoon before attending the Endeavour Fund Awards with husband Prince Harry.

The duchess, back in the UK for a final round of official engagements before she and Harry quit as senior members of the royal family, gave permission for the Evening Standard to have this exclusive photograph because she believes the studio and its work is so important to showcase.

She viewed emerging technology, such as virtual reality, which is being used to develop new forms of dramatic storytelling.

The duchess is pictured here with a hologram of singer Nubiya Brandon, which was featured in the National's exhibition *All Kinds Of Limbo*. It ran at the theatre's Wolfson Gallery last year and uses holographic technology to take audiences on a musical journey to reflect the influence of West Indian and black culture on the UK music scene. It is now on show at Tate Modern.

The duchess is to continue as patron of the National despite the announcement that she and Harry are stepping down as senior royals.

In addition to their official engagements over the next few days, Harry and Meghan are also meeting privately with several of their patronages.

Today Harry was joining six-times Formula One world champion Lewis Hamilton to open a museum at the Silverstone circuit, The Silverstone Experience, which charts British motor racing history with hands-on exhibits. It is also the new home of the British Racing Drivers' Club archive.

Last night Harry told how he was "proud to serve Queen and country" at one of the couple's final events.

They attended the Endeavour Fund Awards at Mansion House to recognise the sporting and adventure achievements of wounded, sick and injured service personnel.

It was the first time the duchess has carried out a public royal duty in the wake of the "Megxit" crisis, but the couple seemed in good spirits. In a



THE DUCHESS OF SUSSEX/CHRIS ALLERTON

Private visit: the Duchess of Sussex poses next to a hologram of singer Nubiya Brandon at the National Theatre. Below, Harry with Lewis Hamilton at Silverstone today



speech at the reception, Harry told the audience: "Meghan and I are so happy to be back with you," before they both handed out awards. Addressing the veterans, Harry, who served with the

Blues and Royals and the Army Air Corps, spoke of the honour of serving his grandmother. He said: "Being able to serve Queen and country is something we all are rightly proud of, and it

never leaves us. Once served, always serving!"

The couple will attend the Mountbatten Festival of Music at the Royal Albert Hall tomorrow, and Meghan will mark

International Women's Day on Sunday. They will join the Queen and other royals at the Commonwealth Day service in Westminster Abbey on Monday, their last official appearance as royals.

Bacon triptych set for £46m sale to fund museum 'in perpetuity'

Robert Dex
Arts Correspondent

A FRANCIS Bacon triptych was unveiled in London today before it goes to auction where it is expected to sell for more than \$60 million (£46 million).

The painting went on show at Sotheby's in New Bond Street and will go on sale at its New York branch on May 13.

The work, which is formally known as the Triptych Inspired By The Oresteia Of Aeschylus, is almost two metres high and was bought from Bacon's London gallery in 1984 by Norwegian collector Hans Rasmus Astrup.

The billionaire businessman said he will use the money from selling the

painting to help pay for the private art museum, called the Astrup Fearnley Museet, he runs in Oslo.

He said: "Astrup Fearnley Museet is meant to be a lasting resource for the public, as it builds on the existing collection and grows beyond it. With this single sale we can ensure that the museum and collection are here in perpetuity."

Alex Branczik, head of contemporary art for Sotheby's Europe, said the painting — which was inspired by a trilogy of ancient Greek tragedies — showed Bacon's "arresting and original vision" and was "a true masterpiece that confirms Bacon's standing in the pantheon of modern masters". He added: "Over



"Masterpiece": the Francis Bacon triptych went on show at Sotheby's London today

the decades, Hans Rasmus Astrup has put together one of the pre-eminent collections of contemporary art in

Europe. An early advocate for the art of our time, he has never shied away from collecting and exhibiting the most rad-

ical and challenging contemporary artists, contributing significantly to the cultural landscape in Norway and beyond.

"At Sotheby's we are delighted to help support his vision, so that Astrup Fearnley Museet can continue to be a Nordic beacon for contemporary artistic practice for decades to come."

Bacon painted 28 large-scale triptychs but only six have ever come to auction, including the Three Studies Of Lucian Freud which went for a then-record amount of \$142.2 million (£109 million) when it was sold in 2013.

The painter, who was born in Ireland but lived and worked in London for most of his life, died in 1992.

Infection more likely to spread

Continued from Page 1

target for UK labs to develop a vaccine in a record-breaking 12 months. The cash will also help roll out a home-testing kit in time for the summer peak.

● The number of Covid-19 cases worldwide was set to breach the 100,000 mark, with more than 3,300 deaths. Scientists said the real figures are almost certainly higher.

● Sir Patrick said infected people may be less likely to spread the virus at a football match than watching the

game in a pub, a more confined space.

● Health Secretary Matt Hancock said the Government is working with supermarkets to ensure food supplies as the number of people self-isolating with coronavirus is expected to rise sharply. With some supermarkets seeing their shelves cleared of essentials such as toilet roll and paracetamol, Mr Hancock stressed there was "absolutely no need" for individual people "to go round buying more than they need."

● Fraudsters have stolen at least £800,000 from people panic-buying,

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[standard.co.uk/coronavirus](https://www.standard.co.uk/coronavirus)

including £15,000 from one person who tried to stockpile face masks, said the National Fraud Intelligence Bureau. And experts said people working from home due to the virus are being targeted by hackers. Dr Asma Adnane said businesses must invest in security

before letting staff remotely access data.

● Parcel firm Hermes earned praise for announcing a £1 million fund to support delivery drivers who cannot work because they are self-isolating.

The first Covid-19 linked fatality was confirmed in the UK yesterday by the Royal Berkshire NHS Trust in Reading — a woman in her seventies who had been suffering from underlying health conditions.

So far about a third of the cases in the UK, 42 out of 116, have been in London or the South-East, with the number of cases jumping in recent days as health officials stepped up efforts to identify them. Health officials had, as of yesterday, not identified the source of 10 cases of the infection.

"We are in the position now where we have got person-to-person transmission of this in the UK and therefore we can expect more cases... This is now outbreaks in the community where we have got some individuals that we don't know where it has come from and therefore that tells you that something is circulating... we are definitely in that phase," explained Sir Patrick.

The known outbreaks are understood to be small-scale at the moment, often transmission between families or close contacts.

Sir Patrick, who has decided not to shake people's hands, said the Government was preparing to move from the "contain" phase to attempts to "delay" a major outbreak to the late spring or early summer, when the peak could be less acute as the virus may struggle to spread so quickly in warmer weather,



The very, very strong advice from scientists is that people should not go buying more than they need

Health Secretary Matt Hancock

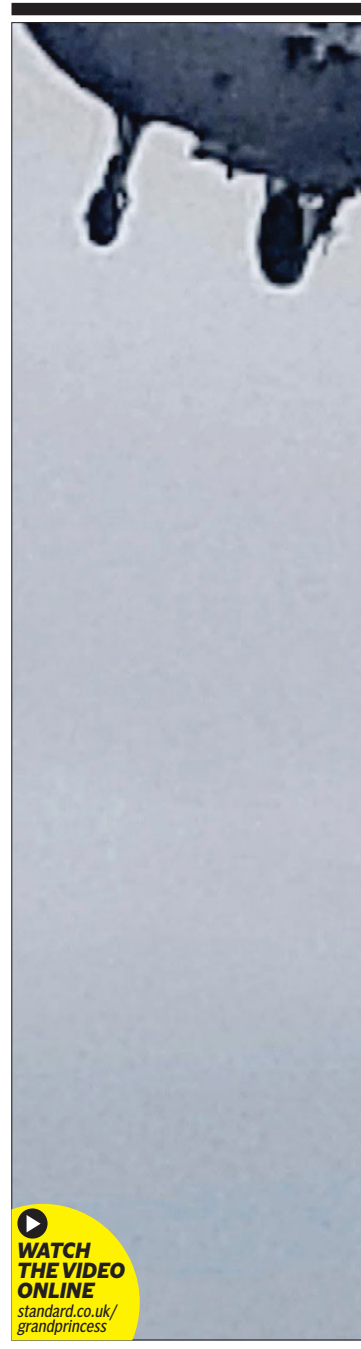
the NHS is likely to be under less pressure, and it may be easier to pick up on cases as there will be less flu about. He explained that an epidemic here could take 12 weeks to peak and then roughly the same period to dissipate, with 95 per cent of cases within a nine-week period, and about half of them in three weeks. The virus might be mutating, and it could be getting more infectious but less deadly.

Currently, it is believed to be about five to 10 times as fatal as flu, but its mortality rate was believed to be one per cent or less.

Given that the vast majority of people are expected to only suffer symptoms like bad flu or less severe, many of those infected will be told to self-isolate at home, as at least 45 people have done already. If they develop severe symptoms, or are in an at-risk group, they are likely to be hospitalised.

Health experts in the UK stepped up their appeal to citizens to wash their hands — the main public health message — but also to try to touch their face less often, and to self-isolate if they have returned from Covid-19 hotspot countries if they develop flu-like symptoms.

As more cases were announced in a swathe of countries this morning, World Health Organisation director general Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus appealed to governments to dramati-



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Representative Example	Duration of Agreement	Upfront Cost	Monthly Device Payment	Credit Amount	Total Amount Payable	Interest Rate	Representative APR	Device Cash Price	Airtime Plan until March 2021	Airtime Plan April 2021 - March 2022	Airtime Plan April 2022 - March 2023
Apple iPhone 11 64GB	36 Months	£49.99	£18.95	£682.01	£732	0%	0%	£732	£19	£19 + RPI% announced in Feb 2021 = Price A	Price A + RPI% announced in Feb 2022

Each year your Airtime Plan will be adjusted on your April bill by the RPI rate of inflation announced in the preceding Feb. See [o2.co.uk/prices](https://www.o2.co.uk/prices). iPhone 11 (64GB) O2 Refresh tariffs start at 1GB of data for £37.95 per month which consists of a £18.95 Device Plan for 36 months and a £19 monthly rolling Airtime Plan. O2 Refresh custom plans: Direct purchases only. Pay the cash price for your device or spread the cost over 3 to 36 months (excludes dongles). The device cost will be the same whatever you choose. There may be an upfront cost. You need a monthly rolling Airtime Plan as long as you have a Device Plan. Pay off your Device Plan at any time and you can choose to keep your Airtime Plan, upgrade, or leave. If your Airtime Plan ends for any reason you will need to pay your Device Plan in full. Device subject to availability. 0% APR. Finance subject to status and credit checks. 18+. Direct Debit. Credit provided by Telefonica UK Ltd, SL1 4DX. Telefonica UK is authorised and regulated by the FCA for consumer credit and insurance. Terms apply, see [o2.co.uk/terms](https://www.o2.co.uk/terms).

cally step up action against the virus. "This is not a drill. This is not the time for giving up. This is not a time for excuses."

South Korea reported 505 additional cases today, down from a high of 851 on Tuesday, taking its total to more than 6,500, with at least 42 deaths.

Germany announced 134 new cases, taking its total to 534, with more than half of the cases (281) in the western region of North Rhine-Westphalia.

More than 3,000 of the deaths worldwide have been in China, while the toll in Italy stood at 148. There are 85 countries outside China reporting infections, with South Africa, the Palestinian ter-

in pub than at football matches



Emergency: test kits being delivered to the Grand Princess cruise ship off the California coast



Test kits airlifted to stricken ship but US admits shortage

David Gardner US Correspondent

CORONAVIRUS test kits have been lowered by helicopter on to a cruise ship being held off San Francisco, as the White House admitted a national shortage of the medical equipment.

The California National Guard flew the kits to the stricken Grand Princess, which is carrying 3,500 holidaymakers and crew. Guests have been confined to their cabins since Wednesday in the latest cruise ship virus scare after an elderly American tourist from a previous voyage died of coronavirus and a number of people fell sick.

The ship's owner, Princess Cruises, said an initial group of 45 people have been identified for testing. Results were expected to be known today.

A total of 142 UK nationals, including 121 passengers and 21 crew, are on board.

Vice President Mike Pence said last night: "We don't have enough tests today to meet what we anticipate the demand going forward." He added: "We've made real progress on that in the last several days."

The death toll in the US climbed to 12 last night, with all but one victim from the north-western state of Washington. There are now more than 200 cases across 20 states.

Mr Pence is co-ordinating the US government's response to the outbreak.

Health experts have claimed that the virus may be spreading undetected through the US because of the lack of test kits.

Health officials say they expect to get



enough kits this week to test 400,000 people. Anne Schuchat, principal deputy director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, said her agency would also supply kits by the end of the week for a further 75,000 people.

President Donald Trump warned that the outbreak "certainly might have an impact" on the economy.

But he insisted he will continue to shake hands with people despite the spread of the virus.

"It's going to all work out, everybody has to be calm, it's going to work out," Mr Trump told a town hall meeting in Scranton, Pennsylvania.

"I love the people of this country and you cannot be a politician and not shake hands," he added. "I'll be shaking hands with people and they want to say hello and hug you and kiss you, I don't care. You have to do that."

Mr Trump is expected to sign a \$8.3 billion (£6.4 billion) bill passed by Congress last night to help local authorities fight the virus.

Battling the virus: medics preparing to test cruise ship passengers, top. Above, a cleaner on the Grand Princess

ritories, and Bosnia reporting their first cases in the past 24 hours.

Mr Hancock sought to reassure the public following panic-buying in some areas. On BBC's Question Time, he said: "The Government has supplies of the key things that are needed, and, within the food supply, we are absolutely confident that there won't be a problem there. And, crucially, we are working to make sure that if people are self-isolating, they will be able to get the food and supplies that they need."

He added: "The very, very strong advice from the scientists, from the medics, is that people should not go buying more than they need."

FIRST CASE IN THE VATICAN



● THE Vatican today announced a patient in one of its clinics had tested positive for coronavirus — the first case in the tiny city state.

Most Vatican employees who use its health services live outside its walls in Italy, which is dealing with Europe's biggest outbreak.

A suspension of Pope Francis's weekly audiences seems more likely now. The Pope has a cold that is "without symptoms related to other pathologies".

Japan's hardline on quarantine sparks row

Ben Morgan

A DIPLOMATIC row erupted today after the Japanese government ordered all visitors from South Korea and China to undergo a mandatory 14-day quarantine period on arrival.

The move prompted a backlash in Seoul, which branded the restrictions "excessive and irrational" and demanded showdown talks.

Japanese government spokesman Yoshihide Suga defended the move and said the "timing was appropriate".

South Korea has the highest number of recorded cases outside of China, with 505 additional cases today, down from a high of 851 on Tuesday.

Bhutan banned entry of tourists for two weeks after recording its first case yesterday, thought to be a US tourist to the kingdom on the edge of the Himalayas.

An Ecuadorian navy ship with 50 people on board was quarantined after one of the crew had contact with the country's first coronavirus case.

The Netherlands today announced

its first death from the virus, an 86-year-old man in Rotterdam. In Germany 134 more cases emerged.

Italy restricted visits to nursing homes after recording 148 deaths. Older people are more vulnerable to Covid-19, but with schools closed they are on grandparenting duties, and therefore at risk of exposure.

Iran planned to limit travel by setting up checkpoints and urged people to stop using paper money. Tehran has recorded more than 3,500 cases and at least 107 deaths.

Thousands of London calls to 111 hotline go unanswered as virus hits South-East hardest

Ross Lydall Health Editor

THOUSANDS of calls from Londoners to the NHS 111 hotline went unanswered last week, it emerged today, as figures revealed the capital and South-East account for a third of all confirmed coronavirus cases in the UK.

Of the overall cases, 25 have been in London with a further 17 in the wider South-East. This has been reflected in the scale of the demand on the helpline, which people have to call if they fear they have coronavirus.

More than 100,000 calls to NHS 111 last week went unanswered. In London, there were 17,146 calls abandoned by people who had waited at least 30 seconds to speak to a call-handler.

A total of 52,446 calls from Londoners to the helpline were answered, including from people with other health issues, though many callers experienced long waits.

Across England, 442,675 calls were made to the 111 helpline in the week ending on Sunday – 120,000 more than the same week last year – and 340,702 were answered.

It came as a London family was today in self-isolation after a parent tested positive for coronavirus. Yerbury primary school, in Islington, announced the diagnosis in a message to parents.

A British businessman who travelled from London has also been diagnosed with Covid-19 in Thailand. He had flown via Hong Kong. In further UK, developments:

- An announcement was awaited this afternoon on whether a patient at a south London hospital had contracted coronavirus.

- The capital has only 101 spare adult critical care beds, with 87 per cent of

the 764 beds occupied on March 1.

- A child at Alder Hey Children's Hospital in Liverpool was reported to have tested positive for coronavirus.

- Health officials are to be asked for advice on whether the mayoral elections on May 7, and the Euro 2020 football tournament in June, should be postponed.

The Islington parent was said not to be seriously ill and the school, in Foxham Road, was remaining open.

Yerbury headteacher Cassie Moss, in a message to parents, said: "A parent in the school community has tested positive for the coronavirus (Covid-19) and is in self-isolation along with their family. We have spoken to the parent and want to reassure you that they are currently experiencing mild symptoms and are well in themselves."

"The parent has not been in the school, or playground, for around a month. The rest of the family currently present with no symptoms."

"We continue to follow all Public Health England guidance. We have been told to continue to maintain high standards of hygiene and to carry on as normal. We have been advised to stay open and will continue to take advice."

The businessman in Thailand, a company consultant, left London on February 28 and changed flights in Hong Kong the following day. He was admitted to a hospital in Thailand on Tuesday with a fever and other symptoms.

Dr Sukhum Kanchanapimai, of the Thai ministry of public health, announced the case today. It brings the total number in Thailand to 48.

NHS England said winter pressures on the NHS had increased on the previous week, with an average of 608 beds a day closed due to norovirus and other

winter vomiting bugs, 99 more a day than the previous week.

On Sunday, 663 of London's 764 adult critical care beds were occupied. This included 47 of the 48 beds at the Royal Free and 80 of the 85 beds at Guy's and St Thomas', the two London trusts that are the specialist centres for coronavirus. It is not known how many of these beds, if any, were occupied by coronavirus patients. Yesterday it emerged that 45 of the UK patients with moderate Covid-19 were in self-isolation at home.

The London Assembly will launch an investigation next week. Experts including Professor Paul Plant, interim health director to the Mayor, Dr Deborah Turbitt, deputy director for health protection in London and Dr Vin Diwakar, London regional medical director, NHS England, will be asked for any likely impact on the City Hall elections and Euro 2020. Wembley is due to host seven games, including both semi-finals and the final, and a fan zone for 30,000 supporters is planned in Greenwich park.

An NHS spokesman said: "NHS staff are working round the clock to respond to the coronavirus outbreak, with 111 services dealing with over 120,000 more calls than the same week last year. That's why we're already recruiting 500 additional initial call responders to answer up to 20,000 more 111 calls every day, with further staffing increases in train, providing a new online service which can provide advice at the touch of a button."

JEREMY SELWYN



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Cape Town	£629	£2,609
Malé	£699	£3,119

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Taking no chances: commuters, tourists and shoppers wear face masks in Paddington and while waiting for a bus in Hampstead, inset top

PM unveils extra £46m to help UK scientists win global race for vaccine

Joe Murphy Political Editor

BORIS JOHNSON today fired up British scientists to win a global race to develop a vaccine against coronavirus in less than a year.

He also pumped money into a British laboratory that hopes to roll out unique home-testing kits within weeks to help families slow the spread of the disease.

Visiting a lab in Bedfordshire, the Prime Minister unveiled an extra £46 million of funding, drawn from international aid money, towards making the breakthroughs that could save millions of lives around the world.

Downing Street said his hope was to slash months off the 18-month schedule that would typically be the shortest timeframe possible to develop a life-saving jab, setting a target of having it ready by this time next year.

"We are ensuring the country is prepared for the current outbreak, guided by the science at every stage," Mr Johnson said. "But we also need to invest now in researching the vaccines that could help prevent future outbreaks."

"I'm very proud that UK experts — backed by government funding — are on the front line of global efforts to do just that."

Scientists are working around the world to try to develop a vaccine. Britain is leading the field, with eight possible vaccines being developed, supported with £65 million from the taxpayer.

Britain was the first to develop a laboratory test for Covid-19, but the process takes several days. Now UK lab, Mologic, which the Prime Minister toured, is attempting to create the first home test to allow nurses and untrained members of the public find out if they have the virus, without sending off samples for testing. Quicker

testing from a home kit would let families know if they need to self-isolate or if they are clear to go to work or school, keeping the economy moving. For developing countries that do not have the laboratory facilities to carry out tests, it would transform their ability to track and tackle coronavirus.

"Rapid testing is going to be key to managing this outbreak," said the Government's chief scientific adviser, Sir Patrick Vallance. "But ultimately, vaccines are going to provide the long-term protection we need."

Sir Patrick said it would have taken 20 years to develop a vaccine in the recent past and warned that it could not be developed in time for the current outbreak, expected to peak in the UK this summer.

"I don't think we'll get something in time or at scale for this outbreak," he told the BBC Radio 4's Today programme. "That said, there have been remarkable changes in the ability to make vaccines and discover vaccines, just in the last few years."

"And it's not unreasonable to assume that we will end up with a vaccine, and we may do so in a year, 18 months, which is remarkable when you consider just a few years ago it would have taken 20 years to do that."

The Government's key message to the public was to wash hands regularly and to avoid face-touching.

CORONAVIRUS ROUND-UP



TORCH CEREMONY FOR OLYMPICS DOWNSIZED

TOKYO Olympics organisers are no longer sending 140 children to Greece to take part in a torch handover ceremony. The torch will be lit on Thursday next week and will be flown to Japan to arrive on March 20, but the arrival ceremony has been downsized. It will be followed by a four-month torch relay due to end on July 24. Despite the spreading virus, organisers held a test event today, using amateurs to test climbing facilities.

£800K LOST TO VIRUS FRAUD IN FEBRUARY, POLICE SAY

VICTIMS have lost £800,000 to coronavirus-related fraud in the first month the crisis hit the UK, police said today.

Of 21 reports to the National Fraud Intelligence Bureau last month, 10 were made by people who attempted to purchase protective face masks from fraudulent sellers. There were also reports of coronavirus-themed phishing emails.

A police spokesman said reporting numbers are expected to rise as the virus continues to spread.

SOAP IS NO PROTECTION FOR STREET CAST MEMBER

A CORONATION STREET cast member is self-isolating as a precaution over coronavirus. There has been no disruption to the filming schedule of the ITV soap.

A spokeswoman said: "The cast member concerned took the decision to self-isolate as a precaution. They haven't been in to work and they are showing no symptoms."

It comes after the release of the new Bond film was delayed due to the virus, and BTS and Stormzy postponed concerts in Asia.

Stock market takes another plunge as infection fears wipe £36bn off shares

Jonathan Prynne
Consumer Business Editor

THE stock market ended another dramatic rollercoaster week with a renewed plunge on coronavirus fears that wiped £36 billion off the value of Britain's biggest quoted companies.

The FTSE-100 index of leading shares slumped 143.97 points, or 2.15 per cent, to stand at 6,561.46 by late morning with no end in sight to the most volatile period in the City since the 2008 financial crisis.

The latest slide meant that the blue-chip index ended the week down having previously recovered some of the ground lost in last week's £200-billion wipe-out.

It followed a night of heavy falls on Asian markets and another day of carnage on Wall Street with the Dow Jones industrial average plummeting



Taking stock: a trader in a face mask on a dealing floor in Seoul, South Korea

by 969.58 points, or 3.6 per cent, to 26,121.28 yesterday.

City economists have slashed forecasts for economic growth this year with US investment bank Goldman Sachs warning that disruption could push Britain to the brink of recession.

Russ Mould, investment director at

brokers AJ Bell, said: "Non-stop news headlines about the spread of coronavirus has caused investors to be very concerned about a global recession. This tension is likely to remain front and centre until we get some evidence that the virus can be contained."

Meanwhile cinema chain Cineworld said there was no sign yet that the outbreak has dampened demand to see movies despite the seven-month delay in the release of the new James Bond film No Time To Die.

Nevertheless shares in the company fell seven per cent on fears that the public may increasingly stay away from places where they worry they may pick up the illness. Some film industry analysts have reportedly estimated the outbreak could wipe £4 billion off the global box office.

Business Page 45

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GCE LIVE

Evening Standard

Tube could be hit by joint strike as 10,000 staff begin ballot over pay row

Dick Murray

THE threat of a Tube strike escalated today as 10,000 staff began a ballot in a dispute over pay.

Members of the RMT union, including drivers, will vote and are expected to endorse a strike call. The ballot result is due at the end of the month.

Union leaders at the RMT and Aslef have rejected a four-year pay deal. They have agreed to meet London Underground management at conciliation service Acas next Tuesday but there is no new deal on the table.

More than 2,400 Tube drivers

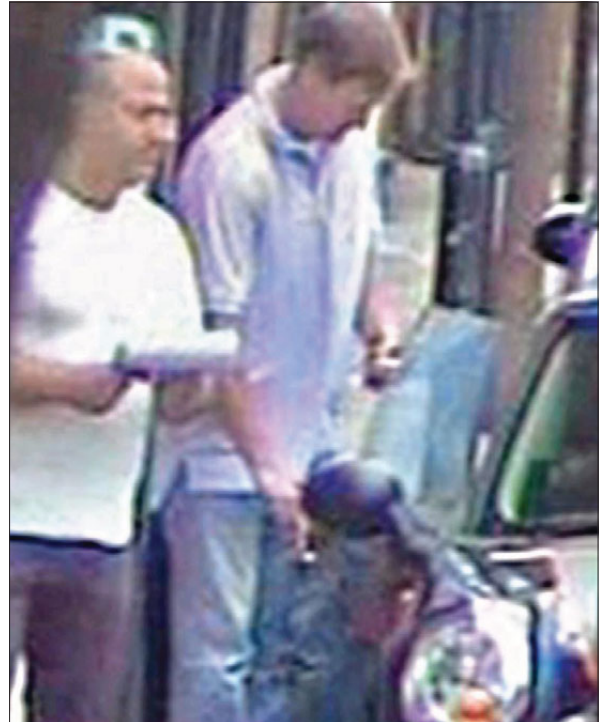
belonging to Aslef will conclude their own ballot later next week and are also forecast to back strike action. The first combined stoppages by the unions could begin in mid-April.

Transport for London said the pay deal guarantees above-inflation rises. RMT leader Mick Cash said LU had "failed to come up with an offer that would fully recognise the efforts of their workforce day in and day out".

Southeastern commuters suffered major disruption today as engineers checked tracks between Dover Priory and Folkestone Central after rocks fell following torrential rain yesterday.



Illicit gains: surveillance images of Tony Antoniou, left, and Tommy Adams with a Mini, and a plastic bag of cash



That's another £100k you owe: gangster caught by brag on tape

Martin Bentham
Home Affairs Editor

A BOAST by one of London's most notorious organised crime bosses about a planned new home in Cyprus has cost him more than £100,000 after prosecutors used it to boost the sum he must repay.

Tommy Adams told an associate that he had bought land in Limassol at a knock-down price from a vendor who was "desperate" to sell. But his bragging backfired when he found out after his arrest that his conversation had been bugged by law enforcers.

They used his boast to prove to a confiscation hearing at Croydon crown court that the £110,000 he used to buy the land should be handed back to the taxpayer, and it was added to the order imposed by the court. This totalled £1.24 million when other assets including two properties in Bow in east London were taken into account.

But the blunder by Adams, who the court was told operated like a "financial ghost" by using intermediaries to launder his criminal profits, has amused law enforcers. "Adams thought he'd been clever by getting the land so cheaply, but he wasn't as clever as he thought because his showing off has cost him a small fortune," said one source.

Adams, 61, was given his confiscation order last week but the recording of him bragging about his purchase has been released by prosecutors to highlight the way in which confiscation legislation

can be used to seize back profits even on the basis of boasts.

In the recording, Adams is heard telling one of his criminal associates: "Bit of land I bought a few months ago. It's cost me no money ... hundred and ten thousand, sterling. They wanted two hundred at first ... fella desperate. It's land, that's it. I'm going to get an architect ... draw up the plans."

The land that Adams referred to has not been identified, but proceeds of crime legislation does not require prosecutors to locate assets. They must only show, on the balance of probability, that the money used in a purchase was illicit.

Surveillance photos of Adams and accomplices were used as evidence in the confiscation hearing. They included one of him and a fellow money launderer, Tony Antoniou, with a Mini that had been bought by another of their accomplices. The vehicle was given to Adams's daughter for her 21st birthday. Another image showed a plastic bag of cash that was exchanged at Euston station. Police later discovered a ledger recording the sums laundered.

The confiscation action followed Adams's conviction for money-laundering in 2017. He was jailed for seven years.

Helen Hughes, a Crown Prosecution Service lawyer, said: "Part of the evidence we used to show Adams's criminal benefit was from conversations in which he boasted about buying land, showing how we utilise every bit of evidence available to prevent criminals profiting from proceeds of crime."

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MPs urge police to reopen probe into kidnapping of Dubai princess from UK

Sophia Sleight Political Reporter

MPs today called on the police to reopen their investigation into the kidnapping of the daughter of the billionaire ruler of Dubai who was snatched from the streets of Cambridge.

A High Court judge yesterday ruled that Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum had abducted and detained two of his adult daughters. He found that the 70-year-old Sheikh, a friend of the Queen, ordered Princess Shamsa to be abducted from Cambridge in 2000.

The princess, then 19, said armed bodyguards grabbed her, injected her with sedatives and took her to Dubai, where she was tortured.

Yesterday's judgment raised questions about whether the Foreign Office blocked the investigation by Cambridgeshire Constabulary. Sheikh Shamsa, now 38, has not been seen in public since the abduction.

Conservative MP Nicky Aiken, who sits on the Commons Women and Equalities Committee, said: "This case clearly demonstrates that no matter what a woman's background, education or status, domestic abuse does not discriminate. I certainly think that Cambridgeshire Constabulary should consider reopening the case."

A spokeswoman for Cambridgeshire Constabulary said there was "insufficient evidence to take any further action". She also said the force was not in contact with the victim and the court's findings did not change the status of their investigation.

According to the judgment Sheikh Mohammed "ordered and orchestrated" the abduction and forced return to Dubai of Shamsa in 2002, and then her sister Sheikh Latifa in 2018. Princess Latifa was seized by Indian soldiers from a yacht 30 miles off Goa and forcibly returned to Dubai.

Tiina Jauhainen, who tried to help her escape, told BBC Radio 4's Today programme: "Now finally the whole world knows that Sheikh Mohammed did indeed kidnap two of his daughters Latifa and Shamsa and he can no longer



cover up the abuses." Labour former cabinet minister Lord Adonis told the Standard: "The British Government should obviously now ban [Sheikh Mohammed] and his associates from entering the UK. Our royal family treat him as friends and our government allows him to come in and out of the country freely. The hypocrisy and double standards are truly disgraceful."

The kidnappings emerged out of the Sheikh's legal battle with his sixth wife, Princess Haya Bint Al Hussein, 45, over their daughter Al Jalila, 12, and son Zayed, eight. Sir Andrew McFarlane,

the most senior family judge in England and Wales, was asked to make findings of fact about the Sheikh in relation to his application for contact with the children.

Sir Andrew said the Foreign Office had confirmed it held information about the inquiry into Shamsa's alleged kidnapping but had refused to disclose it, citing British national interests.

Sheikh Mohammed said in a statement last night that the judgment "inevitably only tells one side" since as a head of government he could not take part in the process.

Ruler: Sheikh Mohammed with wife Princess Haya, son Zayed and daughter Jalila at Royal Ascot in 2018. Left, Princess Shamsa's best friend Tiina Jauhainen, who helped her escape

MAN DRESSED AS PC CONNED PENSIONER OUT OF BANK CARDS

A FRAUDSTER pretended to be a policeman to con a man in his eighties out of his bank cards and went on a £1,800 spending spree.

In November 2017, Mohammad Hussain, 37, told the man he was investigating a bank card fraud and then convinced him to hand his cards over. He was caught after police matched him to CCTV footage.

Hussain pleaded guilty to two counts of fraud by false representation and was sentenced to 18 months, suspended for two years, at Inner London crown court.

SMUGGLER SPARED JAIL AFTER SHIPPING EELS TO ASIA

A SEAFOOD salesman who smuggled baby eels worth £53 million to Asia was today given a two-year suspended jail sentence.

Gilbert Khoo, 67, shipped more than five million live European eels from London to Hong Kong between 2015 and 2017. The rare eels are considered a delicacy in East Asia.

Judge Jeffrey Peden today also ordered Khoo, Surrey, to carry out 240 hours of unpaid community work and to wear an electronic tag for three months with a curfew of 6pm to 6am.

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Showbiz news & gossip



Ellie and Camila find just the right amount of nerve

"GOOD nerves" fuelled Ellie Goulding's performance of new songs at last night's Global Awards.

The pop star, below, told Insider that's what she was channelling before going stage at the Eventim Apollo in Hammersmith. She has previously said she suffers "paralysing" anxiety attacks.

Camila Cabello also performed and was a winner.

DAVE BENETT

'Juggling work and my girls is a challenge — I'm trying my best'

Lizzie Edmonds
Showbusiness Reporter

ALESHA DIXON has spoken about the challenges of juggling her children and career, saying she often questions whether she is "doing the right thing".

The singer, presenter and Britain's Got Talent judge, 41, has two daughters with her partner Azuka Ononye — Azura, six, and Anaya, six months.

Dixon, who found fame in the Nine-

ties with band Mis-Teeq, told Insider: "It [motherhood] is a lot. It has been a challenging six months and every day is a new challenge. I am just trying my best and I don't have all the answers. Every parent questions if they are doing the right thing, but I just have to trust my instinct."

She added: "Yes I have

to be away for work and that is tough, but at the same time I want my children to see me as a go-getter. It is also survival. I have two humans who depend on me, who need me, and I have to work."

Dixon was speaking as she released her fifth book, a title for young adults called Star Switch.



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Swift donates \$1m after twisters hit home state of Tennessee

Margaret Abrams in New York

TAYLOR Swift has given \$1 million to support tornado relief in her home state of Tennessee after twisters devastated Nashville and surrounding areas on Tuesday, killing at least 24.

The pop star, inset, shared a link to an emergency fund on Instagram and encouraged fans to contribute. She wrote: "Nashville is my home and the fact that so many people have lost their homes and so much more in Middle Tennessee is devastating to me."

Earlier this week she sent her condolences to people in the hardest-hit areas. "My heart is with everyone affected by the tornadoes. Sending you my love and prayers," she wrote.

Much of the damage was in Putnam County, 80 miles east of Nashville, where 18 deaths, including five children, were reported. The storm destroyed homes, businesses and schools, and knocked out power for

nearly 50,000 residents. Other Tennessee celebrities to speak out included singer Justin Timberlake, from Memphis. He shared an image of the ruins of Nashville's Basement East concert venue and wrote: "Devastated for this city so many of my friends and family call home. Hurts to watch it get hit like this. But Tennesseans are some of the strongest people out there, and we'll stick together and rebuild." He shared a list of local relief organisations.

Big Little Lies star Reese Witherspoon, who has a home in Nashville, tweeted: "Praying for everyone in Nashville and Middle Tennessee dealing with the aftermath of last night's tornado. I'm just heartbroken and saying special prayers for the families who lost loved ones. Please stay safe."

Country singer Kacey Musgraves said she was "heartbroken" and was selling her stage costumes to raise money for relief efforts. Country star Dolly Parton also tweeted her support.



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Fast Thames ferry for cyclists and pedestrians

Ross Lydall City Hall Editor

PLANS for a "turn up and go" fast ferry that would take pedestrians and cyclists across the Thames in east London were revealed today.

TfL said it hoped the service linking Rotherhithe and Canary Wharf, under consideration after a bridge promised by Mayor Sadiq Khan was shelved last June, could be free to use.

The eastern end of the Jubilee line is very overcrowded at peak times.

The idea of a "green" bridge was dropped when TfL said the cost could be as high as £602 million. But campaigners say TfL overinflated the risk



Speedy service: the "turn up and go" ferry would run from Canary Wharf to Rotherhithe

and claim the costs would be less than £200 million.

Today's proposal is due to go out to public consultation in summer. It could see several ferries operating at peak times, with subsidies and spon-

sorship potentially making it free to use. TfL hopes construction could start next year. Consultants Steer have been appointed to assess different options.

Editorial Comment Page 16



Egg-cellent news!

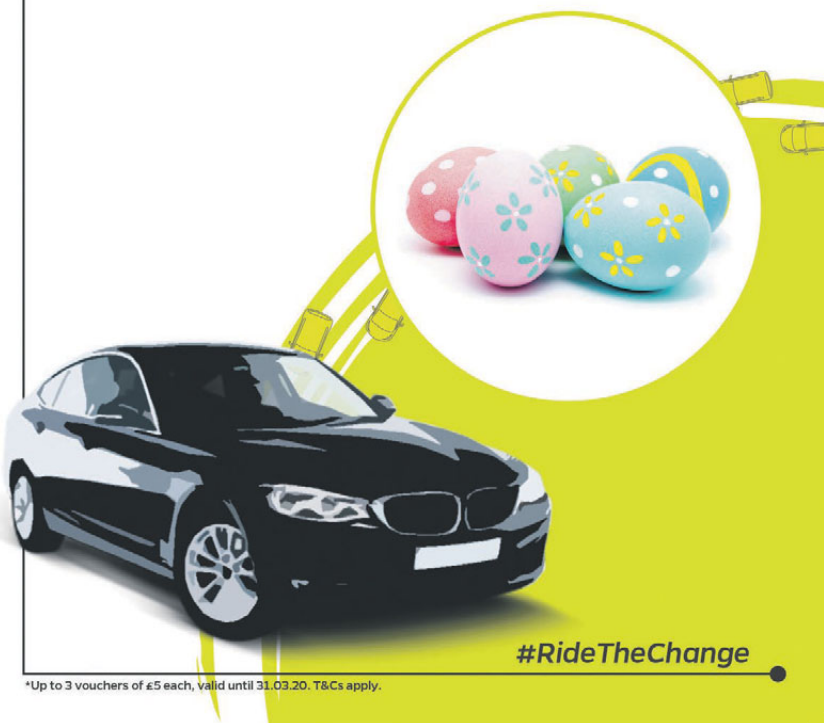
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● TESSA THOMPSON, Evan Rachel Wood and Thandie Newton turn up the glamour in Hollywood at the series three premiere of hit sci-fi series *Westworld*

House prices up 2.8% — but fears virus could hit market's revival

Jonathan Prynn
Consumer Business Editor

THE New Year property market revival triggered by the Conservatives' election victory continued into February when prices rose 2.8 per cent, according to a survey today.

Halifax, one of Britain's biggest mortgage lenders, said the market "has remained steady heading into early spring" with a boom in the number of buyers.

A 2.9 per cent quarterly rise in prices in the three months to February was the fastest pace since October 2015.

But Halifax also warned of the "risk" posed to the revival by the coronavirus outbreak, although most market commentators said it has had limited impact to date.

Halifax managing director Russell Galley said: "Much like we saw in January, the increases seen in February reflect the continued improvement of key market indicators. The sustained level of buyer and seller activity is strong compared to recent years, with positive employment conditions and a competitive mortgage market continuing to support demand."

But he said: "Looking ahead, there are a number of risks, including the

potential impact of coronavirus, which continue to exert pressure on the economy and we wait to see how these will affect housing market sentiment later in the year."

Most London estate agents are still seeing a spike in buyer registrations, viewings and offers as pent-up demand held back by Brexit uncertainty floods back into the market.

A spokeswoman for agency Chestertons said its Fulham office agreed a record 22 deals in February, with nine receiving multiple offers, "which was rarely the case this time last year."

Lucy Pendleton, founder director of estate agency James Pendleton, said: "Registrations for purchase are running extremely hot. Despite the newspapers and TV screens being peppered with images of people wearing face masks and plastic bottles on their heads, there's still a huge appetite to move, and buyers and vendors have so far refused to put their searches on hold."

But she added: "Coronavirus impacted our business for the first time on Wednesday, stealing away a sale that was just days from exchanging. The buyer worked in the events industry which is being rocked by large numbers of cancellations. He was unfortunately told his job was at risk."

Comment



I USUALLY wait until I know someone quite well before I break the news that I am an only child. Even then, I admit it with shamefaced disclaimers. I was never spoilt — I wish that stereotype had been true. I love sharing and I enjoy other people's company. When people say they'd never have guessed I don't have brothers or sisters I am secretly delighted.

But now it turns out I shouldn't be so mortified by my single status. Parents of only children are being praised by everyone from Prince Harry to US congresswoman Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez because smaller families have a smaller environmental footprint. David Attenborough says that global warming can be halted if people have fewer children (I wonder if the Prime Minister will listen). We're being rebranded from "only", because that rhymes with "lonely", to "single". The French were ahead on this — we're "enfants uniques" there.

If having an only child is to become mainstream, there are a few things their parents should know. Your child will crave company. My fellow single pringles and I (see, we are capable of making friends) share laments of afternoons playing two-person card games by ourselves, pretending to be both players.

One devised an elaborate Power Rangers game where she was every character. You might envy her for getting to be the pink Power Ranger every time, but she would have put up with being the yellow one if it meant she could have a conversation with someone else to break the monotony. By having to argue to be the Power Ranger she wanted, she would have learned negotiating skills nice and early.

It's common for us to lie about having siblings. A fellow "only" used to tell people she had a brother who was away travelling the world. Her mother was surprised to be asked if her son was enjoying Australia. Another brought a picture of her cousin into nursery and said it was her sister at boarding school.

Susannah Butter



Having just one child is better for the planet, but take it from me — it's a mixed blessing being a lonely only

Books propagate the notion that it's more fun to be part of a pack. I'd still much rather be one of the March sisters in *Little Women* than, well... the only child people bring up the most is Damien in *The Omen*.

Quentin Tarantino is in the club too — he once said he always goes to the bathroom at parties to have a moment alone. But plenty of introverts do this too, even if they grew up in big families. Ditto group holidays — most people, onlies or not, find the paralysis of other people deciding what to have for dinner in a WhatsApp thread unbearable.

Another advantage of being one of

many is that you can operate beneath the radar. I envy youngest children whose parents are too knackered from dealing with their older brothers and sisters so let them get away with

everything. As my parents get older the roles are reversing. I'm the only one worrying about them, with no one to share care duties with. We have a triangular family, a term coined by another only child (we're creative). When two points of the triangle go, I will be the only one left who remembers our very particular relationship. There will be no one to say "Remember that?" to, and exchange a knowing look.

All the enfants uniques I know agree on one thing — we want more than one child. Two will be just fine, and surely that's still a small family. If we are to save the world we need strength in numbers.

A fellow "only" said she had a brother in Australia. Her mother was surprised to be asked about her son

Anyone got a virus bunker going spare?

AS Phillip Schofield, pictured, asked the Prime Minister on This Morning yesterday, "At what point do I tell my mum, 'Actually it might be a good idea to stay in now'?"

I have been tying myself in knots catastrophising about coronavirus based questions like this — outwardly I laugh about the woman pictured on the bus wearing a bucket over her head for protection (Lord Buckethead, is that you?), and agree that stockpiling loo roll seems hysterical at this stage.

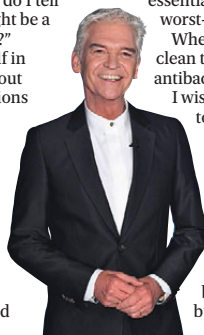
However, a small, scared

voice in my head is wondering if I do need to make sure I have the essentials at home for worst-case scenarios.

When I saw a woman at Pilates clean the equipment with an antibacterial wipe before using it I wished I'd had the foresight

to do the same. Meanwhile the super-rich, of course, do coronavirus differently — they are investing in nuclear bunkers that filter the air.

The PM had no answers for Schofe. I'd better start saving up for a bunker just in case.



● LIKE every *Bougie* London Literary Woman, I am excited about the latest Hilary Mantel novel, *The Mirror And The Light*. I only wish I'd bought it on Kindle. At 882 pages long, it is far too hefty to be casually toted around in your bag in case you find a spare moment to read. Never mind Thomas Cromwell causing pain — what about the weight of the words written about him? Us snowflakes fret that we could slip a disc by hauling it around all day.

On the Victoria line yesterday, someone joked my copy was taking up the space of a whole other passenger. You do get a lot of bang for your buck (£25) but maybe it could have been published in two instalments. Fingers crossed I won't have to self-isolate, but if I do at least it will keep me going for a while.

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Evening Standard*Established 1827***Don't cut corners in the race to find a vaccine**

WE'RE lucky to live in a world in which advanced medicines save lives, and in a country in which they are freely available to all. So if a coronavirus vaccine was ready, we can be sure that the NHS would be in the lead in using it. When will that moment come? That's what everyone wants to know — including the Prime Minister who this morning headed north to a laboratory that's part of the global effort to find one.

At least 20 companies and public bodies are racing to develop, test and approve a way of stopping the virus spreading and already there's been encouraging early progress. Money shouldn't be an obstacle. Given the huge potential economic and human cost of the disease, any price that can begin to curtail the outbreak should be worth paying. The Chancellor shouldn't hold back in next week's Budget.

However, no amount of cash can rush a vaccine into use if the science doesn't say it's ready. First, researchers need to study the disease and create a prototype treatment. Then they need to carry out trials to see if it works and is safe. Finally, pharmaceutical firms need to start producing it on a large scale. Normally a process like this would take years. That's being accelerated but it still might not be until next year until there's a vaccine. As the Government's chief scientific adviser, Sir Patrick Vallance warned this morning, "I don't think we'll get something in time or at scale for this outbreak."

It's tempting to cut corners but a vaccine that isn't safe would be far worse than no vaccine at all. What's reassuring is that our healthcare system will be ready to use it when it comes. Compare that to what's happening in the United States, a country with some of the best doctors and hospitals in the world — for those who can afford to pay. Its system is already struggling to cope with the need to test people who might have been infected — there don't seem to be enough testing kits — and it's not clear if patients who prove positive will face big hospital bills. That could soon become a huge issue in the US presidential election. Here, the NHS will come under great strain in the next few weeks, but we can trust it not to turn away people who need help.

What a ferry good idea

CROSSING the Thames has often been a struggle: "...and to the ferry, where I was forced to stay a great while before I could get my horse brought over," Samuel Pepys noted, impatiently, in his diary for August 3, 1665. Today's London commuters don't ride horses to the office. But they do need to get about on foot and by bike — and at Canary Wharf that's hard if you want to come from the other side of the river.

There's a ferry but it's too small and doesn't run frequently enough. Plans for a footbridge collapsed when the cost of building one became clear. So today the Mayor has announced plans for a new and better ferry which can also take cycles. It may be hybrid or electric, with an automatic docking system so it can shuttle back and forth rapidly. This sounds just as useful and a lot more fun than a bridge. It might also be the first of many. Samuel Pepys would be proud a Thames tradition is still alive.

Equality means kindness

SUNDAY marks International Women's Day, which is a chance to celebrate the huge progress that has been made in equal rights and show what more needs to be done. From fighting FGM to equal pay, the battle isn't won yet. So it's a shock to hear that the former home secretary, Amber Rudd, was no-platformed by some Oxford students last night when she came to speak at a Women's Day event — it wasn't just rude, it damages a cause we should all support.

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standard.co.uk/theleader



Julian Glover

In scary times, opera has the power to cut through and set us free



THE journey from the strangest underground station that has ever existed to the red and gilt of the Royal Opera House is shorter than you might think. It began on October 7, 1989 when, with my father, I used my school German to talk my way through Berlin's Friedrichstrasse subway tunnels. They formed a sinister Cold War frontier. To reach it from the West you rattled in the darkness through disused ghost stations, cut off in the communist East of the city, before showing your passport in a section of the station full of guards, watching through one-way mirrored glass.

It was as if the toughest border in the world had been built in something like the passageways between the Bakerloo and Northern lines at Piccadilly Circus: but that day even this bizarre German station seemed less extraordinary than the scenes we stumbled across in the streets above. East Berlin's rulers were celebrating the 40th anniversary of the foundation of their communist state — but the people weren't playing along.

The official celebrations had huge red "40 Jahre DDR" banners and free beer, but instead of people we saw only open trucks of scared young soldiers with guns waiting to deal with protesters. In side streets we saw small handwritten signs calling for democracy and listing people who had been arrested nearby. The dictatorship was crumbling and one of the famous symbols of its fall was seen for the first time that Saturday I crossed the border: a new production of an opera, Beethoven's *Fidelio*.

Fidelio is also a sell-out show at the Royal Opera House this week. On Tuesday I was lucky enough to have a £22 seat in the slips for a performance with some of the best singers and one of the best opera orchestras in the world. But in 1989 the sensation of a production in the East German city of Dresden was even greater. The opera includes a

famous chorus of prisoners who arrive blinking in the daylight, singing of their joy. In the Dresden staging, they came onto the stage dressed in the common clothes of ordinary East Germans. The message was unmistakable. Like Beethoven's prisoners, East Germans were captive but would soon be free. The production made such an impression that it is still being staged in the same city this spring, more than 30 years after the fall of the Berlin Wall.

I love opera. When it works I think it has more power than any other form of art to grab your emotions. It can be loud and soft, beautiful and bleak. But does its meaning go deeper?

If any opera can be political, then that would have to be *Fidelio*, which Beethoven wrote and rewrote as the French

sight on stage is a real-life horse, which starts stamping its feet impatiently as it hears the music that marks the moment it has to exit the stage. Then there's an up-to-the-minute second act under bright white lights in which the prisoners sit in a semicircle, as if they were in a corporate meeting of middle managers wearing suits.

They look like many of the people in the audience. Maybe London's *Fidelio* is making a point. Are we meant to be prisoners, too? Perhaps. But you don't need to think like this to enjoy the evening. I suspect that a lot of what we think of as political art is really a symbol, not a cause of change. It catches a following wind from events already underway. The revolt against East German communism was already happening when *Fidelio* reached the stage there.

Much is sometimes made of the role Verdi's operas played in the political movement which unified Italy in the 1860s, but the revolution came first and the link with opera followed.

That doesn't take away from music's deep power to lift our hearts and hopes. But we project onto it what we want to feel. In London right now, there is an anxiety about epidemics and the political and economic future.

It does us good to hear the Royal Opera's brilliant chorus sing about liberty. We can relish the show's stars, Jonas Kaufmann as Florestan, and Lise David-son as Leonore, who dominates the evening with a voice of breathtaking power and purity. And you don't have to pay a lot: tickets are scarce for the next performance at the Royal Opera House tonight, but it is being shown in cinemas all over the country on March 17.

Opera as good as this is more than just entertainment. We are so, so lucky to have it. In frightening times, the power of the human voice cuts right through. Just don't rely on it to change the world. It is we who must do that.

“If any opera is political it would have to be *Fidelio*, currently a sell-out show at the Royal Opera House”

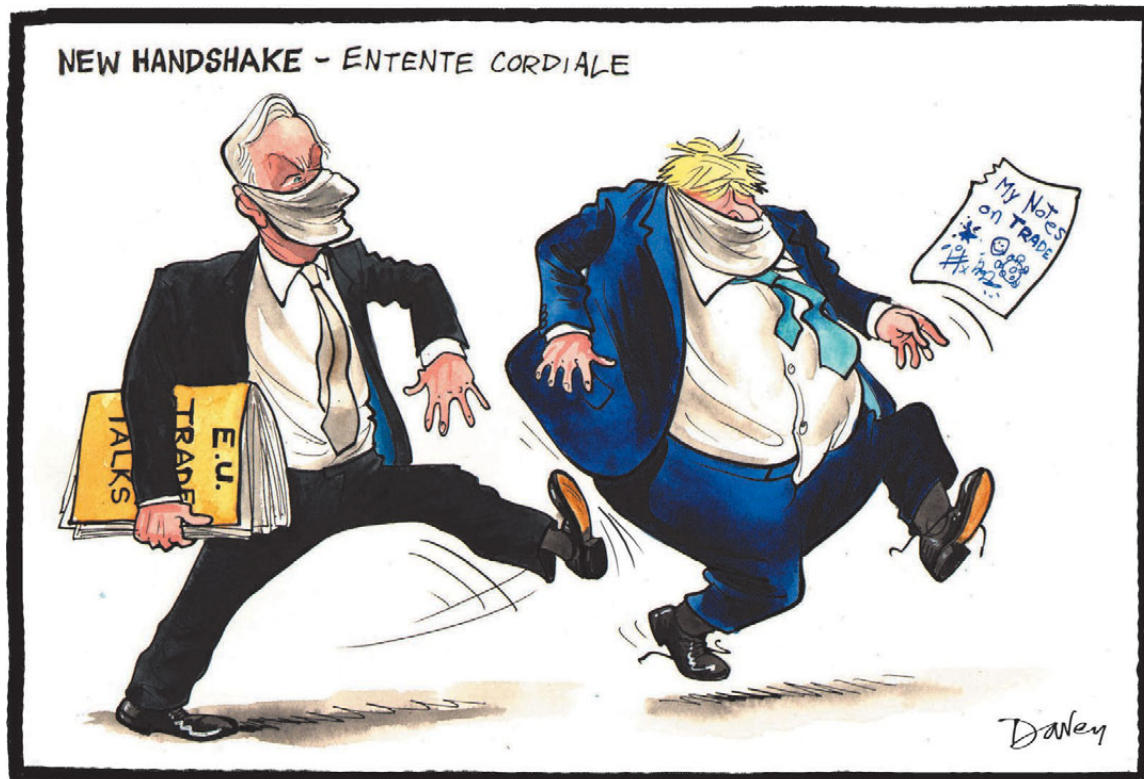
revolution became a catastrophe. Much of the music is compelling but there are problems with the drama, as its composer knew. For a start, the two acts don't hang together. What starts as almost a domestic comedy with a woman dressed as a man ends as a cry for liberty — the sort of thing which encouraged revolutionaries in Dresden but which has been used by regimes of all sorts to justify their cause. Herbert von Karajan even conducted it in 1938 to mark Hitler's birthday.

The new Royal Opera production makes the best of things by staging the opera as two separate pieces, which some critics dislike but I thought was clever and effective. There's a dark, traditional first act in which the best



Breathtaking: Jonas Kaufmann as Florestan in *Fidelio* at the Royal Opera House. Political art like this is symbolic but vital

BILL COOPER



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The Reader Your letters

Labour needs to stay united

IT IS disingenuous of Ian Austin ["Labour is on life support and there's no one to cure it," March 4] to sneer at Hackney and Islington voters or play the Northern card when, within days of the Brexit referendum being announced, Jeremy Corbyn was down this way in Hastings listening to the fishing fleet.

The truth is this is a straight Left-Right contest with very powerful interests lined up against Labour. When the Labour Right disregards party unity in a way it would rage about if in power, we end up with the egocentric, totalitarian-inclined Government that we have currently.

Steve Gooch

Simplify climate change debate

IN THE fight against climate change, a valid point is being made about the science behind the environmental, social and governance (ESG) rating systems being dismal ["Sustainability is all the rage but the metrics are muddy," March 3]. It's true no one can agree what ESG means or if it matters. Yet ESG scores are becoming more important in investing and markets. As JFK said: "We aren't here to curse the darkness but to light a candle that can guide us..." Making this debate simpler would strike the match.

Dr Andy Sloan
Deputy chief executive of strategy, Guernsey Finance

EDITOR'S REPLY

Self-isolating freelancers need sick-pay protection

THE Government has made concessions with regards to sick pay and Covid-19, but it is completely ignoring one vital group of workers — the self-employed.

My union Prospect represents thousands of freelancers. For them, taking two weeks off to self-isolate will leave a huge hole in their family's finances. What's worse is that many may not even realise that they will be out of pocket, as they have insurance which is meant to cover them when they have days off due to sickness. Unfortunately some of our members

have been told by their insurance firms that self-isolation is a personal choice, so they are not covered.

The Prime Minister has said that nobody will lose out, but unless there is urgent action then his words will ring hollow with thousands of workers. The Tories have made a lot of hay trumpeting about the fall in unemployment, in large part due to increases in self-employment. They must not let those people suffer for doing the right thing.

Mike Clancy
General Secretary, Prospect



Alex Lawson
Business News Editor

Dear Mike

IT IS remarkable how rapidly this issue has highlighted the fault lines at the heart of our modern economy.

For the five million people reportedly working in the gig economy, the onus has fallen on them to decide whether they pose a risk to others, unlike in large organisations where coronavirus policies are being hastily drawn up.

One freelancer I spoke to said carving out two weeks a year to take a holiday was hard enough, and his biggest fear is falling ill and losing

out on income. Income protection insurance has been a beacon of hope for some self-employed workers during this crisis, so it's alarming to hear some are not covered.

Another concern is that because the self-employed are often sole traders, busily spending their days behind the till or the wheel of a van, their voice won't be heard as loud as that of big business, but their need for government support is just as great. Their importance to the economy must not be forgotten.

Alex

20mph speed limits save lives

JON WALLSGROVE [The Reader, March 3] expresses concern about 20mph speed limits on TfL roads in the C-charge zone. We are pleased to say that the evidence is to the contrary, and 20mph limits reduce the numbers of people killed and can help improve air quality. A London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine study in 2009 found the number of people killed and seriously injured fell by 42 per cent where speeds were reduced to 20mph.

With air quality, Imperial College research shows little difference between 20mph and 30mph in urban driving and reports: "It would be incorrect to assume a 20mph restriction would be detrimental to local air quality as the effects on vehicle emissions are mixed."

Fuel consumption/emissions are driven by the fuel used in repeated acceleration and the energy needed is proportional to the terminal speed squared. Hence the energy required to repeatedly reach 30mph is 2.25 times greater than to go to 20mph.

Jeremy Leach
London campaign co-ordinator, 20's Plenty for Us



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The best ideas happen after dark — give me the night

Nick Curtis



I WANT to make the case for staying up late. For years I've listened to wellness hucksters banging on about the benefits of natural light and of syncing one's circadian rhythms — and I have held my peace. Well no longer.

Staying up late is big and it's clever. Staying up late is cool. The small hours are when the fun stuff happens and the good ideas come. It's when the naughty people come out. The National Portrait Gallery's forthcoming exhibition, Cecil Beaton's Bright Young Things, is a celebration of nocturnal loucheness. It's why nightlife is called nightlife.

I am both naturally, and — as this paper's theatre critic — professionally programmed to be a night owl. This is a source of irritation to my wife, who is a lark. I wake up mid-morning to her Instagram shots of dawn breaking over the Thames, and I go to bed in the small hours to an angry jab in the ribs for waking her up. But while it's not ideal for my marriage, I do believe in the virtues of a nocturnal existence.

Dickens, Kafka, Tennessee Williams and Proust all wrote at night. J. D. Salinger composed his earliest work, aged 15, under the bedclothes by torchlight. Keith Richards of The Rolling Stones came up with most of Exile On Main Street during long nights noodling in the portable studio the band erected in Villa Nellcote in the south of France between 1969 and 1972.

"If you stay up, you get the songs that everyone else misses because they're asleep," Richards told *The Times* in 2010. Mind you, he was on heroin during much of his time at Nellcote, which I emphatically do not recommend.

However, the arc of human progress and invention — medicines, disinfectants, sedatives and stimulants included — involves the conquest of nature's strictures. We built shelters to protect us from the rain and cold. We invented the wheel to travel further over intractable landscapes. And we invented electric light — and later, Netflix — so that we didn't have to go to bed at dusk.

I've never really understood the supposed health benefits of living like a feudal peasant, especially in a modern city like London, which truly never sleeps. But London's 24-hour culture is a relatively recent phenomenon, in the scheme of things. I'm old enough to remember when TV programming shut down at midnight, and the only solace for insomniacs were late-night radio stations. Before the liberalisation of alcohol licensing laws in 1997, most pubs shut at 11pm and all through the afternoon on Sunday.

Staying up late was the privilege of those who could afford private clubs and extortionate taxis.

Downloadable entertainment, late-night drinking and the night Tube have democratised nocturnal fun. Why would you not take advantage of that? Of course, you can't stay up late every night. Which is why, every New Year's Eve — when a bunch of rank amateurs get in the way of us professional nightjars — I am always in bed by 10pm.

£800 court bill for Towie star as she refuses to name speeding driver

Tristan Kirk Courts Correspondent

REALITY TV star Lauren Goodger has been hit with an £800 court bill and six penalty points after she snubbed a police speeding charge.

The 33-year-old Towie favourite's £43,000 matte black Mercedes Coupe SUV was caught on a speed camera last summer, sparking an investigation by the Met Police. Despite the threat of

prosecution, Goodger failed to reply to two requests to identify who was driving her car and she was charged with a criminal offence.

Met Police case worker Colin Martin told Lavender Hill magistrates' court Goodger's Mercedes had been clocked at 58mph in a 50mph zone on the A13 Thames Gateway, at just before 3.30pm on August 24 last year.

"A reminder letter was sent," he said

in a statement. "No response has been received." Mr Martin said two letters were dispatched to Goodger's Woodford Green home before the decision was taken to prosecute.

She was convicted in her absence on February 18 of failing to give information relating to the identification of a driver. A single magistrate, sitting behind closed doors, convicted her of the charge after she had not engaged

with the court, handing Goodger six points on her licence, a £660 fine and £151 in court costs and fees.

Goodger, an original Towie cast member who recently starred in reality show *Celebs Go Dating*, has had a difficult last few months, after she was caught out by a BBC sting admitting she had not drunk Skinny Coffee despite previously saying it had helped her lose two stone. She later denied saying she had lost two stone through the coffee.

She was recorded agreeing to plug a drink containing cyanide. She later said: "Of course I would never promote anything that contains poison and proper checks would have been made before any promotion."

She was given until Tuesday this week to settle her court bill. The case came to light after a request by the Standard for access to the court papers. Goodger's agent declined to comment.



Clocked: Lauren Goodger was convicted of speeding after failing to identify the driver of her Mercedes at the time of the offence



Help reduce the risk of HPV related cancers

The human papillomavirus (or HPV) is present in one in three people, and some types of HPV can lead to certain cancers. 90% of us will come into contact with some form of the virus at some point in our lifetime. That's why it's important to help protect yourself. For those not covered by the NHS HPV vaccination programme, the Boots HPV Vaccination Service is available in 194 stores nationwide.

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*In the UK, HPV is present in one in three people and 90% of individuals will come into contact with some form of the virus in their lifetimes. See more at: <https://www.anacancerfoundation.org/about-hpv/hpv-facts-and-figures/> Eligibility criteria and charges apply. In selected pharmacies, subject to availability. Find out more at boots.com/hpv



No fines for rogue landlords in half of London councils

Ben Morgan

HALF of London councils did not issue fines last year to rogue landlords found to be renting unsafe homes.

Campaign group Generation Rent has analysed City Hall's "rogue landlord and agent checker" and found that 292 fines were issued by 17 councils last year.

The fines totalled £1.04 million — a reduction on the £1.6 million raised from 433 fines the previous year.

It means almost half of town halls did not issue penalties against landlords renting out unsuitable properties.

Around 130,000 properties in the capital do not have licences for multiple occupancy, while others may fail basic fire safety checks.

Generation Rent director Dan Wilson said: "Laws to keep our homes safe only mean anything if they are enforced, and if landlords understand the consequences of cutting corners. Despite squalid conditions facing many renters, councils have a very mixed

record on bringing the landlords responsible to justice."

Nine councils did not prosecute or issue a civil penalty to a single landlord in the last two years: Bexley, Bromley, Hackney, Hammersmith and Fulham, Kensington and Chelsea, Kingston, Lewisham, Merton and Sutton.

Camden has been the most successful council in taking action, overseeing more than £750,000 in fines over the past two years. Westminster, Hounslow and Haringey have more than doubled the number of fines they have issued.

Mr Wilson said: "We have called for renters to be able to check online with City Hall whether their property has a licence."

Rent Repayment Orders can be used against criminal landlords, and the analysis suggested that in 130 of the 292 cases last year tenants may have been able to reclaim rent. However a Freedom of Information request showed that just six councils had helped tenants to apply for such orders, with 20 people making successful claims.

£15,000 boost to save Palace dinosaurs

THE endangered Crystal Palace dinosaurs are £15,000 better off thanks to a government grant.

The money will be used to build a bridge letting the public get even closer to the creatures. It was announced last week the iron and stone sculptures,

which date from as early as 1852, have been added to Historic England's Heritage at Risk register.

Communities Secretary Robert Jenrick MP said they were "testimony to a pioneering era of British history", adding: "We must preserve them."

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The

Search on for our own British Greta

GRETA Thunberg was the star by proxy at a reception for the Women of the World foundation last night. Founder and director-producer Jude Kelly headed up the 10th anniversary festivities at the Southbank Centre. "I like to think we're producing our own Greta Thunbergs and our own Malalas," said Kelly as she addressed the gathering. "Young girls and women are really taking the baton and running so fast with it and it's fantastic."

Guests included publisher Baroness Gail Rebeck, retail consultant and broadcaster Mary Portas and WOW's Head of Programmes Domino Pateman. Also there were events producer Imri Morgan and entrepreneur and activist Janet Oganah.

Meanwhile, it was leather all round in Fitzrovia at the launch party for an exhibition of Tom of Finland, the late artist and gay cultural icon. Guests at boutique hotel The London EDITION included Pandemonia, a seven-foot conceptual art piece by an anonymous London artist, as well as the always excitingly dressed Daniel Lismore.



PANDEMONIA

DANIEL LISMORE

IMRI MORGAN
JANET OGANAH

Singer Capaldi's

LEWIS Capaldi's team paid for the singer to have a lesson to teach him "how to talk to girls", The Londoner can reveal.

Etiquette expert Liz Brewer, who tutored the swaggy singer in her London home, tells us: "They wanted me to teach him a variety of things, like what to say at a drinks party, how to talk to girls and so we spent the afternoon together. I had no idea who he

was of course." The lesson happened about a month before the pop star released his 2018 hit Someone You Loved and was broken down into three sessions: First Impressions & Social Graces, Powerful Posture and Body Language and Dining Etiquette.

"He was very keen to learn. I think they were serious because he was here for a whole afternoon and they paid a good fee for it,



Mansplained away

HOW do you miss the point of International Woman's Day? By hosting a panel of men to talk about their feminism. London law firm Shoosmiths is under fire for hosting a virtue-signalling GOOD Guys (Guys Overcoming Obstacles to Diversity) event on Wednesday, where the panel of mostly men talked about how they were "champions of women".

One female lawyer told The Londoner: "Attending a one-day, male-centric conference and being awarded a ribbon to demonstrate to your colleagues your 'good guy' status is farcical at best."

Men: this isn't about you.

THE BBC's Middle East editor Jeremy Bowen has revealed he is often naked when speaking to Radio 4's Today programme. "I've sat up in bed without pyjamas... just clutching the mic," Bowen says, adding he's done it "in lots of places where I've lived over the years, or in hotel rooms". Too much information.

GARY Lineker opted not to shake The Londoner's hand, fist bumping instead to "set a good example", at a football event at Craven Cottage for refugee children cared for by Hammersmith and Fulham council last night. The Match of the Day host then told us online trolling didn't bother him due to his "equable temperament". Coronavirus seems a bit different.

Londoner



BARONESS GAIL REBUCK
MARY PORTAS
DOMINO PATEMAN

DAVE BENNETT



● AMBER Rudd has complained after she was “no platformed” 30 minutes before an event at Oxford University last night. The former home secretary (below) branded it “badly judged and rude” after she was invited to an International Women’s Day event but arrived to an empty room thanks to a boycott over her role in the Windrush scandal. Rudd added this morning: “They should stop hiding and start engaging.” What happened to open debate?



● KEIR Starmer has done too many Labour leadership hustings. At a book launch in North London last night, Starmer joked: “I can give you Lisa’s answer, I can give you Rebecca’s... probably as them.”

● TORY Tom Tugendhat shows The Londoner how to do cross-party friendship. At the launch of his old Army colleague Dan Jarvis’s memoir, *Long Way Home*, he said of the Labour MP: “Dan is fundamentally wrong on many issues... but he’s an epically decent guy.”



Ayesha Hazarika

QUOTE OF THE DAY

‘It’s very nice to be back’

The Duchess of Sussex strikes a diplomatic note as she returns to the UK



etiquette lessons

many noughts,” Brewer told The Londoner.

The lesson included introducing yourself and others correctly, shaking hands and social kissing, remembering people’s names and small talk and British humour.

Capaldi (far left) was “almost, almost a perfect pupil”, Brewer (left) explained.

“There was a touch of sarcasm but you know, the guy’s in rock ‘n’ roll or whatever.” Quite.

“I keep seeing him on the television and thinking, a short time ago I was teaching him in my drawing room,” she added.

Capaldi’s career has come a long way

since then. Last month he won the Best New Artist at the 2020 Brit Awards.

But the Scottish singer found his brief and blunt awards speech muted after he dropped an f-bomb during the live broadcast.

Capaldi carried his drink on stage to accept the award, which he did by saying: “Thank you very f***** much.”

The whole of his speech had to be muted for fans watching on television due to his use of the expletive.

Perhaps he ought to invest in a few more etiquette lessons.

The Londoner online:
standard.co.uk/thelondoner



From Teletubbies to telly politics

● BEFORE Laura Kuenssberg became a high-powered political journalist, she started out as a temp.

“I was involved in producing [a] Teletubbies magazine,” the BBC’s political editor says, “phoning up ad production companies saying, ‘where is



Laa-Laa to Bo-Jo:
Kuenssberg

your proof copy of your Lego advert for Postman Pat? We need it!” And how does working with cartoon characters compare to being BBC political editor?

“What? Dealing with a load of people who have temper tantrums and are completely involved in themselves?”

“It’s very different,” Kuenssberg told the Political Party podcast, breaking into peals of laughter.

Edited by
Robbie Smith

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Sport is a great way to help girls build life skills, says footballer Eni

FOOTBALLER Eni Aluko has spoken about how sport can help girls build life skills.

The former England player and TV pundit shared advice with aspiring footballers at a coaching session in London. The 33-year-old, who plays for Juventus, held the session at Royal

Docks Academy in Newham with charity Goals 4 Girls, which has helped over 400 young women from disadvantaged backgrounds to develop leadership and football skills.

The charity, founded in south-east London by former professional footballer Francesca Brown, offers free

development programmes for girls aged 11 to 16, part-funded by Adidas. Aluko told participants: "What you guys are doing is amazing. Within these settings, being able to talk about life beyond football and coach life skills, I kind of had to figure it out as I went along. In terms of a network like

this, it didn't really exist." She added: "You need your team and your family to push you through."

Her visit was part of a new Adidas project with funding platform iFundWomen to help female-run businesses break down barriers within sport.

Huq's plea to schools: Promote female science role models

Ben Morgan

FORMER Blue Peter presenter Konnie Huq today urged schools to promote the achievements of female scientists to encourage more girls to follow careers in engineering, science and technology.

Ms Huq, the longest-serving female presenter of the BBC show, was set for a career in science before she broke into television.

She is now an author of children's books aimed at "making science cool". Her Cookie series, which has a second book due this summer, follows a nine-year-old girl with a love of science.

She has called on schools to promote women such as computer programming visionary Ada Lovelace and DNA pioneer Rosalind Franklin.

A report last month found 14 mentions of male scientists in the GCSE syllabus but none of women.

Ms Huq said: "Girls will not be able to picture themselves in a science role because they will not see it as tangible or viable as a career."

Despite a rise in women studying science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) subjects at university, just 35 per cent of students on these courses are women.

British Science Week starts today and Ms Huq will be a judge for the British Science Association's Youth Industrial Strategy Competition at the Big Bang Fair in Birmingham next week.

"It's about flipping and reversing stereotypes about science. That is what we need to do to put the right things into the heads of young people," she said.

Sandé: Women's Day march shows we're angry at injustices in world

Naomi Ackerman

E MELI SANDÉ says the march on Parliament for International Women's Day shows a movement of people "angry at injustices" and demanding change.

The singer will perform in Parliament Square after the #March4Women from the Women of the World festival at the Southbank Centre on Sunday.

The march, organised by NGO Care International, aims to be a "global movement for gender equality" and this year focuses on the women offering a "frontline response to climate change".

It will call on governments to move towards net zero emissions and increase funding for climate response initiatives and feminist organisations.

Sandé, 32, will be joined by Game Of Thrones star Natalie Dormer and 1917 actor George MacKay, who will both give speeches. She called on more people to join, with 5,000 already expected to attend.

She told the Standard: "I don't think anything is more powerful than physical presence so it's poignant that we are

all going to be together and let everybody know that we are angry at the injustices and we want change.

"Feminism and women's rights aren't this separate entity that only have one day to be spoken about... until there is balance throughout, we are not really going to make much progress."

A key theme of IWD events across the capital this year will be climate change as a feminist issue.

Speakers on the topic will include former president of Ireland Mary Robinson and Helen Pankhurst, the great-granddaughter of suffragette movement founder Emmeline.

Ms Pankhurst said: "Women and girls have specific vulnerabilities around climate emergencies."

"If any of the suffragettes lived right now they wouldn't be saying, 'We did it, you can sit back and relax.' They'd be saying there is still so much to do."

Sandé added: "The climate change focus is personally important to me as my father is from Zambia and my family is still over there and really feeling the effects of climate change." Other

events being held across the capital include the 10th Wow festival at the Royal Festival Hall, where writer Naomi Wolf and ex-Australian PM Julia Gillard are speaking.

Events will also focus on the pressure women feel to be "likeable", with Fleabag actress Sian Clifford and The Guilty Feminist podcast host Deborah Frances-White.

Ms Gillard, who heads the Global Institute for Women's Leadership at King's College London, highlighted the World Economic Forum

Seeking a balance: Emeli Sandé will perform on Sunday following the march



projection that the time period for closing the gender gap around the world has reduced but still stands at 99.5 years.

She said: "We need [the gap] to come down more quickly. We have to change the things that are holding women back."

She also called for advances in making the online environment safer for women, highlighting the "toxicity of social media" faced by females.

Speaking at We Day in London this week, a charity event rewarding young people for social action, actress Gwendoline Christie said it was vital young women "feel their own relevance and power".

LESS THAN HALF HAPPY TO ASK ABOUT FLEXIBLE WORKING

MANY women would not feel confident asking their employer about flexible working — despite it being a top priority. Sixty-two per cent of women surveyed said flexible hours would be their priority when looking for a job. Despite this, 43 per cent said they would not feel confident asking their employer about it — and 31 per cent believed they would "not be understanding" if they did. The survey, of 2,039 women, was commissioned by Hilton and conducted by Censuswide.

'WORKPLACE DISCRIMINATION COSTS £1MILLION OVER CAREER'

WOMEN in business could be losing £1 million in earnings over the course of their careers because of workplace discrimination, a report suggests. The study, by the WealthierHer Network, found 99 per cent of venture capitalist funding goes to start-ups run by men. Network founder Tamara Gillan said: "There are a number of social barriers and institutional biases which actively prevent female entrepreneurs from growing their business from start-up to scale-up and something needs to change immediately."

Ramla Ali fled war-torn Somalia as a child — now the boxer is going for gold in Tokyo. As she readies for battle she

This woman's right to fight

RAMLAALI — athlete, model and the first Muslim woman to win a boxing title for England — hasn't turned on her phone in three months now, and counting. What started as a digital detox enforced by her husband and coach Richard Moore has quickly turned into a voluntary lifestyle choice. "I feel cleansed," she says breezily, fresh back in the capital after a three-month training camp in the Cayman Islands. "I don't even want a phone now. I'm having anxiety about putting it back on because I don't want to get addicted to it."

There were side-effects to the detox, of course — feeling cut off "for about a week", finding out about coronavirus a fortnight late — but they were worth it for the benefits. Her day is free of Instagram scrolling, she is less anxious, she has more time for reading. In downtime in the Caribbean, she read a book on holding your breath underwater which inspired her to teach herself. When she started she could hold her breath for 40 seconds; now she can manage almost three minutes.

Breathing is Ali's new secret fitness



I feel cleansed. I don't even want a phone now. I'm having anxiety about putting it back on

weapon, she says, insisting it's "100 per cent" boosted her performance in the ring. The amateur featherweight is currently deep in training ("twice a day, six days a week") to be the first boxer to represent her home country Somalia at the 2020 Olympic Games in Tokyo this August — coronavirus and qualification depending. Her family fled the war-torn nation when she was a toddler and a lack of official records means Ali will never know her exact age (she guesses it's somewhere between 27 and 30 years old). "I genuinely don't know the date, the month, the year," she tells me, sitting on a plush pink sofa at fashion house Coach's flagship store on Regent Street. Ali has built herself a successful fashion career alongside her sporting endeavours and today she is in model mode: she became a friend of the Coach brand last year and is here to choose an outfit ahead of its Dream Day this weekend, as



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'It's important to show that

JULIA Gillard thought her work would be done by now. It's been eight years since the former Australian Prime Minister gave her poised and powerful speech that exposed the misogyny at the centre of the political system.

"I did naively think when I was younger that gender equality was on the way to being fixed and wouldn't be a feature of much of my life," says Gillard, aged 58, on the phone from her house in Adelaide where she is looking after her niece's dogs Pepper and Lebowsky. "I wish I could tell my younger self that wasn't right."

It's rare for Gillard to be at home — since she stood down as PM in 2013 she has travelled the world speaking about gender equality. This weekend

she's on a panel at the Women of the World Festival at the Southbank Centre. She's in London regularly, as Chair of the Global Institute for Women's Leadership at King's College London.

She has also worked with Meghan Markle, who she thinks is an example of how "gender stereotyping affects every woman no matter what life she leads". "It affects all women in the royal family but it's only Meghan who has experienced that interrelationship between gender and race discrimination," Gillard knitted a baby kangaroo for Markle's nephew, Prince George, when he came to Australia and still knits. "Its rhythmic nature is calming".

Gillard speaks with the same

tells **Katie Strick** about taking refuge in London, staying off social media and speaking up for kids in her community



This girl can: Ramla Ali attending the Coach show in New York in February

part of Coach's Dream It Real initiative. Somali young people from Camden and neighbouring boroughs will be among those attending and Ali will be speaking to them about her journey, confidence and conquering their fears.

It's ironic, then, Ali admits, that she's feeling "flustered" about giving the speech. But the boxing ring is still where she feels her most confident. "It helped me find my purpose," she says, recalling how she discovered the sport at the age of 12 after being bullied about her weight at school. For more than a decade, she kept the hobby a secret for fears her strict Muslim parents would see it as immodest. Even when she won the British and English boxing titles in Bethnal Green in 2016, her family, around the corner living in a council estate in Whitechapel, had no idea.

Today, Ali's mother is her "number-one fan" — in part since she saw the benefits her daughter's success could bring for a troubled Somalia — but Ali is aware there are still barriers for Muslim women getting into sport. Creating safe spaces to train is part of that: once a week, she teaches self-defence classes to predominantly hijab-wearing women and girls, including her 12-year-old niece, in New Cross. "A lot of the women have said how safe they feel walking alone at night now," she says. "That feels amazing."

THE struggle isn't just for Muslim women: a wider sexism is rife across the boxing industry, says Ali, insisting referees are "really quick to stop a female fight". She adds: "If one girl looks like she's dominating the other quite a bit, the referee is quick to stop it and say she can't continue — they'll never do that with a man."

She hopes women start to be held to the same standard as men "because we're just as good — better, even".

"That's why I love Serena [Williams] because she just doesn't care what happens to her," says Ali. Williams was the athlete she looked up to growing up: "She doesn't take anything from anyone, she'll have a fight with the referee knowing full well it'll go against her, if she believes she's in the right. That's the kind of person I wanted to be."

Williams remains "queen bee" on Ali's list of heroes, but her career has allowed her to meet many others: Muslim supermodel Halima Aden, the first to wear a hijab on the cover of *Vogue*; Somali-born actress Sabrina Elba, married to Idris Elba. "Every time she sees me at a party



Olympics-bound: Ramla Ali will be fighting for her native Somalia

she'll always come up to me and make sure I'm OK."

A-list events are a fun new side to Ali's career. She recently attended the Coach show in New York, and was picked by the Duchess of Sussex to star on *Vogue's* Forces For Change September issue cover with 14 other women last year. But she admits parties aren't her comfort zone. She doesn't drink and is "always the one who looks lost. Everyone's there on the dancefloor and I'm like, 'Let me just stand over here with my fizzy water.'"

Instead, she prefers nights in watching boxsets with Moore, a boxing coach and grandson of former Chelsea coach Dave Sexton. They met at a gym and married in 2016, and now live in Greenwich with Moore's brother, who often cooks for them. "He is vegan, though," she laughs, saying she's seen Netflix documentary *The Game Changers* on veganism for athletes but thinks it's "just propaganda".

"I have to slip in a fish when he's not looking."

Moore is also Ali's personal trainer and recently became Somalia's national boxing team coach. "We're always together, 24/7," she smiles, waving in his direction on the other side of the store and telling me how he's in charge of her social media accounts, "even when I had a phone ... He's really sweet. He'll go in [to my Instagram messages], make sure no one's sending nasty stuff and delete all those nasty things before I look".

What nasty things do people say? Ali sighs and reels off some examples ("We gave her a home and she's not even representing GB" or "Why is that woman married to a white man?") but assures me those are "only about five per cent

of messages — 95 per cent are always positive, which is amazing".

She replies occasionally but prefers to speak to her followers through her posts. "There'll be stuff up there from a shoot but there'll also be stuff when I'm drenched in sweat. I try to show them that nobody looks like this all the time. Young girls are very impressionable and otherwise they'll get complexes."

That's the message she's hoping to get across in her speech tomorrow, mixed in with some quotes from a diary entry she had published this week about a recent Unicef trip to Syrian refugee camps in Jordan. "I said some really nice things about my mum, how she's a better fighter than I'd ever be. She's been through so much. She made sure we were clothed, we were fed, we all got degrees. She shouted at us when we came home late because we were missing out on homework... that's the type of mother that I aspire to be one day."

Ali is excited at the prospect of her parents and siblings watching her compete for the first time. They have promised to fly to Tokyo for the summer Olympics, if she qualifies: "We'll get a big Airbnb." One of her brothers, a GP,

My mum made sure we were fed, got university degrees. That's the type of mother I aspire to be one day

has promised to be her doctor on the trip. Another brother is a nutritionist, "but I don't use him because I wanted a female" who understands the menstrual cycle. "It plays a big part because I'm in a weight-based sport, so I need someone who understands that in case I have to weigh in while I'm on."

How does she cope with all the travelling for competitions? Ali says she swears by antihistamines for sleeping on the plane but still hasn't found a magic cure for her skin. "My pores are so massive after flying, it's disgusting," she says, pointing to her forehead. "Maybe that's the next book I'll have to start reading: how to look after your skin after a long flight." She's going to keep her phone switched off until then.

● For more information on Coach's Dream It Real initiative, visit uk.coach.com and uk.youth.org @katie_strick

women can hold their own' — Julia Gillard on misogyny in politics

focused anger that drove her 2012 speech, which has been viewed half a million times on YouTube. "I didn't know I was going to give the speech until I gave it," she recalls. It was a response to leader of the opposition Tony Abbott talking about whether the speaker should stay in office after sending sexist text messages — but it became a rallying cry, spanning everything from comments about Gillard's appearance to extreme bullying: she was called "barren" for not having children, and an opposition fundraising dinner included the "Julia Gillard quail, small breasts, huge thighs and a big red box". "I wrote the notes that became the speech while Tony Abbott was talking. I felt a sense

of cool anger from many days in my prime ministership where I'd tolerated sexist remarks without reply. Afterwards I had to go back to my office and work. By the time I got there it was clear the speech was having an impact beyond Parliament. People were starting to ring in."

Gillard was elected in 2010. She thought the sexism was "a reaction to me being the first woman prime minister in Australia". I thought

Fly by: Julia Gillard is in London this weekend



things would normalise but instead it grew the longer I was PM. It made me wish I had pointed out the sexist incidents earlier when they were a bit more benign."

She knew political culture in Australia was "robust" but "felt it was important to show that a woman could stand in an environment like that in politics and hold her own." Her partner, Tim Mathieson, was the one who worried. "Your family feel the slings and arrows more than you do, so they are protective and

supportive as a result," she said.

As PM, Gillard fought for greener policy, which made her unpopular. Although, after the fires in Australia this summer, more people are realising her actions were necessary.

"We did introduce a scheme to reduce emissions but it was repealed by the government elected afterwards. The peril to our planet is increasing and the tragic summer we've had in Australia has increased hunger for change." How does the political culture in the UK compare? "I'm delighted to see more women MPs in Westminster, especially after so many resigned before the election because the situation was so toxic. Nicky Morgan and Heidi Allen going

was a loss." Are there particularly female leadership qualities? "I'm writing a book about that with my friend [Nigerian economist] Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala. I don't believe babies are born with inherent leadership styles. Women are socialised differently." She remembers not being allowed to do woodwork at school and the girls being the ones who had to do the washing up.

"As we strive for more equality it impacts men too," says Gillard. Men still tell her they've asked the women in their lives to watch her speech. "There's an increasing recognition that a gender equal world will be better for women and men."

Susannah Butter

Anti-gang adviser attacks 'nonsense' charge

Anthony France Crime Correspondent

A LEADING anti-gangs adviser has hit out at police after a judge threw out charges he faked a burglary at his flat.

Gwenton Sloley, 36, had already begun legal action against the Met after drugs police wrongly raided his home on October 22, 2018 and officers carried out a second raid on January 22 last year.

Following an 18-month investigation, Mr Sloley was charged with intent to pervert the course of justice by making a false allegation of burglary two weeks before the initial police raid. The

Judge throws out fake burglary claims by police — now he's seeking £3m

ex-gang member was also accused of having £1,985 at his home which police alleged was criminal property. But on Monday, Judge Keith Raynor upheld a defence application to dismiss the charges following legal arguments at Woolwich crown court. The Crown



Vendetta claim: Gwenton Sloley says officers raided his home unlawfully

Prosecution Service said it would not challenge the decision.

Mr Sloley, who has been lauded by the Home Office, trained law enforcers, health workers and faith groups on how to identify and engage with gangs. After being cleared, he told the Standard:

"The case was nonsense. There was never any evidence to take me to court. This was nothing more than a vendetta. "These officers unlawfully raided my house and tried to create a case around it. I have been hospitalised twice due to the stress. My family are now traumatised each time the door knocks."

The Standard told last year how detectives forced entry to Mr Sloley's Lewisham property as they looked for a crack cocaine dealer who moved out five years before he lived there.

The hunt saw four properties linked to Myles Prosper, 25, searched. As a result, Mr Sloley was blacklisted and NHS trusts and councils cancelled projects with his Crying Sons consultancy.

Mr Sloley, who helped set up the London Gang Exit programme, is seeking £3 million from the Met for defamation and £140,000 in lost earnings. At the time of the first search, Mr Sloley was in Manchester advising police. Police then

raided the property a second time looking for Class A drugs. None was found.

Mr Sloley's solicitor Tricia O'Sullivan, of Imran Khan & Partners, said: "Our client is delighted that... the charges against him have been dismissed."

"We now intend to give consideration to the commencement of civil proceedings against the appropriate body."

The CPS said: "We carefully reviewed the evidence in this case and concluded that the evidential test was met. We respect the decision of the court."

Scotland Yard declined to comment on Mr Sloley's claims but said: "A complaint in relation to damage of reputation and character was received on October 30, 2018. A subsequent complaint was received in July 2019. Matters remain under investigation by the directorate of professional standards."

Prosper was jailed in 2018 after admitting intent to supply and possession of a weapon.

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REVIEW



Baby face: Tom Ogden of Blossoms was joined on stage by an expanded band

Unfancy Blossoms get blokes bouncing to their egg-shakers

AMP London: Blossoms

Lafayette, NI

★★★★☆

David Smyth

LONDON'S newest music venue, Lafayette, is box-fresh but designed to transport gig-goers to old-time New Orleans with its wooden ceilings, exposed brickwork and low-lit cocktail bar next door.

With a capacity of 600, it's the kind of wide space where even if you're at the back, you're at the front. It just found room for Stockport indie band Blossoms, the first big name through the door, who were booked for DJ Annie Mac's AMP series but can command far larger spaces. Last summer, after two albums, they played Stockport County's football stadium.

Officially a quintet, there were eight musicians crammed in here. It's debatable whether they really needed two percussionists in addition to drummer Joe Donovan unless they're planning a new samba direction, but it was a symbol of significance. If you can afford to employ someone on full-time egg shakers, you are officially power players.

Now on their third album and their second number one, they had more than enough big songs to make their time fly by. Baby-faced frontman Tom Ogden brimmed with confidence, which he should as the originator of such irresistible tunes as breakthrough hit *Charlemagne* and the breezy *I Can't Stand It*.

Their unfancy hometown manner has seen Blossoms shoved in the line of northern lad bands that stretches from The Stone Roses to Oasis, Arctic Monkeys and beyond.

The core of bouncing blokes down the front suggested that is their rightful place, but the frothy synths of *Honey Sweet* and danceable bass on *Your Girlfriend* offered something else. The upbeat shimmer of *Oh No (I Think I'm In Love)* sounded like Swedish pop band The Cardigans.

They may well be more than they seem. With three bigger London shows to come this month, there are multiple opportunities to make sure.

● **March 17 to 19, O2 Forum Kentish Town, NW5.**
(o2forumkentishtown.co.uk)

GOING OUT PAGES 29-33



SPLASH OF COLOUR PAINT AND POWDER THROWN BY CROWDS AT HINDU HOLI CELEBRATION

INDIA Hindu devotees smear themselves with coloured powder and paint as they celebrate Holi at a temple in Nandgaon village, Uttar Pradesh state. Holi was originally a festival to celebrate the start of spring, good harvests and fertility of the land and dates back to a 4th century poem. It is also marked by parades with folk songs and dancing

Execution of 'innocent' prisoner is tragic injustice, says Kardashian

UNITED STATES
Ted Hennessey

AN ALABAMA death row inmate convicted of murdering three police officers was executed today despite a high-profile campaign to save his life after an accomplice admitted pulling the trigger.

Kim Kardashian said her "heart and prayers" were with Nathaniel Woods, who was found guilty in 2005 for his role in the shootings of Carlos Owen, Harley Chisolm III and Charles Bennett in Birmingham.

The officers died while trying to serve him a domestic assault war-



No clemency: Nathaniel Woods was given a lethal injection 15 years after being sentenced to death. Kim Kardashian, inset, supported him

rant. Reality TV star Kardashian, 39, urged officials to stop the execution after Woods' co-defendant, Kerry Spencer, admitted pulling the trigger. But a last-minute bid to save him failed and he died following a lethal injection at

9.01pm (3.01am GMT). Kardashian, who is training to be a lawyer, this week visited the White House with three women whom President Donald Trump recently freed from prison.

Shortly before Woods' death was confirmed, she said she believed an innocent man had been sentenced to die.

"The court has lifted the temporary stay of execution for #NathanielWoods. The governor will NOT save his life. My heart and prayers are with Nate and his family," she tweeted.

"This is a tragic example of injustice in the system — in a few minutes Nate may die for a crime he did not commit."

Woods' sister, Pamela, had told reporters outside the prison: "He is actually innocent. Kerry Spencer, the actual shooter, has stated many times that he

did it on his own with no help for anyone." Activists questioned the original trial, alleging the defendant was given inadequate legal advice.

Spencer had fired at the officers with a high-powered rifle inside an apartment, but Woods was convicted as an accomplice, according to prosecutors. Such convictions are allowed under state law and other people have been executed in similar circumstances.

A jury recommended that Woods receive the death penalty by a 10-2 vote. The Supreme Court issued a temporary stay to consider last-minute appeals and then denied the inmate's petitions.

Alabama's Republican governor Kay Ivey denied a request for clemency for Woods, 44, saying that it was unwarranted.



Frosty response: D'Adrien Anderson

Walmart store ice cream licker jailed for 30 days

UNITED STATES
Ben Morgan

A MAN who filmed himself licking ice cream and putting it back in a Walmart supermarket freezer has been jailed for 30 days.

The video of D'Adrien Anderson, 24, went viral on social media last August. CCTV showed him later taking the ice cream back out of the freezer and buying it. Despite him returning to the shop with the receipt, the ice cream manufacturer, Blue Bell Creameries, replaced all of its products in the freezer in Port Arthur, Texas.

Anderson was also fined \$1,000 and ordered to pay the firm \$1,565. His stunt followed a similar video, in which a teenage girl licked a tub and put it back in the freezer at a Walmart in Lufkin, Texas. That video was viewed more than 13 million times.

Watch the video:
standard.co.uk/licked

GLOBAL BRIEFING

AFGHANISTAN

27 KILLED AT KABUL CEREMONY
GUNMEN today attacked a memorial ceremony in Kabul attended by a top political leader, killing 27 people. Abdullah Abdullah, a rival to President Ashraf Ghani, escaped unhurt. The Taliban, which signed a troop withdrawal agreement with the US last weekend, said it was not involved.

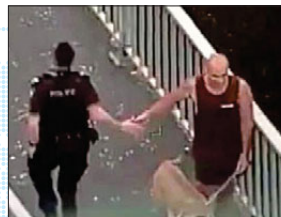
NEW ZEALAND

NORTH KOREA TRAVEL PIONEER DIES
THE head of the world's first budget travel agency to North Korea has died of a heart attack, aged 33. New Zealander Troy Collings co-founded Young Pioneer Tours after his interest in the country was spurred by a documentary on North Korean gymnastics in 2004.



AUSTRALIA

DOG WALKER TACKLES FLEEING 'CAR THIEF' AND HIGH FIVES OFFICER
A DOG walker has been praised for tackling a suspected car thief to the ground before high-fiving an officer and walking away. The suspect was grabbed by the man and held on the ground as he ran from



police after being found in a stolen Toyota in Mermaid Waters on the Gold Coast. The dog walker was then filmed by a police helicopter high-fiving the officer. Police are now trying to locate him so that he can be commended. The suspect, 40, was charged with several car- and drug-related offences.

WATCH THE VIDEO ONLINE
standard.co.uk/high-five

UNITED STATES

FOOTBALL STAR ACCUSED OF CARRYING GUN AT AIRPORT

AN American Football player has been arrested for allegedly possessing a gun at New York's LaGuardia Airport.

New York Jets player Quinnen Williams, 22, was about to catch a plane when he was arrested at 9.15pm for criminal possession of a weapon.

A spokesman said he had a gun permit but it was licensed in Alabama. Under New York law, it is only legal to carry a concealed weapon in the state if it has a New York licence. There was no immediate comment from Williams, above, or the Jets.



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MUSIC RIZ AHMED SMASHES STEREOTYPES

HIS BRILLIANT NEW ALBUM IS A GRIPPING
EXPLORATION OF BRITISHNESS **PAGE 32**



STAYING IN NOUGHTS + CROSSES COMES TO TV

MEET THE BREAKOUT STARS OF THE
MALORIE BLACKMAN ADAPTATION **PAGE 34**



Going Out



Girls on film: Kristin
Scott Thomas and Sharon
Horgan lead the cast

Just put your hands up and surrender to the inevitable

No surprises but
the story of the
famous choir does
an efficient job,
says **David Sexton**

FILM OF THE WEEK

Military Wives

113 mins, 12A

★★★★☆

SOME films are a surprise but others
are almost inevitable, aren't they?
Military Wives is a corking specimen

of the latter. In 2010, two Scots Guards
wives at Catterick Garrison in Yorkshire
had the idea of forming a choir to boost
morale at the base while their husbands
were deployed in Afghanistan.

They wrote to Gareth Malone, whose
BBC programme The Choir was hugely
popular at the time – and he helped
start up a number of military choirs for

a fourth series of the show. In Novem-
ber 2011, one of these performed a song,
Wherever You Are, featuring lyrics
taken from letters between the choir
and their spouses, at the Festival of
Remembrance at the Royal Albert Hall
in the presence of the Queen.

The single went on to become the
number one that Christmas, selling

more than half a million in a week.
Military Wives Choirs is now a regis-
tered charity with 2,200 members par-
ticipating in 75 choirs.

The start of this movement is the story
of Military Wives – with the part played
by Malone and the TV series tastefully

Continued on Page 30



IT'S GOT FEEL-GOOD WRITTEN ALL OVER IT



Going Out | Film

Continued from Page 29

cut out. Kristin Scott Thomas plays Kate, the upper-class wife of the colonel in charge of the base, Richard (Greg Wise). She takes it upon herself, in an extremely de haut en bas fashion, to get involved in the wives' groups, which would normally be led by the Regimental Sergeant Major's wife, Lisa (Sharon Horgan, doing her mardy, quizzical thing), with more of a common touch.

So here's the class war any British film worth its salt needs. Kate's autocratic and unwelcome interference — "gather round and take a seat", she tells the wives at a coffee morning, dinging her cup — is pushed pretty far. Yet we, and the wives of the base, know that she and Richard are deeply traumatised by the loss of their soldier son, Jamie, in a previous tour in Afghanistan, so we make allowances.

Poor Kate, always bravely insisting she's "fine", spends her nights buying daft products she doesn't need off TV shopping channel, hiding them in a cupboard when they arrive. Outside the house there's still the decrepit banger of car, nicknamed "Dave", that was Jamie's pride and joy and sometimes Kate goes and sits in it. And then Kate is, after all, Dame Kristin Scott Thomas, whom it is impossible not to admire and be touched by — and she brings something quite special to this role from her own military upbringing, her Fleet Air Arm father having died in a flying accident when she was five.

The rest of the cast are broadly sketched, allocated one memorable characteristic each — gay, Welsh, sporty, black, shy, Georgie, young, tuneless, etc. And the plot

Military upbringing: Kristin Scott Thomas plays colonel's wife Kate

proceeds in the time-honoured fashion of all such films about people coming together to mount a performance they never thought they could give, which then itself forms the climax of the movie. There's the initial scepticism, the self-doubt overcome, the surprising success, the setback, the bust-up between key performers (a terrific row between Kate and Lisa), the race to get to the big occasion after all (Dave, I regret to say, comes in handy here)...

There have been so many such films — *Calendar Girls*, *Pride*, *Brassed Off*, *Made in Dagenham* — and that's without broadening the genre out to include high school musicals, say, or *Rocky* (nicely alluded to here). But the supreme precursor has to be *The Full Monty*, the 1997 debut of Peter Cattaneo, who has not achieved any equivalent success in films since.

Until now perhaps, for Cattaneo, it turns out, is indeed the director of *Military Wives* and the right man for the job. The film absolutely works as a feel-good tear-jerker crowd-pleaser, that rum combination of tearfulness and exultation, crying and cheering, much assisted by the way the songs (Eighties power ballads mostly) are performed live on set, wholeheartedly rather than highly rehearsed, giving them an affecting spontaneity. Not great film-making maybe, but mum will love it. And it honours families who deserve all honour.

Must know

You know exactly what you're getting — class tension, self-doubt, setbacks, the triumphant weepy finale...

Must go?

If you loved *Calendar Girls*, *Made in Dagenham*, *Brassed Off* or *Pride*, this film is tailor-made for you.



Gorgeous portrait

Charlotte O'Sullivan

**Onward**

Cert PG, 103mins

★★★★☆

THIS rainbow-coloured Pixar adventure is set in a mythical universe where centaurs have mobile phones (a popular ring tone, in these parts, is Marvin Gaye's *Let's Get It On*). Also on display: cyclops unicorn cop, Specter (Lena Waithe), aka Disney's "first openly LGBTQ cartoon character".

Specter looks like *The Simpsons*' Kang and Kodos. And if you cough you'll miss her big line. Is this an outrage? Nah. Gay characters shouldn't have to be Cara Delevingne cute. And, when kids watch this on DVD, they'll be able to savour the bit where Specter (empathetic; down-to-earth) refers to the challenges of raising her "girlfriend's daughter". Pixar loves lesbian mums. You can spot them in *Finding Dory* and *Toy Story 4*. But those were walk-on parts. Here's a gay mum with a name and a voice. Onwards and upwards!

Now the tricky part. Pixar's best works are visually bedazzling and scientifically sound — worthy of Leonardo da Vinci. Let's just say that Onward's director, Dan Scanlon, isn't quite in that league.

The film hinges on a spell that resurrects a dead dad. The spell is imperfectly performed by elf brothers, Ian (Tom



Family matters: from left, Barley, Ian, their mum and the pet, below

ALSO SHOWING...**Sulphur and White**

121mins 15

★★★★☆

JULIAN JARROLD explores the domino effect of sexual abuse in this desperately emotional, sometimes confusing, British drama. The film flits backwards and forwards in time as a 10-year-old boy, repeatedly gang raped by friends of his father in South Africa, grows up to be a cold and crazed investment banker in London. This is based on the true story of businessman David Tait, though many changes have been made, some of them bewildering (Tait was actually abused when he was living in Deptford. Did Jarrold think viewers would find that too dreary?) Anyway, the performances save the day. Dougray Scott is both pathetic and terrifying as David's father, while Hugo Stone is devastating as the boy. In one scene, the shell-shocked David chews his own mouth till it bleeds. It's hardly a major film, but that image really sticks.

Escape From Pretoria

96mins 12A

★★★★☆

DANIEL RADCLIFFE acts his heart out in the (true) story of the white ANC activists who, in 1979, sprang themselves out of prison via home-made wooden keys. Like Chuck in *Cast Away*, Tim (Radcliffe) and Stephen (Daniel Webber) are bright men who enjoy a challenge. Things get really tense when they start sneak-

ing out of their cells in the dead of night, and the cinematography has its moments — a nicely framed close-up of Tim and French fellow prisoner, Leonard, (Mark Leonard Winter), puts the spotlight on their blue eyes. It's like watching four panicky tropical fish. Still, when the three men huddle together, they look like a Bee Gees tribute act. The key to enjoying this movie is embracing the fact that it's slightly daft.

Toni Morrison: The Pieces I Am

120mins PG-13

★★★★☆

GENTLE shocks abound in a documentary about the author of *Beloved*. In that novel, an extraordinary woman, planning a party to end all parties, excites the hostility of her community, who suddenly decide she's lording it over them. One of many revelations here is that Morrison, who died last year, took great care not to alienate her nearest and dearest. She supported family, friends, peers, young writers and pupils (she was an editor and professor for years). Her loved ones paid her back in kind. Morrison, interviewed aged 88 by her close friend, the photographer and filmmaker Timothy Greenfield-Sanders, is at once sexy, self-affirming and shy. She observed the world for decades. It's wonderful to be able to return her stare.

Revelatory: a documentary about Nobel prize-winning author Toni Morrison is full of gentle shocks



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of grief and letting go



“*As the characters move on in their quest, they become more and more adorable*”

Holland) and Barley (Chris Pratt) which means that said dad is only solid from the waist down. In the film, the dad's legs can move and feel good vibrations. Eh? Our legs only move because our brains tell them to. Since the dad has no brain, his legs, by rights, should be inert. The film is dumber than it should be, though it has warmth on its side.

Ian and Barley Lightfoot are socially awkward (friendless, as well as girl-friendless). On top of that, Ian, thanks to his mum, (Julia Louis-Dreyfus; ace), is a dab hand at sewing. These boys, in other words, are the opposite of macho. As they go on a quest to find the rest of their dad's body, they get more and more adorable. As do the dad's legs. The way the dad's shoes grope around, trying to check that both Ian and Barley are within reach, is incredibly moving.

This is a story about how chronic grief warps us. It's also about how support makes us light on our toes. Ian and Barley cross a chasm of doom, flush with delight when their dad starts dancing and — sob! — have to say goodbye to him for ever. Do families need fathers? Scanlon delivers a love song to atypical clans, which couldn't end on a sweeter, or clearer, note.

Must know

A story about how chronic grief warps and changes us, told with wit, warmth and unicorns

Must go?

Less clever than it should be and less beautiful than Pixar's classics, this is still a sweet delight. With unicorns!



Warm, tender snapshot of opposites who attract

The Photograph

106mins PG-13

★★★★☆

Charlotte O'Sullivan

WRITER-DIRECTOR Stella Meghie wants us to fall for beautiful New Yorkers — intrepid online journalist, Michael (LaKeith Stanfield) and svelegant museum curator, Mae (Issa Rae). Deadlines don't impinge on Michael; Mae's kitchen is bigger than my whole flat (sigh). But, thanks to Stanfield and Rae, it's easy to go with the flow. As actors, they have completely different vibes (if he's an ellipsis, she's more of an exclamation mark). Yet both give off a real-world smell.

That Michael and Mae are black is, simultaneously, crucial to the tale and by the by. Let's not JUST talk about race, Meghie seems to be saying. Let's talk about weddings,



Svelegant: LaKeith Stanfield and Issa Rae in the drama set in New York

workaholic mums and the fact that Kendrick Lamar can be a real downer.

At one point, Mae asks Michael to dance with her (Al Green's on the

turntable). Instead, Michael stays put, on the sofa. An awkward little power struggle ensues, that tells us so many about these wary, strong-willed characters.

It's a shame about the flashbacks. In a glossy version of Eighties Louisiana, Mae's ambitious photographer mum, Christina (Chanté Adams) half commits to a decent fisherman, Isaac (Y'lan Noel). Christina's dilemma is supposed to deepen our sense of where Mae's coming from, but the Nicholas Sparks-y plot contrivances drag us straight to a bland rung of hell.

Simply put, Michael and Mae don't get enough time to just be, though a sequel could fix that. Al Green croons, "Make believe you love me, one more time." Michael and Mae are warm and tender. One more snuggle would be much appreciated.



In the spotlight: Bachi Valishvili and Levan Gelbakhiani in *And Then We Danced*

Facing the music: a love story that dances for joy

IT'S A rare kind of film whose tangible power can be felt both on and off screen. The Georgian movie *And Then We Danced*, which follows a young dance student who falls in love with his male classmate, is one of those. It turns a spotlight on homophobia in Georgian society — and was itself threatened by it from production to release.

Directed by Swedish-Georgian filmmaker Levan Akin, the film, released here next week, was made in partial secrecy, with bodyguards hired to protect cast and crew. Locations fell through without warning, and the film's choreographer is still credited as "anonymous".

None of these limitations hamper the film's beauty, however; *And Then We Danced* is a riveting, kinetic love story, alive with the euphoric joy of dancing and first love.

Dancer and first-time actor Levan Gelbakhiani, who plays lead character Merab, says he's seen the impact of *And Then We Danced* at first hand, such as at the Tbilisi International Film Festival last December, where a lesbian love story named *Comets* premiered. "At the screening for this movie, there were only 10 people outside of the cinema, protesting the screening," says Gelbakhiani. "In our case, it was maybe a thousand, or more than a thousand people."

Gelbakhiani is referring to *And Then We Danced*'s premiere, also in Tbilisi, in November last year, at which a horde of far-Right protesters attempted to shut the screening down. The aggression in Georgia was in stark contrast to the rapturous response worldwide; the film received a 15-minute standing ovation at Cannes Film Festival, and

won best film at Sweden's Oscars equivalent, the Guldbagge Awards. "I can't really keep up," says Gelbakhiani of the response.

"A lot of people [have] told us how grateful they are for this film. Homophobia is not just a local problem in Georgia. It's huge, especially when it comes to countries like Azerbaijan and Romania. It's really important because I think in our case, we opened a lot of doors for minority groups. [People] realise that they are not alone."

While Georgian dance is traditionally strict and masculine, *And Then We Danced* challenges the form. In the film, dance is an expression of chemistry and desire;

“*Homophobia is not just a local problem in Georgia. It's huge in places like Azerbaijan and Romania*”

a channel for things that can't be spoken aloud. Dance "is a way to communicate to each other, and to share feelings", says Gelbakhiani.

This is evident in Merab's journey throughout the movie, which becomes an ode to individuality, a celebration of queerness, and a paean to the power of love.

"I think this movie is a really great way to see love," says Gelbakhiani. "To be kinder towards minority groups, and to have this real possibility to love everyone, no matter their sexuality or religion. To understand people, and to understand love."

● *And Then We Danced* is released in cinemas on March 13.

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Going Out | Music**ALBUMS OF THE WEEK****Britishness with bite**

GENRE
Riz Ahmed
The Long Goodbye
Mongrel
★★★★☆



THE hyphen between "actor" and "musician" is not traditionally the most inspiring territory. Wembley-born Riz Ahmed, as usual, smashes the stereotype. He may be approaching Hollywood's A-list thanks to roles in Marvel's *Venom* and *Star Wars* movie *Rogue One* (plus his Emmy-winning turn in the HBO mini-series *The Night Of*) but he's also been rapping since his teens. Post 9/11 Blues, the satirical song he released in 2006 as Riz MC, won attention before his acting rise began, mixing identity politics and dark humour in a style that reaches maturity here, on his first release under his real name. It's a

break-up album, but he's no Adele. The "woman" is called Britney and is dumping him because she wants to "take back control" — sound familiar? The music is interspersed with friends leaving voicemail advice and comfort.

Aside from the poppy Karma and the bhangra shake of Any Day, the style is tense and melody-free. Toba Tek Singh, named after a Saadat Hasan Manto story about the Partition of British India, features harsh electronic stabs. A spoken word segment, Where You From, explores his confused origins in powerful terms.

The whole offers a gripping exploration of Britishness.

David Smyth



POP
Franc Moody
Dream In Colour
Juicebox
★★★★☆



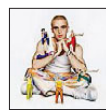
THE pure euphoria of a rave is impossible to bottle, but on Franc Moody's debut album *Dream In Colour*, the North London collective have come pretty darn close with 11 beautifully polished dance tracks, packed with moments so irresistibly funky you'll be struggling not to dance along.

The songwriting isn't very complex, but it doesn't need to be on a record designed almost solely to get people moving, and it never strays out of its lane of pure funk-pop, with its songs propelled by smooth beats, earwormy bass lines and glittering synths.

The best tracks don't take themselves too seriously. *Skin to Skin* turns lustful feelings into a playful dance routine, while *Charge Me Up* stretches a metaphor about battery-powered dancing over an entire song without losing momentum. Slower-tempo *Flesh and Blood* is a standout, with blissful vocals matched by an unforgettable bass melody.

George Fenwick

GENRE
Lauv
~how i'm feeling~
AWAL
★★★★☆



ARI "LAUV" LEFF has made a fun debut pop album with a dark side. This is depression you can sing along to.

The anthemic work is a mega 21 tracks long. Although some bleed together, there are many impressive stand-outs, such as opener *Drugs & the Internet*, a self-deprecating commentary on chasing likes.

Lauv is refreshingly open about sadness, having been diagnosed with depression and OCD. Lyrics reflect his mental state — "Modern loneliness / We're never alone, but always depressed" — but judicious use of synths and falsetto turn dark feelings into beautiful songs with catchy choruses.

Lauv has written songs for Charli XCX, Celine Dion and K-pop giants BTS, who feature on the album. The collaborations are strong (I'm so tired with Troye Sivan was his first Top 10 UK single), but Lauv acts as a one-man boyband — a multi-faceted artist and master of irony.

Helena Wadia

POP
Stephen Malkmus
Traditional Techniques
Domino
★★★★☆



TRADITIONAL Techniques is curious in both senses of the word. While recording *Sparkle Hard*, his 2018 album with the Jicks, Stephen Malkmus was enticed by acoustic instruments lying around the studio. The Pavement frontman experimented and produced this: an album on which the twangs of an Afghan rabab, the rippled tones of a kaval flute and other non-Western sounds meet the distinctly American styles of folk and country music.

Opener *ACC Kirtan* is a tapestry, with threads of downtempo bluegrass, spiritual jazz. Standout track *Shadowbanned* has a freaky, spangled psychedelia to it.

But like any exploration not all new ground is quite so exciting. *Brainwashed* and *Signal Western* are pleasant but sound half-baked. The cryptic lyrics don't add much, though there is some enjoyably daft humour: "I'm Miles Davis better than any of you".

Jochan Embley

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Failed rocker turned star poet steps up to mic

MUSIC

Poet Laureate Simon Armitage used to dream of making it big in a band. He may yet, says **David Smyth**

POETS have collaborated on libretti and hymns and lyrics for songwriters right back to the beginning, so it's not unusual," says Simon Armitage of his move to mix music with poetry, although starting a band, LYR, is particularly unsurprising behaviour for him. Surely the indie-est of poets with his floppy hair and loudly proclaimed obsessions with The Smiths and The Fall, he even wrote a music-based memoir called *Gig: The Life and Times of a Rock-star Fantasist*, in 2008.

"It has recently occurred to me that only through the process of failing to become a rock star have I become a writer," the West Yorkshireman, 56, said in the book. While his status as a poet has risen consistently — he was appointed Poet Laureate when Carol Ann Duffy's 10-year tenure came to an end in May last year — his musical achievements to date have been mixed. There was a teenage punk band called Tess and the d'Urbs, and in 2009 he released his only album as the lead singer in The Scarenongers, who his dad told him should have been named



Record deal: from left, Richard Walters, Simon Armitage and Patrick Pearson have made a sad and beautiful album. It's out in May

Midlife Crisis. He also has an Ivor Novello award for his lyrical contribution to Feltham Sings, a Channel 4 documentary with singing prison inmates.

The balance shifts again with LYR, a collaboration with singer-songwriter Richard Walters and producer Patrick Pearson. The band have signed a major record deal before they play their first ever gigs, which are next week in Leeds and then London. LYR stands for Land Yacht Regatta. On their forthcoming

debut album, Armitage speaks his lines in his dolorous Northern tones, Pearson adds piano and electronic textures that create a slow-moving, glacial atmosphere, and Walters floats in occasionally with sung responses to the principal vocals. It's sad and very beautiful and full of the tiny details that make Armitage's poetry so affecting.

"Almost every track is a monologue from a character who is in some sort of crisis," explains Armitage. "They're all

calling out in some way." What makes these words require music when most of the rest of his work doesn't? "I've always argued that with a pure poem you've got to write everything in there, because there's not going to be a backbeat or a chord sequence to run the engine of the emotions. With these pieces, the writing is more on the surface. They've been left open to some other element, which is provided by the music." Walters first contacted

Armitage about a decade ago about working together. The poet provided lyrics to Redwoods, a lovely ballad which Walters sings on his 2012 solo album *Regret Less*.

Walters and Pearson, who had been in another band together, posted a dictaphone to Armitage, and waited. "It gathered dust for a while, this big furry microphone like an animal in hibernation, waiting to be reactivated," he says. "Finally I started pulling together some pieces of written work that were waifs and strays, really. They were in this overlap zone between poetry and song lyrics, so even though they do function as poems, in a way they're stood there trying to hitch a lift, waiting for something else to come along."

When his words were sent back with music added, did it sound as he was expecting? "It sounded better."

LYR arrive at a fertile time for lyricists. "I grew up in an era when you couldn't really hear what thrash bands were saying on records. Maybe through rap, language has become more conspicuous in music. I think there's a re-energised interest in language these days," says Armitage. Just don't call him a rapper. "This is definitely not rap! Whatever I'm doing comes out of a literary tradition, a folk tradition, even the tradition of the hymnal."

But as he stands centre stage in Hoxton next week after a lifetime in gig audiences, you know he'll be feeling just a little bit like a rock star.

● LYR's new single, *The First Time*, is released today on Mercury KX. The album, *Call in the Crash Team*, follows on May 29. They play Hoxton Hall, N1 on March 10. hoxtonhall.co.uk



TRAVEL TODAY

WHY BELGRADE SHOULD BE YOUR NEXT MINI-BREAK TRAVEL ON PAGE 43

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Staying In

Making this series felt like therapy

TELEVISION

As the adaptation of Malorie Blackman's bestselling *Noughts + Crosses* hits TV, *Katie Strick* meets its two young stars

WHEN Malorie Blackman published her novel *Noughts + Crosses* 19 years ago, Jack Rowan and Masali Baduza, stars of the BBC's new TV adaptation, were both four years old.

Unlike many of their peers, neither read the book growing up, but unbeknown to them, both were living the opposite of their future on-screen reality: Rowan as a "free" white man in a tolerant, multicultural London; Baduza as an "othered" black woman in a post-apartheid South Africa racked by racial tensions.

The star-studded series, filmed in Cape Town but set in a fictional London known as Albion, flips these realities on their head. For anyone unfamiliar with Blackman's award-winning novel, the story follows star-crossed lovers Callum and Sephy in an alternate world where white people (*Noughts*) are the oppressed underclass and black people (*Crosses*) are the ruling one per cent.

Newcomer Baduza, 23, plays Sephy, a Cross and daughter of uncompromising Home Secretary Kamal Hadley; Peaky

Star-cross'd: main, Baduza as Sephy, right, Rowan, as Callum



Blinders star Rowan, 23, plays Callum, a Nought and son of the Hadley family's housekeeper.

"I'm grateful for the experience," Rowan tells me, a year on from filming and the day after the series premiere in Brixton. Filming gave him a taste of what it was like to be on the other side: in one scene, his character is the only Nought at a military training camp of Crosses.

"Even though it was fictional, man you could feel it," he says, seriously. It was the first time he'd ever been "the only one of something" and it showed him what it might feel like when "the things you get isolated for are things you can't change: your voice, your accent, your skin tone".

For Baduza, filming also hit her hard — for opposite reasons. "It felt like a therapy session," she says. "Living as a black woman in this world, my lived experience has been being treated as someone less than."

At school, she had to wear her hair in cornrows because her natural hair was seen as "unprofessional and unkempt". On screen, she wears regal, vibrant clothes and natural afro hair.

Filming the series in her native South Africa was moving. "It's only been 24 years since the end of apart-



heid so everything's still raw, you can still feel it," she says, recalling how filming riot and political scenes "in reverse" there felt "intense".

She enjoyed showing the rest of the cast around her hometown, and for Rowan, staying 12 hours away from home for six months brought him closer to the rest of the cast, which included Mamma Mia's Josh Dylan as Callum's brother and Cold Feet's Helen Baxendale as his mother. Stormzy even makes a cameo appearance as a newspaper editor.

"He's how you'd imagine him to be and more: a very sweet, humble, hardworking guy," smiles Rowan, who shares a scene with the grime star in one episode. "I wasn't on set that day but I made sure I met him," laughs Baduza.

Baduza's character begins the series with a boyfriend, and Callum joins the army, neither of which are in the book,



Stormzy has a cameo. 'He's just how you'd imagine: very sweet, humble, hardworking'

so fans familiar with the original storyline will be "kept on their toes".

Both Rowan and Baduza watched the first episode live on BBC 1 last night because "there's that added magic when the rest of the world is watching it", and they are excited to hear fans' reactions, both good and bad, "because it's when we are uncomfortable that real growth and change can occur", says Baduza.

"People will be uncomfortable seeing themselves in a light they've never seen themselves in, but I think it'll really challenge people's mindsets and perception of reality. Ultimately, that's what we want."

● All six episodes of *Noughts + Crosses* are now available on iPlayer

@katie_strick

STREAMING NOW: BOOKS ON FILM

My Brilliant Friend

(Now TV)

Elena Ferrante's Neapolitan Quartet translates into very good telly, featuring many dusty Italianate piazzas, twinkly waters and best pals Lenù and Lila.



Baghdad Central

(All 4)

Helter-skelter whodunnit with a dark twist set, interestingly, in wartime Baghdad. Based on the novel by Elliott Colla.



A Series of Unfortunate Events

(Netflix)

Deliciously dark children's book universe gets the full Netflix kitchen sink treatment.



STARS SHELLEY VON STRUNCKEL

Aries March 20 - April 19

Those around you may discuss the twists and turns triggered by the retrograde Mercury or ignore them completely. Whatever the case, you're urged to ensure you double-check details. This could save days of confusion.

0904 470 1141 (65p per minute)*

Taurus April 20 - May 20

The move by your ruler Venus into Taurus signifies a shift that will be as crucial as the events involved are unexpected. Bear this in mind and, when sudden changes arise, you'll plunge into them, and with enthusiasm.

0904 470 1142 (65p per minute)*

Gemini May 21 - June 20

Events are coming in a rush of excitement and celebration. But be aware that, initially, some of what arises will be disruptive, if not raise questions about long-standing arrangements. That's timely, because several need to change.

0904 470 1143 (65p per minute)*

Cancer June 21 - July 21

Ages ago, you promised one particular individual you'd keep certain facts to yourself. But since then, events have forced you to discuss these with others. Apologise, then explain the reason why. You will be forgiven.

0904 470 1144 (65p per minute)*

Leo July 22 - August 22

One thing that distracts you is others' dramas, especially the pleas of those who are needy. This once, however, first check the facts. The individual in question may not be in as much distress as they say.

0904 470 1145 (65p per minute)*

Virgo August 23 - September 22

At the moment, certain issues remain puzzling. Be patient until the coming Virgo Full Moon arrives early next week, which both sharpens your instincts and helps to bring already tricky issues to a head.

0904 470 1146 (65p per minute)*

Libra September 23 - October 22

Nobody is better at diplomatically re-organising your plans so you can proceed with them, while making it appear you're putting others first. But events are now forcing you to ask certain individuals to give what you're doing priority.

0904 470 1147 (65p per minute)*

Scorpio October 23 - November 21

The last thing you want to do is upset anybody by revealing you've been keeping certain facts to yourself. It's just you knew how upsetting these would be. But sudden events are forcing these out in the open and triggering talks.

0904 470 1148 (65p per minute)*

Sagittarius November 22 - December 20

For ages, you've been thinking about making substantial changes on your way of living. Judging by the influence of Monday's powerful Full Moon, that time has come. Begin exploring your options now, and you'll enjoy the process.

0904 470 1149 (65p per minute)*

Capricorn December 21 - January 19

If you're into astrology, you'll have lived through the confusion triggered by Mercury's retrograde cycle before, and be aware that, often, it leads to helpful insights — and they could develop into powerful changes.

0904 470 1150 (65p per minute)*

Aquarius January 20 - February 17

You've an amazing talent for observing sudden changes in the wider world and understanding how they'll fit in with existing arrangements. But you're far less flexible about certain habits. The sooner you acknowledge this, the better.

0904 470 1151 (65p per minute)*

Pisces February 18 - March 19

Accepting that somebody who you trusted has disappointed you is challenging. But it's also worth facing the fact you refused to acknowledge this. You owe it to yourself and others to stand up to the individual.

0904 470 1152 (65p per minute)*

IF IT'S YOUR BIRTHDAY ON...

SATURDAY: Often, decisions are a simple yes or no. Now it's about reviewing past arrangements or alliances, exploring what would create a better balance or bring you closer. But, elsewhere, it's about moving on to something new.

SUNDAY: A pivotal new chapter of your life is beginning. It's about being true to yourself. But also, it's about your self-worth, your financial assets and what comes your way. The result? You'll live well but also support others, often in life-changing ways.

MONDAY: Your birthday Full Moon triggers a review of relationships of every variety. While you'll discover once-rewarding arrangements are ending, you'll explore new ones that could bring rewarding activities or, possibly, a new variety of joy.

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*Astro line horoscopes are updated every Friday. Calls cost 65p per minute plus your telephone company's network access charge and will last approximately five minutes. **0906 number costs £1.50 per minute plus your telephone company's network access charge. Maximum call duration for live services is 20 minutes. Service open daily from 8am-1am. You must be over 18 years old to use this service. Calls recorded and regulated by PhonePayPlus. For entertainment purposes only. Service provided by Spoke. Customer service: 0333 202 3392

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THE GREATEST SHOW ON TURF

Cheltenham Festival, a jewel in the horse racing crown, begins on Tuesday. Turn the page to find out the favourites galloping for glory in four thrilling days of unmissable sporting action

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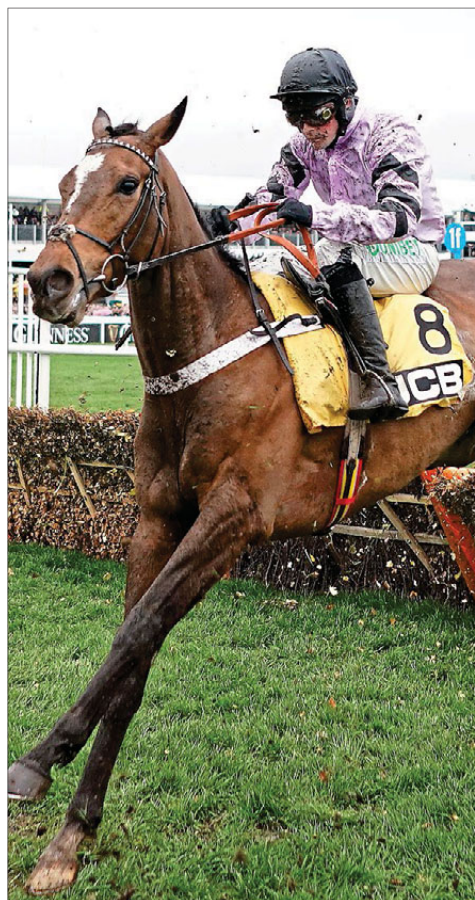
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18+

Min £20 in EXC back bets on the Supreme Novices' Hurdle 'Win' market. Excludes Antepost bets. Max £20 EXC mobile free bet, not valid on 'E/W' & 'SP' bets, awarded at bet settlement. T&Cs apply.

ADVERTISEMENT FEATURE

Your guide to the horses to watch at

**TUESDAY****CHAMPION HURDLE, 3.30pm**

Nicky Henderson is the leading trainer in the feature race on day one of the Festival - and he saddles the 4.8 favourite Epatante. Henderson, who is looking for his eighth Champion Hurdle success, also has the next best in the market, Pentland Hills (6.8), pictured left, whose Betfair Exchange price to win the Triumph Hurdle last year was 42.0 compared to an industry starting price of 20-1, and Fusil Raffles (28.0), who would need good ground to be at his best. The race looks wide open. Last year's winner, Esprit D'Allen, will not be defending its crown after being put down following a training accident, while two-time race winner Buveur D'Air is out injured. Ante-post favourite at the start of the season Klassikal Dream and stablemate Saldier have been ruled out too.

In the absence of these two horses, Willie Mullins will be pinning his hopes on Cilaos Emery (9.6), who has been supplemented for the race at a cost of £22,500, and Sharjah (14.5).

Fellow Irish trainer Jessica Harrington, meanwhile, has high hopes for veteran Supasundae (14.0), who has run in the Stayers' Hurdle over three miles in each of the past two seasons at the Festival but would be reverting to two miles.

**BACK****CAREFULLY SELECTED (3.15)****National Hunt Chase, 5.30pm**

Patrick Mullins will be looking to become the first jockey to win the race - which has been reduced in distance this year from four miles to three miles and six furlongs - for a third time when he takes the ride on the eight-year-old, who is trained by his father, Willie, inset right. The 11-time champion amateur won the race on Back In Focus in 2013 and five years later on Rathvinden, equalling his father's record in the race.

LAY**SHISHKIN (4.2)****Supreme Novices' Hurdle, 1.30pm**

The current favourite for the first race of the entire meeting, but horses who head the betting have a poor record, with just two winning in the past 13 renewals. Favourites and joint-favourites have been successful 10 times (22 per cent) in the 45 runnings since 1972. The Nicky Henderson six-year-old has yet to record any solid top-level form, either.

Leading contender:
Barry Geraghty
on Defi Du Seuil

**WEDNESDAY****CHAMPION CHASE, 3.30pm**

It's the old master against the younger pretenders in day two's showpiece. Altior - a golden oldie in racing at the age of 10 - is aiming for a third successive win in the two-mile race, a feat achieved only once before. Nicky Henderson's stable star, who is unbeaten in four starts at the Festival, having won the Supreme Novices' Hurdle in 2016 and the Arkle Novices' Chase in 2017, has been beaten just once over obstacles - and that was when stepped up in trip to two miles and five furlongs at Ascot in November. Back at two miles at Newbury last month, he was back in the old routine with a dominant victory which saw him shorten into favouritism at 3.15 for the Champion Chase.

Standing in his way this time are this season's standout two-mile chasers, Defi Du Seuil (3.25), pictured above right, and Chacun Pour Soi (3.95). The former, trained by Philip Hobbs, won the JLT Novices' Chase, over two miles and four furlongs, at last year's Festival. He has been beaten just once since then, when runner-up behind the Willie Mullins-trained Chacun Pour Soi, who was imperious that day.

**BACK****ENVOI ALLEN (2.64)****Ballymore Novices' Hurdle, 1.30pm**

It wouldn't be Cheltenham without a hotpot, and this year it is the unbeaten six-year-old trained by Betfair Ambassador Gordon Elliott, right. Envoi Allen, pictured right, is eight-from-eight in both points and under rules, and is a potential superstar.

LAY**CHAMP (4.4)****RSA Novices' Chase, 2.10pm**

Favourite for the race, but fell on his previous start. He was second in the Ballymore Novices' Hurdle at last year's Festival, and won his two other chase starts, but his jumping was a little unconvincing.



racing season's most exciting event

THURSDAY

STAYERS' HURDLE, 3.30pm

There are three certainties in life: death, taxes and Paisley Park winning day three's big race. Emma Lavelle's star has racked up an impressive sequence of seven wins in as many races after finishing 13 of 20 runners in the 2018 Albert Bartlett Novices' Hurdle. We see no reason not to back him again.

The eight-year-old is the defending champion and looks to be in a different league to his rivals. He is 1.8 on the Betfair Exchange, while his nearest challenger – Summerville Boy – can be backed at 12.5. It would be no surprise to see Paisley Park lining up at odds-on and being the hottest favourite of any race at Prestbury Park next week.

Of the rest of the field, Willie Mullins's Penhill, pictured right, looks a lively contender at 15.0. The 2018 Stayers' hurdle champion missed last year's race due to a setback in training.



BACK

SIRE DU BERLAIS (12.5)

Pertemps Network Final Handicap Hurdle, 2.10pm

Just like Paisley Park, Sire Du Berlais is also looking to successfully defend his crown after winning last year's event. To be in the race, horses must finish in the top six of a qualifier – and Sire Du Berlais was asked relatively few questions when coming home fourth at Warwick to secure his place.

LAY

MIN (3.9)

Ryanair Chase, 2.50pm

Would probably be lining up in the Champion Chase rather than in this if his owner Rich Ricci was not running Chacun Pour Soi in Wednesday's big race. The Willie Mullins-trained nine-year-old has a reputation for being a nearly horse at Cheltenham, having finished runner-up twice at the Festival and fifth in the Champion Chase last year.



FRIDAY

CHELTHAM GOLD CUP, 3.30pm

Trainer Willie Mullins will be hoping lightning strikes twice in the blue riband of steeplechasing after following the path that worked so well last season, having run Al Boum Photo only at Tramore on New Year's Day prior to the Festival. His charge is 5.4 favourite on the Betfair Exchange, but in the Gold Cup's history only seven horses have won the race more than once.

His closest challenger, Santini (6.0), scrambled home on his seasonal appearance but laid down a serious marker for the race when winning the Cotswold Chase. Behind him that day was Bristol De Mai, pictured left, who rates a lively outsider at 29.0. Of the rest, Delta Work, at 6.4, was third in last year's RSA Chase at the Festival and he has won two of his three starts this season, while Paul Nicholls, pictured below left, who has won this race four times, runs Clan Des Obeaux, who was fifth last year and secured the King George VI Chase for the second successive year on Boxing Day.



BACK

MINELLA ROCCO (8.4)

Foxhunters' Chase, 4.10pm

This former Cheltenham Gold Cup runner-up rolled back the years in January when winning at Warwick. The Jonjo O'Neill-trained 10-year-old followed that up with another win and is the classiest entrant for the renewal of this race.

LAY

GOSHEN (4.7)

Triumph Hurdle, 1.30pm

The runners in this race won't hang around – with Goshen, Allmankind and Irish raider Aspire Tower all keen sorts – which will put more of an emphasis on jumping. That could be a problem for Goshen, who has a Rolls-Royce of an engine, but he will have to cut out his sketchy leaping to play a part. He also faces Solo, who won by 13 lengths on his UK debut.

ADVERTISEMENT FEATURE



WHAT IS THE BETFAIR EXCHANGE?

Welcome to the world's largest sports betting exchange – and here's how to use it

Simply put, the Betfair Exchange allows people to bet against each other. Instead of going up against an online or a high-street bookmaker, you are pitting your wits against other people who use the Exchange.

One of the main reasons for using the Betfair Exchange is that it can offer much better value than traditional bookies who set their own odds. On the Exchange, you can request your own price on a particular event or market.

For example, you might want to back a well-fancied horse to win a particular race at Cheltenham next week and request silly odds of 100-1. Someone on the Exchange, however, might strongly believe that your choice has no chance and therefore offers you the price requested.

Bets cannot be cancelled or declined on the Exchange, as long as you have the funds to place your bets or pay out winnings, and no bookmakers are involved.

With the Betfair Exchange, you only need to find another person who is happy to take on your bet at your requested price. So if you think that the current price available on a horse running at the Festival is too low or high, just simply ask for a better one.

The major difference with the Betfair Exchange compared with bookmakers is that it allows lay betting, which means backing a selection to lose rather than win.

By laying a bet, you effectively become the bookmaker by offering a price that can be taken by another Exchange user.

BETTING IN-PLAY

One of the big benefits of the Betfair Exchange is that it allows bets to be made after an event has started and up to its conclusion, hence the phrase "betting in-play".

For example, once a race is underway at Cheltenham, you can back or lay a horse just as you would have done before the race had started. You are therefore reacting to an event as it unfolds.

By betting in-play, you can also "trade" your position, which gives you the opportunity to lock in your profit. For example, if your horse in a chosen race looks to be on its way to victory, you may decide you want to lay off your stake at a shorter price, just to be sure.

USING DECIMALS

Unlike traditional bookmakers who use fractions for their prices, the Betting Exchange uses decimals. With decimal odds, it is a lot easier to understand what price is better. Do you know whether 4/7 will give you a higher return than 1/2? With decimal odds, you would see that 1.57 is bigger than 1.5, for example.

Decimals allow for smaller increments and more intense

Champion Hurdle

Cheltenham, Tuesday 10 March

			Back all	Lay all
Epatante	4.3 £195	4.4 £89	4.5 £103	4.7 £34
Pentland Hills	6.6 £35	6.8 £74	7 £77	7.4 £203
Cilaos Emery	12 £59	12.5 £16	13 £13	19.5 £10
Supasundae	15 £111	15.5 £48	16 £90	17 £136

Betfair Exchange prices

Champion Chase

Cheltenham, Wednesday 11 March

			Back all	Lay all
Altior	2.54 £11	2.86 £28	3 £791	3.1 £93
Defi Du Seuil	3.25 £246	3.3 £142	3.35 £75	3.4 £493
Chacun Pour Soi	4.1 £66	4.2 £74	4.3 £36	4.4 £50
Dynamite Dollars	22 £55	25 £22	26 £15	27 £45

Betfair Exchange prices

competition for prices. On the Betfair Exchange, Pentland Hills, the second favourite for the Champion Hurdle, is 7.0 (6/1) to win, but you could ask for 7.2 or 7.4 before the next standard fraction of 13/2.

Fractional odds represent the profit you make, so 6/1 means you will pick up £6 for every pound staked.

Decimal odds represent the return: 3.3 means you will receive £3.30 for every £1 invested, including your stake.

BACK/LAY PRINCIPLES

The prices on offer on the Exchange appear in one of two boxes – blue to back and pink to lay.

In the example tables above, Altior, pictured left, ridden by Nico de Boinville, is 3.0 to win the Champion

Follow my lead: Stayers' Hurdle, main image

Betting In Play

Be sure of a profit Benie Des Dieux was matched at 1.03 before falling at the final hurdle in last year's Mares' Hurdle

Chase, so if you want a £10 bet on him, returning £30, you would need to find a layer willing to risk £30 to win £10.

There are two ways to back. Firstly, you can accept the odds being offered, in this case 3.0. But you could also request higher odds and hope someone else is willing to take you on. This is what the pink "lay" window box shows.

Similarly, there are two ways to lay. Firstly, you can act as the bookmaker by laying at the odds requested. In our Altior example, you can see there is £93 wanting odds of 3.1.

So if you want to lay £20 at 3.1, click the 3.1 window, enter the amount you are willing to lay and click "confirm".

Alternatively, you can request odds that you are willing to lay, which are shown by the blue "back" windows. In our graphic, there is £28 wanting Altior to win at 2.86.

Decimal Odds

[1.2] is 1/5
[1.5] is 1/2
[2.0] is evens
[2.5] is 6/4
[3.5] is 5/2
[4.5] is 7/2
[9.5] is 17/2



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Alastair McKay *The Viewer*

A literary wolf on the hunt for myths — Hilary Mantel tells her own story



Hilary Mantel: Return to Wolf Hall
Saturday, BBC Two, 9pm
★★★★☆

What Was Virginia Woolf Afraid Of?
Sunday, Sky Arts, 9pm
★★★★☆

WHAT do we know about Hilary Mantel? The success of her books is inarguable. The third part of the Wolf Hall trilogy has just been published after lengthy gestation, and the talk is of peripheral lint such as the Booker Prize; and political hiccups, like Dominic Cummings and his resemblance (or not) to Henry VIII's king whisperer, Thomas Cromwell. In the receding shallows of this froth stands the author, giving almost nothing away, though "almost" is a generous adverb when she wants it to be.

Let's see. **Hilary Mantel: Return to Wolf Hall** was made in collaboration with the author. How much say she had isn't clear, but she certainly colludes in the business of projection. There she is, making herself up, talking about how she inhaled stories as soon as she breathed in. "Sometimes I think I wasn't born," she says. "I just came out of an ink blot."

Let's play Dr Rorschach and see what that blot suggests. What story is the storyteller telling? First, there is a lesson about memory. Mantel grew up in Derbyshire, near a valley in which a village was drowned to make way for a reservoir. In the Fifties, Mantel heard people talking about how they had seen the church spire when the water levels were low.

But the church had been blown up before the flood. "There really was no steeple." From this, Mantel absorbed a



Method writer: Hilary Mantel, who has just released the last book in her Wolf Hall trilogy, visits a tannery as she tries to immerse herself in the time of Henry VIII

lesson about fact, history and myth, and how they collaborate.

Mantel doesn't use this phrase, but she seems to be a Method Writer. When writing about 1540, she inhabits that time, smelling the dog dung from the tannery, developing Tudor sensibilities. She brings the period to life by writing in the present tense, but she understands something atmospheric: the loudest noise her characters would have heard would be thunder, or church bells.

The psychology bit? Mantel's parents had an unusual relationship. An old flame of her mother moved into the family home, and Mantel's father became Hilary's roommate, making himself part of the wallpaper. Someone, not Mantel, suggests that she is trying to find her father, a man who should have spoken up, in Thomas Cromwell.

She believes in ghosts, or prompts from the unconscious about roads not taken, with the dead being like a backing group to everyday reality. And writing? That, says Mantel, is "like trying to polish up a thunderstorm."

And so, to **Virginia Woolf Afraid Of?** the author is not around to spread confusion, having already done that with her books. But a number of Woolf tamers conspire to present a picture of the writer as being (deep breath): snobbish, rude, indiscreet, insulting, snarky, judgmental, volatile, anti-Semitic, abused and because of/despite this, quite brilliant in her ability to examine consciousness and, by applying great verbal sophistication to universal problems, illuminate loneliness, isolation and fear of death.

Possibly these are the things she left out of her sentences, while cultivating the power of silence.

@AHMcKay

TONIGHT
Amazon Empire: The Rise and Reign of Jeff Bezos
PBS America, 8.35pm



This lengthy examination of the founder of the internet company which was almost called *relentless.com* certainly raises some awkward questions. It suggests everything which is admirable about Amazon can also be viewed as something to be feared. The company understands the power of data collection, and consumers seem happy to conspire with Alexa to provide it. The key question seems to be: are we happy with one company winning capitalism?

DEEP DISH
Amazing Stories: The Cellar
Apple TV+

This reboot of an Eighties anthology series has Steven Spielberg's name attached, but the first episode is a surprisingly static time travel drama. Written by Jessica Sharzer (*American Horror Story*) and directed by Chris Long (*The Americans*) it drops an iPhone-using young man into the cellar of a dilapidated house, where he finds an old photo. There's a storm, and — oops! — he's back in time, without his phone for comfort.

DEEP DISH
Bob Servant
BBC iPlayer



Fans of *Succession*'s Logan Roy may be startled by this comedy in which (the real) Brian Cox stars as a cheeseburger tycoon embarking on a career in politics. Cox gives it the full Broughty Ferry, and writer Neil Forsyth (who also brought us the off-kilter drama *Guilt*) keeps things on the breezy side of absurdity.

LONDON LIVE
Val and Elsie
9.30pm

Pensioner Elsie, played by Marji Campi, is fiercely independent, but due to a drink problem is now reluctantly reliant on her new carer Val (Suzie Chard). Val isn't exactly up to the job and is busy doing whatever it takes to provide for her son. How will Elsie cope with reckless Val?

TONIGHT'S TELEVISION

BBC1

- 6.00 BBC News at Six (S,HD); Weather.
- 6.30 BBC London News (S); Weather.
- 7.00 **The One Show** (S,HD). Live chat and reports, presented by Alex Jones.
- 7.30 **MasterChef** (S,HD). 5/24. Former participants Alex Rushmer, Dr Tim Kinnaird and Dhruv Baker join hosts John Torode and Gregg Wallace to help select those going through to the next quarter-final. More at 9.30pm.
- 8.30 **EastEnders** (S,HD). Shirley grows suspicious of Suk's behaviour.
- 9.30 **MasterChef** (S,HD). 6/24. Six heat winners return to fight for a place in Knockout Week.
- 10.00 BBC News at Ten (S,HD).
- 10.25 BBC London News (S); Weather. Followed by National Lottery Update.
- 10.35 Greg James' Sport Relief Heroes (S,HD). The DJ meets up with his heroes of the charity event.
- 11.35 **Catchpoint for Sport Relief** (R,S,HD). 1/2. Celebrity special edition of the game show, hosted by Paddy McGuinness.
- 12.15 Weather for the Week Ahead (S,HD). 12.20 BBC News (S,HD).

BBC2

- 6.00 Richard Osman's House of Games (S,HD). 95/100. With Chizzy Akudolu, Miles Jupp, Amol Rajan and Ellie Taylor.
- 6.30 **Great British Railway Journeys** (R,S,HD). 10/15. A trip to the University of Glasgow's Officer Training Corps.
- 7.00 **Extreme Wales with Richard Parks** (R,S,HD). 2/3. The endurance athlete explores Britain's deepest cave.
- 7.30 **Celebrity Antiques Road Trip** (R,S,HD). 17/20. Nadia Sawalha and Kaye Adams go antiquing in Scotland.
- 8.30 **Wild Cuba: a Caribbean Journey** (S,HD). 1/2. Colin Stafford-Johnson explores parts of Cuba few have seen.
- 9.30 **QI** (R,S,HD). 2/18. With Nish Kumar, Holly Walsh and Cariad Lloyd.
- 10.00 **Mock the Week** (R,S,HD). 10/13. With Angela Barnes, Ed Byrne, Kerry Godliman and Chris Washington.
- 10.30 **Newsnight** (S,HD). With Kirsty Wark.
- 11.00 **Weather** (S,HD).
- 11.05 **The Beguiled** (S,HD) (2017). Premiere. Period drama, starring Colin Farrell.
- 12.35 Sign Zone: Spying on the Scammers — Panorama (R,S,HD). 1.05 Sign Zone: Doctor Who (R,S,HD). 2.10 This Is BBC Two (S).

ITV

- 6.00 ITV News London (S,HD); Weather.
- 6.30 ITV Evening News (S,HD); Weather.
- 7.00 **Emmerdale** (S,HD). Will is forced to go back to his old ways, Vanessa receives a date for her surgery, and Victoria makes a huge decision for her and Luke.
- 7.30 **Coronation Street** (S,HD). Gary bumps into an old acquaintance, Nina joins Roy on a bat-watching expedition, and Craig decides to make some changes to his lifestyle.
- 8.30 **Vera** (R,S,HD). 3/4. A murder at a remote cottage in Northumberland takes DCI Vera Stanhope back to a place full of childhood memories and reminds her of an unsolved case from earlier in her career.
- 10.25 ITV News (S,HD); Weather.
- 10.55 ITV News London (S,HD); Weather.
- 11.0 **McDonald and Dodds** (R,S,HD). 1/2. Drama about chalk-and-cheese police partners solving crime on the streets of Bath, beginning with the murder of a homeless man. Jason Watkins and Tala Gouveia star.
- 12.55 Ideal World Fitness (HD). 3.00 Who's Doing the Dishes? (R,S,HD). 3.50 ITV Nightscreen (HD).

CHANNEL 4

- 6.00 **The Simpsons** (R,S). 1/25. Lisa discovers Bart's demented twin.
- 6.30 **Hollyoaks** (R,S,HD). Toby is angry when he sees Romeo leaving his flat.
- 7.00 **News** (S,HD).
- 7.30 **Crufts 2020** (S,HD). Further coverage live from Birmingham's NEC, where events include Flyball, Agility and Heelwork to Music. Clare Balding guests include Love Island's Olivia Buckland and Alex Bowen.
- 9.00 **Gogglebox** (S,HD). The households' opinions on recent TV.
- 10.00 **The Last Leg** (S,HD). 8/10. Adam Hills, Josh Widdicombe and Alex Brooker are joined by guests John Bercow and Sara Pascoe for a comic review of the past seven days.
- 11.05 **The Big Narstie Show** (S,HD). 5/6. With guests including Nile Rodgers, Riz Ahmed and Ray BLK.
- 12.10 Film: 2 Guns (S,HD) (2013). Action adventure, starring Denzel Washington and Mark Wahlberg. 2.05 The Simpsons (R,S). 2.30 The Simpsons (R,S). 2.55 Come Dine with Me (R,S,HD). 3.50 Grand Designs (R,S,HD). 4.45 Location, Location, Location (R,S,HD). 5.45 Kirstie's Vintage Gems (R,S,HD).

LONDON LIVE

- 6.00 London Live News.
- 7.00 **Danger UXB**. A bomb is found in a nightclub which German scientists claim cannot be disarmed, and Ash receives a mysterious message. Guest starring Judy Geeson (the original Seventies Poldark).
- 8.00 **Trust Me, I'm a Doctor**. The doctors reveal the secrets to sticking to New Year's health resolutions, while Dr Saleyha Ahsan tests some new science that could promote weight loss.
- 9.00 **The Ronnie Wood Show**. The guitarist is joined by photographer and former Mary Quant model Pattie Boyd, who discusses her life in rock music and shares some of her favourite records.
- 9.30 **Val and Elsie**. Short film about a pensioner and her reckless carer.
- 10.00 **Cam Girl** (2018). Documentary about webcam porn, following the experience of one performer.
- 11.20 **Murder Investigation Team**. Gritty crime drama, starring Lindsey Coulson.
- 12.20 Film: *Burning an Illusion* (1981). Drama, starring Cassie McFarlane. 2.25 Trust Me, I'm a Doctor. 3.30 News Rewind. 5.00 Talking Points.

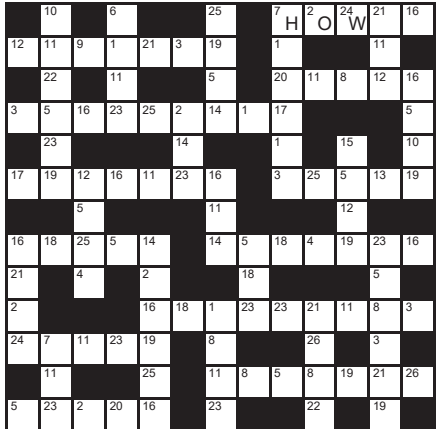
Puzzles & Games

CODEWORD

WIN AFTERNOON TEA FOR TWO

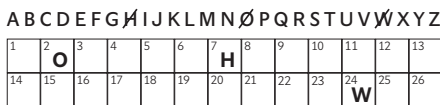


Enjoy a delectable afternoon tea treat for two at the luxurious hotel Dukes London in Mayfair. Enjoy a spread of savoury and sweet dishes, including a platter of sandwiches, a selection of pastries and warm scones, all washed down with a generous serving of tea or coffee. This week's theme is new words.



TO ENTER: text **ES CODEWORD** followed by your answer to **85100** by 23:59 tonight (eg: ES CODEWORD HANGRY). Texts cost £1 plus your standard network charge. Or call **0901 292 5008**. Calls cost £1 plus your network access charge*.

Need a little help getting started? Text or call our clue line for up to four extra clues. Text **ES WORDCLUE** to **85100**. Texts cost £1 plus your standard network charge. Or call **0905 652 6230**. Calls cost £1 plus your network access charge*.



Yesterday's codeword: **REMAINDER**

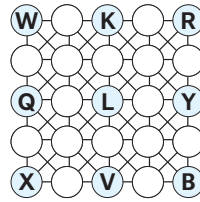
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Answers and clues change each day at 23:59. Usual promotion rules apply: see www.standard.co.uk/rules. Phone & Text Services Helpline: 0800 839 174. One prize of Afternoon Tea For Two. Terms & Conditions will be sent with the voucher. One winner will be selected at random from all correct answers received from 2/3/2020 to 6/3/2020.

GOGEN

Insert letters to form the listed words, moving between adjacent cells horizontally, vertically or diagonally in any direction. Insert the remaining letters of the alphabet (except Z) in the grid so that all the listed words are spelled out in this way.



CLASP
CONKER
JUICY
LIMB
MILD
REFLUX
SQUIDGY
VISTA
WHALE

A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z



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THE TUBE QUIZ

Plan a journey using the Tube map from ARSENAL to FINCHLEY ROAD. The answer to each question will suggest to you the name of a station at which you should stop to change to a new line or branch.

ARSENAL

The Europa, Oceanic and Queens Buildings used to occupy the current site of what?

Which station is an anagram of YO, ALDEBARAN WIG?

A match in England's group between Uruguay and France was the only 1966 World Cup match to be played where?

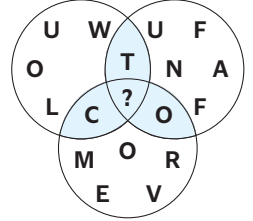
Which station sounds like shred, a computer socket, a restricted-range network, line particles and a tall marsh grass?

FINCHLEY ROAD

Yesterday's solution: WAPPING, Clapham High Street, Stockwell, Finsbury Park, Turnham Green, KEW GARDENS

CIRCLEGRAM

Replace the question mark with a letter so that the letters within each circle can be arranged to form words, names or terms on a common theme. What are the three words, and the letter represented by the question mark?



Need a little help getting started? Text or call our clue line for a keyword clue. Text **ES CIRCLECLUE** to **85100**. Texts cost £1 plus your standard network charge*. Or call **0901 293 5270**. Calls cost £1 plus your network access charge*.

Yesterday's solution: M: Superman, Iron Man, Batwoman, all superheroes.

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HOW TO PLAY Each number from 1 to 9 represents a different letter. Solve the clues and insert the letters in the appropriate squares to discover a word that uses all nine letters.

THE CLUES

3957688 gives a sport
72119 gives a sport
76497688 gives a sport

Yesterday's solution: PROCLAIMS

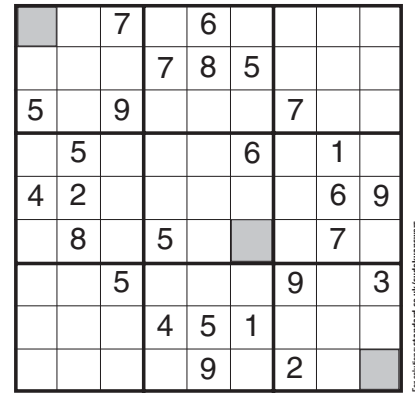
TO ENTER: text **ES MINICODE** followed by your answer to **85100** by 23:59 tonight (eg: ES MINICODE AMSTERDAM). Texts cost £1 plus your standard network charge. Or call **0901 292 5006**. Calls cost £1.02 plus any network extras. **Need a little help getting started?** Text or call our clue line for up to three extra letters. Text **ES MINICLUE** to **85100**. Texts cost £1 plus your standard network charge. Or call **0901 292 5063**. Calls cost £1.02 plus any network extras.

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Answers and clues change each day at 23:59. Usual promotion rules apply: see standard.co.uk/rules. Phone & Text Services Helpline: 0800 839 174. One prize of A Cocktail Masterclass For Two. 18+ only. Terms & Conditions will be sent with the voucher. One winner will be selected at random from all correct answers received from 2/3/2020 to 6/3/2020.

SUDOKU

Fill the grid with the numbers 1 to 9 so that each row, column and 3x3 block contains the numbers 1 to 9. Target: 30 min.



For a chance to win £50 complete the Sudoku puzzle to discover the numbers in the three shaded squares. Text **ES SUDOKU** followed by your answer (reading left to right) and name to **85100** e.g. ES SUDOKU 123 John Smith. Texts cost £1 plus your standard network charge*. One prize of £50 is available each week.

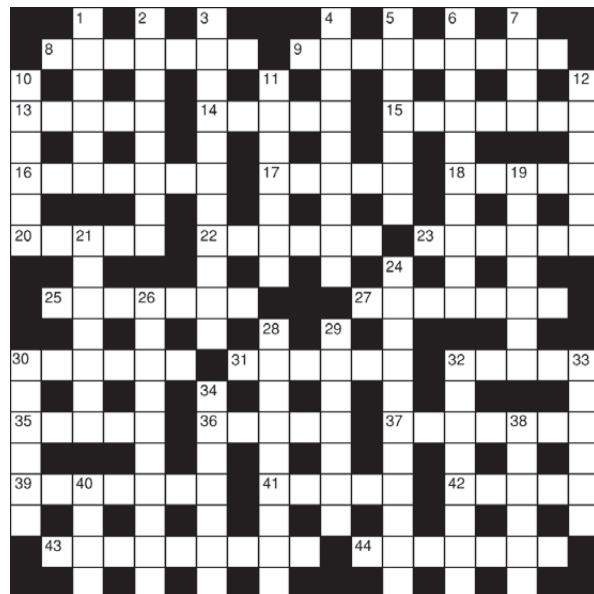
The winner will be chosen from all correct entries received between Monday at 00:01 and Friday at 23:59. Texts after this time will not be entered but you may still be charged. Answers change each day at 23:59. Text helpline 0800 839 174.

CRYPTIC ACROSS

- 8 Finding it beyond one, which is extraordinary (7)
- 9 Rebuking for stopping (7,2)
- 13 Run in and steal (5)
- 14 An untruth to gain entry as a foreigner (5)
- 15 Wind blown that we're out to catch (7)
- 16 In the new series the daughter has a home there (7)
- 17 "A kind of gift for," I interposed (5)
- 18 Leaves with the attendants (5)
- 20 She tempts one again into wrongdoing (5)
- 22 Says it's bad but cooks it (6)
- 23 Of historical interest, looked as though it might topple over! (6)
- 25 Flowers, a drink and pastries (7)
- 27 Removed "Authorise to take action about" (7)
- 30 Pretends, when one slips into (4,2)
- 31 Right on the bay, but concealed (6)
- 32 What police raids disclosed in the art gallery? (5)
- 35 Say nothing when on the mat; just show indifference (5)
- 36 Accounts for the said shadows (5)
- 37 Everything having gone wrong, impounded the vessel (7)
- 39 Go back to the asylum (7)
- 41 Again prevail upon to go round and say hello to (5)
- 42 Returning to sea, arranged to get rid of (5)
- 43 Concerning the origins of the wealth (9)
- 44 Allow the public to see the film free (7)

DOWN

- 1 Beats up to get the money (6)
- 2 The murderer caught, she'd made money from it (6,2)
- 3 Like that motley lot in the doctor's waiting room? (3-8)
- 4 Being sufficient for driving as far as (7,2)
- 5 A son, not very tall and rather dim (7)
- 6 To gain access use a jemmy, showing boldness (10)
- 7 Dope the dog (4)
- 10 By making small cuts, economises (6)
- 11 The figure, unfairly rag the new maid about (7)
- 12 Relieved the head cold had come to an end (6)
- 19 Is a collector, one deduces (7)
- 21 Enter the duck in the list as "farmyard bird" (7)
- 24 Manage to save, for the party (3-8)
- 26 Continued to cultivate? (8,2)
- 28 Urged on to play cricket, though by nature a jockey? (3-6)
- 29 Kept under control as he guided round (7)
- 30 Parents are aggravating? The crust! (6)
- 32 Thought you'd swallowed it (8)
- 33 Someone who chars for an entertainer (6)
- 34 Standing for, say, about half an hour (7)
- 38 Pass by and see moving round inside (6)
- 40 Drew fast (4)



DOUBLE CROSSWORD

EASY ACROSS

- 8 Outstanding ability (7)
- 9 Doubting (9)
- 13 Kingdom (5)
- 14 Month (5)
- 15 Live together (7)
- 16 In small stages (7)
- 17 Rigid (5)
- 18 Beneath (5)
- 20 Lawful (5)
- 22 Running shoes (6)
- 23 Conceited, informally (6)
- 25 Wine merchant (7)
- 27 U.S. state (7)
- 30 Take for granted (6)
- 31 Pal (6)
- 32 Wickerwork basket (5)
- 35 Ballroom dance (5)
- 36 Male relative (5)
- 37 Future prospect (7)
- 39 Ruler (7)
- 41 Furnish (5)
- 42 Flower part (5)
- 43 Youth (9)
- 44 Lengthen (7)

DOWN

- 1 Fleet (6)
- 2 Bathing costume (8)
- 3 Set up (11)
- 4 Praised (9)
- 5 Stipulate (7)
- 6 Athlete (4,6)
- 7 Young sheep (4)
- 10 Sparring (6)
- 11 Severe (7)
- 12 Strongly-built (6)
- 19 Lessen (7)
- 21 Shade of red (7)
- 24 Large heavy shoes, informally (11)
- 26 Percussion instrument (10)
- 28 Sportsman (9)
- 29 Income (7)
- 30 Season (6)
- 32 Weapon (8)
- 33 Probable (6)
- 34 Noblewoman (7)
- 38 Excursion (6)
- 40 Midday (4)

YESTERDAY'S SOLUTIONS ON PAGE 48

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Travel

Edited by **Susannah Ramsdale**

Serb your enthusiasm

It's packed full of history, shopping, cool nightlife and delicious sausages ... Belgrade is short break heaven, says **Martin Dunford**

48 HOURS IN BELGRADE

NOT many people consider Belgrade for a weekend. Yet in many ways it's the ideal place for a short break — easy to get to, with plenty to see and a buzzy centre that forms a perfect backdrop for shopping, dining and sightseeing. It's highly affordable and likely to remain so for a while, at least until the Serbs realise their dream of joining the EU.

Explore

To properly understand Belgrade go to Kalemegdan — a sprawling park and citadel at the top of the city's main street. The view from its ramparts is truly one of the great views of the world, and you can spend a happy morning ambling around the park, picking up a trinket or two from the Yugoslav years — Yugo-nostalgia is big in Serbia.

Work your way back down Knez Mihailova Street, a grand pedestrianised street that is home to the best shopping, also making time to pop into Serbia's National Museum (narodnimuzej.rs) on nearby Trg Republike — open again after years of renovation and worth a visit for just that (plus it's free on Sundays). On the other side of the centre, in Vracar,



Yugo for the culture: visit the National Museum, reopened after years of renovation, and the monument of Prince Mihailo

you'll find the Hram or Temple of St Sava, a vast structure, planned since the late 19th century to remember the Serbs' patron saint, whose remains were burnt on this spot in Ottoman times. It was begun in the Thirties yet untouched until the rise of Serb nationalism in the Eighties. Peek inside to see the huge dome and concrete shell — which in time will be covered by the world's largest mosaic — and the (finished) crypt.

Visit the Tesla Museum (nikolatesla-museum.org) nearby, dedicated to genius inventor Nikola Tesla, who developed the theory of alternating current as well as giving Elon Musk a name for his electric car company (which in part



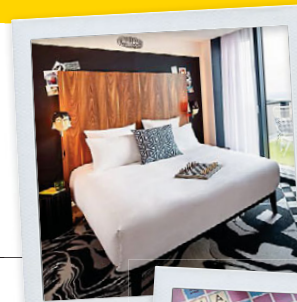
The view from the ramparts of Kalemegdan citadel is truly one of the great views of the world

funds the museum). Don't miss the flower-filled mausoleum of communist ruler Marshal Tito, in the posh residential area of Dedinje, still visited by those who view the Yugoslav years as the best in the country's recent history. The period is documented in the museum

in the grounds, where the ruins of Tito's villa are still visible through the trees. It was destroyed by Nato bombs in 1999 during the Kosovo war. The ruins, like many others in Belgrade, have been deliberately left as a reminder.

Eat and Drink

Just off Knez Mihailova, Restaurant Manufaktura (restoran-manufaktura.rs/en) specialises in Serbian produce and serves kebabs, salads and fabulous sharing platters stacked with delicious cheeses, smoked meats, sausage and stuffed vegetables. It has a shop attached if you want to take something home. You'll find delicious Serbian food at



Boutique stay: a room at Mama Shelter hotel, which is on the top floor of a shopping centre



Balkan fry-up: cuisine at Mama Shelter

trendy Ambar (ambarrestaurant.com), on the waterfront below Kalemegdan — one of the capital's coolest areas to hang out by night. Try the kajmak (a sort of creamy cottage cheese) while taking in views of the wide and gentle Danube.

Ceger (kafeceger.com), right opposite the Hram in Vracar, has everything from coffee and cocktails to decent burgers, pasta and steaks and there's a nice outside terrace. Finally the river island of Ada Ciganlija — known simply as "Ada" — shows the lighter side of the city, a special place where Belgraders come to swim, eat and dance. Visit on a summer weekend and you'll have to fight for a table at the many bars and restaurants.

Stay

The City Savoy (hotelcitysavoy.com) is comfortable, mid-priced and in the centre (double rooms from about £80 a night), or try Mama Shelter (mama-shelter.com), a new boutique hotel that occupies the top floor of a shopping mall and has a huge rooftop terrace (doubles from around £80 a night). The art nouveau Moskva (hotelmoskva.rs), is the grande dame of Belgrade hotels, with a café, spa and pool, and a frisson of Cold War atmosphere (doubles from about £100 a night).

DETAILS BELGRADE

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Keep the stock rolling

Meet the Scot making sure Britain's next generation of trains arrive on time » **Page 46**

Bankers reunited

Bob Diamond brings in former Barclays acolyte to broker Panmure » **Page 47**

City Editor **Jim Armitage**
standard.co.uk/business

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Business

European stocks in a nosedive as investors flee to bonds for safety

CORONAVIRUS

MARKETS

Simon English

AN ALREADY turbulent week for financial markets ended in further disarray today, as stocks across Europe tumbled and investors poured money into bonds.

The yield on a 30-year US Treasury bond, regarded as perhaps the safest investment in the world, fell to a record low of just 1.405%.

A UK 10-year gilt now yields a paltry 0.28%.

That indicates that investors are so worried about the future they are willing to tie up cash for long periods at low returns just for the near certainty that they will at least get their money back at the end.

In London, with bankers being isolated over coronavirus and many



It's still extremely difficult to understand just what the full impact of the coronavirus is going to be

Craig Eriam, analyst at Oanda Europe

increasingly being told to work from home, there was little support for stocks. At one point every single FTSE 100 stock was flashing red.

The index fell 143.97 points to 6561.46, following overnight falls in the Dow Jones and the S&P 500.

The Japanese Nikkei lost nearly 3%, with Hong Kong's Hang Seng down more than 2%.

While traders hold out hope of further monetary stimulus — this week the Federal Reserve cut rates — the fact that central banks are plainly nervous did not help sentiment.

That very large US companies are struggling to cope with the flu only increased tensions.

Microsoft, Amazon and Facebook have confirmed staff have the virus.

SHAKEN AND STIRRED CINEWORLD REELS AS BOND SPOOKS INVESTORS



INVESTORS in Cineworld appeared unconvinced by the cinema operator's attempts to reassure them over the impact of the virus today.

Shares in the company have fallen this week after a delay to the new James Bond film No

Time To Die, above, to November from April, largely due to some Asian cinemas being closed.

Cineworld said that, so far, there has not been a "material impact" on admissions and that

studios "remain committed to their release schedule". It added that it was ready to postpone investment and cut costs if needed. But the stock fell 7% to 113p.

Alex Lawson

Starbucks has banned the use of customer-provided cups in the US. Craig Eriam, senior market analyst at Oanda Europe, said: "It's been a better week than last but at the same time, there's nothing normal or settling about the wild moves we're continuing to see."

"The difficulty we have is that it's still extremely difficult to understand just what the full impact of the coronavirus

is going to be. There's a lot of talk about disrupted supply chains, but what that means for growth, employment and companies' bottom lines is another thing."

The boom in bonds was echoed by gold, which rose nearly 6% to a seven-year high of \$1690.

Even good news was treated with suspicion. Ipek Ozkardeska, senior

analyst at Swissquote Bank, said the latest figures from the US economy show factory orders robust and manufacturing doing better than expected.

She added: "Overall productivity grew by the most since 2010, giving some margin to take the coronavirus shock on output, but investors were not in a mood to find a silver lining."

@SimonEngStand

Credit card firms did not ground wobbly Flybe

Jim Armitage



COMMENT

MUCH blame over Flybe's demise is cast on the credit card companies for holding back £50 million of fares from the airline, pushing it over the edge.

The criticism is simply not fair. For starters, it's not Visa and Mastercard who make the call on such matters, but their payment processors, those vast, mysterious companies such as Adyen and WorldPay which run pretty much every payment in the world these days.

But don't condemn them too much either. Their job is to collect the cash from the customer's bank account and pass it on to the merchant's. If the merchant goes bust and the customer demands a refund on their credit card, it's the processor that has to stump up.

If you're processing payments for a supermarket, the risk is pretty much zero — the customer walks off with the groceries a second after the transaction. But with plane tickets, holidays or made-to-order sofas, customers buy months before delivery. That's months in which the vendor could go bust, leaving the processor on the hook.

When businesses are looking wobbly, as Flybe has for years, processors refuse to work for them or demand hefty deposits and a "rolling reserve" of money held back in case disaster strikes.

After the death of Thomas Cook, onerous terms were put on all but the strongest. Flybe, Norwegian and South African Airways will all have been punished.

Now, with mass bankruptcies likely, particularly in Asia, those terms will only get tougher, tightening companies' cash squeeze. Another reason to only invest in airlines with the healthiest balance sheets.

@ArmitageJim

Business**BUSINESS INTERVIEW** MARY GRANT PORTERBROOK

Matthew Gwyther



MARY Grant is that rarest of creatures — a senior woman in the train game. (Some 16% of railway people are female.) But like all male gricers she knows her double transverse bogie from her cupola caboose and articulated pantograph. And so she must — she rents out locomotives and carriages for a living. Grant is the chief executive of Porterbrook, one of the three large rolling stock companies or Roscos, as they're known in railway jargon.

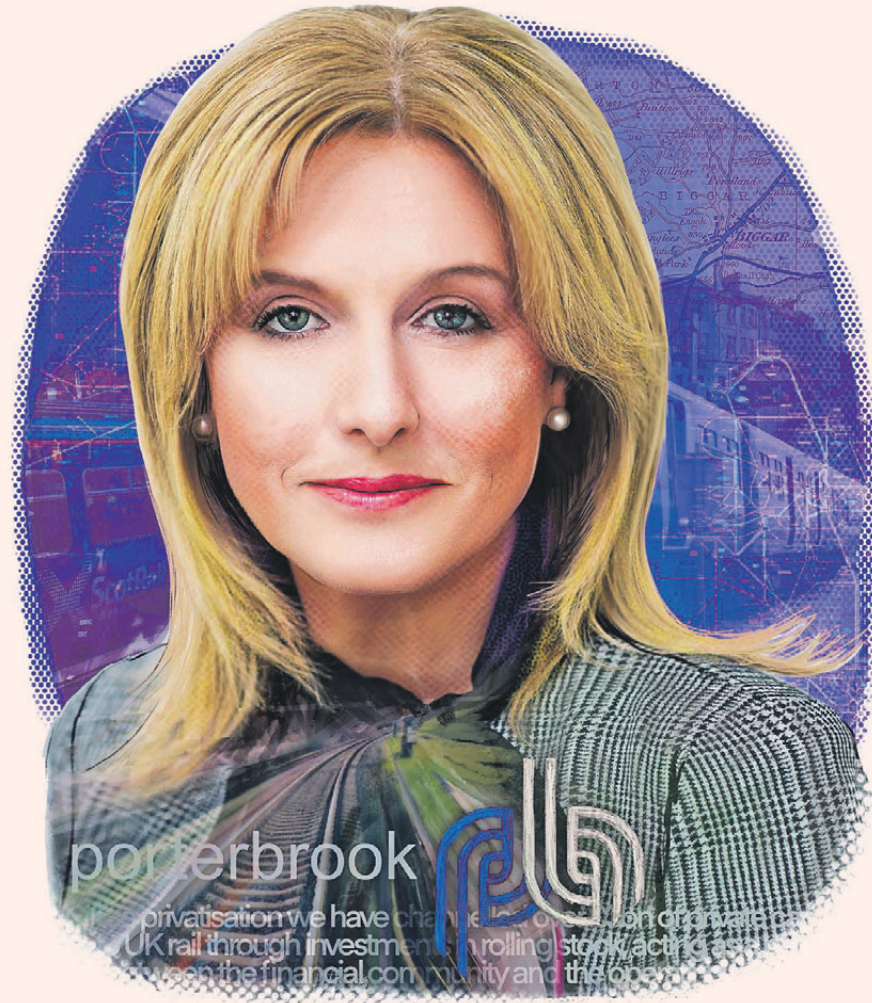
From the 900-seater €60 million Ferrari that is the Eurostar Velaro to the Caliban of the railroad, the Pacer, Grant will do you a deal. Indeed, so unloved are the Pacers — the reviled Leyland bus adaptation from the early Eighties whose continued use saw Northern Rail stripped of its franchise in January — that Grant'll let you take a couple off her hands gratis.

Britain's railways aren't a happy place. As they await the findings of the Williams Review — the umpteenth inquiry into the industry's woes — almost all stakeholders are fed up. The train operating companies have operating margins of 3%, spend their lives warring with rail unions and take heavy incoming reputational fire day-in day-out. Network Rail and its late-running engineering works are permanently in the dog house. Shouty Controller Grant Schappis, the Transport Secretary, is throwing his weight around à la Cummings as he seeks the Great Levelling Up. And, most importantly, passengers are a huddled mass of discontent. Renationalising the railway was one of the few Labour policies to get any traction among fair-minded people in December's election.

Grant is unlikely to mourn Flybe, which provocatively used to have "Faster Than Road or Rail" tattooed down its aircraft fuselage. But where airlines made the Government millions in Air Passenger Duty, the Treasury subsidises the railway by around £7 billion annually.

The cost of running the UK's railways is 40% higher than it is in the rest of Europe, according to the 2011 McNulty report. The train in which you stand is owned by a bank, leased to a private company, which has a franchise from the Department for Transport to run it on this track owned by Network Rail, all regulated by another office, and all paid for by taxpayers or passengers. This is expensive and complex.

But Grant seems happy with her lot. In 2018 Porterbrook had revenue of £474 million and pre-tax profits of £148 million before some complex loan arrangements. Between 2012 and 2018



The Scot making sure Britain's next generation of trains arrive on time

Rolling stock boss is trying to keep up with demand for carriages

the three Roscos passed on a total of £1.2 billion to their parents in the form of dividend payments — in Porterbrook's case to EDF, Allianz Capital and the Alberta Investment Management Corporation. Grant appears, as presumably the highest paid director, to make a tidy £750,000 annually.

Indeed when asked if she could return to 1992 as John Major's Transport Secretary she says she would privatise British Rail in the same way. She maintains that it's developed organically into the current public/private system. She points out that government covers 65% of rail's costs and that her organisation

is a responsible asset manager which has spent £3 billion on rolling stock since privatisation which isn't on HMG's balance sheet.

Actually when you talk to industry experts most say that we work our knackered old Victorian railway harder than any nation in the world. Passenger

numbers have doubled since privatisation in the early Nineties and our trains are busier than at any time since WWI.

Grant, 50, is a farmer's daughter from Biggar in the Scottish borders. She kicked off her career as a trainee wiping tables at Welcome Break's South Mimms services, advancing to toilet brand manager after a while. At 30 she was bidding as part of a failed attempted management buy-in for Road Chef — "That was my first important business lesson: you can buy anything at any price." Then, from 2003 she was at First-Group/Scot Rail doing trains and buses and is still recognised by Glasgow taxi drivers — she lives North of the border. After a short spell as boss of private equity-owned Phones4U she sorted Eurostar's new trains as a consultant and ended up at Porterbrook in 2017.

She exudes a brisk confidence and has just returned from Tokyo where she's been spreading the investment word. Porterbrook has been developing a hydrogen-powered train plus a diesel hybrid that doesn't spray soot and nitrogen oxides into passengers' lungs as it arrives under Marylebone's canopy. If Grant has a problem it is that train operators are demanding new carriages for passengers far faster than she'd like. Some 7200 new trains have arrived on the rails since 2014 and the average age has reduced from 21 to 15 years. This has the potential to make a mess of Grant's long-term numbers if she's left with a siding of middle-aged carriages on her hands.

Did she understand why the public was a bit fed up with the whole rail procurement process? How is it when a new project — Crossrail/HS2 — is ordered contractors say, "we'll do it for 50", then halfway through and already three years late they announce, "Sorry, Mr Mug the Tax Payer, it'll cost you 75" and then when everybody is already really hacked off their gambit is, "You can walk away... or have it finished for 100". Rail is the unreliable iron horse boyfriend. Surely her own shareholders wouldn't tolerate broken promises?

"I wouldn't tolerate it myself," she responds. "But it's too easy to sit on the sidelines and have a go. I haven't looked closely at the details of either but these are hugely complex projects and I think they tend to come out in the end roughly where everyone knew they would. Crossrail and HS2 will be hailed a huge success when they're finished [Porterbrook has no direct involvement in either]. They are both the right thing to do."

When they work, trains are a far more civilised and eco way to travel than road or air. In 2022 (or whenever) to arrive at Heathrow in 28 minutes from Tottenham Court Road on a slick, modern electric train rather than London's equivalent of the Pacer Calibans on the wretched Piccadilly line will, indeed, be a thing of wonder.

@MatthewGwyther

PAUL DALLMORE.COM

Second London site for new art gallery

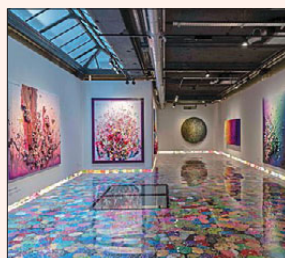
PROPERTY
Joanna Bourke

A LONDON-based contemporary art gallery start-up is to expand in the capital by investing in opening a second site.

Unit London, founded by artists-turned-gallerists Joe Kennedy and Jonny Burt in Chiswick in 2013, has signed a lease with FTSE 250 West End landlord Shaftesbury to open a new concept space at 40 Earlham Street in Seven Dials.

The firm, which has exhibited work from artists such as Jake Wood-Evans and Zhuang Hong Yi, said the new 5500sq ft of space will house "Unit X" from April. Unit X will showcase exhibitions but also offer events, such as workshops, panel discussions and new product launches. Artist tie-ups with brands could also be on show.

Property agents Cushman & Wakefield and Nash Bond advised on the letting. @es_jourboure



On show: Zhuang Hong Yi at Unit London

Chinese are set to sell gay dating app

TECHNOLOGY
Alex Lawson

THE Chinese owners of Grindr are close to selling the gay dating app amid US national security fears.

Gaming company Beijing Kunlun Tech is close to offloading the app to a group of investors including James Lu, a former executive at Chinese search engine Baidu, Reuters reported.

The sale of the California-headquar-

tered firm, rumoured to be for around \$500 million (£387 million), has been on the cards since 2018. That's when Kunlun took full control and US authorities raised fears over the personal information of millions of Americans such as private messages and their HIV status falling into the wrong hands.

Grindr describes itself as the world's largest social network for gay, bisexual, transgender and queer people.

@MrAlexLawson

JPMorgan boss's heart surgery sparks job talk

BANKING
Simon English

JAMIE Dimon, the 63-year-old Wall Street titan who has led JPMorgan since 2006, had heart surgery yesterday, opening up intense speculation about who will eventually succeed him.

The bank said in a memo: "We want to let you know that Jamie experienced an acute aortic dissection this morning. He underwent successful emergency heart surgery to repair the dissection."

While executives Daniel Pinto and Gordon Smith will run the bank while Dimon recovers, analysts said JPM needs a clearer succession plan.

Dimon, who had

treatment for throat cancer in 2014, is arguably the most powerful banker in the world and certainly one of the best paid, typically making \$20 million-to-\$30 million a year.

He has been vaguely tipped as a presidential candidate and was close to President Barack Obama, who reportedly seldom made a move affecting financial markets without asking "WDJT?" (What does Jamie think?)

JPM said Dimon's heart condition was "caught early" and he is "awake, alert and recovering well".

Under Dimon, JPM became America's biggest bank by some way, surpassing Goldman Sachs and Morgan Stanley.

@SimonEngStand



Wall Street titan: there is gossip over who will succeed Jamie Dimon

FORMER HEAD OF AMIGO IN RETURN TO STEER ITS SALE

THE former boss of troubled guarantor lender Amigo today returned after leaving due to ill health last summer.

Glen Crawford has rejoined as a consultant. He left last June to have surgery for a spinal condition.

He is tasked with helping to sell off the company and is on a six-month contract.

A war of words has broken out over the circumstances of the sale between the board and founder James Benamor who left the company this week. His Richmond Group is the largest shareholder.

Back together: Diamond and Ricci to lead Panmure

BROKING
Simon English

BOB Diamond, the former Barclays chief executive now in charge of Panmure Gordon, has hired his former acolyte Rich Ricci to lead the broker.

As part of the shake-up, Panmure is acquiring Whitman Howard, an independent broking and investment banking business for an undisclosed sum.

Richard Morecombe of Whitman becomes president of Panmure. Ian Axe, also ex-Barclays, was the CEO of Panmure until today. He has left with immediate effect, amicably, sources insisted.

Diamond owns a chunk of Panmure, with the biggest stake held by the Qatari Investment Authority. The Qataris have a stake thought to be around 40%.

The move brings back together two

of the biggest and most controversial names in British banking. It will be seen as a serious sign of intent by Panmure to become a major player in the City.

Panmure has been a famed name in the Square Mile for years, famously employing David Cameron's father.

Rich Ricci said: "I am delighted to be leading an organisation with Panmure Gordon's heritage and potential. The acquisition of Whitman Howard and the addition of Richard Morecombe to the leadership team means we are exceptionally well placed for growth. We will have a strong client base with an exciting pipeline, a good team and a clear strategy. Richard's and my focus is on ensuring Panmure Gordon is the leading broker for small and mid-cap companies in the UK."

Richard Morecombe said: "Having

spent part of my career at Panmure Gordon, I am delighted to now be returning. It has an exceptional brand and an impressive client list."

Ricci was famed as one of the biggest dealmakers in the City during his time at Barclays. With a big personality, vast pay and bright braces, he was an unmissable presence in the markets. He even named his racehorse Fatcat-in-the-hat and entered it to Cheltenham.

However, his brand of swaggering well-paid banker fell deeply out of favour after the financial crisis. He exited the bank shortly after Diamond was replaced by Antony Jenkins and the bank was hit with a £290 million fine for rigging Libor. His departure was labelled by the bank as a retirement, although he was only 49.

@SimonEngStand

Rail arch owner slammed for seeking 'excessive' rent rises

INFRASTRUCTURE
Joanna Bourke

THE new owner of Network Rail's £1.5 billion empire of railway arches was today accused of proposing "excessive" rent hikes for small businesses.

The Arch Company, owned by property investor giants Blackstone and Telereal Trillium, completed a deal last year for 5200 properties. It promised in a charter in October to be a responsible landlord and work in partnership with tenants.

But today Guardians of the Arches, a tenants' association representing businesses such as gyms and bars, said some members have seen bumper rent rises proposed, some above 100%. It plans to challenge "massive" rises.

Hair salon Live True London told the Evening Standard its Clapham branch has been asked for a rise of



Hairy: Live True London faces 35% hike

more than 35% in its rent review. It said this is unwarranted "given the local area rents and continuing deteriorating trading conditions for retail businesses on the High Street".

The Arch Company said: "Rent reviews are on a case-by-case basis. We are working closely with long-standing small businesses and not-for-profits that have affordability concerns to agree suitable rents."

It added it has agreed scores of below market rents since autumn.

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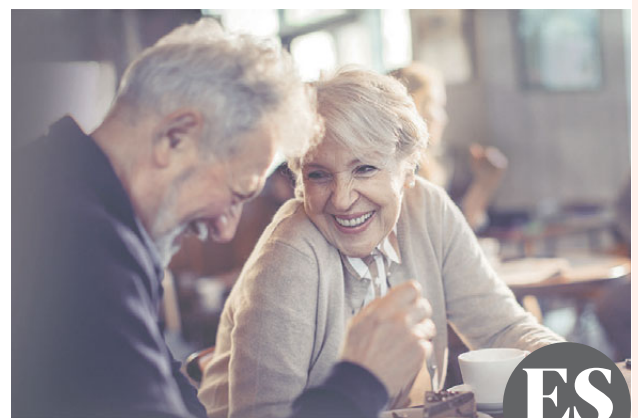
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Business

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SECTORS

	2019/20	High	Low		2019/20	High	Low		
CONS & BUILD MATERIALS				Ricardo	686	6	846	592	
Bellway	3558	120	4336	2656	Robert Walters	484	6	676	4284
CPI	2667	88	3116	2266	TRANSPORT				
ELECTRONIC & ELE EQUIP				Go Ahead Grp	1767	62	2304	1761	
discoverIE Grp	488	14	606	381	UTILITIES OTHER				
ENGINEERING & MACHINERY				Drax Group	25214	814	39014	24714	
Bodycote	7085	211	975	6385	AIM				
FOOD PRODUCERS				Appreciate Grp	54	21	80	46	
Crestbrook	3444	90	3912	2454	Ashstead Group	2201	76	2797	1744
HEALTH				Christie Grp	108	132	84		
ConvaTec Group	179	51	22514	1301	Cohort	590	18	738	354
INSURANCE				Dart Group	1066	74	1950	6751	
Admiral Group	2157	81	2356	1989	Elecosoft	731	874	684	
Beazley	5051	21	634	5011	Sophron	725	10	1220	5499
Hiscox	1197	50	1795	1140	Tritel	466	239	534	260
INVESTMENT COMPANIES				United Oil & Gas	0	0	0	0	
Custodian REIT	1104	14	1204	106	RECENT ISSUES				
UKCPR	79	11	93	781	Adriatic Metals	6614	51	10214	63
LEISURE & HOTELS				Calson	214	245	2134		
Marriotts	8214	214	13314	801	Everlec Hldgs	123814	146214	76114	
OIL & GAS				FRP Advisory Grp	80	8314	7914		
Cairn Energy	12614	51	21614	12614	Galliford Try Hldgs	14314	5	201	103
Hunting	29014	1114	657	283	Gemfields Grp	10	10	12	10
Premier Oil	6314	414	12014	6014	Helios Towers	11514	214	160	11114
Pharos Energy	2814	14	78	28	Impress Grp	195	199	190	
PHARMAS & BIOTECH				JP Morgan Oil Core	104	109	99		
Hikma Pharm	1887	60	2212	1540	Just EatTakeaway	6835	315	8330	6480
REAL ESTATE				Longboat Energy	87	11	10514	86	
Capital & Centres	195	101	275	1811	M&G	19314	41	25214	190
CLS	262	6	32214	209	Mining Minors & Mts	31	6114	56	
Derwent Land	4014	136	4362	2858	NJ Housing	5514	6114	56	
Granger	292	714	3414	215	National World	11	11	10	
Heical	453	12	540	320	Octopus Rmble	10714	114	112	100
Raven Property	44	1	5114	361	Pebble Group	143	31	159	1181
Raven Prop Ref	127	1	143	1161	Taseko Mines	321	50	3914	
Raven Prop CnvPrf	100	100	100	100	Vaulco Energy	150			
Sawills	1051	56	1268	8091	ZAIM Credit Systems	31	4	21	
Tetris Big Box	131	4	16214	12614					
U and I Group	16414	314	20114	12514					
Urban&Civic	329	12	375	260					
Workspace Grp	1084	41	1317	797					
RESTS PUBS & BREWERIES									
Fisher SIA	830	20	1250	820					
SPECIALITY & OTHER FIN									
Mattoli Woods	81114	1314	865	655					
Paragon	426	1814	55514	38514					
SUPPORT SERVICES									
Dignity	57214	714	76314	45514					
Experian	2673	127	29214	19814					
Ferguson	6812	272	76914	4992					
Homeserve	1196	39	1352	9514					

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YESTERDAY'S CROSSWORD SOLUTIONS

CRYPTIC Across: 4, Fig-h-ts 7, Revolver 8, Isla-nd 10, Poise 13, Pa-I 14, Ella 15, Gi-R-L 16, Pry 17, B-rat 19, E-ire 21, Crescendo 23, Su-es 24, Hate 26, Opt 27, Eve-R 29, Alas 32, Onor 33, Blig-h 34, Treats 35, Tomorrow 36, Persia.
Down: 1, Triple 2, Avail 3, Blue 4, Friar 5, G-all 6, Tenure 9, Silent 11, Ole 12, Sabre (dance) 13, Pitcher 15, Gas 16, Pro 18, Resent 20, I'd-eal 21, Cut 22, Ear 23, Sparse 25, Hag 28, Vesta 30, Li-b-ra 31, S-how-N 32, Oats 33, B-L-ob.
EASY Across: 4, Shrewd 7, Tomorrow 8, Elated 10, Annie 13, Veal 14, Kegs 15, Pets 16, Big 17, Soot 19, Soul 21, Murderous 23, Deep 24, Rest 26, Dan 27, Head 29, Eros 32, Darn 33, Grade 34, Kimono 35, Dynamite 36, Charge.
Down: 1, Steak 2, Among 3, Tree 4, Sweet 5, Real 6, Weevil 9, Lassos 11, Nee 12, Issue 13, Veteran 15, Pod 16, Bus 18, Orphan 20, Outer 21, Men 22, Red 23, Danish 25, Hod 28, Erode 30, Radio 31, Sever 32, Door 33, Grab.
BACK PAGE Across: 1, Casual 5, Deaf 8, Aegis 9, Ill 10, Rota 11, Span 12, Essay 13, Gratts 16, Dull 18, Lido 20, Bus 22, See 23, End 24, Hash 25, Pest 28, Sudden 30, Place 32, Haul 33, Tang 34, Bee 35, Rover 36, Drew 37, Advent.
Down: 1, Cringe 2, Syllabus 3, Afraid 4, Ceaseless 5, Disable 6, Espy 7, Find 8, Ate 14, Suspected 15, Odd 17, Lee 19, Inedible 20, Ban 21, Shallow 26, Tugged 27, Invent 29, Shed 30, Pure 31, Ear.

British stocks catch a cold after investors self-isolate

Alex Lawson



MARKET ROUND-UP

INVESTORS decided it was time to self-isolate from UK stocks today, with the FTSE 100 mired in the red amid coronavirus.

The FTSE 100 slumped more than 2%, or 143.97 points, to 6561.46 as a slew of new cases across Europe and the US sparked a pessimistic mood.

The blue-chip index has endured a rollercoaster week and was set to end it around where it started. Just three stocks made gains — supermarkets Tesco and Morrisons and miner Polymet — during the mass sell-off.

Among the hardest hit were companies in the travel industry with corporate travellers and holidaymakers alike shunning international trips.

Budget airline easyJet was down 5% at 963p. Ryanair dived 4% to €10.79. British Airways owner IAG fell 4% to 405p.

Package holidays specialist Tui was similarly battered, down 6% to 510p while cruise operator Carnival fell 4% to 2050p valuing it at £15 billion.

Other big fallers were exhibitions operator Informa, down 5% at 585p, Premier Inn owner Whitbread, off 5% at 3429p and credit data firm Experian, which fell 5% to 2663p.

Ian Williams, an economics and strategy research analyst at Peel Hunt, said:



Travel sickness: Tui was among many operators to suffer as holidaymakers shun trips

"No sign of risk appetite stabilising as the reports of new coronavirus cases spread across Europe and North America, resulting in further event cancellations and profit warnings."

It's been a tough week for shopping centre owners with downbeat news from Intu and Capital & Regional.

Today Hammerson, the malls firm behind Brent Cross, hit its lowest point since 1993, initially tumbling 8% before settling down 4% at 178p.

Banking giant Goldman Sachs cut its rating on the stock from Buy to Neutral. It said the theory behind buying the stock had been that it could sell part or all of some of its premium outlets, but

that now looks unlikely in the current depressed retail environment.

Insurer Aviva has been busy reviewing its Asian operations and today exited Indonesia with the sale of its stake in its business there to its joint venture partner Astra International. The financial terms of the deal were not disclosed and Aviva shares fell 4% to 338p.

AIM-listed budget hotels chain easyHotel raised £11 million in a share subscription to fund expansion across Europe.

It issued 11.6 million shares at 95p, a premium of 36% to last night's closing price. The stock rose 19% to 83p.

@MrAlexLawson

City Spy



@City_Spy

Is this why Stobart was seeing double at Southend?

AIRLINE folks noticed a rapid increase in Flybe routes from Southend airport since the now-collapsed business was bought by the Virgin-Stobart consortium last year. Some of the routes were duplicates of those running from City Airport, 30 miles away. Why would the struggling carrier cannibalise one route from another, one asks? Could Stobart's ownership of Southend airport have anything to do with it? Surely not...



A WAR with franchisees has spawned an abrasive, hard-man image for Domino's departing chief executive David Wild in the media. A fair portrayal, Spy asks? "No. A lot of people have worked with me for many years and have been happy to work with me. They find my style helpful and supportive," says the pizza seller. Not so Wild, then. That said, he says it'll be down to the company's next chairman, not him, to end the franchisees' feud. Odd. Surely that should have been the job of the CEO, David, no?

SHARES in funeral homes giant Dignity have been surging in the grim hope of a business boost from coronavirus. They're one of the only risers again today. But the market's got it all wrong, a big wheel in the undertaking world tells Spy. Mortality rates are actually unseasonably low lately, which he blames on us all washing our hands too much, failing to pass enough infections to the elderly. Covid-19, bad news for undertakers. Who would have thunk it?

THE PRICE of facemasks and gold look like they'll soon be at parity amid the corona chaos, but Spy spots an ancillary product becoming popular. Sites are selling washable stands to nestle your fashionable facegear on to extend its life as masks become scarce. Presumably they'll sit on shoppers' nightstands as their pandemic nightmares rage through their sleeping minds.

THE City trader joke on self-quarantining: you just haven't got any mates.

Small-cap spotlight
CORONAVIRUS has put a dampener on demand for restaurants and hospitality, so it was perhaps no huge surprise to see Ten Lifestyle warning on revenues today. The concierge business, which helps corporate clients book travel, dining and entertainment, said sales would be hit after "disruption" in the Asia Pacific region. But its board believed it could limit the impact on profits and it is expected to break even. The shares fell 8% to 77p.

Spy's favourite victim of bust high-risk bond firm London Capital & Finance's collapse is a lovely chap in his eighties living "in sin", as he puts it, with a lady of a similar vintage. They reside in Worthing, that favourite haunt of the oldsters or, as they call it, "God's waiting room."

Email us at:
cityspy@standard.co.uk



FORD v BIGGAR
Dan Biggar sets the tone in terms of his physicality and there aren't many 10s who are better at regathering their own kicks. Coming into Twickenham you need to be abrasive and Biggar will want to run the show. In contrast you've got George Ford, who had an armchair ride at fly-half against Ireland. He was able to pull the strings from deep. You've got the aggressor versus the controller and it's all about who gets the upper hand.
● Topsy was speaking on behalf of TM Lewin.
@topsy_ojo (Twitter and Instagram)

TOPSY OJO'S KEY CLASHES

WATSON v WILLIAMS
The fact these guys are both fit and straight back into their teams shows their quality. It'll be a great battle. Liam Williams being on the wing means Wales essentially have two full-backs to nullify Ford's kicking game. As for Anthony Watson, he is someone who just gets you on your feet when he's on the ball.

BACK-ROW BATTLE
You've got out-and-out fetchers in Tom Curry and Josh Navidi in the No8 slot. That'll be an interesting battle and it's about how both teams use their back row. With no Toby Faletau for Wales and no Billy Vunipola for England, everyone will be asked to help out. Wales know they need to slow England down at the breakdown.

England will stand tall after struggling to think on their feet in Cardiff last year

RUGBY

Will Macpherson

Coverage in association with



WHEN England lost to France in Paris five weeks ago, ending their Grand Slam hopes at the first hurdle, Eddie Jones blamed himself, as he often does.

Jones said he had under-prepared his team in the hope that they would peak towards the end of the Championship.

That seemed a bit odd, given the first game, against new-look France, always appeared toughest, and the last, against Italy, always seemed the easiest.

So the Italy game is, for now, no longer. So tomorrow's meeting with Wales is England's time to peak.

The signs are good. That this is in essence the end of the campaign gives England the opportunity to expend every ounce of energy in the knowledge that on Sunday, they will return to their clubs.

By the time they play the rearranged Italy match, which could be seven months away, their backroom staff will be different, with Steve Borthwick leaving for Leicester, and the playing group will be, too. George Kruis is likely to be playing in Japan, others will be unfit or out of form or out of favour.

In the first half against Ireland 12 days ago, England were superb, but have expressed regret at failing to secure a

LINE-UPS

Twickenham, Tomorrow, 4.45pm, ITV
England v Wales

Elliot Daly	15	Leigh Halfpenny
Anthony Watson	14	George North
Manu Tuilagi	13	Nick Tompkins
Owen Farrell (c)	12	Hadleigh Parkes
Jonny May	11	Liam Williams
George Ford	10	Dan Biggar
Ben Youngs	9	Tomos Williams
Joe Marler	1	Rob Evans
Jamie George	2	Ken Owens
Kyle Sinckler	3	Dillon Lewis
Maro Itoje	4	Jake Ball
George Kruis	5	Alun Wyn Jones (c)
Courtney Lawes	6	Ross Moriarty
Mark Wilson	7	Justin Tipuric
Tom Curry	8	Josh Navidi

Reps: Cowan-Dickie, Genge, Stuart, Launchbury, Ewels, Earl, Heinz, Slade
Reps: Elias, Carre, Brown, Shingler, Faletau, Webb, Evans, McNicholl

SIX NATIONS TABLE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	BP	Pts
France	3	3	0	0	86	62	1	13
England	3	2	0	1	54	42	1	9
Ireland	3	2	0	1	55	50	1	9
Wales	3	1	0	2	79	51	2	6
Scotland	3	1	0	2	35	32	2	6
Italy	3	0	0	3	22	94	0	0

ROUND FOUR

Tomorrow: Ireland v Italy (postponed)
England v Wales, 4.45pm, ITV
Sunday: Scotland v France, 3pm, BBC1

bonus point and only winning by 12 points. As he did before that game, Jones said their training had hit a new level this week and was "not far underneath where we were at the World Cup".

That level of training produced unforgettable performances against Australia and especially New Zealand in October. They are yet to reach those heights, but have shown a clear evolution, especially up front. There, Matt Proudfoot, the forwards coach who duffed them up in the final with the Springboks, has made them consider the scrum a whole pack effort, not just the front row's area, and as an attacking weapon.

Proudfoot also likes the 6-2 bench that Jones has employed for the third straight game (he did it three times in four years before Proudfoot turned up) and the replacements appear a clear area of superiority for England.

The third thing England now do is load the side with locks. Again, there are five in the 23. This time, there are five lineup jumpers in the starting XV. They are a tough pack to play against, although few containing Mako Vunipola are.

And then there is the fact that last year's defeat in Cardiff — when they imploded after a strong start to the game to throw away a fine opening to the Six Nations — "irks every player and certainly irks me," insists Jones.

That game, when they struggled so badly to think on their feet, saw them kicked into shape over the following months. This is a revenge mission.

Hit the heights they are promising and they will be too strong for Wales. A

change of coach and two defeats has not made them a bad side and they will trouble England. But the champions' selection looks a little rushed; Dan Biggar and George North were a doubt, while Liam Williams and Josh Navidi are straight back in after long spells on the sidelines. England have done the same with Mark Wilson and Anthony Watson, mind. There is abundant class and plenty of experience — England are fielding their most-capped Test side ever, with 776, and still Wales trump them by 63 — but also a slightly undercooked feel.

By picking Navidi, they are out to scavenge and will have been encouraged by Sam Underhill's absence through injury. Could they be underpowered against England's pack-centred strategy?

England under Jones speak about controlling the controllable and concentrating on the next game. And, as they spoke yesterday before confirmation arrived that the Italy game was off, they were relentlessly on message, with coach and captain Owen Farrell difficult to draw on their aborted Italian job.

This would have been an easy week to become distracted, with speculation swirling about an issue way beyond their control and a senior player exiled because of an illness he does not have. But if Jones and his players are as focused as they say they are, perhaps we are about to see that peak he promised in Paris.

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England have bounced back... but Wales could upset the odds

THE Six Nations resumes this weekend, with two of the three scheduled matches going ahead.

England take on Wales at Twickenham tomorrow with Scotland hosting the French on Sunday, while Italy's trip to Ireland was called off because of the current health threat posed by the coronavirus.

Standard Sport teamed up with QBE Business Insurance again to provide predictions for each round of matches every Friday during the Six Nations (see main graphic).

QBE Business Insurance has based its predictions for these fixtures on a complex mathematical formula created by a team of experts whose day job is to help businesses anticipate the likelihood and impact of risks, so that they can prepare for and manage them properly.



England are back in the driving seat in the race for the championship after their victory against Ireland during the last round, with the Predictor giving Eddie Jones' team a 39 per cent chance of claiming the title

The computer model has simulated each game 10,000 times, with an average score taken to find the final result. Actuaries inputted a wide range of rugby variables including the number of tries, kicks and conversions scored by the teams involved.

England are back in the driving seat in the race for the championship after their victory against Ireland during the last round of matches, with the Predictor giving Eddie Jones' team a 39 per cent chance of claiming the title.

England start favourites to beat Wales at home, with the Predictor forecasting that they will win 26-17 at Twickenham. Such has been the unpredictable nature of the tournament so far, though, that the unfancied French will be pushing hard to maintain their unbeaten record and pip England to the title.

Coach Fabien Galthie's new-look France have been a revelation, but Les Bleus are given only a 15 per cent chance of overcoming Scotland this weekend and then Ireland in their last game to claim a coveted Grand Slam.



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SportRacing coverage in association with **betfair**

Henderson: I need sleeping pills to get me through Cheltenham

Stress of Festival takes its toll on trainer

**Matt Majendie**

IT started with the occasional sleepless night before transforming into full-blown insomnia.

Now, in the days leading up to Cheltenham Festival, trainer Nicky Henderson has a sleeping tablet prescribed by his doctor to take each night.

It is a small window into the stresses of an event to which 250,000 racegoers will converge from Tuesday next week.

Henderson will first tread on its hallowed turf 48 hours earlier, a long-established tradition of his to walk the course with his dogs, always allowing himself to think back to the wins — 64 and counting — and the near misses.

"You just take it in, see what you think and you hark back to those moments," said the trainer, who has the favourite, Santini, in next Friday's Cheltenham Gold Cup, the highlight at the four-day meeting. "What always strikes me is it's a funny place when empty, stranger still when full."

There is a magic about the Festival that even its chief participants cannot define, from the atmosphere created by racegoers to the Anglo-Irish rivalry between the leading trainers.

"There's so many crumbs that make a cake," said Paul Nicholls, the sec-

ond-most successful English trainer at the Festival with 45 victories. "Even just thinking about it now, you get goosebumps. It's hard to explain but it's basically the Olympics of our sport, the best of the best we have."

For Nicholls, his Cheltenham is primarily defined by the Gold Cups — four in all courtesy of See More Business, Denman and Kauto Star twice. The nerves of watching those are so unbearable, he has been known to take himself off to the car park for the duration of the race or find a TV screen tucked away on which to watch it in great isolation.

"It's because the winning means so much," he said. "I can't explain the feeling of walking into the winners' enclosure after the Gold Cup. Any win is special but that's the ultimate thrill."

Nicholls's stable jockey Harry Cobden's first memory was as a 14-year-old visiting with friends, in awe of idols such as AP McCoy and Ruby Walsh. It lit the spark for his riding ambitions. His is a career in its infancy and he boasts two Festival winners from the 20 he has ridden.

It is a number that looks set to rise in the coming week. "It's the hardest place in the world to ride a winner," said the 21-year-old. "The place is just buzzing, it's phenomenal. I remember my first race as a professional there, you hear the



NEXT WEEK »
READ PAUL NICHOLLS' CHELTENHAM COLUMN IN STANDARD SPORT



Let battle commence: trainer Nicky Henderson with Gold Cup favourite Santini

THIS MONDAY »

8-PAGE CHELTENHAM SPECIAL



crowd at the start as the flag drops. That's unbelievable and gets you revved up."

Growing up, fellow jockey Barry Geraghty remembers the horses that inspired him from the TV screen during Festival week, Dublin Flyer the initial name on the lips of the Irishman.

"I grew up dreaming of it and suddenly you're on the hallowed turf," said the two-time Gold Cup winner.

For all the highs, there are the inherent lows, the missed opportunities, the falls and the sudden change of the

weather denying a shot at a winning opportunity. "If you break it down, it's just another day in the office but just bigger," said Henderson. "It's the culmination of a year's work and it's stressful but I wouldn't want it any differently."

For Geraghty, the days after a poor Festival are hard to take, while for trainers, the mental and physical collapse in the aftermath is even more pronounced.

Last year, Nicholls had the rarity of a week off, booking a break in Antigua by way of celebration. So how did the celebrations unfold from the Ryanair Chase and RSA Novices' Chase wins?

"They didn't, I just slept for a week, you're that broken," he added.

● **Day One offer — new & existing customers.** Bet £20 on the first race on the betfair exchange and get £20 as a free mobile bet. Small details — big results at Cheltenham 2020 with betfair. Min £20 in EXC back bets. Max £20 Free bet. Not valid on T/W & SP bets, mobile only. T&Cs apply.

Paris Marathon delayed by virus

CORONAVIRUS

NEXT month's Paris Marathon has been postponed until October because of fears over the coronavirus at the mass participation event.

France has had more than 420 confirmed coronavirus cases to date, with seven deaths as a result of the global outbreak.

Paris' decision casts doubt over the subsequent London Marathon three weeks later but officials in the capital are still hopeful that the race — scheduled for April 26 — will still go ahead as planned.

Starc back home to cheer on wife

CRICKET

MITCHELL STARC has been sent home from Australia's tour of South Africa — so he can watch his wife Alyssa Healy take on India in the T20 World Cup final.

Healy has been a key part of the Australia side that beat South Africa to reach Sunday's final.

Starc has been excused from the final ODI in South Africa to watch.

"It is a once-in-a-lifetime chance for Mitch to watch Alyssa in a home World Cup Final," said coach Justin Langer.

Fallon eyes a win at UK Open

DARTS

FALLON SHERROCK is confident of picking up a first win by a female at the UK Open since 2005.

Sherrock, along with Lisa Ashton, is in action this weekend when she will be bidding to become the first woman to win a match at the event since Deta Hedman. And after her groundbreaking win at the World Championship in December, the 25-year-old said: "I genuinely feel like 2020 is going to be the year where there is a women winner. I can see one of us, if not both of us, winning."

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Mark Noble

Read the West Ham captain's column every Friday

What a start for Jarrod... he epitomises what we need



 THE performance against Liverpool gave us the platform and belief to really push on when we played Southampton last weekend.

It's been a really tough six weeks. We could have gone to Manchester City and been smashed, and Liverpool similarly, but we came out of those two games reasonably OK although the display against Liverpool was much better than against City.

Southampton was a tricky one because everyone came to see us win and they were in form. We did the job, though, and right through the game we looked dangerous, with Jarrod Bowen and Michail Antonio.

For a full debut it could hardly have gone better for Jarrod. If you look at the goal he scored, it was very similar to the run he made against Liverpool — outside to in — only for his chip to hit Liverpool's keeper Allison.

I will remember his full debut more for the tackle on Ryan Bertrand just when he was poised to pull the trigger. It was great to see your winger back in the six-yard box, defending for the team. I wrote in this column, shortly after Jarrod signed, that it was good to see him get after the ball in training and trying to win it back straight away when he lost it, without me having to shout at him. He epitomises the type of player we should be signing.

Jarrod is a quiet boy but — as you can perhaps imagine — myself, Aaron Cresswell and Robert Snodgrass haven't left him alone. That's just part and parcel of being a new boy at this club and it's a test of his character.

Clothes, appearance, lifestyle, have all come under the spotlight and we've

had him serving us with coffees every morning before training. It's all light-hearted but there is a point to it all.

I remember Don Hutchison was relentless when I was a young kid, hammering me for this and that. One day, when brave enough, I said: "Hutch, what's your problem? Why are you 'on' me so much?" He replied: "Mark, it's because I like and respect you. If I had no time for you, I wouldn't do it."

That has always stuck with me and I made sure I added that to my repertoire when I became a senior figure.

I was also delighted for young Jeremy Ngakia. Playing Liverpool twice in your first two games is quite a baptism and against opposition of that quality, fear and adrenalin can get you through.

As we walked off the pitch in that first game, I said to him: "The toughest times will come now." What I meant by that is that, having done well in those first couple of games, the expectation is that he will maintain that standard. That will test his character but — knowing Jeremy — he will pass that test.

A word, too, for the manager. He's been back now for a couple of months and they've been difficult with the fixtures he's faced.

What he has brought, though, is a knowledge and a realistic appraisal of what we need. He's brought in Jarrod because he knows that you need your wingers and strikers to track back and launch into last-ditch tackles because we're in a relegation battle.

We all know that but when it doesn't happen enough, they are normally the clubs in trouble. Has it happened at say, Wolves and Sheffield United? Yes, every week? Has it happened enough at our club? No.

The manager has laid it on the line. This is where we are and this is what we have to do to get out of this.

The atmosphere in the stadium on Saturday was terrific and I could tell that as soon as we walked up the tunnel at the start. 'Bubbles' was being sung with gusto and I could sense the fans knew we needed them. I'd love it if our fans whistled and booed every time the opposition got the ball. It happened to us up at Liverpool and it was deafening.

Tomorrow at Arsenal — where I started as a 10-year-old — we must start as we left off last Saturday.

Finally, there are no shaking hands in the dressing room because of the coronavirus. Instead, it's fist pumps all round and hand sanitisers everywhere.



 I'll remember his full debut more for a goal-saving tackle he made in our six-yard box

Tierney's battle to regain place

Simon Collings

MIKEL ARTETA has warned Kieran Tierney he will have to oust Bukayo Saka from the Arsenal team if he wants to regain his spot at left-back.

Tierney joined from Celtic for £25million last summer, but has struggled with injuries and has been out since he dislocated his shoulder at West Ham in December.

In his absence, 18-year-old winger Saka has excelled at left-back.

Tierney has now returned to full training, but Arteta said: "They [Tierney and Saka] have to compete, they have to challenge each other and

improve. Whoever is best will be in the position, which is a really good thing for the team."

Saka's form has led to suggestions he should be considered for an England call-up. But Arteta was coy when asked if the player would be ready for the challenge of international football and warned it is a step up from the club game.

"He is doing really well with us," said Arteta ahead of tomorrow's match against West Ham at Emirates Stadium. "International level is a different level. It is up to the England manager to discuss whether he is ready to do that."

Mourinho to check on Dier

Dan Kilpatrick

JOSE MOURINHO will speak to Eric Dier before deciding whether to select him for Tottenham's visit to Burnley tomorrow.

Dier (right) feels ready to play, but the Spurs boss wants to check the defender is in the right frame of mind, after he entered the crowd to confront an abusive supporter who had clashed with his brother following Wednesday's FA Cup defeat to Norwich. Mourinho has publicly backed Dier, who was said to be calm in the

dressing room afterwards, but is aware that it has been a turbulent 48 hours for the 26-year-old, who is expected to be punished by the FA.

Dier completed 120 minutes in an encouraging display at centre-half, but Mourinho could opt to recall Toby Alderweireld. The FA and Tottenham have launched separate investigations, while the Met Police confirmed they are aware of the incident and could decide on their own probe. If they opt to speak to Dier, his brother and the fan, the club and FA will put their investigations on hold.



Neville keeps faith in Lionesses

Jack Rosser

PHIL NEVILLE insists the gap between England Women and the best teams in the world has not widened despite a 2-0 defeat to the USA in their SheBelieves Cup opener.

England were outclassed for long periods in Orlando with a sixth defeat in nine games increasing the pressure on Neville.

His side have struggled since losing to the USA in the World Cup semi-finals in July but Neville insists they are not going backwards.

"The semi-final was eight months

ago, and in terms of the gap between... the gap has not widened that is for sure," said Neville.

"Our team is different, there is a lot of young players in there, we are building something new."

"The gap still has not widened. When we are playing, say for instance in that first half, I still see a team that are willing to go out there and play against the best team in the world. But we have got to add ruthlessness."

England play Japan in their next match on Sunday, before playing Spain in the final match of the round-robin event.

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Premier League

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Liverpool	28	26	1	1	64	20	79
Man City	27	18	3	6	68	29	57
Leicester	28	15	5	8	54	28	50
Chelsea	28	13	6	9	47	39	45
Man Utd	28	11	9	8	42	30	42
Wolves	28	10	12	6	41	34	42
Tottenham	28	11	7	10	46	39	40
Sheff Utd	27	10	10	7	29	25	40
Burnley	28	11	5	12	33	39	38
Arsenal	27	8	13	6	39	36	37
Everton	28	10	7	11	37	42	37
Palace	28	9	9	10	25	32	36
Southampton	28	10	4	14	35	51	34
Newcastle	28	8	8	12	24	41	32
Brighton	28	6	10	12	32	40	28
West Ham	28	7	6	15	35	49	27
Watford	28	6	9	13	27	43	27
Bournemouth	28	7	6	15	28	45	27
Aston Villa	27	7	4	16	34	52	25
Norwich	28	5	6	17	25	51	21

CHELSEA v EVERTON

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CHELSEA DRAW EVERTON

* Implied from betting market odds taken at 9am Thursday 5th March

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Tammy: I hope Harry is back for the Euros

Continued from Page 54

did come into my hands," said Abraham. "I am ready for it. I have to step up and do what I do best.

"I have spoken to Marcus. Harry Kane is someone who I have always idolised.

"Hopefully he can be back because he is a player that England definitely need and Marcus as well. They are both great young talents.

"I've watched England on TV [at tournaments] and actually going to the Euros would be a dream come true. But first of all, it's about knuckling down at Chelsea."

Abraham last night became the first man to win Premier League Player of the Year and Young Player of the Year at the London Football Awards, run in aid of Willow, the national charity which was set up by former Arsenal goalkeeper Bob Wilson and his wife, Megs, to support seriously ill 16-40-year-olds.

James Olley

Chief Football Correspondent



THERE has been a clear sense of late that Tammy Abraham's remarkable breakthrough season had stalled but the man himself insists he is just getting started.

The 22-year-old's desperation to return from a nagging ankle injury prompted a recurrence of the problem, which in turn led to an enforced mid-season hiatus, affording him a moment to take stock.

In the midst of this break, Abraham was at the Camden Roundhouse last night to pick up two prizes as he became the first man to win Premier League Player of the Year and Young Player of the Year in the same year at the London Football Awards.

The LFAs are the curtain-raiser to the sport's award season and therefore voted on the earliest, explaining why Abraham was the standout choice after scoring 15 goals for Chelsea and breaking his duck for England in November with his first international strike against Montenegro.

Abraham has been burdened with the responsibility of helping fill the scoring void left by Eden Hazard in addition to succeeding where more lauded strikers Alvaro Morata and Gonzalo Higuain have failed in becoming a consistently effective Chelsea No9.

He was only able to make a late cameo appearance in last month's Champions League last-16, first-leg defeat by Bayern Munich but having targeted a return to action this month, Abraham is keen to make up for lost time.

"There is still so much to do," he told Standard Sport. "That's why I am eager to get off the physio bed and go back out there on the pitch. I just want to go back to doing what I do best. And for me it is unfinished business.

"It has been tough, watching on the sidelines, coming in for games when you know you aren't 100 per cent. You just want to do the best you can. It is hard when you are not ready. This time, I just said, 'I'll just come back when I'm 100 per cent instead of coming back and going again.'"

Abraham sustained an ankle injury against Arsenal on January 21, heightening speculation Chelsea were on the lookout for the kind of big-money transfer-window signing which has denied

EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW**TAMMY ABRAHAM**

'Chelsea will always attract big players but I've just got to keep doing the right things and then no one can really say anything'



Abraham and other youngsters like him their shot at regular action before Frank Lampard arrived as head coach.

When announcing Abraham as the

winner last night, Blues chairman Bruce Buck declared "a transfer ban is a good thing — in fact I recommend it to all London clubs", a wry nod to the

opportune emergence of Abraham and 21-year-old Mason Mount among others as Chelsea turned to youth in the wake of FIFA's punishment denying them the

Foster: Giving the boss a new deal is key to Watford's future**EXCLUSIVE**

James Olley

BEN FOSTER has urged Watford to tie down manager Nigel Pearson on a new contract to safeguard the future of the club.

Pearson replaced Quique Sanchez Flores in December on a deal until the end of the season when the Hornets were bottom of the Premier League after taking eight points from their first 15 matches.

They have since climbed up to 17th in the table after securing five wins under Pearson, the latest of which came last Saturday when inflicting Liverpool's first League defeat of the campaign with a stunning 3-0 victory at Vicarage Road.

When asked about the importance of Pearson remaining at Watford beyond the summer, Foster told Standard Sport: "That's really important for the club as a whole. Watford need somebody like



Hitting out: Ben Foster in action during the win over Liverpool — but he knows Watford's season will not be defined by beating the top teams in the Premier League

Nigel Pearson. They haven't had a guy like him in a long, long time. They have been crying out for it as well. He is a manager who manages the whole club from top to bottom and that's what they've been crying out for."

Foster revealed Pearson held a team meeting yesterday in which he stressed the importance of backing up their performance against Liverpool with a similar level of intensity when they face Crystal Palace at Selhurst Park tomorrow.

"He basically said, 'Look, it's great you go and beat Liverpool on a Saturday night, it's on the television, the world is watching,'" said Foster.

"That's fantastic but now is the time to replicate it. It's all great doing that but if you can do it again at Palace away on a Saturday, the week after against Burnley, they are the times you need to get results.

"Our season is not going to be defined by beating Liverpool, it is beating teams

like Crystal Palace, Burnley, they are the teams we need to get points from."

Foster is out of contract himself at the end of the season and is yet to be offered a new deal, despite his form earning him the Goalkeeper of the Year prize at last night's London Football Awards.

He turns 37 next month and although he dismissed rumours of a move to Tottenham, Foster insisted he is relaxed about the situation.

"It's not something I'm thinking about," he said of his contract situation. "I'm sure it'll get sorted somewhere along the line. It is not a problem. I'm not talking to Tottenham at all. It is complete rubbish. And that's all there is to it. I'm very easy about it.

"I'm not putting any age on [when I might retire] whatsoever. If you'd asked me four or five years ago, I'd maybe said 'mid-30's, that'll do me'. But I'm 36. I'm enjoying it. I've never felt as fit.

"I've had a lot of injury problems in the past but now I've never felt so fit."



Ouch: Abraham sustains the ankle injury which has disrupted his season

Saint-Germain and Napoli's Dries Mertens in January as stop-gap options only to later decide to wait to pursue longer-term targets including Lyon's Moussa Dembele and RB Leipzig's Timo Werner.

The Blues also have upwards of £150million to spend this summer, all of which signals the probability of fresh competition for Abraham.

"For me, it is about when you are doing the right things, no one can really say anything," she said.

"But you take it at a team like Chelsea, they are always going to attract different talents around the world. For me, it is about doing my thing on and off the pitch."

That damaging defeat by Bayern threatened to derail Chelsea's season but Tuesday's FA Cup fifth-round win over Liverpool has given them fresh impetus ahead of Sunday's visit of the other half of Merseyside, Everton.

The Blues have just a three-point cushion over fifth-placed Manchester United and continue to hold Champions League qualification in their own hands.

"You are going to be taken by surprise sometimes and for us it is about always being on our game," he said. "Teams are on our tail. They want that fourth spot as well and we just have to keep looking up and keep hopefully getting results."

"For us, I'll take a top-four finish as a successful year. Especially with all that's happened, the transfer ban and all sorts. We've come out of the blocks and surprised ourselves really. But it's not done yet. We are still in a good position but we just have to stay there."

Just like Abraham himself.

Prize guy: Tammy Abraham at last night's London Football Awards

chance to bring in any new players last summer.

However, they explored the possibility of signing Edinson Cavani from Paris

Watkins' Brentford dream

James Oiley

OLLIE WATKINS insists his "dream" is to play Premier League football with Brentford next season — but left the door open to a move should they fail to get promoted.

The 24-year-old (right) was last night named EFL Player of the Year at the London Football Awards in recognition of a fine season to date in which he has scored 22 Championship goals, a tally currently only bettered by Fulham's Aleksandar Mitrovic (23).

Watkins has been linked with a move to several clubs, including West Ham and Crystal Palace, while it is believed the forward also has admirers at Tottenham. But with Brentford fifth in the table at present, Watkins told Standard

Sport: "The dream is to play with Brentford in the Premier League and hopefully that can happen. We have ten games left, we want to give our all and do something special."

Asked whether he would consider his future if the Bees missed out on reaching the top flight, he added: "I don't know what's around the corner but I'm really happy at Brentford. There are good people and good players there so hopefully we get promoted and we are playing Premier League football next year."

"Was talk of a January transfer distracting? No, definitely not. I thought 'why would I want to leave when I'm playing week in, week out, scoring and the team are winning?' So it didn't catch my eye one bit."



WEEKEND BRIEFING

If Kane doesn't make it, England have got the perfect replacement...

Alan Smith



CHELSEA v EVERTON

IT all looked so promising in November. Harry Kane helped himself to a hat-trick against Montenegro before giving way to Tammy Abraham, who also got on the scoresheet towards the end, poking home his first England goal to make it 7-0.

With Gareth Southgate's side heading to the Euros, Abraham stood in pole position as Kane's understudy — a striker full of confidence, freely scoring for Chelsea.

The outlook, unfortunately, doesn't appear quite so healthy now. As is so often the case in a long, tough season, injuries have thrown a heavy spanner in the works. Kane remains some distance off a Tottenham return, while Abraham's ankle continues to keep him sidelined. In a way, though, this little break could serve him well.

His form, in truth, had tailed off a bit, which was only to be expected of a 22-year-old in his first season leading the line for Chelsea.

With 34 appearances already stacked up, it has been a great learning curve for the young man.

But ankle permitting, I don't see why Abraham can't return to the form

enjoyed before Christmas when his pace, skill and height proved a real handful for plenty of experienced defenders.

He's built a bit differently to most top-flight strikers. In terms of physique, I'd compare him to Emmanuel Adebayor — another forward whose long limbs proved hard to contain.

Because of that same lanky frame, perhaps Abraham just needs to build up a bit more inner strength, which only comes from playing regular football. With that sorted, I'm sure he can go on to enjoy a fantastic career at the top, which means also succeeding on the international stage.

In fact, the more he is exposed to those high-level matches, the better his technique and output will surely become. As for this summer at the Euros, a fully fit Abraham would prove very handy, especially if Kane doesn't make it.

There are other options, of course. Southampton's

Danny Ings and Everton's Dominic Calvert-Lewin have both done enough in different ways to catch Southgate's eye. For me, though, Abraham's qualities would tip the balance, supplying an overall package the others can't. For that reason, I'm just hoping his ankle settles down quickly.

A strong end to the season wouldn't just help Chelsea, it would offer England hope in a position Kane's injury has introduced doubt.

Alan says...

In Tammy Abraham's absence, Olivier Giroud is expected to lead the line against Everton on Sunday and you can get 9/1 about him scoring two or more goals.

CRYSTAL PALACE v WATFORD

COMMENTATING for Sky last Saturday, I described Watford's 3-0 win over Liverpool as the greatest performance in their Premier League history. That's how good it was. But it's too easy to say, "That's got to be the standard from here on in" because, in reality, it's impossible to hit those heights on a regular basis. People say you should be just as pumped up for Crystal Palace as you were for Liverpool. But human nature doesn't work like that. As a result, manager Nigel Pearson might feel a little nervous about this one.

BURNLEY v TOTTENHAM

I CAN'T imagine Jose Mourinho has lost four on the trot very often. This is uncomfortable territory for a manager who made his name by winning, no matter the method. And now he's in charge of a team clearly lacking belief. On the plus side, new arrivals like Steven Bergwijn, Giovanni Lo Celso, Tanguy Ndombele, Gedson Fernandes and Ryan Sessegnon should only get better next season. Less promisingly, clean sheets are becoming increasingly rare. That's just not Mourinho. Maybe even he's wondering where the old Jose has gone.

ARSENAL v WEST HAM

ON the face of it, Arsenal's only motivation this season rests with the FA Cup given they can't achieve anything else.

Or can they? At the moment, nobody knows what will happen with next season's Champions League spot that Manchester City will apparently be forced to relinquish. Will 5th place in the league come into play? Will UEFA still admit four English clubs?

If so, Arsenal's league campaign remains very much alive, seeing as they lag only five points behind Manchester United in fifth. That is far from unbridgeable if the Gunners

can go on a run, starting with victory in this London derby. It's a long shot, of course. As well as Spurs and United, Sheffield United and Wolves might have something to say on the matter.

But for Arsenal, qualifying once more for the Champions League might be the only way to persuade Pierre-Emerick Aubameyang that his future remains in north London.

As for West Ham, their future simply must lie in the top flight, otherwise the financial implications would be horrendous. Looking at the fixtures, I think they'll be ok. David Moyes looks set to once again come to the rescue.

THIS WEEK'S ACTION

(3pm unless stated)

TONIGHT
Championship
Nott'm Forest v Millwall (7.45pm, Sky)

TOMORROW

Premier League
Liverpool v Bournemouth (12.30pm, BT1)

Arsenal v West Ham

Crystal Palace v Watford

Sheff Utd v Norwich

Southampton v Newcastle

Wolves v Brighton

Burnley v Tottenham (5.30pm, Sky)

Championship
Bristol City v Fulham (12.30pm, Sky)

Brentford v Sheff Wed

Charlton v Middlesbrough

Preston v QPR

League One
AFC Wimbledon v Bolton

League Two
Leyton Orient v Cambridge

SUNDAY
Premier League
Chelsea v Everton (2pm, Sky)

Man Utd v Man C (4.30pm, Sky)

SheBelieves Cup
Japan v England (6.15pm, BBC4)

Man Utd v Man C (4.30pm, Sky)

SheBelieves Cup
Japan v England (6.15pm, BBC4)

Man Utd v Man C (4.30pm, Sky)

SheBelieves Cup
Japan v England (6.15pm, BBC4)

Man Utd v Man C (4.30pm, Sky)

SheBelieves Cup
Japan v England (6.15pm, BBC4)

Man Utd v Man C (4.30pm, Sky)

SheBelieves Cup
Japan v England (6.15pm, BBC4)

Man Utd v Man C (4.30pm, Sky)

SheBelieves Cup
Japan v England (6.15pm, BBC4)

Man Utd v Man C (4.30pm, Sky)

SheBelieves Cup
Japan v England (6.15pm, BBC4)

Man Utd v Man C (4.30pm, Sky)

SheBelieves Cup
Japan v England (6.15pm, BBC4)

Man Utd v Man C (4.30pm, Sky)

SheBelieves Cup
Japan v England (6.15pm, BBC4)

Man Utd v Man C (4.30pm, Sky)

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**A GREAT START FOR JEREMY...
AND NEW BOY JARROD, TOO**
MARK NOBLE'S COLUMN
Page 51

TAMMY: I WILL BE BACK IN TIME FOR EURO WARM-UPS

» STRIKER'S PLEDGE AS HE EYES RETURN THIS MONTH

EXCLUSIVE

James Olley
Chief Football Correspondent

TAMMY ABRAHAM today revealed he is targeting a return to action this month and is hopeful of being fit for England's friendlies against Italy and Denmark.

The 22-year-old is currently unable to train and will miss Chelsea's Premier League home game against Everton on Sunday as he continues his recovery from an ankle problem, which he describes as looking like a "swollen ball".

Abraham originally suffered the problem against Arsenal on January 21 when turning his right ankle after colliding with the Stamford Bridge advertising boards.

He returned to action 11 days later at Leicester but was then missing for three weeks before two substitute

appearances against Tottenham and Bayern Munich, after which he aggravated the problem during a post-match warm-down.

As the injury persisted, Abraham flew to Barcelona at Chelsea's request to see a specialist, who confirmed the club's original diagnosis that he did not require an operation. The striker, however, subsequently picked up a bug and head coach Frank Lampard is reluctant to put a timescale on his return.

But when asked whether there was a chance he would be available for England this month, Abraham said: "Yes, definitely. I'm almost fit. There's still a bit to do. I'll get there soon."

"It's a recurrence. [The problem was] playing on it and aggravating it even more. It is still like a swollen ball really but it is getting better day by day."

"The club wanted me to go to Barcelona. They just wanted

different eyes, a different mindset on this situation. He told me what was wrong, exactly what the Chelsea physios said, and he recommended some stuff for me to do. I'm doing physio right now."

"This time, I just said, 'I'll just come back when I'm 100 per cent' instead of coming back and going again."

This month's internationals would provide a huge opportunity for Abraham to stake a claim ahead of Euro 2020, with Harry Kane and Marcus Rashford both sidelined through injury.

Kane and Rashford have both insisted they will be fit for the tournament but Gareth Southgate only has this month's two fixtures to assess his options before naming his final squad in late May.

"The March internationals could be [a great chance] if it

Continued on Page 52

EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW TAMMY ABRAHAM

» PAGES 52 & 53



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EDDIE'S MEN ARE READY FOR REVENGE

SIX NATIONS SPECIAL

Page 49



THIS MONDAY: CHELTENHAM FESTIVAL SPECIAL

8-PAGE SUPPLEMENT



Breaking his duck: Tammy Abraham scores his first England goal in the 7-0 victory over Montenegro

Vunipola's ready for action... but England miss out due to coronavirus confusion

Will Macpherson
Rugby Correspondent

MAKO VUNIPOLA is set to start for Saracens against Leicester tomorrow despite not being considered for England due to coronavirus.

On Tuesday, it emerged that Vunipola had flown back from attending to a family issue in Tonga via Hong Kong and was therefore told not to come into the England camp, despite being selected.

Saracens, though, having run the necessary medical checks, were happy for him to join up with them and now he has been named in the No1 jersey against Leicester. For Sarries, captain Brad Barritt returns to start at inside centre in a team missing Alex Goode, Duncan Taylor and Jackson Wray to concussion.

Meanwhile, Vunipola's Saracens teammate Jamie George says he hopes a "hungry" Wales team get a hostile welcome at Twickenham.

"Wales games have a different feel and a different edge to them," said the hooker, who starts in a side showing two changes from the victory over Ireland.

"We've prepared that way this week. We're aware they're coming in off the



He's back: Saracens' Mako Vunipola

back of two losses and will be hungry as ever to get that victory. They'll be as physical as anything, so we're preparing for a proper battle.

"I'd say it's the strongest rivalry historically. If you look back at the big games throughout my career they're the ones we get most excited about.

"There's a different edge to it. The Welsh fans when you play in Cardiff make it hostile, so we're looking forward to welcoming them to Twickenham and want to make it as tough as we can."

There are just two Championship matches this weekend, with France travelling to Edinburgh to face Scotland on Sunday. Italy's visit to Rome, due to be played tomorrow, was postponed due to fears over the spread of coronavirus.

England men's, women's and U20s fixtures in Italy next weekend have also been postponed, leaving the Six Nations needing to find two weekends — which is likely to take until next season — to play the games and complete the Championship. They are continuing to monitor the situation and further games could yet be delayed.

Not since 1972, when the troubles meant teams did not travel to Ireland, has a season not been completed. Commercial imperatives mean all nations are desperate to complete their fixtures.

England have insisted the situation with Vunipola and the uncertainty surrounding coronavirus have not distracted them this week, but George acknowledged that this could be their final game together as a team, depending on how long the Italy game is delayed.

"It's potentially the last game together, so it's going to be an interesting one," he said.

Hodgson extends deal

Tom Dutton

ROY HODGSON has ended uncertainty over his future at Crystal Palace by signing a one-year contract extension.

Hodgson was in the final year of his contract, but the former England manager has agreed a deal until 2021 following talks with chairman Steve Parish this week.

The 72-year-old, who took over in September 2017, has guided the Eagles to safety this season with back-to-back wins over Newcastle and Brighton and said: "I am delighted we have reached an agreement to extend my contract.

"I am proud of what we have achieved since I was appointed two-and-a-half

years ago and I look forward to us working together for the foreseeable future.

"Everyone knows how I feel about the club that I supported as a boy, I feel a special bond with the supporters and know that myself, the owners and the players are all working together to achieve the same goal."

Palace were bottom of the Premier League when Hodgson took over, but he has stabilised the club.

Parish added: "I am delighted that Roy has agreed to extend his contract with the club and has reinforced his commitment to help us extend this period of unprecedented stability in the top flight."

Bruce: We'll have to shut out fans

NEWCASTLE manager Steve Bruce fears it is "pretty inevitable" that Premier League games will be played behind closed doors because of the spread of the coronavirus.

Serie A games in Italy will be played with no fans in attendance until April and Bruce believes it is only a matter of time in the UK.

"It is something we are probably going to face," he said today. "We all know football is a way out for everybody, but lives are at stake and we must go by the authorities. But it looks pretty inevitable that could be on the cards."

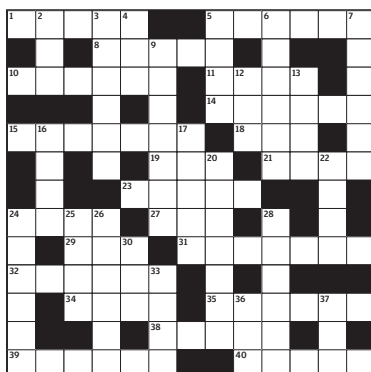
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 - 11 Frank (4)
 - 14 Show (6)
 - 15 Exalted (7)
 - 18 Odd (3)
 - 19 Consume (3)
 - 21 Girdle (4)
 - 23 Seraph (5)
 - 24 Rush (4)
 - 27 Number (3)
 - 29 Cover (3)
- DOWN**
- 2 Tune (3)
 - 3 Fight (6)
 - 4 Aster (3)
 - 5 Fall (4)
 - 6 Angel (6)
 - 7 Menace (6)
 - 9 Torture (7)
 - 12 Equality (3)
 - 13 Call (4)
 - 16 Drive (4)
 - 17 Keen (5)
 - 20 Filmsy (7)
 - 22 Deficit (4)
 - 24 Save (6)
 - 25 Otherwise (4)
 - 26 Immersed (6)
 - 28 Away (6)
 - 30 Rabbit (3)
 - 33 Gull (4)
 - 36 Ocean (3)
 - 37 Vase (3)

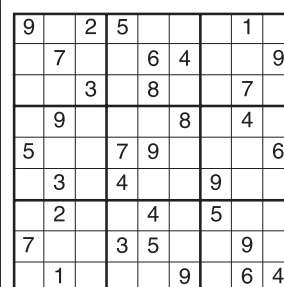
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YESTERDAY'S SOLUTIONS, PAGE 46.

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