



How to give a poorly pet a helping paw

FREE PULLOUT INSIDE

NHS at highest threat level as UK cases rise to 51

6m workers could be off sick all at once

Even eating out and shopping may be under threat

LIFE ON HOLD FOR THREE MONTHS

... and look who's taking precautions

LIVES may have to be put on hold for up to three months to fight the deadly coronavirus, Boris Johnson said yesterday.

Setting out a 'battle plan' for tackling a potential epidemic, he warned the nation of the scale of

By **Jason Groves** Political Editor

the challenge posed by an illness that may afflict millions.

The sobering strategy said Britons could be asked to suspend their social lives – 'avoiding contact outside work and school' – if the virus took hold.

Sources said dramatically cutting back on activities such as eating out,

going to the pub, shopping and shows could significantly slow the spread of the contagion. Other contingency measures were set out to allow key public services, such as the NHS and the police, to continue functioning.

The plan said officers could be told to suspend investigations and focus on serious crime, the Army could be put on standby and foreign visitors

showing symptoms could be required to have a coronavirus test before being allowed into the country.

The plan said a fifth of the workforce – more than six million staff – could be off sick at the peak of the outbreak, which ministers hope to delay until late in the spring.

It emerged last night that the NHS

Turn to Page 2

Weather

Go to: [dailymail.co.uk/weather](https://www.dailymail.co.uk/weather) for UK and world 5 day forecast

Map of the UK showing weather conditions and temperatures for various cities. Temperatures are in °F and °C. Wind speeds are indicated by arrows.

City	Temp (°F)	Temp (°C)
Aberdeen	7 (45°F)	10
Glasgow	7 (45°F)	10
Newcastle	7 (45°F)	10
Manchester	7 (45°F)	10
Birmingham	7 (45°F)	10
Cardiff	9 (48°F)	25
London	7 (45°F)	10
Plymouth	7 (45°F)	10

Summary: Rain in south

UK TODAY: A generally dry start for most. Dry and partly cloudy throughout the day in the northern half, but rain moving in across the southern half. Max 11c.

Today's weather

	9am	12noon	3pm	6pm	9pm
London	4c	7c	6c	6c	4c
Plymouth	7c	9c	10c	9c	8c
Cardiff	5c	6c	7c	8c	5c
B'ham	4c	6c	5c	4c	2c
M'chester	3c	6c	6c	5c	3c
Newcastle	2c	6c	6c	4c	0c
Glasgow	3c	5c	7c	4c	2c
Aberdeen	2c	6c	6c	5c	2c
Belfast	3c	6c	6c	4c	3c

5 day forecast

	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun	Mon
London	8c	9c	12c	11c	11c
Plymouth	8c	9c	11c	10c	10c
Cardiff	8c	9c	11c	10c	10c
B'ham	8c	7c	10c	10c	10c
M'chester	8c	7c	10c	9c	10c
Newcastle	7c	7c	10c	8c	9c
Glasgow	7c	7c	9c	8c	9c
Aberdeen	7c	7c	8c	9c	9c
Belfast	6c	7c	10c	8c	9c

Yesterday

	24 hours to 6pm	Sun (hrs)	Rain (ins)	Temp (min)	Temp (max)
Aberdeen	6.2	0.12	1	9	10
Aberporth	7.8	0.00	5	8	10
Belfast	6.3	0.02	2	8	10
Birmingham	4.2	0.03	1	9	11
Bournemouth	7.1	0.00	1	11	11
Bristol	6.5	0.01	4	10	11
Cardiff	7.1	0.02	5	10	11
Durham	5.4	0.00	0	11	11
Edinburgh	6.4	0.04	3	10	10
Glasgow	4.7	0.09	2	8	8
Hull	4.6	0.02	0	9	9
Ipswich	0.4	0.04	0	8	8
Leeds	5.1	0.08	1	8	8
Lincoln	3.6	0.01	1	8	8
London	2.7	0.03	1	11	11
Manchester	1.6	0.08	2	8	8
Southampton	7.5	0.00	3	10	10
St Andrews	8.5	0.01	2	10	10
Stornoway	3.6	0.04	1	7	7

Information supplied by MeteoGroup

Moon and Sun

MOON rises: 11.16am, sets: 3.15am
Sun rises London: 6.38am, sets: 5.47pm
Manchester rises: 6.48am, sets: 5.53pm
HIGH TIDE London Bridge: 8.31pm
Liverpool: 6.10pm

Europe forecast

	today	c f	tomorrow	c f
Amsterdam	cloudy	9 48	rain	8 46
Brussels	rain	9 48	rain	7 45
Frankfurt	cloudy	10 50	rain	8 46
Geneva	cloudy	10 50	rain	11 52
Lisbon	cloudy	18 64	rain	16 61
Madrid	fair	19 66	rain	15 59
Paris	rain	7 45	rain	9 48
Rome	sun	16 61	drizzle	14 57

Around the world yesterday

	weather	c	f	weather	c	f	weather	c	f
Algiers	Fair	17	63	Florence	Showers	10 50	New Delhi	Sunny	26 79
Amsterdam	Fair	8	46	Geneva	Sunny	7 45	New York	Fair	12 54
Athens	Sunny	19	66	Gibraltar	Fair	16 61	Nice	Sunny	14 57
Auckland	Cloudy	25	77	Guernsey	Sunny	8 46	Oslo	Drizzle	2 36
Bahrain	Sunny	23	73	Helsinki	Cloudy	2 36	Palma	Sunny	15 59
Barcelona	Fair	13	55	Hong Kong	Fair	20 68	Paris	Cloudy	7 45
Basra	Sunny	22	72	Innsbruck	Cloudy	8 46	Perth	Sunny	30 86
Beijing	Sunny	6	43	Istanbul	Fair	16 61	Prague	Rain	4 39
Beirut	Sunny	18	64	Jersey	Fair	8 46	Rhodes	Cloudy	17 63
Belfast	Sunny	8	46	Larnaca	Sunny	19 66	Riga	Cloudy	6 43
Belgrade	Cloudy	20	68	Las Palmas	Sunny	21 70	Rome	Showers	13 55
Berlin	Cloudy	6	43	Lisbon	Cloudy	18 64	Singapore	Fair	31 88
Blairritz	Showers	13	55	London	Showers	8 46	Stockholm	Cloudy	4 39
Brussels	Fair	6	43	Los Angeles	Showers	19 66	Strasbourg	Cloudy	8 46
Bucharest	Fair	14	57	Luxor	Sunny	25 77	Sydney	Drizzle	21 70
Budapest	Showers	10	50	Madrid	Cloudy	11 52	Tangier	Fair	17 63
Ch'agen	Cloudy	4	39	Malaga	Sunny	19 66	Tel Aviv	Sunny	20 68
Cairo	Fair	20	68	Malta	Rain	16 61	Tenerife	Sunny	22 72
Cape Town	Sunny	28	82	Melbourne	Cloudy	18 64	Tokyo	Fair	16 61
Casablanca	Sunny	20	68	Mexico City	Fair	25 77	Toronto	Rain	6 43
Corfu	Cloudy	17	63	Miami	Cloudy	26 79	Tunis	Fair	12 54
Cyprus	Sunny	19	66	Milan	Cloudy	9 48	Vancouver	Rain	5 41
Dubai	Sunny	24	75	Montreal	Cloudy	-2 28	Venice	Sunny	11 52
Dublin	Sunny	7	45	Moscow	Rain	4 39	Vienna	Drizzle	9 48
Dubrovnik	Mist	13	55	Mumbai	Sunny	29 84	Warsaw	Fair	8 46
Faro	Fair	17	63	Nairobi	Cloudy	24 75	Wellington	Cloudy	22 72

KUROSU

EVERY day in the Mail you can play Kurosu, the most addictive brainteaser since Sudoku. There are only two rules:

- 1: Fill in each space with either a nought or a cross so there are no more than two consecutive noughts or crosses in any row or column. Important note: diagonals don't count.
- 2: Each row and column must contain three noughts and three crosses.

Today's difficulty rating ★★☆☆

		0	0		
			X		0
X				X	
X					X
		0			

PLAY more Kurosu and 26 addictive puzzles like them every day on your smartphone or tablet with Mail Plus, your Mail newspaper on your screen. Get a FREE trial today at [dailymailplus.co.uk](https://www.dailymailplus.co.uk)

Solution on Puzzles & Prizes back page

Continued from Page One

had declared a 'Level Four' incident, the highest level of alert, as officials brace for a surge in coronavirus cases in the coming weeks.

Hospitals have been advised to postpone treatment where possible and treat patients at home, or in the community to ease pressure on beds.

At a press conference in No 10 yesterday, the Prime Minister said 'all reasonable and necessary steps' were being taken. He stressed that for the overwhelming majority the virus would produce only a mild disease.

But there are fears for the over-80s, who are thought to be especially susceptible. In a worst-case scenario, official projections point to as many as half a million deaths, although experts insisted early evidence from China



suggested the final figure would be only a fraction of this. As the number of UK victims rose from 39 to 51:

- The new cases included two in Bury and another in Bolton, as well as others in London and Hampshire;
- A major advertising campaign will urge Britons to wash their hands for 20 seconds throughout the day;
- The Queen wore long gloves at an investiture for what was believed to be the first time in decades;
- The death rate rose to 3.4 per cent from 2 per cent – possibly because the number of mild cases is being under-reported;
- Sick pay and benefit rules could be overhauled;
- A Wirral secondary school closed for a deep clean after a parent became infected;
- The US Federal Reserve announced a surprise cut in interest rates, with the Bank of England expected to follow;
- Shoppers ignored 'Don't panic' warnings and cleared shelves of essentials;
- In Italy, the death toll soared to 79 and Iran temporarily freed 54,000 prisoners to combat the spread of the virus.

The 12-week plan will come into force should the virus defeat efforts to contain it.

Officials believe that cutting

HOW THE BUG IS SPREADING

BRADFORD: 1 case
Infected in Italy

BURY: 3
One patient visited northern Italy, had contact with other two

BOLTON: 1
Visited Italy

WIRRAL: 5
Four evacuated from Diamond Princess cruise ship in Japan, and one is parent of child at school in area

BELFAST: 1
Came from northern Italy via Dublin

NORTHAMPTONSHIRE: 1
Announced yesterday

GLOUCESTERSHIRE: 2
Primary school worker who returned from northern Italy, and one more

SWANSEA: 1
Visited Italy

BERKSHIRE: 1
Primary school staff member who had been overseas

DEVON: 2
Secondary school pupil and relative infected in Italy

HAMPSHIRE: 1
Announced yesterday

SURREY: 3
One returned from Milan, then two in same family contracted virus here

WEST SUSSEX: 2
Contracted from a man in Surrey

YORK: 2
Chinese student and mother

DERBYSHIRE: 1
Had been on holiday in Tenerife

HULL: 1
Visited Italy

HERTFORDSHIRE: 3
Includes two parents of school children

ESSEX: 1
Had not travelled abroad

LONDON: 5
Two infected in Iran, one in China, plus two more

KENT: 1
NHS worker who visited Italy

BRIGHTON: 6
'Superspreader' Steve Walsh got virus in Singapore and infected five others in France

TAYSIDE: 1
First Scottish case, returned from Italy

LEEDS: 2
Infected in Iran

BRITAIN CASES: 51

Note: 12 new cases were announced yesterday, but the Department of Health refused to confirm where four of them were found

VIRUS PANIC SPREADS PAGES 4-9

social activities by up to three quarters could hugely restrict its spread. Mass events, such as concerts, sports matches or even the May local elections or VE Day commemorations, could be cancelled.

Families were also warned that they may be asked to go into quarantine at home if one or more of them contracts the virus. Routine operations could be cancelled to ease the

strain on the NHS, and patients could be discharged early to free up beds.

Last night it was claimed that non-time-critical homicide investigations could be postponed as long as there was no increase in threat.

Forces could also increase response times to crimes such as burglaries and postpone some operations, such as action against gangs or seri-

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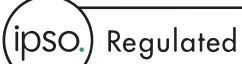
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EMERALD STYLE

Kate marks her visit to Ireland by going green... three times

From **Rebecca English**
Royal Editor in Dublin

IT was her first official trip to Ireland, so there was only one colour for the Duchess of Cambridge yesterday.

Kate, with husband William, arrived in Dublin in a military-style emerald green coat by Catherine Walker.

She wore co-ordinating £550 Manolo Blahnik heels and £17,000 Asprey diamond earrings in the shape of daisies.

When she took off her coat to meet Irish president Michael D Higgins, she revealed another green number, a £1,567 Alessandra Rich rose print peplum dress. But Kate, 38, saved the best for last. On an evening visit to the Guinness Storehouse to sample Ireland's famous national brew, she sparkled in a third green outfit – a £1,595



Thirsty work: Enjoying a Guinness

metallic chiffon gown by The Vampire's Wife, the label created by musician Nick Cave's wife Susie.

William, 37, and Kate are in Ireland for a three-day official tour on behalf of the Queen and the Government to soothe the post-Brexit wounds.

They flew to Dublin on a commercial Aer Lingus flight. As well as holding talks with President Higgins, they also met prime minister Leo Varadkar and his partner Matt Barrett before attending a ceremony at Dublin's Garden of Remembrance – which is dedicated to those who fought for Irish independence from Britain.



Arrival: In a coat by Catherine Walker



Formal: Kate in the Alessandra Rich dress

By **Colin Fernandez**
Science Correspondent

CALLING overweight and obese people fat or lazy is worsening their mental and physical health, according to a statement signed by 100 organisations.

Weight-based prejudice and discrimination is as unacceptable as sexism or racism but is endemic in society including the NHS, the statement issued yesterday said.

The letter claimed that, much like at the height of the plague, cholera and Aids epidemics, the tendency to blame the individual prevents obese patients from receiving proper medical care. The team of experts, led by Professor Francesco Rubino from King's College London, issued what they called a Pledge to Eradicate Weight Stigma. Health campaigns which stigmatise obese people – popularly known as 'fat shaming' – should be avoided, the letter says.

A Freedom of Information request last year uncovered 332 cases where overweight people filed complaints against NHS staff for insulting them over their weight in the previous three years. Patients moaned about language including being

labelled 'cuddly', 'stumpy' and 'massively overweight'.

One patient lodged a complaint against Barking, Havering and Redbridge trust after a worker told her she was too big to use a portable toilet.

A consultant at Portsmouth Hospital was ticked off after telling a patient 'people your size have become an epidemic' and their headaches were likely due to their weight. Signatories included MPs and peers from the All Party Parliamentary Group On Obesity, Diabetes UK,

the World Obesity Federation, and Weight Watchers.

The paper – launched today on World Obesity Day in the journal Nature Medicine – said that reviews of scientific evidence show that stigma against weight can cause both physical and psychological harm, and that affected individuals are less likely to seek and receive adequate care.

Instead of treating obesity as a failure of willpower, healthcare professionals and the wider public should treat it as a disease with genetic, biological and environmen-

tal causes. Professor Rubino said: 'Often perceived as lazy, gluttonous, lacking willpower and self-discipline, people with obesity are vulnerable to stigma and discrimination in the workplace, education, and in healthcare settings.'

'History shows us with examples such as the plague, cholera and HIV/Aids that stigma can interfere with public health efforts to control epidemics.'

'Initiatives aimed at combating stigma and social exclusion were as important then as they are now.'

Don't say 'fat' – it's as bad as being racist!

Call to end shaming of the obese



Evening sparkle: Kate in the Vampire's Wife gown

VIRUS PANIC SPREADS

NHS ON HIGH

...as doctors
are urged to
Skype patients
– and set up
'virus wards'

By **Sophie Borland** Health Editor

PATIENTS will be offered video appointments to prevent them turning up at overstretched and overcrowded hospitals.

As the entire NHS was put on the highest level of alert to deal with coronavirus, it emerged Skype calls will be given to those with long-term conditions, such as diabetes and heart disease, who attend regular outpatient clinics.

Meanwhile hospitals are being urged to prepare 'coronavirus wards' for large groups of infected patients to prevent the spread of the virus to other wards.

It comes as the NHS has been put on Operation Level 4 – the highest level of demand – in anticipation of a surge in cases over the next few weeks.

The measures were set out in a letter to health managers from the NHS's strategic incident director for coronavirus Professor Keith Willett. He urges chief executives to carry out coronavirus 'test runs' to practise dealing with a sudden influx of patients.

Staff should also be fully trained in putting on hazmat suits, as well as the basics of washing their hands between patients.

And NHS regional trusts have also been

'Need to use all acute units'

told to set up COVID-19 Incident Coordination Centres, which will work seven days a week to provide advice to hospitals, ambulance services and GPs.

Professor Willett's letter, sent on Monday, states: 'As you will be aware, the current outbreak of a novel coronavirus is resulting in national and international preparations to be stepped up.'

'In declaring a Level 4 incident, NHS England and NHS Improvement have established an incident management team with an operational incident coordination centre established seven days a week, working closely with the Department of Health and Social Care, Public Health England and other Government departments.'

Until now, coronavirus patients have been taken to one of four specialised infectious disease centres: Guy's and St Thomas's and the Royal Free in London, the Royal Liverpool and Broadgreen University Hospitals NHS Trust and Newcastle upon Tyne Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust.

But the letter explains that, should the number of cases escalate as expected, all hospitals in England will be required to treat patients.

In this event, it states 'we will need to use all acute units, for example through the cohorting of patients'.

The term 'cohorting' refers to setting up specialist coronavirus wards to prevent patients infecting others, particularly the elderly who are the most vulnerable. Pro-

fessor Willett also urges managers to treat patients at home, wherever possible through the use of 'remote consultations' such as video or phone calls.

He writes: 'Where possible, consider implementing alternative

models such as remote consultations for those patients who can be supported at home and review arrangements to support vulnerable individuals in alternative settings, including in the community.'

Such patients would include

those with long-term conditions such as diabetes, heart disease, lung conditions or osteoporosis.

Not only will this reduce demand, it will also ensure that vulnerable individuals are not coming into hospitals and exposing themselves

to the virus. Professor Willett's letter instructs care homes to ensure they have regular contact with GPs and pharmacists to ensure residents do not suddenly become unwell and end up in hospital.

He tells them to prepare to

UK's fate in your hands ... not just



This is how to do it: Boris Johnson in a photo on his Instagram account

By **Sophie Borland** and **John Stevens**

BRITONS are being urged to wash their hands throughout the day for 20 seconds at a time as part of a major coronavirus awareness campaign.

Adverts are going up at bus stops and on billboards and social media sites stressing the importance of frequent handwashing. They will also appear in newspapers and on radio stations.

Health Secretary Matt Hancock said simply washing your hands with soap and water was the 'single most important thing' Britons could do to protect themselves.

But the expanded advertising campaign is being launched amid widespread confusion over whether the public should abandon shaking hands for fear of spreading germs. The official advice on handshaking is far less clear.

Boris Johnson said yesterday that he was still shaking hands with 'everybody' – including with staff in hospitals where patients were being treated for coronavirus – despite politicians around the world ceasing the practice.

Mr Hancock, meanwhile, stressed that the risks of handshaking were 'negligible', especially if everyone washed their hands more often.

However, the Queen appeared to be taking precautions against coronavirus yesterday when she wore gloves during an investiture ceremony in the ballroom at Buckingham Palace.

Observers suggested the elegant white pair she chose to present awards appeared much longer than those she routinely wears when meeting the public on official engagements.

It is the first time the Queen has been



God save the clean: Queen wore gloves yesterday when she gave a CBE to actress

pictured wearing gloves at such a ceremony in the past decade. Traditionally she hands out honours without gloves, which could hinder the fiddly task of fastening medals to a recipient's lapel.

At 93, she is in one of the groups most at risk if they contract the disease. Each investiture ceremony sees at least 60 people presented with awards.

Buckingham Palace yesterday refused

to be drawn on whether the Queen's move was designed to protect her health. A spokesman said only: 'It is not unusual for the Queen to wear gloves on a public engagement.'

The handwashing adverts begin with the stark message: 'Coronavirus, protect yourselves and others.'

They feature an image of germ-ridden door handle with the warning: 'Viruses

HESST ALERT

Her Majesty's



Wendy Craig but not at an investiture last November

can live on some surfaces for hours. Wash your hands more often.' The adverts tell patients: 'Use soap and water for 20 seconds or hand sanitiser.'

The adverts also urge the public to wash their hands when they arrive at work or at home in the evening. They

must do the same before preparing or eating food, including snacks. Mr Hancock said: 'We all have a role to play in stopping this disease. Washing hands regularly is the single most important thing that an individual can do. Public safety remains our top priority.'

'locally manage their residents', rather than referring them to hospital.

They must also put 'infection control measures' in place to ensure the virus is not brought into care

homes by a member of staff or visiting relatives.

An NHS spokesman last night pointed out that it has been on a Level 4 alert for at least a month since cases started escalating in China.

By **Sophie Borland**
Health Editor

THE NHS is restricting coronavirus testing and even turning away patients who have suspicious symptoms, a senior GP has warned.

Dr Ali Joy said members of the public who suspect they have the potentially deadly disease were calling the NHS 111 helpline to try to arrange a test, only to be told they did not need one.

The GP, who practises in Chelsea, west London, said she was 'concerned' the 'rigorous checklist' being used by the 111 call centre staff to decide who gets tested may be overly restrictive.

She said she had tried to arrange a test for an 18-year-old with cold-like symptoms who had just returned from northern Italy – the worst-affected country in Europe – and was told 'categorically' that he would not need one.

The NHS announced last week that it would be rolling out home testing for coronavirus in a bid to stop people going to crowded A&E units and infecting others around them. Individuals with suspicious symptoms are told to call 111 and an adviser will decide if they need a test. If it is deemed necessary, they will arrange for a nurse or paramedic to visit their home.

But Dr Joy, pictured right, said in Chelsea there were just three nurses carrying out the tests for the whole borough and they were allowed to do a maximum of 36 a day.

She said: 'Everybody in the medical community knows that NHS 111 doesn't work for coronavirus testing – it's just simply not working.'

'They have this rigorous checklist where they have the dangerous countries and the symptoms. If you don't fit absolutely into that box, they don't even take your name. It's almost impossible to get testing.'

Referring to her experience of trying to arrange a test for the 18-year-old through NHS 111, she said: 'This is a real issue. His mother had tried, her GP had tried, I tried, the school had tried. So four people had tried

and he was refused a test. He had been through north Italy and he had symptoms and he was refused a test. NHS 111 don't give you a reason, they just say the symptoms aren't sufficient enough. I was told categorically he doesn't need testing.'

She said another patient with a bad fever and a cough who had just flown back from Johannesburg in South Africa had also been refused a test. Although South Africa has not yet reported any cases, it has a large Chinese population and experts believe that some patients may have the disease undetected.

Dr Joy also warned that some hospitals did not yet have coronavirus isolation pods, which are meant to enable

patients to be tested away from crowded A&E units, including the Royal Brompton and Harefield hospitals in central London. And she also believes that when someone tests positive for the disease, the NHS is not properly tracing all those who may have come into contact with the patient and potentially been infected.

The NHS said it had ploughed £1.7million into the 111 service to offer more coronavirus advice over the phone. A spokesman added: 'Guidance on which patients are eligible for home testing is set by experts at Public Health England, and almost 14,000 people have been tested for coronavirus in the UK so far.'



Check that spots illness instantly

A BREATH test that instantly spots patients with coronavirus has been developed by British scientists.

They say it could be used to screen people in airports, GP surgeries, pharmacies or ambulances to give instant results.

The technology, developed at Northumbria University in Newcastle, needs further testing but experts say it could change the ways the virus is spotted.

Currently coronavirus is tested using a cheek swab which is sent off for analysis at a Public Health England lab, which takes between 24 and 48 hours.

The new test spots biological information in breath which can identify

diseases. People simply breath into a device similar to a breathalyser used by the police.

Although diagnosis from breath sampling has been used before, previous methods have not been reliable enough due to contamination, loss of the sample and issues of variability in breath analysis.

But the device developed in Newcastle has solved these problems so data collected closely matches results from lung samples taken surgically.

Researchers hope the technology could eventually be used to diagnose lung diseases, diabetes, cancers and liver and brain problems.

Hospitals to shift 'bed blockers'

HOSPITALS will be cleared of so-called 'bed blockers' if the coronavirus spreads seriously, health bosses indicated yesterday.

Those who no longer need intensive medical treatment will be shifted from hospital wards to make room for patients with the virus under the Government's 'action plan' to deal with the outbreak.

Mostly elderly and frail, those who need help with everyday living rather than treatment will be moved back to their homes and given care there, it said.

However, this will increase pressure on the social care system, which is expected to come under strain if coronavirus begins to affect large numbers of people.

Health Secretary Matt Hancock said the threat of

illness among those running care homes and providing care at home was 'a potentially big challenge'.

He said there would be a call for volunteers and a programme to bring back qualified social care staff who have left the industry, in the same way that retired doctors will be recalled to the NHS.

Speaking on BBC Radio 4's Today programme, Mr Hancock also called on people who develop coughs not to visit elderly and vulnerable relatives.

The move to end bed blocking if coronavirus develops into a crisis was disclosed in the action plan published yesterday by Mr Hancock's Department of Health and Social Care. At any one time it would affect as many as 5,000 people.

VIRUS PANIC SPREADS

1 IN 5 STAFF MAY BE STRUCK DOWN

By Jason Groves, Steve Doughty and Matt Oliver

UP to a fifth of the workforce could be off ill at the height of coronavirus, ministers said yesterday.

They urged employers to prepare for mass absences with staff off for extended periods. The worst-case scenario figures would mean more than six million people being off sick at any one time.

A 'battle plan' published by the Government said firms could be encouraged to allow staff to work from home if the virus takes hold – in order to limit the spread.

The plan warned workers to brace themselves for having to cover for sick colleagues over extended periods, adding: 'Everyone will face increased pressures at work, as well as potentially their own personal illness or caring responsibilities.'

Yesterday's plan left open the possibility of shutting schools for up to three months. But officials made clear they are wary of taking this step because of the potential impact on parents who may have to stay off work to care for their children, adding to staff absences.

Health Secretary Matt Hancock last night

Sick pay shake-up to let workers stay home without seeing GP

revealed that sick pay rules may be relaxed to help staff whose wages are cut off during the coronavirus outbreak.

An easing of the laws is 'under review' to ensure that people who self-isolate are not denied sick pay by their employer, he said. He has come under pressure from opposi-

'Everyone will face more pressure'

tion MPs who pointed out that workers who self-isolate should stay out of contact with other for 14 days – but are entitled to sick pay for only half that time before they must see a doctor. The discrepancy is a significant flaw in the campaign to control the virus.

The law says that those entitled to sick pay from their workplace can self-certifi-

cate for seven days, but after that they must produce confirmation from a doctor.

The issue may affect not only employees who have full rights, but also the five million workers in the gig economy or self-employment who lack this protection.

Business Secretary Alok Sharma told MPs yesterday that such workers could claim benefits – either Universal Credit or disability benefits – if they self-isolate or develop illness. Downing Street said ministers would also consider whether Universal Credit sanctions, which can see claimants lose their benefits if they fail to attend appointments, should be suspended.

The Business Department is also said to be establishing a working group to help firms whose supply chains are disrupted.

Ben Willmott of the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development urged firms to be generous with staff.

He added: 'We think there may be a case

for the Government to create some sort of compensation or hardship fund to help individuals such as the self-employed, temporary or low paid staff if they are not eligible for sick pay or paid leave.'

Office staff are already being told to work from home, postpone meetings and cancel their travel plans as businesses try to slow the spread of the virus. Many are following Public Health England guidance, which says not to close down workplaces.

BT, Glaxosmithkline, Astrazeneca, Unilever and Reckitt Benckiser are among those to have told employees to cancel their travel plans. The UK-based companies employ hundreds of thousands of staff between them globally.

Royal Bank of Scotland, Barclays, Goldman Sachs and JP Morgan have taken similar measures, as well as accountants EY and KPMG. Citigroup has banned staff from attending events or meetings with more than 25 attendees.

Major retailers, including sandwich shop chain Greggs are emphasising handwashing procedures and one travel agent, Travel Republic, said it had closed its offices after a member of staff tested positive.

There were also reports that some companies had banned 'hot desking'.



HENRY DEEDES SKETCH

AN ICY morning and an early summons to Downing Street. The Prime Minister wished to lay out his plans to take on the coronavirus outbreak.

There had been suggestions lately that Boris Johnson was not giving the escalating crisis due attention. Worse, that he was lying 'doggo', hoping it would all blow over.

Time, then, for Bozza to show the country that he was taking charge.

When he arrived at the Number 10 briefing room, his entrance appeared to show us he meant business. His march was brisk and purposeful, his grip around the lectern firm and manly. Gripping his papers, there was a welcoming nod which said: 'Let's get to it, amigos.'

Heck, he'd even donned his stern-looking face for the occasion – or at least moulded it that way as much as he could. The prime ministerial features, like the late oyster-eyed comedian Marty Feldman, say, or Ken Dodd, does not easily 'do' serious.

Flanked either side of Boris were two humourless suits, whom I first took to be his coppers.

Turned out they were the Chief Medical Officer, Professor Chris Whitty, and Chief Scientific Adviser, Sir Patrick Vallance. Or was it the other way round?

Boris, too, was initially confused as to which one was which. No matter. Like Ant and Dec, they were more or less one and the same.

The PM's speech was impressively headmasterly. Calm and authoritative. 'Pro bono publico, no bloody panico' was the general

message of the day. He admitted it was 'highly likely' the UK would see more cases of the virus in coming weeks, but was certain we had the resources and health service in place to deal with it.

Daftness, naturally, was absent, though necessary wallop was given to remarks such as 'going about our business as usual'.

The Government's plan to combat coronavirus would come in four strands: 'Contain, Delay, Research, Mitigate.'

As Boris said this, the two suits, standing motionless at neighbouring lecterns, nodded along in agreement.

Down in front, the snappers clambered around on the floor for their shot.

One jerky sideways swoop of the Prime Minister's excitable arm and his words were suddenly

drowned out by the camera shutters. And what was the PM's main advice? Wash your hands.

'Eugh, you knew I was going to say this,' he muttered. 'Hot water, soap, sing Happy Birthday...'

THE PM grimaced before trailing off awkwardly, aware he must have sounded like a nursery teacher.

I hadn't seen him look so embarrassed since the election trail, when his advisers kept making him repeat his pledge to cut VAT on women's sanitary products.

After that, he left much of the talking to the eggheads.

Sir Patrick, a tall, lawyerly-looking figure, urged caution about bringing in emergency measures too early, reasoning that there was

no point bringing undue chaos to people's lives.

Whitty was similarly reassuring. No, said the Prof, there was no need to cancel your holidays abroad. No, don't go stockpiling food either.

Nor did he see any point in shutting down schools.

An extraordinary-looking creature, is Professor Whitty.

Spindly and bug-eyed, he reminded me of the doomed pathologist in sci-fi films who you just know will end up entwined in an alien's tentacles.

Someone asked if it was still all right to shake hands. 'I'll be shaking hands with everyone, you'll be pleased to know,' said Boris. A relief to many, I'm sure.

Perched on the front row throughout the press conference was the feline silhouette of

Like Ken Dodd, PM's features don't easily do serious



Stern: Mr Johnson yesterday

Health Secretary Matt Hancock, grinning and nodding in all the correct places.

Having a good 'war', Hancock, don't you think?

BUSY fellow. He spent most of yesterday morning competently touring the broadcast studios, never once, to my mind, trying to score cheap political points.

Later, Hancock was also required to make a statement to the House. Labour's health spokesman, Jon Ashworth, managed to miss the start of it, after arriving in the chamber late.

'I was having problem with me printer,' Ashworth sobbed to an unimpressed-looking Speaker.

Oh dear. Well, thank goodness that Mr Hancock and his department are in charge – and not the Labour Party.

By Jason Groves

Political Editor

Six million may miss work



Employers encouraged to allow staff to work from home where possible. The battle plan warns that staff sickness will have a major impact on business and public services. At the peak of an epidemic as many as one in five could be off sick at any one time – equal to more than six million people. The plan warns: 'Everyone will face increased pressures at work, as well as their own personal illness or caring responsibilities.'

Clampdown on mass gatherings



If the virus takes off then some mass gatherings could be called off to slow the spread. But officials pointed out yesterday that the spread of the virus could be greater if fans banned from a football match choose to watch it in the pub. But older people could be advised to stay away, potentially putting events like the VE Day commemorations in jeopardy from May 8-10.

Social contact cut to slow spread



Strategies to slow the spread of the virus include so-called 'population distancing'. Officials yesterday said this could include asking people to 'avoid contact outside work and school'. Sources acknowledge there is little they can do to prevent people meeting friends and visiting pubs, restaurants and cinemas, but say that cutting social contact by 75 per cent could have a major impact on the spread of the disease.

Vetting for care home visitors



A dedicated plan for care homes will be published later this month. But, with elderly people significantly more vulnerable to the virus, sources said efforts would be made to limit contact with potential carriers. Visits could be limited and family members could be asked to show they are virus-free before visiting. At the height of the epidemic care homes could be temporarily closed to visitors, although ministers are anxious that residents do not feel cut off from their loved ones.

Police to halt paperwork



The report suggests that police could be told to shelve all but the most serious casework in order to focus on 'critical functions'. The document states that if the police suffer a 'significant loss of officers' to sickness they would be expected to 'concentrate on responding to serious crimes and maintaining public order.'

Army guards at high-risk sites



The Army could be put on standby to substitute for the police on guarding duties at high

CORONA BATTLE PLAN

From VE Day to knee ops: How you could be hit



Taking no chances: Emergency services in hazmat suits in Harrow, north-west London yesterday

profile sites, such as nuclear power stations and Parliament. This would free up police officers for frontline roles. The Prime Minister said there were 'long-established plans' for the Army to 'backfill' in emergencies. But government sources played down suggestions that the military would play a wider role.

Courts deploy video-links



Ministers are looking at changing the law to allow suspects being held on remand to give evidence via video link from their prison. The system is already used for some serious terrorist offences and could be extended to other cases to

reduce the need to transfer people to and from court every day.

Schools expected to stay open



The battle plan leaves open the possibility of ordering school closures for up to three months in order to slow the spread of the virus. But ministers are acutely aware of the potential impact on children's education, the exam season and parents' ability to work if schools are shut so it will only happen as a last resort. Instead, ministers will change the law to permit larger class sizes and to allow children to temporarily attend a different school if theirs is closed.

Healthy teachers could also be redeployed to other schools that are suffering shortages.

Hospital ops to be delayed



The NHS is likely to face massive strain if the virus takes off. The battle plan says that routine services, including elective operations such as hip and knee operations, could be 'reduced temporarily' to ease the burden. Doctors will liaise with council social services teams to enable 'early' discharge from hospital' to free up beds. Boris Johnson yesterday urged people to be 'self-restraining where possible' when considering accessing NHS services.

Former medics called up



Ministers will change the law this month to allow doctors and nurses who have left the NHS or retired to return temporarily to plug gaps left by sickness among healthcare workers. The NHS is also looking to fast-track recruitment of an army of volunteers to help maintain services such as feeding patients and delivering medicines.

Border staff on watch for virus



There are no plans to close ports and airports. But the Government will change the law to give border staff the power to require people arriving in the UK showing symptoms of the coronavirus to take a test. Powers have already been taken to require people deemed at risk of the virus to be isolated from the rest of the community.

Support for firms and sick workers



The battle plan says the Government is looking at financial support for businesses facing 'short-term cash flow problems'. Chancellor Rishi Sunak is expected to unveil detailed measures in next week's budget. Ministers are also looking at the possibility of providing support to those workers who do not qualify for sick pay to ensure they take time off work if they catch the virus.

Town halls put on death watch



The report states that there 'could well be an increase in deaths' and says talks with councils are underway to ensure that funeral services are not overwhelmed. Chief Medical Officer Chris Whitty said scientists were 'reasonably confident' that only one in a hundred people who contract the virus will die. In a worst case scenario this could translate into about 500,000 extra deaths over a period of months, although officials are hopeful the final number will be 'much lower'. The elderly are more susceptible, with those aged over 80 thought to be particularly at risk.

FROM THE FAR EAST TO FRANCE, THE MASKS OF FEAR



BEIJING



BANGKOK

Don't panic! Shoppers clear stores

Essentials vanish as advice is ignored

By **Sean Poulter**
Consumer Affairs Editor

SHOPPERS are ignoring 'Don't Panic' advice and clearing shelves of essentials – from hand sanitisers to toilet rolls, pasta and rice.

Government advisers say there is no need to stockpile and people will be able to rely on the kindness of others if they fall sick.

However, it seems many people have not been convinced by such reassurances, while some experts have even warned of potential food riots.

Sales of antibacterial gel and wipes are up 255 per cent with some stores running out and others introducing rationing. Retailers have also seen a rise of 10 per cent in sales of disinfectants and 7 per cent for liquid soap.

Facebook and Twitter are littered with photographs of empty shelves and shoppers appear to have thrown empty boxes into the aisles.

Shortages seem to have spread to cupboard items such as rice, pasta, couscous, Pot Noodles, bottled water, toilet rolls and pet food.

The rush to the shops and a surge in online grocery orders comes as concerned families fear they may have to put themselves into a form of 'home quarantine'. But the scramble, mirrored around the world, is at odds with the advice of the Government's Chief Scientific Adviser, Sir Patrick Vallance.

Standing alongside Boris Johnson yesterday, he said: 'I think the advice is that there is absolutely no reason to be doing any panic buying of any sort or going out



and keeping large supplies of things. Clearly there will need to be measures in cases of household quarantine for making sure food is in the right place at the right time.'

The Chief Medical Officer for England, Professor Chris Whitty, went further, suggesting the sick could safely rely on the kindness of others to make sure they had everything they need.

He said behavioural science evidence showed that the 'response of the British public to disasters and emergencies is extraordinary outbreaks of altruism'.

In contrast, Tim Lang, professor of food policy at City University, London, and author of a book called Feeding Britain, said: 'Stockpiling is an understandable

response after weeks of growing concern about coronavirus.'

'What has perplexed me is that the Government has been so slow to learn how fragile UK food systems are. Stockpiling at home ought to be the last line of food defence, not the only line.'

Fraser McKevitt, head of retail and consumer insight at analysts Kantar, said shoppers are heeding the hygiene advice. He said: 'Given the media focus around the outbreak of Covid-19 in February, it's unsurprising to see shoppers prudently protecting themselves from illness.'

Boots and some other stores are limiting customers to buying a maximum of two bottles of hand sanitisers each.

Industry experts said UK supermarkets have contingency plans to ensure food remains on shelves.

However, senior food industry analyst Bruno Monteyne, of stockbrokers Bernstein, who is a former Tesco executive, made the shocking claim earlier this week that any major outbreak 'will quickly lead to panic buying, empty shelves and food riots'.

But he stressed: 'The industry has ready-made plans to deal with that: plans are surely being drawn up with suppliers to rationalise product ranges and transition to a "feed the nation" status when necessary.' He added: 'The objective isn't to scaremonger. On the contrary, the industry has plans to deal with this.'

Meanwhile the British Retail Consortium insists that there is 'no evidence' to justify claims of chaos and food riots. Its director of food and sustainability, Andrew Opie, said: 'Disruption to supply chains has been limited, and the availability of products remains good.'



Sold out: Empty shelves in stores across the UK



PARIS



LONDON

CORONA LATEST

Marathon could be cancelled as UK cases surge

MATT Hancock yesterday said the London Marathon might be cancelled under plans to halt the spread of the virus.

But the Health Secretary acknowledged it was 'far too early' to make a final decision, even though the race is set to take place on April 26.

While Mr Hancock said the Government has no plans to cancel mass events, the move could be considered if the virus continues to spread across the country.

It comes as many events in Asia and Europe have been abandoned or downsized due to the outbreak.

More than 40,000 people from around the world run in the 26.2-mile marathon, while around 750,000 spectators line the capital's streets to cheer them on.

When asked about the possible cancellation, Mr Hancock said: 'We do not recommend cancelling mass events and schools should not be closing unless there is a positive case. We want to minimise disruption, subject to doing the things we need to do to keep people safe.'

Postpone film, say Bond fans

JAMES Bond fans have waited almost five years to see Daniel Craig, pictured, play 007 for the final time.

But they are ready to wait even longer, as fans have asked the studios behind No Time to Die to push back the April 2 release date.

An open letter on a fan site read: 'It's just a movie. The health of fans around the world is more important.'



The world premiere is still scheduled to take place at London's Royal Albert Hall on March 31.

Student punched in 'racist' attack

A STUDENT from Singapore was assaulted by thugs shouting, 'I don't want your coronavirus in my country.'

Jonathan Mok, 23, was ambushed on London's Oxford Street last Monday.

He said his nose 'exploded' with blood as the group punched him, resulting in possible facial fractures.

Mr Mok, who has an English father and Chinese mother, said: 'Racists constantly find excuses to expound their hatred and in this current backdrop of the coronavirus, they've found yet another excuse.'

Scotland Yard are investigating.

Mask smuggle Brit arrested

A BRITISH lorry driver was arrested in Morocco after trying to smuggle 100,000 face masks out of the country.

He was reportedly planning on selling the masks for £26 each in the UK.

The unnamed driver was held at a cargo port near Tangier, according to local reports. The arrest was said to have been made yesterday and he is believed to be in police custody.

And investigations are under way at several hospitals across Spain after thousands of masks were stolen due to shortages caused by the outbreak.

US slashes rates... will UK follow their lead?

INTEREST rates could be cut in response to the coronavirus outbreak.

Last night the US Federal Reserve slashed its interest rates by half a percentage point due to the 'evolving risks to economic activity'.

It was the first emergency cut in the US since the financial crisis more than a decade ago.

Yesterday, Bank of England governor Mark Carney indicated a rate cut could be on the cards.

Giving evidence to the Treasury committee for the final time before he steps down as governor on March 15, he revealed the Bank is considering whether to cut official interest rates from 0.75 per cent.

He told MPs that the Bank's monetary policy committee is 'assessing the economic impacts and considering the policy implications'.

A cut would drive down the cost of borrowing for millions of households

By James Salmon
Associate City Editor

tweets sent by Donald Trump to the US Fed's chairman Jerome Powell urging him to take action.

Mr Trump - who days ago dismissed fears of a US coronavirus outbreak as 'fake news' whipped up by the Democrats and media - has been urging the US Fed to cut rates further.

He tweeted: 'It is finally time for the Federal Reserve to LEAD. More easing and cutting!'

But instead of reassuring financial markets, the Fed's shock move spooked investors on Wall Street and the Dow Jones slumped 2.9 per cent.

A report from the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development has warned the outbreak could halve global growth this year, tipping many countries into recession.

Hopes of a co-ordinated global response increased following an emergency call between G7 finance ministers and central bankers yesterday. This helped lift markets in the UK and across much of Europe.

The FTSE 100 of Britain's biggest companies rallied for the second consecutive day, rising almost 1 per cent.

Mr Carney yesterday also warned the coronavirus could trigger a 'large' economic shock but insisted the impact will 'ultimately be temporary' and not as devastating as the financial crisis.

He said: 'We don't want viable businesses to go out of business because of the very necessary steps that need to be taken to protect and serve the British public over the course of the near future.'

The outgoing governor has been in regular contact with Chancellor Rishi Sunak and Treasury officials are understood to be preparing to set aside billions of pounds in next week's Budget to help firms and workers cope with the impact of a major epidemic.

'Protect and serve the public'

and businesses, giving them breathing space if the economy slows down.

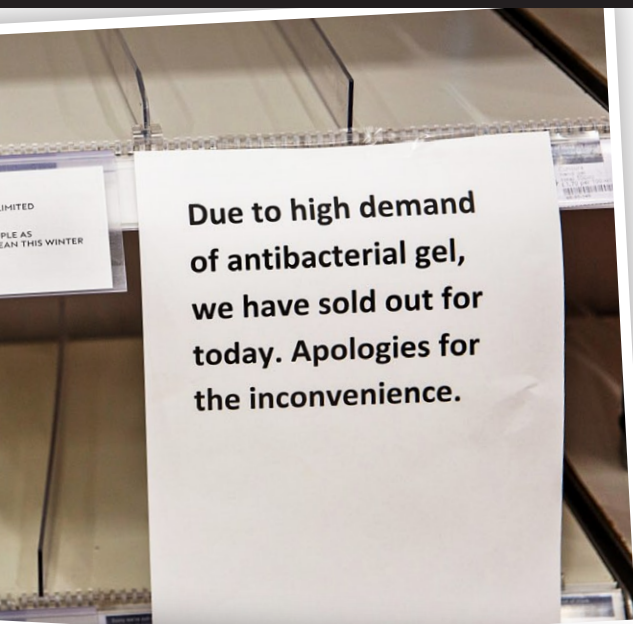
Asked by MPs if a cut was imminent, Mr Carney indicated the decision would not be made before March 26.

His appearance came just hours before the US Federal Reserve announced it was cutting rates by half a percentage point to a target range of between 1 per cent and 1.25 per cent.

It is its first emergency rate cut since December 2008 in the midst of the financial crisis and is also the biggest cut since the Great Recession.

In a statement, it said: 'The fundamentals of the US economy remain strong. However the coronavirus poses evolving risks to economic activity.'

The move follows a series of angry



as buyers stockpile hygiene and food products

Is Priti victim of smears over aide's 'suicide bid'?

By **Claire Ellicott**
Political Correspondent

ALLIES of Priti Patel have blamed her former top civil servant for dragging her into a row about an aide who took an overdose amid claims of bullying.

Sources close to the Home Secretary said it was 'ludicrous' to accuse her of being responsible for the woman's legal case against the Government, arguing that it had started long before Miss Patel took office.

The MP has been under fire for weeks after being accused of bullying staff during her time as a minister and the Cabinet Office is leading an inquiry to 'establish the facts' over whether she breached the ministerial code in her dealings with aides.

Miss Patel came under renewed pressure on Monday when it emerged that

Priti aide 'took an overdose after claims of bullying'

From yesterday's Mail

one of her former aides when she was employment minister took an overdose and received a £25,000 payout from the Government.

Miss Patel had shouted at the woman in her private office and told her to 'get lost' and 'get out of her face', legal correspondence alleges.

The minister is described in the woman's formal grievance complaint as having acted 'without warning' and with an 'unprovoked level of aggression'.

The Department for Work and Pensions did not admit liability and the case did not come before a tribunal, the BBC reported.

But yesterday Miss Patel's allies hit back. One said: 'It's ludicrous to drag Priti into this.'

'This person only worked for Priti for two weeks and was already in the process of quitting when Priti took over as employment minister.'

'The accusations of bullying were made against the department, not Priti, and the payout was made by the Civil Service - which, by the

way, mishandled her case entirely. It was nothing to do with Priti at all.' The allies blamed friends of Sir Philip Rutnam, the former top official at the Home Office, for spreading the 'false' allegations.

Sir Philip resigned on Saturday following an extraordinary briefing row with Miss Patel after he accused her of belittling staff in the department.

He said he had become the 'target of vicious and orchestrated campaign against him', which he alleged she was involved in.

But Miss Patel's friend said: 'It's actually very serious that a civil servant had mental health issues and attempted to take her own life

Row erupts over toxic claims that bullying led to overdose



Under fire: Priti Patel arrives at the Home Office yesterday

because of the way she was treated by her civil service colleagues.

'And it's childish and stupid for anonymous friends of Philip Rutnam to push around false stories about civil service mistakes which she

'Pushing around false stories'

[Miss Patel] had nothing to do with.' The row came after Boris Johnson asked the Cabinet Office to 'establish the facts' around bullying claims. Cabinet Office minister Michael Gove said the inquiry will examine all the complaints, although it is

unclear if the Department for Work and Pensions claim is included. The PM has already offered Miss Patel his support, calling her a 'fantastic Home Secretary'.

Yesterday, it emerged she has sent an internal email to staff saying she regretted Sir Philip's resignation and calling on her department to pull together.

Asked yesterday if Mr Johnson knew about the DWP allegation, his official spokesman said: 'The Home Secretary denies any allegations of bullying and the PM has expressed full confidence in her. An inquiry is under way.'

Sir Philip could not be reached for comment.

Adviser who told Cummings to be kind loses job

By **Political Correspondent**

A SPECIAL adviser who confronted Boris Johnson's chief adviser Dominic Cummings over his 'unkindness' two weeks ago has been removed from her job.

Lynn Davidson will leave her post as an adviser to Defence Secretary Ben Wallace after No10 attempted to move her to the Department of Health prior to her comments to Mr Cummings, as part of a wider shake-up.

Mr Wallace is said to have asked Downing Street to keep Miss Davidson at the Ministry of Defence but was told this was not an option. Miss Davidson's employment was then terminated.

The former Mail journalist, pictured, put the Prime Minister's most senior adviser on the spot over his treatment of colleagues at a meeting of Government special advisers on February 14. She told him that he was out of order and should show more respect to young aides.



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OH, YOU MUCKY PUP!

Big beast hopes for Crufts glory (after a wash)



Outside: Boris before his walk

By Alex Ward

HE is over 6ft tall, described as 'blond and nutty' and enjoys being in front of the camera.

Meet Boris – one of more than 70 Pyrenean mountain dogs hoping for glory at Crufts this week.

And getting a big blond hound ready for judging is a huge task, as his owner Susan Reilly knows.

Boris needs a shower, blow dry and comb after long muddy walks, as pictured here, to keep his shiny coat in tip-top condition.

He is due to compete at the highest level – the 'open class' – for his breed at the world's most famous dog show on Saturday.

Miss Reilly, from Bracknell, Berkshire, said a win at Crufts for three-year-old Boris would be special because it would be exactly 50 years since his breed was judged best overall at Crufts.

In 1970 the best in show prize was awarded to Bergerie Knur, who beat

WATCH MORE AT 
mailplus.co.uk/briefings

8,397 other dogs to come top.

Miss Reilly, 59, has written to Boris Johnson and received a reply agreeing that her pet was more handsome than the Prime Minister.

She said: 'The thing with Boris is he is a natural showman. He loves the camera. He's blond and nutty so I was always going to call him that, after Boris Johnson.'

Boris the mountain dog's upkeep costs around £150 a week and includes fillet steak and chicken – but his owner said it all helps to keep her 7st 8lb pet in peak condition.

She said: 'He won't eat anything else and to be honest he is a bit spoilt... But to look at him he is amazing. His coat has never looked better.'

Despite winning awards internationally, Miss Reilly said Boris will face stiff competition as there are 78 dogs entered in his breed's event alone.

How to help a poorly pet
 – Centre pages

Caked in mud:
 Boris's not-so-blond coat after walkies



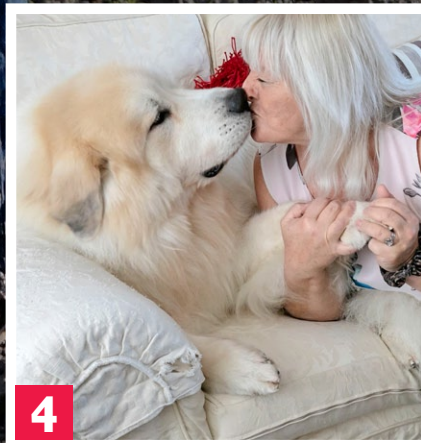
1 A post-walk shower...



2 ... and then a blow dry



3 His blond coat is brushed...



4 ... and he's ready for a snooze

BBC boss: We won't abandon our older viewers for youth

BBC director-general Tony Hall has promised not to abandon older audiences amid fears the corporation's attempts to appeal to youngsters will leave them feeling ignored.

Writing on this page today, Lord Hall pledged said older Britons are 'super-users' of the broadcaster's services and vowed they will always be 'super-served' by it.

He said the BBC, which has decided to strip millions of over-75s of their free TV licences, knows the elderly 'are often the people who value and rely on us most'.

It comes as the BBC battles to stop younger audiences deserting its services in favour of streaming giants like Netflix,

By **Paul Revoir** Media Editor

Amazon Prime Video and Spotify. Lord Hall also announced that the corporation is to launch a major initiative, which he called a 'big listening exercise', aimed at asking the public to tell the broadcaster what they want it to produce.

Involving events throughout the country, the exercise is described as 'one of the most significant pieces of public engagement the BBC has ever undertaken'.

The peer's comments are a response to the criticism the corporation has faced across a range of issues, such as the TV licence reform. Ministers are currently consulting on whether to decriminalise non-

payment of the licence, a move which the BBC has said could cost it around £200million a year. The Government has also suggested the charge could be scrapped in 2027, with claims it could be replaced by a subscription service.

It emerged yesterday that Lord Hall and

'More tough choices to come'

other senior executives have been called to give evidence to MPs on the Commons digital, culture, media and sport committee about the proposed changes to the licence fee. In his article, Lord Hall welcomes a

debate about the BBC's future and funding model, saying it needs to 'change with the times' or will 'fail its audiences'. And he said the BBC will need to make 'more difficult cuts' and 'more tough choices'.

His comments come after BBC presenter Carrie Gracie launched a ferocious attack on the broadcaster's overpaid bosses on Monday. The former BBC China editor, who has been a leading figure in rows over equal pay, said there were 'too many managers' who were 'paid too much', adding that she would 'take them all out'.

She also revealed that, with 450 jobs being axed in news departments, she is preparing to walk away from the BBC. She said: 'I'm an expensive person, I should go.'

By Tony Hall

BBC DIRECTOR-GENERAL

LET'S have a debate about the BBC. We're always up for it. We are probably the most hotly-debated organisation in the country. That's good. It means we matter.

The former culture secretary Nicky Morgan wrote recently that the BBC needs to accept that no change isn't an option. I couldn't agree more. A BBC that doesn't change with the times is a BBC that fails its audiences. And they own the BBC after all. The BBC has always been the first to embrace change. We were perhaps the original disrupter, pioneering the wireless, TV, colour broadcasting, high-definition, the transition to digital with DAB, iPlayer and more.

Let's not forget that iPlayer was absolutely groundbreaking. The head of Netflix, Reed Hastings, credits it with blazing the trail for his company, creating a whole new market for video-on-demand.

I believe British innovation is something to be proud of. Some say if the BBC was that innovative we would have invented Netflix ourselves. The truth is, we did.

More than ten years ago, back when Netflix was still delivering DVDs through the front door, the BBC joined forces with other public service broadcasters to set up a British video-on-demand service. It was blocked by the regulators, opening up a gap that Netflix and others were only too happy to exploit.

More recently, we were blocked from making planned updates to iPlayer. Audiences told us they wanted straightforward changes, like more box sets and more programmes available for longer. They said this was what they expected, what they demanded as value for the licence fee.

THE delay while the regulator checked our plans cost us valuable time. Meanwhile our US competitors were free to update their own platforms on a near-weekly basis, with no permission needed.

We've worked hard to modernise our organisation. Driving down efficiencies to industry-leading levels. Cutting jobs and management layers. Streamlining our news operation. Reshaping what we do to meet the needs of today's audiences. We know we have to do more to serve young people in particular.

It's an area where we need to be radical and I'll be setting out big plans on this in April when we publish our strategy for the year ahead. But don't let anyone tell you this will come at the expense of older audiences.

We know they are often the people who value and rely on us most. They are our super-users and they will always be super-served. Big change at the BBC will need to continue. We will need to go fur-

ther to switch spending from activities that no longer serve audiences towards those that can serve them better. We will need to make more difficult cuts and more tough choices. But in looking to change, we must not

undermine what makes the BBC such a valued asset for Britain. Today the country faces a broad range of challenges. It is part of the BBC's public service mission to help the nation respond. That means working alongside other

institutions and news organisations to keep everyone informed about coronavirus, for example.

Not only does the BBC have a responsibility to report the information the public need in a manner that is calm, measured and



Handover: Lord Hall outside the BBC studios at the start of his tenure in 2013

Let's listen to what YOU say ... and promise to do better

accurate, we also have a reach and influence that few can match.

This reach extends throughout our nations and regions.

One of our biggest priorities in recent years has been shifting the organisation away from London, from our 3,500 staff in BBC North to our brand new HQ for BBC Wales. A decade ago, a third of the BBC was based outside the capital. Today it's half.

The recent floods highlighted what a vital role we play at local level. Our local radio reporters have worked hard to keep communities safe, informed and prepared, even as their own homes were affected. One MP speaking to BBC Hereford & Worcester called it public service broadcasting at its very best.

OUR reach also extends around the world. Today the BBC is used by around 430million people. At a time when Britain is seeking to reshape its international identity, we have an important role to play in carrying the nation's voice, values and cultural influence worldwide.

The BBC is not a perfect institution. Like everyone else, we can and do make mistakes. But we always strive to be better. And we are always accountable to our audiences, who are quick to highlight our weaknesses but equally quick to praise our strengths.

We will talk to the public about what kind of BBC they want as we approach our second century. We will carry out a big listening exercise, with events up and down the country. It will be a chance for audiences to speak to us directly, and tell us what they want us to be. I will set out full plans in the spring, but I want this to be one of the most significant pieces of public engagement the BBC has ever undertaken. I won't tie the hands of my successor, but I want them to have all the insight they need from the people who matter most: the public.

So yes, let's have a debate about the BBC. Let's even debate our funding model when the time comes. But let's not put the cart before the horse. Let's first decide what kind of BBC we want for this country, then work out how best to achieve it. I genuinely believe at this important moment, the BBC matters more than ever and can work even harder for the UK at home and abroad.



'Groovy': The PM with Munira Mirza

By Vanessa Allen

BOUDICCA was a 'proto-Brexiteer', Boris Johnson claimed yesterday in naming the five women who most shaped his life.

He said the British queen's bravery in taking on the Romans was an inspiration, adding: 'What a woman.'

Boudicca joins singer Kate Bush and campaigner Malala Yousafzai in his top five. Political aide Munira Mirza and his grandmother Irene Williams complete the list.

Mr Johnson, 55, who announced his engagement to his girlfriend Carrie Symonds on Saturday, said the Queen and Margaret Thatcher only narrowly missed the cut for his nominations to mark International Women's Day on Sunday.

He told *Grazia* magazine he had struggled with the decision, but had chosen women who had made a personal impact on him and had 'stirred my emotions'.

THE FORMER COMMUNIST

As a former member of the Revolutionary Communist Party, she might seem an unlikely inspiration for a Tory prime minister. But Miss Mirza, 41, has become a key member of Mr Johnson's inner circle since she first joined his team 12 years ago while he was London mayor.

The daughter of Pakistani immigrants, she grew up in Oldham and went to a comprehensive before winning a place at Oxford University. Now head of the Downing Street policy unit, she was credited with helping to shape the manifesto that won the Conservatives their majority at the last election.

Mr Johnson told *Grazia* magazine: 'Munira is capable of being hip, cool, groovy and generally on trend. She hates cant; she hates frippery; she hates political correctness. She has, all told, the most powerful non-sense-detector I have ever seen.'

MUSIC LEGEND

Mr Johnson said that with Wuthering Heights Kate Bush had written 'one of the world's greatest ever pop songs, part of the soundtrack of my adolescence'.

He added: 'There are moments when I simply can't understand what she is saying; moments she is staccato, birdlike, and then sometimes she produces a crashing bow-wave of noise unlike any-

BORIS: 5 WOMEN WHO'VE MADE ME WHO I AM

He praises Kate Bush and granny – but no mention of 2 wives or Carrie!

'Birdlike': Wuthering Heights singer Kate Bush



'Shining': Irene Williams



'Spirit': Queen Boudicca



'Idealist': Malala Yousafzai

thing written before or since.' It is not known if Miss Bush, 61, returns his admiration. She praised his predecessor Theresa May, saying she was 'wonderful' and 'the best thing that's happened to us in a long time'.

SUNNY GRANNY

Descended from royalty, the Prime Minister's grandmother Irene Williams lived on an Exmoor hill farm with no central heating or mains electricity. Known to Mr Johnson

and his family as 'Granny Butter', she was related to King George II through her German great-grandmother, Karoline von Rottenburg. She won a half-blue for judo while studying at Oxford and would use a knife and fork even when eating potato crisps.

Mr Johnson said: 'There is a simple reason why my grandmother ranks as a heroine of mine: her sheer unconquerable optimism ... for Granny Butter the sun was always shining, or about to shine,

and everything was pretty well marvellous.'

ANCIENT RULER

The Prime Minister may have had his own relationship with the EU in mind when he praised Boudicca's refusal to bow down in the face of Roman aggression.

The British queen led a revolt against Roman rule in the first century, vowing to 'win the battle or perish'. The uprising failed and she is thought to have killed herself. Mr

Johnson said: 'What a woman. The Romans have just beaten her up, raped her daughters and seized her kingdom. And what does she do? She attacks. Boudicca was driven by a simple desire for freedom. She was a Romano-sceptic, a proto-Brexiteer ... who can say her spirit is not alive in the country today?'

TEEN ACTIVIST

Mr Johnson met Malala in 2014, two years after she was shot in the head by Taliban gunmen for speaking out against a ban on girls attending school in her native Pakistan. She was brought to Britain for surgery and has since started a global campaign for equal access to education, and has won a Nobel prize for her activism.

Mr Johnson said: 'She was unlike anyone I had met. She was so brave, so right and so luminously idealistic that I could see I was in the presence of a modern-day saint.'

Mr Johnson added: 'Her campaign – for female education – is the fastest and best way we could change the world... men in suits: listen to Malala.'

Why parrots' decisions show they're no bird brains

PARROTS can make decisions based on probabilities, just like humans, researchers have found.

The kea, a species of large parrot found in New Zealand, was able to make inferences based on previous knowledge and experience. They even performed better than chimps in some experiments. The

Daily Mail Reporter

researchers from the University of Auckland trained six parrots to associate the colour black with a treat and the colour orange with no reward. In one experiment coloured tokens were put in two transparent jars and the birds then saw a

researcher take tokens from each jar and hold one in each hand, without being able to see which colour was in which hand.

In almost every instance, the kea chose the hand that appeared most likely to carry a black token.

Lead author Amalia Bastos said: 'Kea look very intelligent and they behave

very intelligently. I just didn't expect them to perform quite well as chimpanzees do.' She added: 'We were [also] very surprised to find that the kea can use social cues even from humans to make these judgments.'

The study was published in the journal *Nature Communications*.

Britain's child health shame

■ We fall behind Western nations ■ Infant mortality rate up since 2016

By **Ben Spencer**
Medical Correspondent

THE health of British children is falling behind those in most other Western nations, a damning audit reveals today.

Progress in child health has stalled across the UK and in poor areas is in reverse, according to a report by the Royal College of Paediatrics and Children's Health.

The nation is 'in danger of failing a generation', it said. Shockingly, infant death rates have increased slightly in England since 2016 – which experts warn is a 'major wake-up call' for a developed country.

Rising child obesity, low breastfeeding rates and deep poverty are also a major concern, the authors say.

And growing inequality and cuts to public health are making things far worse, the report claims. The authors say even where there have been notable improvements in children's health, the UK lags far behind other countries.

For example, although there has been a fall in the number of emergency asthma admission rates across the UK, the country

'It should be a major wake-up call'

still has one of the highest mortality rates in Europe for children and young people with asthma. Dr Ronny Cheung, one of the report authors, said: 'Our report shows troubling signs for children and young people across the UK.'

'The harsh reality is that, in terms of health and wellbeing, children born in the UK are often worse off than those born in other comparably wealthy countries. This is especially true if the child is from a less well-off background.'

He added: 'Infant mortality is a globally-recognised sign of how well a country is looking after the health of its citizens.'

'Throughout the world, the number of babies dying in their first year has been steadily falling for decades, as incomes rise and mothers and children receive better healthcare.'

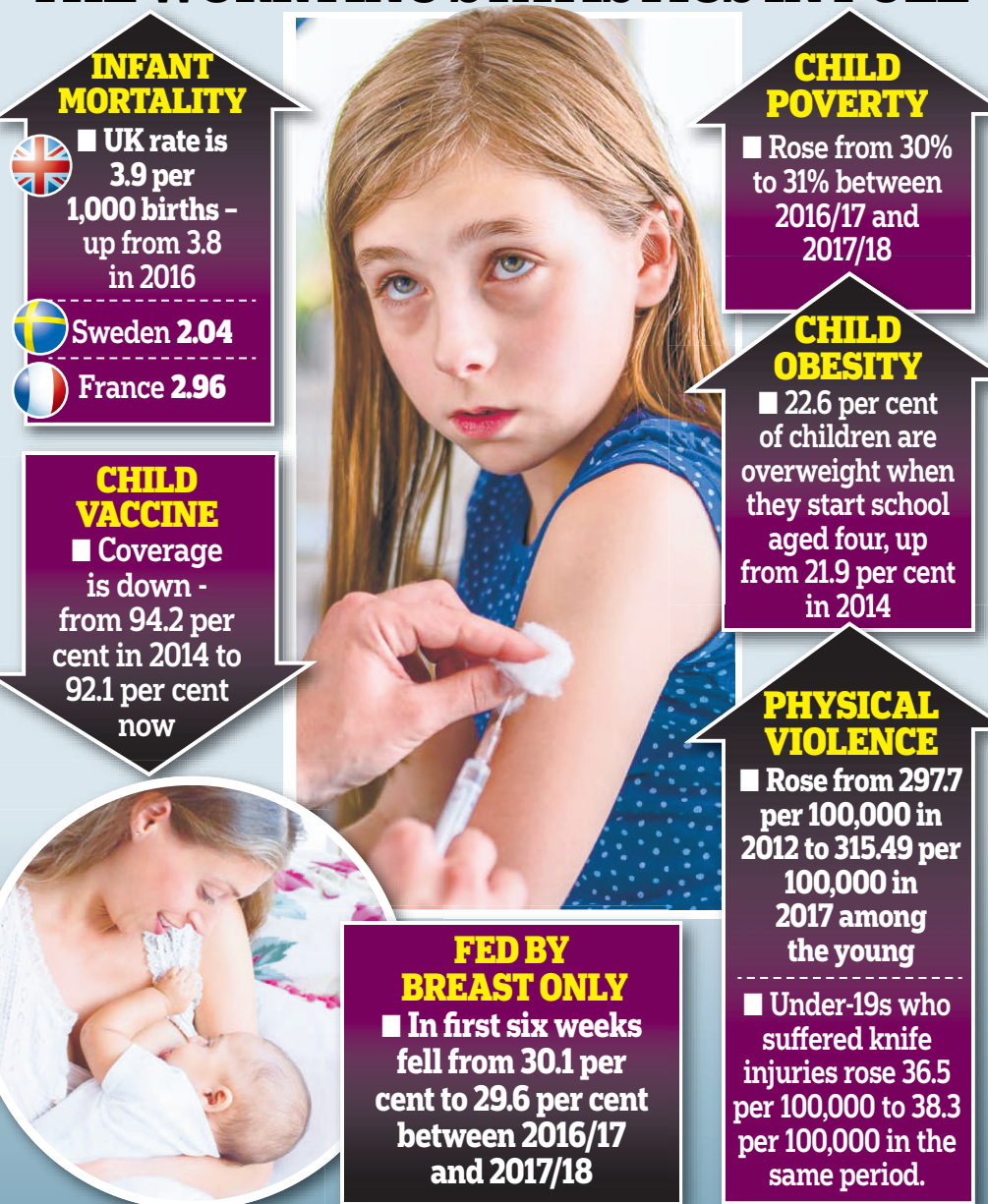
'Yet UK infant mortality rates have stalled, and in England they actually got worse between 2016 and 2017. For a high-income nation such as ours that should be a major wake-up call.'

The report tracks 28 measures of child health – including asthma, epilepsy, mental health, poverty, breastfeeding and obesity. Nearly a quarter of four and five year olds in England are now overweight, having gradually increased from 21.9 per cent in 2014 to 22.6 per cent now.

Breastfeeding rates in England are at the lowest level since 2009, with only 30 per cent of mothers breastfeeding for more than six weeks.

Infant mortality – defined as child deaths before the age of one – is at 3.9 per 1,000 in England, having risen slightly from 3.8 per 1,000 in 2016 and then

THE WORRYING STATISTICS IN FULL



'A lot of work ahead of us'
be prioritised. England has seen a huge decline in spending on local services and I see the results of that every day of my working life especially for my most disadvantaged patients.'

The authors called for a cross-

departmental child health strategy and restoration of an estimated £1 billion in cuts to the public health grants for local authorities.

Professor Russell Viner, president of the RCPCH, said: 'We've got a lot of work ahead of us if we're to get a grip on... child health in the UK. This report is the only one of its kind to zoom out and look at the full picture and it's not a pretty sight.'

Andrew Fellowes, public affairs manager at the NSPCC, said: 'It's scandalous that progress in children's health is not improving and shameful that the most disadvantaged are seeing the biggest retreat.'

A Health Department spokesman said: 'We want every child to have the best start in life, regardless of their background, and tackling health inequalities is a priority for the Government.'

Do you trust neighbours? One in 4 don't

MOST people think their communities are in decline and many no longer trust their neighbours, a report found.

Researchers also said the number of post offices, pubs and libraries has drastically fallen in the past few decades.

Launching a cross-party review into community, Conservative think tank Onward said repairing the social fabric of our neighbourhoods is the 'defining challenge of this Parliament'.

While well-being statistics are improving nationally, trust and life satisfaction is falling locally.

One in four people now says that none or few of their neighbours can be trusted, up from one in seven in 2012.

Over the same period, the share of people who feel their area has become a worse place to live has increased by nearly a third to a quarter.

Polling by the think tank and PR firm Hanbury Strategy shows membership of local organisations fell from 61 per cent in 1993 to around 50 per cent today.

Since 2001, the number of pubs dropped from 52,500 to 38,850, a 26 per cent drop. Since 2005, libraries went from 4,392 to 3,187, a 27 per cent drop.

And post offices fell from 22,405 in 1982 to 11,547 in 2018, a 48 per cent drop.

PM 'won't meet Harry's family'

THE mother of crash victim Harry Dunn believes Boris Johnson will not meet her family because he is 'frightened'.

Charlotte Charles has written to the Prime Minister asking for a meeting after the US refused to extradite Anne Sacoolas, 42, an American intelligence officer's wife, over the death of motorcyclist Harry, pictured, last August. She has admitted causing the accident after driving her SUV on the wrong side of the road outside RAF Croughton in Northamptonshire, but claimed diplomatic immunity.

In a letter to Mr Johnson, Miss Charles, 45, said: 'We think that what happened to Harry has highlighted a number of very serious problems. This is not just an issue of diplomatic immunity... I don't know why you haven't wanted to see us. Please don't be frightened.' Downing Street has said Mr Johnson is 'committed to securing justice for Harry's family'.



Netanyahu: I've won the election

ISRAELI Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu claimed victory after the country's third election in a year – even though his coalition appeared short of a majority.

Mr Netanyahu – leader since 2009, having held the position from 1996 to 1999 – is likely to be given the first shot at forming a government to end the deadlock.

With 90 per cent of the vote counted, Mr Netanyahu's Likud party had 36 seats in Israel's 120-member parliament. The Right-wing bloc, which includes ultra-Orthodox Jewish parties, is projected to win 59 seats, two short of a majority.

Their main challenger, the centrist Blue and White party, was projected to win 32 seats. While there remains no guarantee that Netanyahu can form a coalition, he hailed a 'giant' success.

'This is a victory against all the odds, because we stood against powerful forces,' Mr Netanyahu said.

President Reuven Rivlin will receive final results by March 10 then has a week to ask a candidate to form a government.

18 stone by age of 15 PAGES 30-31



Step down: Meghan with the Queen

By Emma Powell

Showbusiness Correspondent

DAME Hilary Mantel has described the Duchess of Sussex as a 'smiling face in a dull institution'.

The Wolf Hall author said she was pleased that Meghan's marriage to Prince Harry had survived the couple's decision to stand down as senior royals.

The 67-year-old posed in regal attire at Hampton Court Palace in south-west London – a key location in her trilogy of novels about Henry VIII and Thomas Cromwell – for Harper's Bazaar.

Referring to Meghan and Harry, she said: 'I'm pleased that it's the marriage that's

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surviving and the connection with the monarchy that has to go, because I think almost all of us would have bet that if she left, she'd have to leave alone. None of us know the details of how this is going to work out. But I think that Meghan was too good to be true. She was a smiling face in a dull institution, she cheered the nation up no end – or, at least, men and women of good will.'

In January, Harry and Meghan announced their plans to step down as senior royals less than two years after their marriage.

Dame Hilary said there is no denying Meghan has been a victim of 'abominable' racism. She added: 'People who say that's got nothing to do with it – well, they need to check their privilege.'

She also told the BBC: 'There has been an element of racism in the invective against [Meghan]. I think it's more deeply embedded in people's consciousness that any of us are willing to admit.' The author pro-

Mantel on Meghan: She was too good for dull monarchy

Regal: Dame Hilary Mantel at Hampton Court Palace for Harper's Bazaar



voked controversy in 2013 for likening the Duchess of Cambridge to a 'shop window mannequin' who would become a 'jointed doll on which certain rags are hung'.

The comments were condemned by the then prime minister David Cameron as 'completely misguided', although she said

her words had been taken out of context. Dame Hilary won the Booker Prize for her novels Wolf Hall and Bring Up The Bodies, and will tomorrow release the long-awaited final part of the trilogy, The Mirror And The Light. The April issue of Harper's Bazaar is on sale today.

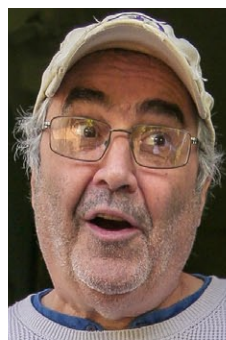
Baker: BBC threw me under a bus for Archie chimp joke

By Eleanor Sharples
TV and Radio Reporter

DANNY Baker has complained that the BBC 'threw me under the bus' after he jokingly compared Harry and Meghan's mixed-race son Archie to a chimp.

The broadcaster was sacked from his Radio 5 Live Saturday morning show last May after he tweeted a picture of a smartly dressed chimpanzee captioned 'Royal baby leaves hospital'.

Baker, 62, pictured, denied accusations of racism over the comment. He told Tracy Ann Oberman's Trolled podcast yesterday that he 'never had a great relationship' with BBC bosses because he is not 'clubbable' and claimed that one of the staff who rang his home



over the matter was rude to his wife. While he received support from hundreds of showbusiness friends, some said they could not openly back him as they had mortgages to pay.

'The BBC threw me under the bus,' he said. 'I had 200 or 300 direct messages from people in showbusiness. But a few said they wanted to support me publicly but had a mortgage. I did not feel sorry for myself, because I shouldn't.'

Baker, who hosts his own podcast, Treehouse, said he doesn't want to be 'defined' by the 'revolting, terrible time' he suffered. But he admitted: 'Mine was the most catastrophic mistake. The most outrageous catastrophic mistake, born out of something so trivial and the consequences of it so disastrous. Everything I got I deserved.'

Smells like teen spirit!

By Colin Fernandez
Science Correspondent

BABIES smell so nice because they have evolved to help them bond with their mothers, research suggests.

But while a newborn's odour triggers maternal feelings of love, it is a different matter when they turn into teenagers.

The less appealing scent as children enter puberty encourages parents to keep their distance and helps them become independent, a study found.

The idea that babies generally smell pleasant and teenagers less inviting may seem unsurprising – but it is linked to the mother's highly developed sense of smell, the German researchers said. She

Babies' scent helps bond with mum – but youths are whiffier to gain independence

is capable of detecting in a sniff her child's developmental stage.

Lead author Dr Laura Schaefer, of the Dresden University of Technology, said: 'This study reveals that children's body odours are an important factor affecting the mother-child relationship, and hints toward its importance for affection and caregiving.'

The findings are based on 164 German mothers who were tested with body odour samples of their own children and four others of the same sex ranging in age from one

to 18. The samples consisted of cotton T-shirts and baby suits that children slept in for one night.

Overall, mothers classified the developmental status of the child with an accuracy of about 64 per cent. Mothers were asked to smell the fabrics, and identify whether it came from a child aged up to one, one to three, four to eight, nine to 13, 14 to 18 or older than 18.

They generally scored higher when identifying what the researchers called pre-pubertal odours, as opposed to those

defined as post-pubertal odours. More pleasant smells were found to be pre-pubertal, even when they came from older children.

Stronger body scents were identified as coming from post-pubertal children.

Dr Schaefer said: 'This suggests infantile body odours can mediate affectionate love towards the child in the crucial periods of bonding.'

Post-pubertal classifications 'could be interpreted as a mechanism for detachment, when the child becomes more

independent and separates itself from parental care', she said.

The study, published in the journal Frontiers In Psychology, follows previous experiments by the same team using MRI scans to see how maternal brains react to baby odours.

These showed responses similar to studies that tested for reactions to facial cuteness. The research adds further to the evidence that smell is an important factor in the mother-child bond.

The team's investigation into the effects of body odour on the psychological relationship between mother and child could have long-term clinical implications.

It is hoped that the research may lead to the development of nasal sprays that could help a mother suffering from post-natal depression to bond with their baby.

At last, Boris calms deadly virus concerns

DURING the anxious days of the Second World War, the British people subscribed to one morale-boosting aphorism: Keep Calm and Carry On.

Not even Boris Johnson's most slavish disciples could sensibly argue he channelled Churchill yesterday while putting the country at battle stations to fight the coronavirus outbreak.

But the Prime Minister made absolutely clear he has no doubt the public, imbued with an indomitable bulldog spirit, will meet the onerous challenges thrown up by the virulent disease.

Not before time, he appeared before the nation to spell out exactly how the Government intends to keep its citizens safe from the most serious public health scare for a generation – 51 infected so far.

Britain, he warned, must hope for the best but prepare for the worst. And the worst is very bleak indeed.

In a severe Covid-19 epidemic, says Downing Street, normal life would be disrupted almost beyond recognition.

Up to four in five people could fall sick, with vast numbers dying. Millions would be absent from work – harming business.

Public services would come under extreme pressure, with the NHS scrapping countless operations and care homes in crisis.

Police would respond only to grievous crimes and riots (although exasperated critics might say, not uncharitably, that's already the case).

To curb the contagion, schools could be closed. Public gatherings – such as the VE Day celebrations and the London Marathon – banned. And even martial law-style lockdowns introduced in cities.

Of course, none of this may come to pass. The illness, spawned in a market selling live beasts for the cooking pot in China, might prove less deadly than normal winter flu.

But by treating the public like grown-ups, and communicating the drastic – but sensible – restrictions that may need to be imposed, Boris finally offered the leadership for which Britain has been crying out.

Impressively authoritative, he reassured an increasingly jittery country that matters were firmly in hand – staving off panic.

It begs the question: Why in Heaven's name has it taken him so long to confront head-on arguably the sternest challenge of his stint in No10?

(Now, this paper respectfully suggests, perhaps the PM can find space in his diary to visit the stricken winter flood victims as well as spending time with his wife-to-be at his official country mansions.)

His prudent contribution contrasts starkly to Nicola Sturgeon's. The preposterous SNP leader claimed Scotland's failing NHS, which she runs, could cope with an extra 250,000 coronavirus patients on the wards.

When people die from inhaling a fungus from pigeon droppings at its newest hospital, this simply doesn't wash.

While the Government appears to have robust plans to tackle the health emergency, it must also toil to avoid economic collapse.

Stock markets are plunging and businesses have been damaged. Demand is falling and countless firms risk going bust. Some experts predict the epidemic will trigger a 2008-style credit crunch.

So it is relieving (if not surprising) to hear Bank of England governor Mark Carney calm nerves by pledging 'all necessary steps' to support Britain's straining economy.

To stimulate demand, he has hinted at an interest rate cut. That would be welcome. Chancellor Rishi Sunak could aid recovery in next week's Budget by lowering taxes.

Mind you, tackling coronavirus isn't just the responsibility of governments and banks. Everyone can do their bit.

The greatest defence against a menace that could potentially ruin innumerable lives is the simplest: Wash your hands more.

If we all pull together, conjuring up a spirit of national unity, Britain can indisputably defeat this viral enemy.

Yes, we must avoid panic. But if fears are correct, STEPHEN GLOVER says...

This could be the greatest test we've had for a generation



by Stephen Glover

AT TIMES of crisis most people will offer up thanks that they are not running the country, and that someone else is prepared to undertake such an unenviable task.

For days many of us have been cavilling at Boris Johnson. What has he been doing? Was he really too occupied with his bride-to-be Carrie Symonds and discussing their forthcoming baby to show an interest in coronavirus and the floods?

And then, all of a sudden, he bounces onto our television screens looking uncouthly grave, and brandishing a 'battle plan' which is full of draconian-sounding measures that may have to be taken.

The police will ignore low-level crime if the virus spreads. There could be troops on the streets. Firemen may be otherwise occupied. A fifth of the workforce could be put out of action.

Danger

The Government's 28-page document published yesterday also includes the notion of social 'distancing'. This could mean working from home. Emergency powers may be introduced to close schools or cancel large public events.

According to officials in a background briefing to journalists, 'distancing' might also entail not socialising with friends in the pub after work, even after being surrounded by people during the day. It's hard to see how this could be enforced.

Until the day before yesterday, Boris Johnson and ministers seemed either rather comatose or a little confused, with not much more to say than that we should wash our hands – thoroughly and often.

Now they have dramatically put themselves on a war footing, and are bursting with advice and instructions which, in their scope, are probably unprecedented in peacetime.

Have they gone too far? Are

they ramping up the panic? Most of us are capable of being fickle. I certainly am. A few days ago, a voice in my brain was complaining that the Government was doing too little. Now it is wondering whether it is doing too much.

Hang on, it says. At the latest count there have only been 51 cases of coronavirus in the United Kingdom. So far no one has died here. Indeed, it appears to have a relatively low mortality rate compared with other recent epidemics.

While the stock market has been crashing and the economy wobbling, dozens, if not hundreds, of people have been dying from ordinary influenza without anyone taking a blind bit of notice.

Aren't we suffering from a collective hysteria? Haven't we lost our sense of proportion? And isn't the Government feeding the frenzy with its talk of a 'battle plan' and its panoply of coercive measures that seem more appropriate to wartime?

That is what a voice in my brain is asking. All this is getting out of hand, it says. We are in danger of causing more upset to society, and more harm to the economy, by overreacting to the threat of coronavirus than the contagion itself is ever likely to do.

And then I ask myself: what else could the Government do? It obviously must have a plan. If any of us were unlucky enough to be running the country, wouldn't we produce something similar in the knowledge that if we did nothing we would be, rightly, pilloried by the Press?

The truth is that the Government is damned if it does, and damned if it doesn't. It can't easily win. One can pick holes in some of its proposals. For example, the unenforceable injunction against a drink in the pub after work seems over the top. It seems perverse to discour-

age us from meeting our chums if we have brushed against strangers while standing on the train, and bumped into all manner of folk at work.

That said, most of the ideas unveiled yesterday seem reasonably well thought out, and of course some, or all of them, may never have to be adopted. It is best to be prepared.

For the fact is that we could – and I stress *could* – be on the verge of a challenge for which, as a country, we are psychologically not well prepared, having enjoyed decades of peace and plenty during which a pandemic seemed unimaginable.

Of course, we must remain calm. Everyone should pay heed to what the PM said yesterday about 'the vast majority of the people of this country...going about our business as usual'. The Health Secretary Matt Hancock said the same on BBC radio.

Continuing to live our normal lives is, admittedly, a tall order with the Government contemplating introducing emergency powers, and a media blitz in which every new case of coronavirus in countries as far away as South Korea and Australia is reported as though it is happening next door.

Hoarding

One thing should surely be clear. Remaining serene categorically excludes the widespread panic-buying and stockpiling of items such as lavatory paper and pasta.

Such hoarding seems not only idiotic but also shaming in a country once famed for its stoicism. Those who can recall the many privations of the last war will be aghast at such feeble-minded behaviour.

Reading between the lines, it seems the Government and its advisers do expect a serious epidemic. If they are right, it will test not just the country's

physical resources but its very mettle.

Who will look after the elderly, the group most at risk? What will happen to care homes if many of their staff are off sick? Do we have the traditions of neighbourliness to step into the breach? Can the young, so unused to privation, and so accustomed to relative luxury, adapt to harsh conditions?

There are questions, too, about Boris Johnson and the Government. They are already fighting a battle to secure satisfactory trade deals with the EU and the United States.

Are they capable of coping at the same time with a dire national emergency that could be far more convulsive than the worst tribulations of Brexit?

Scourge

Mr Johnson was impressive yesterday – thank God it wasn't Jeremy Corbyn standing there – but questions remain as to whether he has the endurance and concentration of mind to guide us through a really serious crisis.

The measures he announced underline the fact that we are in uncharted territory. Both the rulers and the ruled will require a great deal of determination and strength of character to come out the other side.

Maybe the Government is wrong. Maybe there will be comparatively few more cases before the worldwide scourge of coronavirus fizzles out as temperatures rise. Half of me thinks this will be the case.

What is certain is that if ministers' fears turn out to be ill-founded, we should resist the temptation to blame them. No one should say that they were guilty of scare-mongering, or trying to throw their weight around for no good reason. This is not Project Fear. It is Project Prepare For The Worst And Hope For The Best.

Let's pray the threat recedes, and that we can get on with living our lives. For if the Government is even half-right, what lies ahead will be an unadulterated nightmare.

Sarah Vine

sarah.vine@dailymail.co.uk



**Columnist
of the year**

Sorry, I'm not blessed with Fiona Bruce's steely resolve to shun Botox

FIONA BRUCE is almost unique among her generation of high-profile female presenters in that she has never — so she says — succumbed to the temptation of Botox.

In an industry where frozen foreheads abound, she remains steadfastly untouched by the needle at 55, even though, as she puts it: 'If you don't do it, as I don't, you look pretty rough by comparison.'

I think she's being a bit hard on herself. With her impeccable poise and perpetual low-key glamour, Bruce is the last person I would describe as looking 'rough'.

But there is undoubtedly something in what she says. Women these days view their appearance with an increasingly critical eye, often striving to achieve impossible levels of perfection in a world that seems to value appearance above almost everything else.

It's not just those who make a living on screen who feel this need; thanks to the popularity of image-based social media platforms such as Instagram, we all spend more time scrutinising our own reflections than is perhaps good for us.

And I should know. This time last year I had a thread lift, ostensibly for a magazine article but if I'm honest because, like Fiona Bruce, I was feeling somewhat 'rough'.

I wanted to look and feel just that little bit glossier, more confident — less like the rather cross, increasingly jowly person who greeted me every morning in the mirror.

A THREAD lift is a little more involved than Botox: in essence it involves inserting a number of barbed threads under the skin which are then tightened to lift the tissues of the face.

Over time the threads dissolve, leaving the lift in place.

It wasn't exactly painless; but it was quick, and it was effective. I left the clinic looking a little chipmunk but otherwise unscathed, and went straight to a lunch meeting.

Over the course of the following weeks and months, my skin grew smoother and my face less saggy. But perhaps more importantly, for the first time in years I felt quite good about myself. And, shallow as that may seem, it was the best feeling ever.

We live in a world where there is

ITALIANS have been told to observe a one metre exclusion zone around themselves in an attempt to halt the spread of the coronavirus. To anyone who knows the tactile Italians as I do, that's like telling an Englishman not to mention the weather. In other words, we're all doomed.

an entire new female aesthetic, fuelled by the rise of celebrities such as Kylie Jenner, Kim Kardashian and their many imitators, whose appearance relies heavily on the work of cosmetic surgeons.

Among such social media 'influencers', Botox and fillers and all the rest are no longer the exception, they are the norm — 'Instagram Face', they call it.

And Fiona Bruce is right: these pouting paragons of perfection do make the rest of us look 'rough'. Even if you know it's all fake, it's hard not to be seduced by it.

No wonder more and more of us are succumbing. According to a recent survey, 40 per cent of British adults are considering a non-surgical treatment in the next 12 months. In the UK alone, the market for these treatments is projected to rise to more than £3 billion a year within five years.

Like it or not, having one's facial expressions tweaked is fast becoming no more unusual than a visit to the dentist.

The sad truth is that we are not all blessed with Fiona's solid, sensible resolve — least of all me. I admire her tremendously. But I fear she may be fighting a losing battle.



Clean sweep over Mantel

MRS HINCH, a former hairdresser from Essex and an Instagram 'cleanfluencer', has had twice as many pre-orders for her Little Book Of Lists as two-times Booker Prize winner Dame Hilary Mantel for the latest part of her acclaimed Tudor

trilogy. Mrs Hinch, who has 3.2 million Instagram followers, describes her magnum opus as 'a whole book filled with just lists! Notebook goals! My idea of absolute heaven!' And to think we used to be nation of literary giants...

BACK in 2009 I caught swine flu, or H1N1 to give it its proper name. It was absolutely horrible, made worse by the fact that the publication I was working for at the time kept ringing me up every five minutes asking me to write about how I felt. Write? I could barely open my eyes. I spent several days in bed and then got tonsillitis, which turned into a quinsy (a

medieval-sounding ailment that basically amounts to an abscess on the tonsils), and after that, pneumonia. But I survived. By all accounts, coronavirus sounds much less unpleasant, plus it only really causes complications in the very elderly or those with underlying conditions. Of course, we must all take precautions. But let's not turn a pandemic into a panicemic.

Kardashian trash-ion

THE house of Balmain is the latest venerable fashion house to have sold its soul to the ranks of the rapper-ati.

Where once its founder, Monsieur Pierre Balmain, presided over exquisitely tailored creations, now the company makes overpriced trainers and rubber onesies for the likes of Kim Kardashian, who strode around the capital of fashion this week looking as though

she'd escaped from some S&M party.

I'm not much of a fashionista myself, but I am lucky enough to own a vintage Pierre Balmain coat dating from the mid-Fifties.

It's a little threadbare, but it still draws compliments, thanks to its expert tailoring and timeless cut. I can't imagine Ms Kardashian's tawdry creation will stand a similar test of time.

I'M GLAD Prince Harry took advantage of his visit to the UK to spend some time with his grandmother at Windsor. Apparently they exchanged warm words, and the Monarch, 93, told

him he will 'always be welcomed back'. The Queen is the only one to come out of this hoo-ha with any integrity. God only knows how this royal band of flakes and fools will cope when she's gone.

STELLA MCCARTNEY reinforces her animal rights credentials by sending a menagerie of models dressed as furry friends — foxes, cows, rabbits, horses and even a cuddly crocodile — down the catwalk in Paris. She does know, doesn't she, that fake fur is about as environmentally unfriendly as you can get, made as it is from plastic? Oh, the pitfalls of being right-on.



Keira's fight for vulnerable young



THERE is something depressingly inevitable about the tale of Keira Bell (left), 23, the young woman who was given drugs to help her transition to male — and who is now suing an NHS Trust for negligence on the grounds that, aged 16, she was too young to make an informed decision.

For years, experts have been warning of such a possibility, arguing that vulnerable young people should not be making irreversible decisions about their gender. The response

from the powerful transgender lobby has been predictable: online hysteria, accusations of transphobia and conspiring to deny trans people their rights. Meanwhile, politicians who should know better have caved in to their demands, further endangering the wellbeing of people like Keira.

Of course, we should respect the medical needs of transgender people. But we also have a responsibility to distinguish between cases that are genuine and those that are born out

of other issues. And yet, as I write, it is still possible for a child to begin hormone treatment — as Keira did — after as few as three therapeutic assessments. In other words, a teenager can embark on a course of treatment that will result in irreversible physical changes, including potentially rendering themselves infertile, with about as much thought as they might give to getting a tattoo. That is not progress, that is child abuse — and it must stop.

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Architect didn't read Grenfell blaze risks

By Arthur Martin

THE lead architect on the Grenfell Tower refurbishment yesterday admitted he did not read key fire regulations during the project.

Bruce Soune said he was unaware about concerns over using combustible cladding – despite accepting fire safety was ‘fundamental to the work of an architect’s practice’.

He told the public inquiry into the Grenfell tragedy no one at his firm did a compliance check on materials used in the refurbishment.

Asked whether he knew about the specific fire risks of the aluminium panels used on the block, he said: ‘No. I thought their melting temperature was quite high.’

The cladding has already been identified by the inquiry as one of the main reasons that the 2017 fire spread so quickly, claiming 72 lives.

Giving evidence yesterday, Mr Soune said he did not know that

‘Limited experience’

the insulation used in the cladding system was required to be of limited combustibility to comply with tall building regulations.

He also said he had no knowledge of previous cladding fires on high rises in the UK or in Dubai.

Mr Soune, an associate at Studio E Architects who was the initial project leader, admitted he had no professional experience in working on residential buildings.

And he said his only previous knowledge of the cladding products used on Grenfell was while studying to be an architect in South Africa.

It also emerged only one member of the Studio E team previously worked on high-rise residential buildings – and he was not a qualified architect.

Mr Soune was shown a diagram of different building classifications relating to blocks over 18 metres.

He was asked by Kate Grange QC, counsel to the inquiry: ‘Were you aware that there might be different rules that applied to buildings over 18 metres?’

He replied: ‘No. I was aware they may exist, but I did not refer to [the document] at the time.’

When asked whether he read Government guidelines on building and fire regulations, he said: ‘I referred to it on occasion but I certainly didn’t read it from start to finish.’

Mr Soune was also shown a diagram of how fire can spread up the external cladding of a building.

When asked whether he saw a diagram like this during the Grenfell project, he said he had not.

He added: ‘We didn’t know there was any concerns regarding compliance [of the cladding].’

Earlier Mr Soune said he had expected another firm to be appointed to deal with cladding the tower because it was complex.

Once the refurbishment reached construction stage, he was replaced as day-to-day project leader by Neil Crawford – who was not a registered architect because he did not complete his final qualifications.

Mr Soune said he and Andrzej Kuszell, the founder of the practice, decided to appoint Mr Crawford to the role because he had experience with high-rise buildings.

But the inquiry heard that this experience was limited to two previous projects.

Asked if he or colleagues considered hiring an architect with experience of cladding a high-rise block of flats for Grenfell, Mr Soune replied he did not recall doing so.

Studio E was selected for the major overhaul without a competitive procurement process because it was already working on a new school and sports centre next door.

Mr Kuszell earlier conceded his team lacked experience in high-rise residential refurbishments.

The inquiry in Paddington, West London, continues.

Iran’s uranium stock now 5 times deal limit

Mail Foreign Service

IRAN’S stockpile of enriched uranium is more than five times the limit fixed under its landmark 2015 nuclear deal with world powers, a United Nations watchdog said.

The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) report said that – as of February 19 – the Iranian stockpile was 1,510kg, soaring above the 300kg limit agreed in the deal, which Britain signed up to.

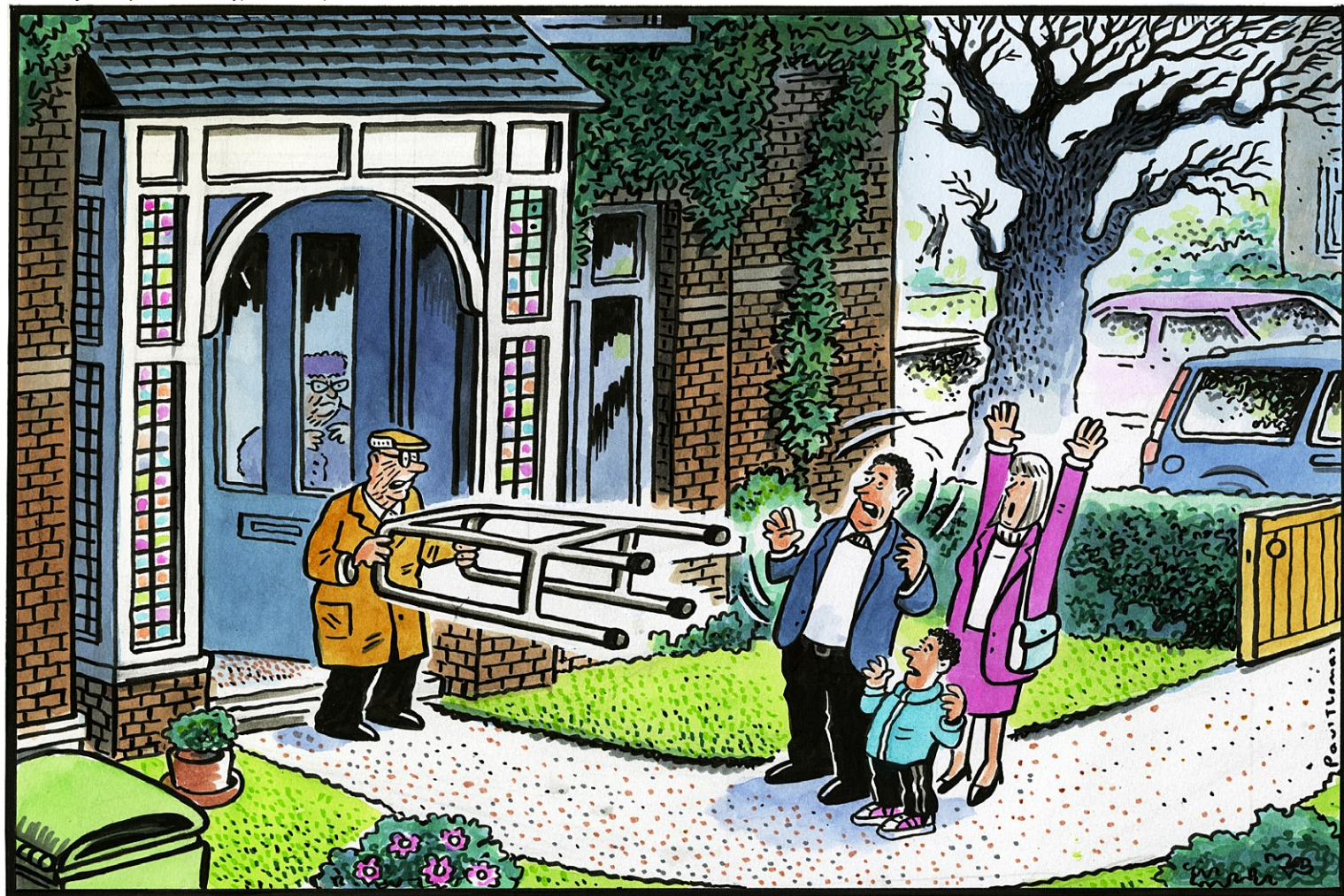
Experts warn this level could provide sufficient material to produce a nuclear weapon.

But more steps, including further enrichment, would be required to make the stockpile suitable for use in a weapon. An enrichment level

of around 90 per cent would be needed for weapons use – but the report says Iran has not enriched uranium above 4.5 per cent.

The 2015 deal has been hanging by a thread since the US withdrew in May 2018 and imposed sanctions on Iran, targeting its oil sector.

Last June, Iran warned it had quadrupled the rate of enrichment after tensions with the US mounted. The IAEA report said it had identified three locations in Iran where it possibly stored undeclared nuclear material or undertook nuclear-related activities.



'Relax, grandad - we promise not to hug you!'

To order a print of this Paul Thomas cartoon or one by Pugh, visit Mailpictures.newsprints.co.uk or call 0191 6030 178.

Prescription fees going up... again!

By **Ben Spencer**
Medical Correspondent

THE cost of an NHS prescription in England is rising to £9.15 next month – the third year in a row it has been hiked.

Health Secretary Matt Hancock said the 15p increase is 'in line with inflation'.

But charities fear patients with long-standing or complicated conditions – who face the charge for each medicine or appliance dispensed – will struggle to afford the cost of their medication.

Patients in England can claim free prescriptions only if they are disabled, under 18, over 60, an inpatient, pregnant or on certain benefits. However, they have been free for everyone in Scotland since 2011, while there has been no charge in Wales since 2007 and Northern Ireland since 2010.

Laura Cockram, chairman of the Prescription Charges Coalition and head of policy at the charity Parkinson's UK, said: 'It is incredibly disappointing that yet again, people with long-term conditions are being penalised by an outdated pre-

Patients hit with third annual rise in a row as charge jumps to £9.15

scription charges system. By continuing to drive up the cost of prescriptions, the Government is ignoring clear evidence that the charge is a false economy that leaves people unable to afford vital medication which places increased pressure on the NHS.'

Patients who need a lot of

'Many already find it difficult to pay'

drugs can save costs by purchasing pre-payment certificates, which from April 1 will cost £29.65 for three months – a 55p increase – or £105.90 for 12 months, up £1.90.

Claire Anderson, chairman of the English pharmacy board at

the Royal Pharmaceutical Society, said: 'Raising the amount people have to pay for their prescriptions is deeply concerning.'

'People now may not be able to afford their prescriptions and shouldn't be in a position where they have to ration or completely go without their medicines.'

'This could lead to more people becoming ill and would only put more strain on an already stretched NHS.'

'Prescriptions are free in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, so it seems unfair that patients must pay for their medicines in England.'

Other charities also hit out at the increase. The Kidney Care UK charity said: 'The system must change so people with kidney disease and/or transplants don't have to pay for life-

saving medicine.' Anaphylaxis Campaign added: 'The system must change so people with severe allergies don't have to pay to stay well.'

Charges for wigs, often used by cancer patients who lose their hair during treatment, and fabric supports will also rise.

Synthetic wigs will increase from £72.80 to £74.15, partial human hair wigs will rise from £192.85 to £196.40 and full bespoke human hair wigs will rise from £282 to £287.20, while the cost of surgical bras, which are worn after operations, is going up from £29.50 to £30.05, and abdominal or spinal supports are rising from £44.55 to £45.35.

Simon Dukes, chief executive of the Pharmaceutical Services Negotiating Committee, which represents local pharmacies, said: 'Pharmacies report that many people already find it difficult to pay the prescription charge. While we recognise the financial pressures that the NHS is under, raising the prescription tax once again runs the risk of those most in need not getting their medicines – ultimately adding to the NHS bill elsewhere.'

b.spencer@dailymail.co.uk

Labour fears local election humiliation

LABOUR is braced for massive losses in May's local elections after its own research predicted the party is facing one of its worst ever results.

A leaked party document suggests it could lose control of councils including Plymouth, Amber Valley in Derbyshire, Harlow in Essex and Crawley, West Sussex. Under the worst forecast 315 councillors

By **John Stevens**
Deputy Political Editor

could be defeated, and in a further crumbling of Labour's 'Red Wall' in the North, it could lose its Sheffield stronghold.

Voters in 118 councils in England go to the polls on May 7, a little over a month after a new leader takes over from Jer-

emy Corbyn. The document, obtained by the BBC, says Labour's predictive modelling 'points to substantial losses that may constitute one of our worst local election performances in recent history'.

Ian Murray, who is running for deputy leader, called the research an 'urgent wake-up call', adding: 'We are sleepwalking into disaster if we don't change.'

Ephraim Hardcastle



JON Snow's eyeball searing neckties remain mothballed as the Channel 4 news anchor

nobly self-isolates. But what of News At Ten's Tom Bradby, flying back from Australia via either Singapore or Hong Kong to resume ITN spouting duty after the Big Ben bongs tonight?

WHILE £120million has been allocated for Theresa May's curious brainchild – 2022's Brexit Festival – not a penny has been earmarked for the Queen's platinum jubilee in the same year, celebrating her unprecedented 70-year reign. David Cameron grudgingly contributed £1million for her 2012 diamond jubilee with Tony Blair offering a measly £450,000 for her 2002 golden shindig. Buckingham Palace isn't holding its breath for a contribution from Boris.

THE Queen will be at Westminster Abbey on Monday with her family and 2,000 others for the annual Commonwealth Day thanksgiving service. She won't be following the example of Sweden's King Carl XVI Gustaf, who has cancelled tonight's diplomatic dinner for 150 over coronavirus fears. HM, as always, refuses to change the diary even if threatened by terrorists or germs.

JOANNA Trollope, pictured, tells Woman & Home magazine that it's normal for women to feel jealousy, fury or anger, adding: 'You are not alone if you want to cut the crotch out of your cheating husband's trousers!' Joanna!



FORMER MI6 head Sir Richard Dearlove, now outed by Czech intelligence as a British spy in Prague during the 1970s, was successful in keeping his day job secret from his teenage daughter. She told her Hampshire boarding school classmates that daddy was a shoe salesman.

ECO-ZEALOT Ben Goldsmith has been using Twitter to denigrate hill farmers in his messianic quest for the 're-wilding' of Britain, describing the farming method as Victorian-style 'failed sheep ranching'. All fine and dandy. But how does earnest Ben, son of billionaire tycoon Sir James Goldsmith, reconcile this with being a non-executive board member of Defra?

DAME Hilary Mantel declines to compare Downing Street rottweiler Dominic Cummings with her own 'power-behind-the throne' hero, telling BBC Radio 5 Live: 'No. I think Thomas Cromwell was far better dressed.'

SMOOTHIE chops former Tory trade minister Lord Young recalls his solution to obstructive civil servants, who told him he couldn't do what he wanted. 'I would invariably reply, "What a pity, could we meet this time tomorrow and you can tell me how we can?" And they always did.'

FORMER Labour minister Dame Margaret Hodge urges Eamonn Holmes to settle his £250,000 tax bill, saying: 'He should pay, I don't know how much he earns but he should pay and not get out of it.' Over to you Eamonn, self-proclaimed market leader in the TV presenting lark.

Email: john.mcentee@dailymail.co.uk

Smugglers charge migrants just £11 to get into the EU

By David Churchill

EU leaders stepped up their attack on Turkey over the new migration crisis yesterday, branding the country an 'official trafficker of migrants'.

Greek PM Kyriakos Mitsotakis hit out at Turkish premier Recep Tayyip Erdogan for allowing thousands to storm Greece's sea and land borders in recent days.

It came amid reports that people smugglers are being allowed to operate freely by Turkish officials and as a result have slashed their prices for getting migrants into the EU to as little as £11. They usually charge hundreds of pounds.

One Turkish trafficker, who gave his name as Semih, said: 'It has become something allowed from our Turkish side. In the past we used to get them across for \$200 or \$300 (£150-£230) per person and now we do it for \$15 (£11).'

On Monday it emerged that a child died after a boat capsized off the Greek island of Lesbos, which hosts Europe's biggest migrant camp.

Mr Mitsotakis accused his Turkish counterpart of using refugees and migrants as 'pawns' in a bid to 'blackmail' the West into giving him military support for his conflict with neighbouring Syria.

But he also tore into Brussels for failing to reform asylum policy since the last migration crisis in 2015-16, saying the latest surge should act as a 'wake-up call'. The bloc is no better prepared for sudden influxes than four years ago, he added.

Mr Mitsotakis held crisis talks with EU Commission president Ursula von der Leyen and EU Council president Charles Michel yesterday before the trio visited the Greece-Turkey border to witness the chaos.

He accused Mr Erdogan of tearing up a treaty signed with Brussels in 2016 under which four million refugees living in Turkey receive billions of pounds



Flashpoint: Police try to disperse migrants on the Greek island of Lesbos yesterday

in aid in return for him stemming migration flows.

He said: 'This is a blatant attempt by Turkey to use desperate people to promote its geopolitical agenda and to divert attention from the horrible situation in Syria.'

'We stand ready to support

'Blatant use of desperate people'

Turkey in dealing with its refugee problem and find a solution to the Syria conundrum, but not under these circumstances.

'Unfortunately, Turkey has become the official trafficker of migrants to the EU and Greece does not accept this situation.

We are sending a very clear signal that migrants and refugees cannot be used as instruments, as pawns in a geopolitical game.'

Sebastian Kurz, the Austrian chancellor, also waded in, saying: 'The people are being used by President Erdogan as a political football, as weapons and as instruments of pressure on the European Union.'

Mr Erdogan's provocative actions were sparked by the killing of dozens of Turkish troops in an air strike in north-west Syria last week. He is appealing for military support from Nato and European allies to assist in his conflict with Syrian leader Bashar al-Assad's forces.

But his call has fallen on deaf ears, prompting him to throw

open Turkey's borders. Mr Erdogan will meet Russian president Vladimir Putin, who backs Assad, in Moscow tomorrow in a bid to broker a ceasefire.

Countries on the EU's external border, such as Italy and Greece, want other member states to take a bigger share of arrivals so they are not left bearing the brunt.

Greece said it had stopped 24,000 illegal attempts by migrants to storm its borders since Saturday. Charities also recorded 1,700 new arrivals on the five Aegean Greek islands near Turkey - Lesbos, Chios, Kos, Leros and Samos.

Mrs von der Leyen unveiled a £600million aid package to help Greece deal with the migrants.

EastEnders star: I was trolled because my girl went to private school

By Eleanor Sharples
TV and Radio Reporter

FORMER EastEnders star Michelle Collins has revealed how she was bullied by trolls for sending her daughter to a private school.

The actress, pictured, sent her daughter Maia-Rose to £20,370-a-year Channing School in Highgate, north London.

The 58-year-old, who played Cindy Beale in EastEnders from 1988 until 1998, wrote on Twitter: 'I'm so sorry I sent my daughter to a private school because that's what worked for me and her.'

'Am I now going to be vilified and bullied for it? I can't believe the nastiness on Twitter and from people I even know! The actress, who also played Stella Price in Coronation Street from 2011 to 2014, added: 'I will no longer apologise for my choices in life.'

Many of Miss Collins's followers tweeted their support. One wrote: 'People have nothing better to do than bully. You clearly did what you thought was best for your daughter, and that is exactly what a loving parent does.'

Maia, now 23, got three A grades at A level despite nearly having to drop out after having her gall bladder removed and two further operations.



£5billion Right To Buy bonanza

TENANTS buying their council homes have benefited from nearly £5billion in discounts under the revamped Right To Buy scheme, figures reveal.

The initiative was introduced under Margaret Thatcher in 1980 to help council tenants on to the housing ladder, with ministers increasing its scope in 2012.

Now the Local Government Association (LGA) has found buyers could knock an average 42 per cent off the market value of their home under the scheme.

But David Renard, of the LGA, yesterday warned reforms are needed to ensure enough social housing is being built to replace homes lost through the scheme.

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'My God... I'm such a bad mother'

What £90k city worker accused of shaking baby to death 'told police'

Daily Mail Reporter

A WEALTHY financial consultant accused of murdering her four-week old daughter with her lover told police: 'My God, I'm such a bad mother', a court heard.

City worker Clare Sanders, 43, and Tomas Vaitkevicius, 45, allegedly shook their baby Eva on three separate occasions during the first weeks of her young life.

Sanders' mobile phone had been used to search 'shaken baby syndrome NHS', 'shaking babies' and 'baby is shaking' six days before Eva's death.

Jurors heard the transcript of Sanders' police interview, recorded hours before Eva died, in which the £90,000-a-year consultant admitted finishing a bottle of 'a liqueur thing' the previous night.

Shortly before 2.40am on September 1, 2017, an emergency call was made to the London Ambulance Service by neighbour Karen Brewell, who lived in the same block of flats in Mitcham, south London.

Eva was rushed to a hospital in south London as paramedics tried to treat her. But she was pronounced dead shortly before 7am on September 2, 2017, and a post-mortem examination later gave the cause of death as 'traumatic brain and spinal cord injury'.

Claire Harden-Frost, prosecuting at the Old Bailey yesterday, read out Sanders' police interview from the previous evening.

Sanders said in it: 'It's all my fault for not keeping an eye on her. Tom (Vaitkevicius) had already had a couple of beers. We had some of that, like, liqueur thing. I washed up the glass, so we'd finished it.'

An interviewing officer asked her: 'Had you opened it before the feed?' Sanders replied: 'No, I don't think so. Oh my God, are we negligent?'

The officer asks: 'So, you wrote down that Tom had done the

feed but you can't remember whether you saw him?' Sanders responds: 'Oh my God, oh God it's all my fault.'

The interview turned to the moment Sanders called the neighbours for help. The mother

'What have I done to my child?'

said: 'I went to the neighbours and I called them. I just said she wasn't breathing. What have I done to my child?'

She was asked where Lithuanian Vaitkevicius was while she

was in the ambulance with Eva.

Sanders replied: 'At the house. Why was he at the house? Why didn't he come in the ambulance? Oh my God, was it my fault what happened to her? My God, I'm such a bad mother.'

She also gave her account of discovering her 'grey and lifeless' baby.

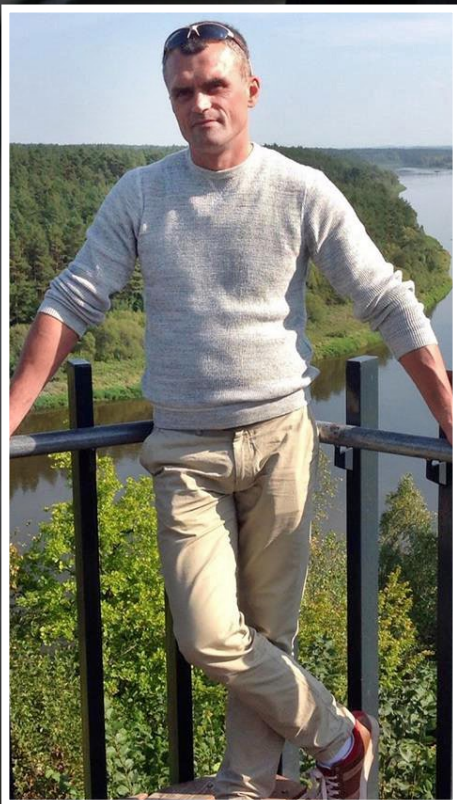
She told police: 'She was in the pram over by the window. I picked her up and that's when the milk goes out. I should have, I should have been keeping an eye on her. She was lying on her back. I lifted her to my face.

'The milk came out. It was a

gush. I screamed. Was it milk, was it blood? I don't know. I thought it was milk. I screamed and passed her to Tom, Tom came in. I just said she's not breathing.' The officer asked her: 'How did you know she was not breathing?'

Sanders replied: 'I don't know, she was grey and lifeless. Have I just imagined all of that? I was just in a state of panic. I can't really recall it for you.'

Sanders and Vaitkevicius both deny murder and an alternative count of causing or allowing the death of a vulnerable child. The trial continues.



Denials: Financial consultant Sanders at the Old Bailey, and inset, lover Vaitkevicius



Ikea's vegan meatballs - made of oats

IKEA will launch a vegan version of its popular meatballs at its British stores this summer.

The Swedish flat-pack furniture giant is following in the steps of Greggs and KFC by introducing vegan products which reportedly look and taste like meat.

The company already sells 150million meatball meals worldwide every year.

It launched a vegetarian option five years ago but will sell a plant-based alternative from August. They will be made from pea protein, oats, apples and potatoes.

Ikea says the plant-based balls have a climate footprint which is 96 per cent lower than its pork-and-beef ones.

They will be available in all of Ikea's UK in-store cafes and sold in freezer packs for customers to take home.

It comes after Ikea impressed customers with its vegan hot dog in 2018.

Michael La Cour, managing director of Ikea food services, said: 'We see a growing demand from our customers to have access to more sustainable food options and we want to meet that need.'

'Our ambition is to make healthier and more sustainable eating easy, desirable and affordable without compromising on taste and texture.'

Ikea said its carbon emissions were down by 4.3 per cent last year despite sales increasing 6.5 per cent.

Now TV Phoebe heads to Oliviers

IT WASN'T enough just to win a string of Golden Globes, Emmys and a multi-million pound deal with Amazon.

Now Fleabag creator Phoebe Waller-Bridge is set to sweep up in the theatre world



too - as the stage version of her hit BBC comedy is up for two Olivier Awards.

The one-woman show, which had a run at Wyndham's Theatre in London last year, is nominated for Best Entertainment or Comedy Play - while the British star, 34, is also up for Best Actress.

Miss Waller-Bridge, pictured, will go up against Hayley Atwell, who starred in Rosmersholm, Sharon D Clarke for Death Of A Salesman and Juliet Stevenson for The Doctor at the ceremony in April.

The Fleabag star won Emmys for Best Actress and Outstanding Series earlier this year, as well as two Golden Globes, Critics' Choice awards and a Screen Actors Guild award. She signed a three-year deal, reportedly worth £16million, to produce new TV shows for Amazon.

Snickers' Welsh tweet was nuts

THE makers of chocolate favourite Snickers apologised yesterday - after being less than sweet towards the Welsh language.

Social media staff behind the peanut bar's Twitter account started a thread of Welsh place names, claiming that they looked like 'someone sat on a keyboard'.

They went on to use 'Llanfairpwllgwyngyll' and others as examples.

But the tweet from Snickers, which is made by Mars, was swiftly slammed by Welsh speakers who said the remarks were 'bigoted' and 'racist'.

One Twitter user wrote: 'Ignorantly making fun of stereotypes and caricatures of minoritised languages is the lowest of the low, playground-level, gutter-style content marketing and should have no place in the modern, post-colonial era.'

Now the firm has been forced to apologise - and used its 'you're not you when you're hungry' tagline to say sorry.

It said: 'From everyone at Snickers UK we're sorry to everyone offended by our last tweet, we totally misjudged it...'

By **Ray Massey**
Motoring Editor

BMW has launched a new electric car that features a 'soundtrack' by award-winning movie composer Hans Zimmer.

The sounds are to address concerns that the near-silent running of battery-powered vehicles makes driving feel soulless.

The German company's BMW i4 electric prototype is designed to take on Elon Musk's Tesla Model 3.

It has recruited Mr Zimmer to create a suite of sounds for the vehicle, including start-up noises, acceleration tones and acoustic accompaniments to a door opening. The film composer, who designed the tones alongside BMW's sound engineer

BMW that's so quiet it needs its own soundtrack

Renzo Vitale, won an Academy Award for his score for The Lion King.

He also wrote the music to Gladiator, Pirates of the Caribbean, and worked on the forthcoming 007 film No Time To Die.

Mr Zimmer launched his electric-drive soundtrack for the i4 yesterday and the sounds will be introduced as a standard feature worldwide from July. The i4 is set to go into production next year as BMW's

first all-electric premium mid-size car. Mr Zimmer said: 'We have an extraordinary opportunity to turn electric driving in a BMW into a very special experience with the help of great sounds.'

A company spokesman said: 'It will imbue BMW's electric models with extra emotional depth by connecting the driver with the vehicle's character on another level through individual tones and sounds.'

History don barred from Oxford talk in trans row

By Josh White

AN OXFORD historian, who was given bodyguards after threats from trans activists, has been barred from speaking at a feminist history event.

Selina Todd, a professor in Modern History at St Hilda's College, had been provided with security last month after allegedly making 'transphobic' remarks.

And in the latest twist, she was 'no platformed' at an Oxford event about the women's liberation movement, due to criticism from trans opponents.

The prominent feminist historian had been accompanied to lectures by the 'two big burly guys' after infuriating some trans-rights activists.

She later warned that 'democracy is under threat' due to the violent reaction of pro-trans activists when their beliefs are challenged.

Trans-rights campaigners were believed to have taken issue with her ties to the women's rights group

'Expressed hostility towards the event'

Woman's Place UK – which some claim to be 'transphobic'.

And in a move that was strongly condemned by the university and met with outcry by many other feminists, the author was barred from Friday's event at Exeter College commemorating the 50th anniversary of Ruskin College's inaugural Women's Liberation Conference.

In a statement addressing the cancellation professor Todd said: 'I am shocked to have been no-platformed by this event, organised by Oxford International Women's Festival and hosted at Exeter College. I was asked to participate in October 2019, and I explained to the organisers that some trans activists may object to my being there', she said.

'I was then told that trans activists had already expressed hostility towards the event because they claimed second-wave feminism is



Under fire: Professor Selina Todd

inherently trans-exclusionary'. Among those who spoke out against her exclusion was campaigner Julie Bindel, who told the organisers: 'You should hang your heads in shame for giving into this mob.'

Education Secretary Gavin Williamson has made protecting free speech on university campuses – and stamping out 'no platforming' – one of his priorities.

Last night, the Times reported the Conservative MP Sir Edward Leigh had lodged a complaint with the Universities Minister about suppression of free speech at the event.

The Oxford University History Faculty also criticised the decision, saying: 'We cannot accept the exclusion of our respected colleague professor Selina Todd from the event, and that means that we withdrew from the weekend's celebration. We recognise that it is not always straightforward to balance the rights of women with the rights of trans people, but we believe that the way forward is for us all to talk to one another.'

Professor Todd denies holding discriminatory views against trans people. Exeter College said it was not responsible for her being banned.

In a lengthy statement posted on Twitter, the Oxford International Women's Festival said it was not 'responsible for requesting Professor Selina Todd not to speak'.

Scores of children 'died on social services' watch'

HUNDREDS of children died or were victims of abuse and neglect after concerns for their welfare had already been raised with social services, according to a report.

There was a 'significant and troubling' number of cases where children had 'either died or been seriously harmed in the context of abuse and neglect', the Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel said.

The panel received 538 serious safeguarding notifications of child abuse and neglect since 2018.

More than half of the cases (54 per cent) were known to social services.

By Daily Mail Reporter

A similar proportion had already been identified as 'vulnerable' but despite this 'the system was not able to prevent the death or serious incident', the report said.

Some 244 of the reports involved children who later died.

The panel could not confirm the exact number of children who had died because some notifications mentioned more than one child.

A Government spokesman said: 'Every child deserves to be safe and we are taking urgent action.'

by Jane Green

LOOKING BACK, I can see how easily my head was turned. I was in my mid-40s and happily married, or so I thought, to a wonderful man who loved me. Busy raising our six children in the suburbs just outside New York – but still an English girl at heart.

This was my second marriage, which had been an unexpected love story. I answered an ad for a tiny beach cottage, and shortly thereafter fell madly in love with its owner. The man with twinkly blue eyes and a ready smile.

I had four children, he had two, and our families seemed to fit together. We stole away for moments of romance when the children were asleep, or on the very rare weekends when we found ourselves childless.

We had been together for six years, married for three. Our wedding had been tiny, just our families and children, one set of dear friends. We got married in front of a fireplace in a small boutique hotel in our town, both wiping tears away as we said our vows. I knew this time it would be for ever.

And then, it was on to real life. My husband would joke that life had become 'pots and pans': we were so busy chauffeuring the children around, cooking dinner, juggling work and family life, we didn't have time to focus

Exhausted by life, we had little time for the two of us

on each other. The pots and pans of life had swiftly removed the romance. We were happy enough, even though we had little time for just the two of us, and felt permanently exhausted. I used to say (and still do), a good night was being in bed by nine; a great night was being in bed by eight.

As relationship psychologist Esther Perel says in her book, *Mating In Captivity: Reconciling The Erotic And The Domestic*: 'It's hard to experience desire when you're weighted down by concern.'

We were weighted down by concern, children, financial commitments, exhaustion. There seemed to be little room left for desire.

My publisher asked to send me to a book conference in California. I couldn't wait – anything work related that involved travel was a break from the monotony, a chance to remember who I was when not defined by being someone's wife, someone's mother.

I was to speak on a panel of authors, most of whom I didn't know, held at a large hotel close to Disneyland. I decided to have lunch in the bar beforehand, to settle my nerves and regroup before the event. Out of the corner of my eye, I noticed a young, very handsome man sit next to me.

He got out some papers and placed them on the counter, and I noticed my name written on the paper. He was clearly one of the other authors on my panel, so I turned and introduced myself.

Within minutes, we were engaged in a lively chat, and as we ordered our respective salads, our conversation went from small talk about publishing and the writing life, to real talk about parents, and grief, and relationships.

At a certain point in our

conversation, it occurred to me, with a jolt, that he might have been flirting with me; that there might be chemistry between us.

It had been so long since someone had flirted with me, I told myself I must have been imagining things. Besides, he was so young! So handsome! What on earth was I thinking?

He was the first one up at the podium to speak. 'I was just talking to this very lovely woman in the bar,' he said, 'and when I said I didn't know what to talk about today, she advised me to tell funny stories and talk about

celebrities I know.' I sank my head into my hands, my cheeks burning with embarrassment. It was true, I had said that, only half-joking, but all I could think was: very lovely woman. He said I was a very lovely woman.

After the event, we exchanged email addresses, promising to read each other's novels and stay in touch. I didn't think much about it, other than to enjoy the little bit of attention I had had. A few days later, on a plane to the UK for a book tour, I settled in to read his novel.

Landing at Heathrow, I texted



Back on track: Jane Green and husband Ian Warburg

Novelist JANE GREEN had a loving husband and a happy family. But as she reveals here, that didn't make her immune to a new type of infidelity

Why so many women like me have an ALMOST AFFAIR

my husband to say I had arrived safely, then emailed the young, handsome author. I told him the truth, that I had finished his book and found it beautifully written.

His response came back immediately. If I didn't send him my latest book, he said, he would show up outside my window like John Cusack in *Say Anything*.

I hadn't ever seen that film, but I watched it in the hotel room that evening, trying to decipher the scene, the lyrics of the soundtrack song, trying to figure out if there was deeper meaning to his email.

We emailed back and forth during that trip to England, and every time I saw his name in his inbox, I felt my heart soar. I felt alive again in a way I hadn't in years; I felt pretty, and sexy, and young, as I made my way around the UK, constantly checking my phone for his name in my inbox.

It wasn't that I would have an

affair, I told myself. I am absolutely not the kind of person to ever have an affair, I thought. I just wanted to feel alive for a little bit longer; I wanted to feel beautiful again. I wanted one more email to feel that way again. And that, of course, is how so many affairs start.

Who amongst us, married to wonderful people, would ever have an affair? Most of us are loyal, honest, trustworthy, we are not the sort of people who would hurt our spouses in that way.

We don't want to necessarily do anything, we just want a little excitement, a little more dopamine released in our brains; we want to feel that we are still exciting. But if you don't walk away in time, there is enormous danger ahead.

I know there is a certain type of man who constantly needs approval, who kids himself that he is able to compartmentalise his life, thereby not hurting his

wife. But the thrill, the lure of excitement, of feeling alive again, is the same for women as it is for men.

Latest figures show that 22 per cent of married men admit to having an affair and 14 per cent of married women. Although the

I just wanted to feel alive, to feel beautiful again

numbers who had dreamt of it must be much higher.

The late psychologist, Dr Shirley Glass, one of the world's experts on infidelity, had this to say: 'The new infidelity is between people who unwittingly form deep,

passionate connections before realising that they've crossed the line from platonic friendship into romantic love. Infidelity is any emotional or sexual intimacy that violates trust.'

Flirtatious emails can very quickly become what feels like a deep, passionate connection — that's what I was falling into. The young, handsome author and I continued emailing, and shortly after my return, he visited New York, and we met for a quick drink.

I kissed him goodbye on the cheek, and when I arrived home, flushed with too much flirting and too many martinis, my husband took one look at me: 'Uh oh,' he stepped back and stared at me. 'My wife has a crush.'

Over the course of the next year, the emails between the author and I gradually grew less and less. I still felt a flicker of excitement when I saw his name in my inbox, but he

was in California, I was on the East Coast and it was unlikely I would ever see him again. Then I was invited to speak at an event in Los Angeles. Los Angeles! That was where the handsome author lived.

I accepted, and emailed him to let him know. Within minutes, we had agreed to brunch. I went to find my husband, to inform him I would be away on September 4th. 'September 4th?' said he. 'I don't think so.' 'What? I have to go. It's my career!' I was indignant.

'You mean, you're going away on my birthday?' he replied. I was mortified. Not only had I forgotten my husband's birthday but I was planning on spending it brunching with another man.

My husband's eyes lit up. 'I know!' he said. 'Why don't I come with you? We can make a weekend of it!' I stared at him, like a deer caught in the headlights. But what could I say? So off we went together, not just to LA but to meet Mr Dreamy.

At the restaurant, I stopped speaking. I didn't have much of a choice, unable to get a word in edgewise as my husband and the young, handsome author chatted away, nineteen to the dozen.

At one point, the author excused

Flirtatious emails can quickly feel like real passion

himself and left the table. 'Wow,' my husband turned to me, his eyes all knowing. 'He's the best looking man I've ever seen.'

After lunch, the author invited us to join him on a walk around the canals in the Venice neighbourhood. I was not dressed for walking, I was dressed for brunching, in much-too-tight jeans and strappy sandals that I thought had just the right amount of approachability combined with sex appeal. My husband enthusiastically agreed, eager to continue this new bromance.

And so, we walked. It was a blistering hot day, and within minutes my hair, which had been expertly blow-dried, frizzed into something resembling a large cloud of candy floss, sweat was trickling along my hairline, and painful blisters were forming underneath those sexy, strappy sandals.

I limped along by myself, behind my husband and the author, ten yards in front of me, their heads together, still chatting like the oldest of friends. It bloody well serves me right, I thought.

Later that night, I looked at my husband, at his salty sea-dog white beard, his large hands that make me feel safe, and I thought about how much peace, and love, and serenity he has brought to my life.

A friend once told me that the grass is greener where you water it. I had forgotten to water the grass. We had become so used to taking each other for granted, we had lost the spark.

When we got home I shamefacedly confessed to my husband that I had had what I called an 'almost affair'. I had betrayed him emotionally, if not physically. That I had been seduced by the attention.

He was stunned at first, hurt I am sure, but he held me close and told me he loved me and he trusted me. And I felt ashamed.

I had never felt so grateful to have avoided the path of excitement, and danger. Later that night the young, handsome author emailed me.

This time, there was no fluttering of my heart when I saw his name in my inbox. He wrote to tell me he thought my husband was wonderful, handsome, and utterly brilliant. Yes, I thought, leaning over to kiss my husband. You are absolutely right.

Save the Jolly Fisherman!

Skegness mascot is at risk of being axed over health and safety fears

By **Helena Kelly**

HE'S the cheerful, white-haired angler often seen skipping along the sands of Skegness, relishing the bracing breeze.

But the net is closing around Jolly the Fisherman as local officials consider axing the mascot over health and safety worries.

The character is based on the poster created by artist John Hassall in 1908 to advertise Great Northern Railways.

The famous illustration was accompanied by the slogan: 'Skegness is SO bracing.'

Locals dressed as Jolly are seen parading on the pier and beach to greet holidaymakers.

But a report commissioned by the town council has highlighted hygiene fears over the 'very dirty' mascot costumes, along with the 'resource and cost of operating Jolly'.

The costs are 'more than



Poster boy: Jolly from 1908

many will imagine' due to strict regulations, especially if they are worn by more than one person, it said.

Nobody can wear the costume for more than 20 minutes without having a 20-minute break, and all mascots must

undergo a check to ensure they can work with children.

Former town councillor John Byford said: 'Jolly is not just our town mascot - he's a crowd-puller, he's our A-list celeb. He may be 112, but he's certainly not ready to hang his boots up yet.'

There are statues and daubings of Jolly around Skegness. But this is not the first time the fisherman has been caught in a row.

In 2015, animal rights group Peta said he 'evokes images of cruelty to animals' and demanded that he be replaced with a fish.

Lincolnshire Coastal Business Improvement District, which used to look after the mascot, has stopped lending out the costumes and handed them to the council.

Last night locals took to social media to launch a 'Save Jolly' campaign. They described the character as a 'real asset to Skegness' and 'part of the town's history'.



Needing a new angle: A local in the mascot costume

PM: I'm almost certain to take time off for new baby

By **John Stevens**
Deputy Political Editor

BORIS Johnson has said he will 'almost certainly' take paternity leave when his new baby arrives.

The Prime Minister and his fiancée Carrie Symonds are expecting a baby in the early summer.

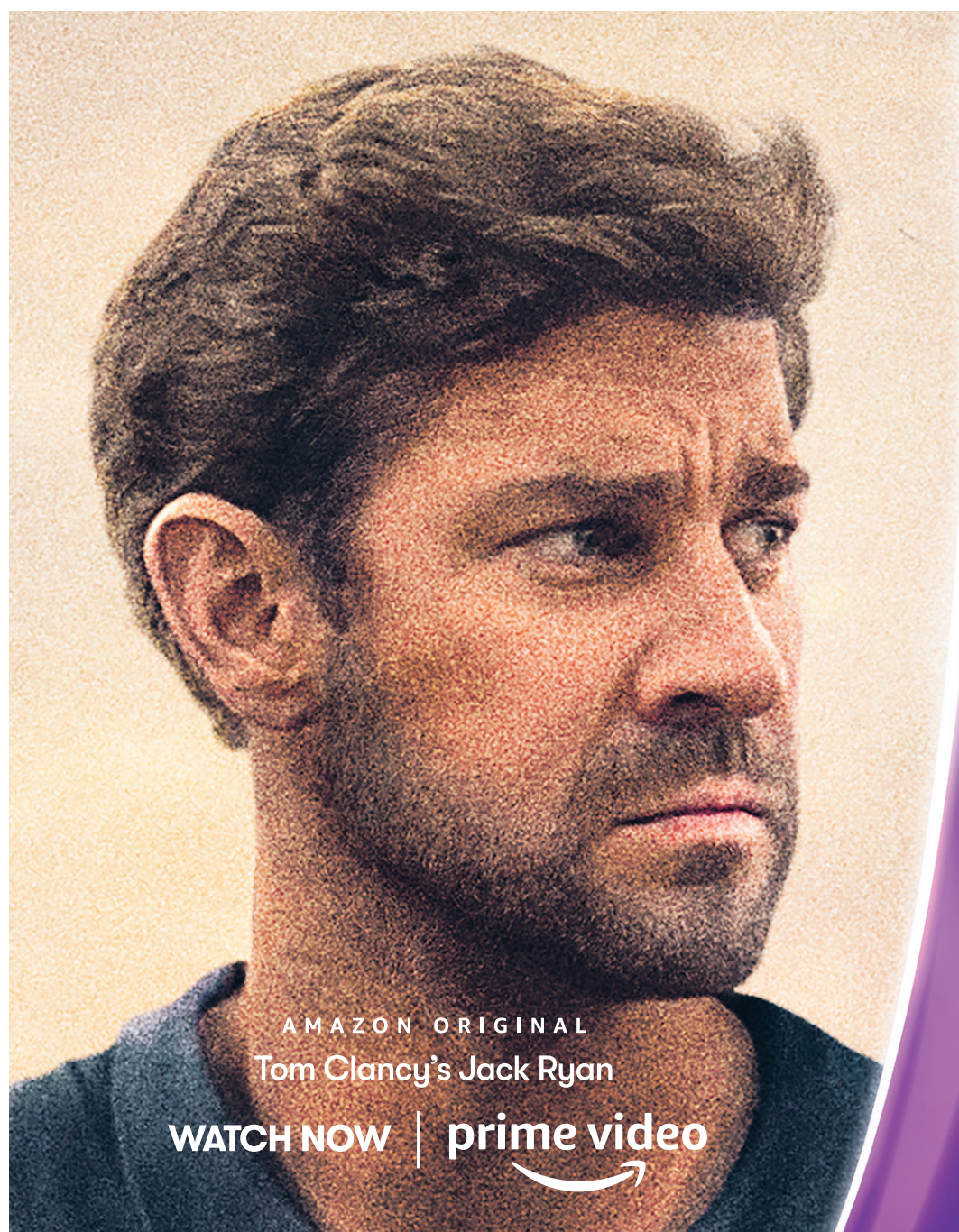
Asked yesterday by the Daily Mail whether he intends to take time off, Mr Johnson said: 'The answer is almost certainly, yes.' Although he then added: 'I can't remember what the question was.'

Over the weekend Miss Symonds told her followers on Instagram she felt 'incredibly blessed' to be planning for a baby and a wedding.

She said she and Mr Johnson became engaged at the end of last year and also have 'a baby hatching early summer'. Mr Johnson, 55, and Miss Symonds, 31, made history as the first unmarried couple to officially live together in Downing Street when they moved in last year.

Downing Street yesterday said it was too early to give details on how long Mr Johnson will take off.

Foreign Secretary Dominic Raab is expected to fill the role of acting prime minister.



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BEYOND
LIMITS

By **Rebecca Camber**
and **Java Narain**

BRITAIN'S most notorious landlord, who was once described by a judge as 'an emissary of Beelzebub', was acquitted yesterday of abusing a policeman by calling him a 'poofter'.

Nicholas van Hoogstraten, 75, walked free from court after threatening to call his 'personal friend' – the former Attorney General Geoffrey Cox – to complain about his latest prosecution.

The property tycoon was represented by Mr Cox at the Court of Appeal in 2003, when he successfully argued that his conviction for killing a business associate should be quashed. Yesterday Mr van

'A complete waste of public money'

Hoogstraten – who has changed his name to Nicholas Adolf von Hessen – attacked the criminal justice system after being hauled to court for allegedly harassing a policeman by calling him a 'poofter'.

In an extraordinary court hearing, the defendant admitted making the comment to PC James Breeds. But magistrates deemed that his use of the phrase was not actually a crime and did not meet the threshold for the offence of behaviour causing harassment, alarm or distress.

Mr van Hoogstraten told Brighton magistrates he had used a string of offensive terms for gay people 'back in the day' but he asked: 'Since when is "poof" or "poofter" in any way offensive?'

Police were called on August 19 last year after a man complained that his car had been illegally clamped at Mr van Hoogstraten's

car park in Hove, East Sussex, and a group of men were threatening to hit him if he did not pay.

When PC Breeds arrested the tycoon's son, his father intervened. Prosecutor Melanie Wotton said: 'His son is shouting and at that point Mr von Hessen says "he's a poof" to PC Breeds.'

'No other swear words were used but in my submission no other swear words have to be used. It is a derogatory and abusive term.'

Police bodycam footage was played to the court showing the tycoon's son taunting PC Breeds, and calling him 'Mad Max'. Mr van Hoogstraten added: 'Maybe he's a poofter as well.' Yesterday the

businessman ranted at court staff, and said of the case: 'It's a complete waste of public money...'

In an earlier hearing, the businessman threatened to ring Mr Cox, ranting: 'A personal friend of mine is the Attorney General and he will want to know what is going on in these courts.'

He went on: 'It was my son who was sexually assaulted by this officer, who happened to be a poofter. I made a comment about it, him being a poofter, and I'm the one who's arrested.' Yesterday PC Breeds told the court that the remark was meant to intimidate him, adding: 'It's undermining, it's aggressive, it's something you

shouldn't have to hear.' But magistrates decided that the remark did not meet the criminal threshold.

It is not the first time that Mr van Hoogstraten has walked free from court. The businessman accrued vast wealth as a slum landlord and his fortune was once estimated at £500million.

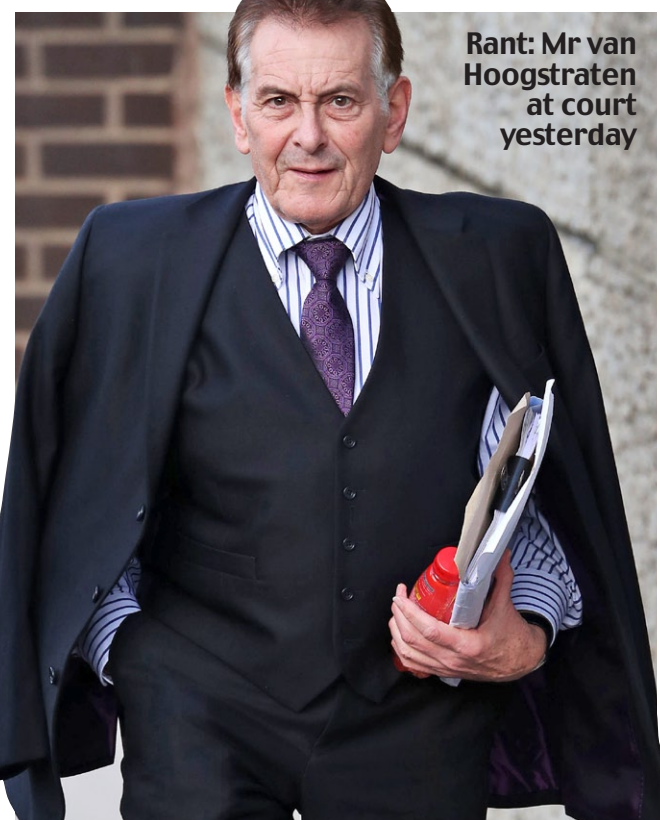
But he became notorious for court cases featuring allegations of gangland attacks carried out on his orders. At 22, he was convicted of throwing a grenade into a rabbi's home and was sentenced to four years. At the trial the judge called him a 'sort of self-imagined devil who thinks he's an emissary of Beelzebub'. In 2002 Mr van

Hoogstraten was sentenced to ten years in jail for hiring a hitman to kill property developer Mohammed Sabir Raja in 1999. The manslaughter conviction was overturned, but in 2005 a High Court civil judge ruled that Mr van Hoogstraten was responsible for recruiting the hitman after Mr Raja's family sued him for £6million.

He refused to pay and moved to Zimbabwe where he became a close associate of its dictator president Robert Mugabe.

Yesterday the tycoon said outside court: 'I'm pleased to see that there's still a semblance of British justice. It shouldn't have got off the ground in the first place.'

Cleared of abuse, tyrant landlord in gay slur at policeman



Rant: Mr van Hoogstraten at court yesterday



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Genesis reborn! Collins and Co reunited after 13 years



Back again: Phil Collins

GENESIS are to reform for a UK tour 13 years after their last live performance.

Phil Collins will be joined by original bandmates Tony Banks and Mike Rutherford for the dates at the end of the year – but founding singer Peter Gabriel is not expected to take part.

The band will announce the news on Zoe Ball's Radio 2 Breakfast show this morning.

It comes after they sparked rumours of a reunion by posting an old photo on their Instagram feed with the caption: 'And then there were three.'

Genesis, who formed in 1967 with a line-up also including Anthony Phillips and original drummer Chris Stewart, were one of the pioneers

By Helena Kelly

of 1970s prog rock before scoring big hits such as *I Can't Dance*, *Mama* and *Invisible Touch* with a more commercial sound in the 80s and 90s. They have sold more than 100 million records worldwide, with Gabriel, Collins – who joined the band as a drummer in 1970 – and Rutherford also launching hugely successful solo careers.

They split in 1996 and briefly reunited for their 40th anniversary in 2007. Tickets for the concerts in November and December will go on sale at the end of the month.

The news will come as a shock to fans after Collins, 69, said in 2018 he could no longer play drums since he had major back surgery.



Follow me: Mike Rutherford, Collins and Tony Banks in 1990

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Q0060146 February 2020



Lord Grade's £2.5m court battle with China tycoon

CONSERVATIVE peer Lord Grade is locked in a High Court battle with a former business partner he now accuses of illegal activity, it can be revealed.

The former BBC chairman is facing questions over his judgment after teaming with an entrepreneur who allegedly boasted of being jailed and is accused of being party to Ponzi-style schemes.

Lord Grade, chairman of the Lords' select committee on the impact of

By Glen Keogh

claiming he was owed £2.5million.

The parties will battle it out at a London hearing today. Lord Grade has already reported Mr Zheng to the Government's Serious Fraud Office over the botched fundraising.

Documents – seen by the Daily Mail – that are due to be put forward by Lord Grade and his associates claim that a company associated with Mr Zheng in China is under criminal investigation for alleged illegal public fundraising.

Another raid on the Chinese business, which had its operations suspended, was announced by the US Securities and Exchange Commission in November. Documents also suggest that Mr Zheng was named in a criminal judgement in China in 2017 as being a beneficiary of an illegal pyramid selling scheme.

The revelations shine an uncomfortable light on the business dealings of the Tory peer, who regularly claims his full £313-a-day allowance for sitting in the Lords.

Some Gate investors claim money running into 'millions of pounds' has been misappropriated by the Gate Ventures board. They accuse Lord Grade and other board members of 'potentially unlawful transactions'.

A spokesman for Gate Ventures said that when Mr Zheng offered to raise further funds, he had been 'vouched for' by the company's previous largest shareholder so 'the board felt it was ok to take him up on his offer'. A spokesman for Mr Zheng refused to comment ahead of the court proceedings.

'Botched fundraising'

the gambling industry, even travelled with the businessman to Macau, one of the world's gambling hotspots, to convince investors to pump £7.5million into his controversial, loss-making, media company.

During the 2018 roadshow, he described Zheng Yongxiong, known as Quentin, as his 'partner' while attempting to drum up funding in Gate Ventures, which backs West End shows and films.

Lord Grade, 76, is chairman of the company and the Duchess of York was a non-executive director until stepping down in December.

Mr Zheng is said to have promised that the Far East roadshows would raise £7.5million, which has not materialised. However he launched court action attempting to place Gate Ventures into administration

As Queen honours veteran behind Normandy memorial...



Hero: Aged 18 before D-Day

HOW I SEE IT



by Robert Hardman

EXACTLY six months from today, he will see his greatest wish come true when he watches the unveiling of the tribute to the 22,442 men and women who never came home.

But yesterday, D-Day veteran Harry Billinge was the one being honoured as he met the Queen at Buckingham Palace and received the MBE for his tireless work on behalf of the Normandy Memorial to the liberators of Europe.

Meeting the monarch, he said, had left him 'overwhelmed' but also hugely proud on behalf his fallen comrades.

Mr Billinge, 94, from St Austell, Cornwall, has been one of a group of veterans who have spent more than five years campaigning for a memorial to all members of the British Armed Forces who were killed on D-Day and in the subsequent three-month Battle of Normandy through the summer of 1944.

Uniquely among the Allies, Britain is the only country without a national memorial on French soil.

Following last year's victorious campaign by the Daily Mail and its generous readers, that omission will be corrected later this year when the spectacular Normandy Memorial is opened.

Yesterday the Queen congratulated Mr Billinge on the achievement and asked him about the unveiling on September 4.

'You're going over there, are you?' she asked him.

'If I'm still alive,' he replied cheerfully.

The Queen also noted that Mr Billinge had been discharged from the Forces through injury.

'I see you've got the King's

Badge,' she said, looking at the badge on his lapel, a silver badge for civilian wear which showed that the wearer was a veteran.

Mr Billinge confirmed that it was indeed. He said afterwards: 'He was a good bloke, King George VI, and it meant everything to meet his daughter.'

'I told her the MBE wasn't for me but for all them poor devils who never came back.'

On the morning of D-Day itself, Mr Billinge was a teenage member of a Royal Engineers unit charged with demolishing a German radar station near Arromanches.

Of his ten-man unit, only four of

them survived. To this day, he can still rattle off the names of the others in his sleep.

In advance of yesterday's ceremony, Mr Billinge and his wife, Sheila, had been guests of honour at 24 Commando Regiment Royal Engineers over the weekend.

They were then driven to the Palace yesterday in a Bentley belonging to Falklands veteran and ex-Royal Engineer commando, Dan Newbold.

'It's been the most marvellous day. I've never known anything like it in my life,' said Mr Billinge before being taken to a celebratory lunch with the Normandy

Memorial Trust, which is still raising vital funds for landscaping and maintenance of the 50-acre memorial site overlooking the landing beaches at Ver-Sur-Mer.

AMONG those who were also recognised at yesterday's investiture were actress Wendy Craig, 85, who said she has no plans to stop working in entertainment as she received her CBE from the Queen.

The great-grandmother is best known for her role as Ria Parkin-

son in the Carla Lane sitcom *Butterflies*, which aired on BBC2 from 1978 to 1983.

Novelist Rose Tremain, 76, was also made a dame for her services to writing. Her novels and short stories have been published worldwide in 27 countries, and have won various awards including the Orange Prize for Fiction in 2008 for her book *The Road Home*.

■ Donations for the Normandy Memorial can be made via www.normandymemorialtrust.org or cheques sent to The Normandy Memorial Trust, c/o The Secretary, 56 Warwick Square, London SW1V 2AJ.

My MBE is for all the poor devils who never made it back



Chat: Mr Billinge and Queen



Pride: With MBE at palace yesterday



Poignant: Harry Billinge returns to Normandy beaches in 2018

Chimewatch: Who stole the bell from England's smallest church?

ENGLAND'S smallest church will fall silent for the first time in 1,000 years after its bell was stolen.

Bremilham Church, which is 10ft by 11ft and has room for only ten worshippers, was targeted by thieves last week.

The 3ft brass bell is 291 years old and weighs around 220lb. Police believe it would have taken two or more people to remove it from its oak beam.

There has been a chapel on the site at Cowage Farm, near Malmesbury, Wiltshire, since 1179.

Farmer Thomas Collins said: 'There's only

Daily Mail Reporter

one bell like it. We're poorer for losing it. We've lost a little bit of heritage.'

The current church dates from the 15th century and holds a Guinness World Record for being the smallest in England.

The Grade II-listed building has only one service a year on Rogationtide, the sixth Sunday of Easter.

Mr Collins is not optimistic about the bell being returned, joking: 'I'm going to buy a lottery ticket instead.' Wiltshire Police said they are investigating.

Baby bumblebees are being brain damaged by pesticide

BABY bumblebees are being harmed by a commonly used pesticide.

Researchers from Imperial College London scanned the brains of bees exposed to the insecticide imidacloprid and found the key region of the brain that facilitates learning showed reduced growth.

The researchers said the findings, published in journal *Proceedings of the Royal Society B*, show that residues of this insecticide in flowers and plants can cause permanent brain damage in the insects.

The pesticide is restricted in the EU and the research supports Government policy to maintain the ban in the UK after Brexit.

By Colin Fernandez
Science Correspondent

However, it is widely applied in other countries including the US where it is one of the most commonly used pesticides.

Study lead Dr Richard Gill said: 'Bee colonies act as "superorganisms", so when any toxins enter the colony, these have the potential to cause problems with the development of the baby bees within it.'

'These findings reveal how colonies can be impacted by pesticides weeks after exposure, as their young grow into adults that may not be able to forage for food properly.'

By **Francesca Washtell**
and **Xantha Leatham**

BRITAIN'S biggest car maker has promised an incredible 40,000 volunteers to join the Great British Spring Clean.

Jaguar Land Rover's pledge comes as the total number of volunteers joining the war on litter hit an amazing 468,299 yesterday – with 11,385 events registered.

The company will organise dedicated events at its six main UK manufacturing and engineering sites and encourage their enormous workforce to get involved in the war on litter.

Chief executive, professor Sir Ralf Speth, said improving the environment was an 'integral' part of the company's mission and that his staff could make a 'real difference'.

The number signed up to this year's spring clean massively eclipses the number of volunteers who signed up in 2018, which stood at 370,000 – and we still have weeks of the campaign to go. Jag-

40,000 Jaguar staff join our litter drive

... taking the number of volunteers to 468,299

Doing their bit:
Volunteers from
Jaguar Land Rover



Daily Mail



Jaguar Land Rover said it will ask employees to use their 16 paid volunteer hours to take part in our litter campaign, run in conjunction with Keep Britain Tidy.

The company will organise litter pick events throughout March and April, while the Great British Spring Clean is underway. These will take place around its main sites in the UK including in Solihull, Birmingham and Merseyside.

Sir Ralf said: 'Improving both the environment and the lives of residents in the communities we call home is an integral part of Jaguar Land Rover's Destination Zero mission – our ambition to make our societies safer and our environment cleaner.'

'As the UK's largest automotive manufacturer our colleagues can make a real difference to our local communities and a positive impact on the environment.'

JLR is encouraging all 40,000 employees to get on-board, either in their own time or by joining an

organised event. Last year, staff at the company donated 75,000 volunteer hours to good causes across the UK.

Their announcement comes as Reckitt Benckiser, a consumer goods giant whose brands include Dettol, Strepsils and Durex have pledged to clean up the local area around its global headquarters as part of our campaign.

They said two teams of 100 volunteers will spend an afternoon litter picking around the Science and Innovation Centre in Hull and near its headquarters in Slough.

Susan Egstrand, head of Reckitt

SIMPLY GO ONLINE TO
www.gbspringclean.org
TO JOIN THE WAR ON LITTER

Benckiser UK and Ireland, said: 'The Great British Spring Clean is a fantastic initiative and we applaud the Daily Mail for its leadership on such an important issue. 'At Reckitt Benckiser we are all

committed to creating a cleaner world so we'll be rolling up our sleeves and taking part over the coming weeks.'

Many influential companies and organisations have pledged to get

involved with the Great British Spring Clean.

HSBC, Hargreaves Lansdown and Barratt Developments are also on board, and have promised to encourage their tens of thousands of staff members to take part in litter picks.

Last year our campaign, which runs from March 20 to April 13, enlisted almost 600,000 people across the country to take part in tackling Britain's litter.

This year we hope to do even bigger and better – aiming to get as close to a million volunteers as we can.

Mail+Briefings

WATCH WHEN CRICK MET MACCA

In a totally fab exclusive, our man talks US politics with Paul McCartney

www.mailplus.co.uk/crick





Model mother: Abbey Clancy

Abbey: I work to set good example to my four kids

AS a mother it can be difficult to juggle looking after young children and having a career.

But Abbey Clancy, 34, has insisted it is important to carry on working to set a good example to her four youngsters.

The model, who is married to former England striker Peter Crouch, said she is still trying to 'figure out' the

'Stuck with that guilt'

'dynamic' between her work and being a mother of four.

The couple are parents to Sophia, eight, Liberty, four, Johnny, two, and nine-month-old Jack.

Miss Clancy told OK! Magazine: 'I think for any mum who has to or chooses to go to work, you still get stuck

By **Eleanor Sharples**
TV and Radio Reporter

with that mum guilt. But for me, I feel like it's important to set a good example for them. I want to work and still be me while being the best mum I can be.'

Miss Clancy, who has a clothing line with Lipsy, said: 'I don't really feel too much pressure from outsiders.'

'I maybe put pressure on myself sometimes or feel guilty about going to work, or sometimes when you're tired your confidence might be a bit low, but I haven't really suffered too much negativity from others.'

She added: 'I have been quite lucky in that sense. I feel like I'm in a privileged position where I can do the jobs that I love and then come home and be a mum and have my four kids around me.'



Family time: The couple with three of their children

Now boss of Save The Children blames sex probe for lost £16m



By **Simon Walters**

THE embattled boss of a charity hit by sex pest claims was last night accused of making an 'outrageous' attack on the official watchdog that investigated its failure to protect female staff.

A leaked memo from Kevin Watkins, chief executive of Save The Children UK, puts the blame for it losing £16million of taxpayers' money on the Charity Commission for investigating the charity's cover-up of sexual harassment and bullying of female staff by two former bosses.

The memo plays down the seriousness of the two-year inquiry, saying it is 'no indication' of the extent of wrongdoing. And it claims the Commission is struggling to cope with a series of big investigations because of a cash shortage.

It goes on to admit that despite promising to root out mistreatment of staff at SCUK, 28 per cent said they 'had experienced some

form of workplace incivility', with those from minorities worst affected.

The memo by Mr Watkins was disclosed on the eve of tomorrow's publication of a damning report into SCUK by the Charity Commission.

The inquiry was ordered after former chief executive Justin Forsyth and his deputy Brendan Cox, the widower of

'Disruption and risks'

murdered Labour MP Jo Cox, were exposed as sex pests.

Mr Forsyth, 54, who worked for Tony Blair and Gordon Brown in Downing Street, quit a senior Unicef post in 2018 after he was accused of sending 'unsuitable' text messages to female SCUK employees.

Mr Cox, 44, who also advised Mr Brown, faced similar claims about his time at SCUK and

Save the Children 'failed female staff'

FOURTH boss could face calls to quit over charity's sex harassment scandal

From yesterday's Mail

was accused of sexually assaulting a government official in the United States.

The Commission will accuse SCUK of 'comprehensive failures' by letting Mr Forsyth and Mr Cox resign quietly in 2015 despite their misconduct.

It says the charity let down women employees badly.

It is expected to lead to calls for Mr Watkins, a SCUK trustee when the scandal was covered up, to resign. He has always denied any wrongdoing and says major changes have been introduced to safeguard female staff.

The leaked memo, sent yesterday, tells SCUK staff 'how to talk about the report' to minimise its impact and win back the £16million annual grant withdrawn by the Department for International Development because of the scandal.

It appears to blame the Commission for losing it the money - rather than Mr For-

syth and Mr Cox's behaviour and its attempt to sweep it all under the carpet.

It adds that the inquiry has 'taken longer than expected - but this shouldn't be taken as an indication of what the Commission is finding out. It has publicly stated that it is struggling with a series of big investigations at the same time as it has faced major budget cuts'.

The memo bans SCUK staff from talking to the media and reveals new security checks have been ordered to stop journalists gaining access to its London HQ tomorrow.

One source said: 'It is outrageous to point the finger of blame at the Charity Commission and demean the inquiry when SCUK only has itself to blame. Instead, they use heavy handed measures and spin to carry on covering things up. When will they learn?'

Despite downplaying the inquiry, the memo admits it failed to deal properly with Mr Forsyth and Mr Cox.

And it also reveals that, despite improvements, many staff are still unhappy with the way they are treated, particularly those from minorities.

SCUK last night said the charity had co-operated fully with the probe. A spokesman added comments in the memo about the Commission were 'already in the public domain'.

by Kathryn Knight

TEENAGER Tommy is a gentle soul, fond of football and rugby. Yet aged just 14, his days of playing them are long gone: topping the scales at 23 st, he's clinically obese and suffers chronic hip, back and knee pain.

'I'm too heavy to play football or do rugby,' he says. 'When I walk up the stairs at school, at the top, I'm sweating and my shirt has pretty much gone see-through. You get called fat.'

Five-year-old Liliane, known as Lily, is also dangerously overweight. She weighs 7st and her appetite is so voracious her despairing mum Lana has caught her trying to eat raw sausages from the freezer.

Endlessly teased at school because of her size, she has already asked her mum if she is going to end up in a wheelchair.

Then there's 15-year-old Harry, whose 18st weight has put such a strain on his hips that one has collapsed, requiring painful — and high risk — surgery.

They are some of the 80 outpatients seen every week at Bristol Royal Hospital for Children's Obesity Clinic, where a team of

specialists sits at the front line of what is nothing less than an epidemic. Last autumn, new figures showed that levels of severe obesity among primary school age children had reached an all-time high.

Worse, if they are still obese aged 14, they are 80 per cent more likely to be living with obesity as an adult — a condition which results in more years of unhealthy life, costs the NHS some £5.1 billion a year and, after smoking, is the single greatest cause of early death in the UK.

A damning new study published today reveals the health of British children is falling behind those of other wealthy countries, with obesity a prime factor in the decline.

It means that it is no exaggeration to say the doctors, nurses and social workers at Bristol's child obesity clinic — and similar units throughout the UK — are battling to stop young people eating themselves into an early grave. It's a battle that has now been captured

on camera for the first time in a thought-provoking, one-off documentary.

Sensitively filmed, it is a no-holds-barred look at both the myriad physical and psychological complexities of this modern phenomenon and its grim daily realities.

'I've seen children with BMIs of 65, 67 [the healthy range for adults is between 18.5 and 25] and because being overweight and obesity have become so prevalent in the country then people have stopped recognising it as being different,' says Professor Julian Hamilton-Shield, Clinical Lead Paediatric Weight Management at the Bristol unit.

'Eighty five percent of parents don't recognise that their child is overweight — and the ultimate responsibility for the care of that child is with their parents.'

Fifteen-year-old Harry appears to fall into this category. His 18st weight and Body Mass Index (BMI) of 44 — which means he is considered extremely obese — have led to the collapse of his hip. It requires complex surgery, an already fraught procedure, and one where all the risks are heightened by the patient's obesity.

What's more, unless Harry gets his weight problem under control, the same thing is likely to happen to his other hip.

For his mum Sue — who is also overweight — it's a wake-up call. 'I didn't realise it was as bad as it was,' she says. 'I suppose you see them every day and you don't realise how much weight he's put on.'

Yet this wake-up call does not translate into drastic change: while under the clinic's supervision, Harry initially lost 4st, he then regained two in a pattern that is so horribly familiar to the unit's staff that Professor Hamilton-Shield likens part of his job as being that of a detective.

'We're trying to work out what's within the family that is leading to the excess weight,' he says. 'We don't like it — nobody likes it — but we probe. And sometimes it comes out and sometimes it doesn't.'

More often than not, myriad problems lie in the background, as with Tommy, a sweet-natured teenager who, at 23st, is one of the clinic's heaviest patients.

He was referred there in 2018 aged 12 and weighing nearly 19st, but while he initially lost some weight under clinic supervision, when filming commenced last summer, he had gained 6st in just five months taking him to 23st.

EVEN given his 6ft 6in height he's morbidly obese, a situation that has left his mum Esther, 42, in her words, 'grieving for a child who is still here'.

He's the second of single mum Esther's four children — she has three others aged eight to 18 — and she recalls how his weight problems began five years ago when he was diagnosed first with glandular fever, then chronic fatigue syndrome.

It meant that her previously active, healthy boy suddenly spent a large portion of the day in bed.

'The lack of activity was a massive contribution to the weight gain,' Esther recalls.

'And a lot of the time the house would be asleep when Tommy was awake. He'd miss proper meal times and be grabbing and grazing. There were mental health issues as well. He was very depressed and on occasion he had suicidal thoughts.'

All the while, Tommy's weight was creeping up, before finally, in 2018 and weighing nearly 19st, he was referred to Bristol's obesity clinic.

'I made him several doctor's appointments and I highlighted it with the school nurse but not much came of it,' Esther says. 'I was doing my best, but I just kept being told he needed to cut down. But it simply wasn't as easy as that given everything else that was going on.'

That is not, of course, a popular view, with many people thinking that

obese people simply need to eat less. 'I know what people think,' Esther says. 'It's so easy to judge. Weight is a target point for people and it shields them from looking beyond that point.'

'I'm a bigger mum so I know people look at me and think: "Fat mum, fat kid, they must be eating loads of junk." But that's not the truth.'

'I home cooked healthy meals, but I couldn't police what he was eating 24-7.'

Five-year-old Lily's mum Lana is also used to judgmental looks: at 7st, her daughter is twice the average weight for her age — far heavier than her seven-year-old brother Jaden.

'Jaden is a normal sized boy, so they look at Lily and assume I am over-feeding her,' Lana says. 'You can see the looks when you're out and about — that I've got no discipline and no boundaries, which isn't true. I am trying to do my best like any mum, but it's incredibly hard.'

Particularly tough for Lana, is her daughter's voracious appetite which leads her to ransack the house for food: everything from raw sausages from the freezer and even, on one occasion, toilet paper.

HER ravenous hunger pains also see her descend into violent fits of anger and tantrums.

'It started from when she was tiny, eight weeks old. I noticed that no amount of milk would fill her up, she was never satisfied with what she was given,' Lana recalls.

'She would wake often in the night screaming for food. At first I just assumed she was a really hungry baby, so, of course, I just gave her what I thought she needed.'

It meant that by the time Lily was three, she was so heavy Lana couldn't pick her up — and her frame was matched by her appetite.

'She would go through all the cupboards and the freezers to get anything, every sort of food she could get her hands on,' Lana recalls.

'It was the same at nursery. I would get calls from the staff saying she was going into the kitchen trying to get food. I didn't really understand it — why she was the way she was.'

After several visits to the doctor, her weight gain accelerating and her behaviour worsening, Lily, then four, was referred to the obesity clinic, where she was placed on a strict calorie-controlled diet.

'The problem was, that rule book was ripped up the moment we walked through the door,' says Lana. 'She thought I was starving her because she's constantly hungry. It made me feel like a terrible mum.'

Lily's constant hunger was also a worry to the obesity clinic team, who after several months of supervision decided to undertake further investigations to find out if there was any other reason she was not losing weight.

Their work led them to a research institute in Cambridgeshire, where blood samples revealed Lily has a rare genetic malfunction that means her body is unable to process calories as efficiently as usual and that — vitally — she feels intense pangs of hunger equivalent to someone who hasn't eaten for three days.

As the consultant gently tells Lana: 'It's not her fault she's hungry.'

It came as a huge relief, giving some explanation for the difficult past five years. 'I've carried a lot of guilt, that it's somehow my fault, so this took some of that weight away,' Lana says.

Yet the news has also proved a mixed blessing, because at the moment little can be done to mitigate against it.

Because Lily is too young for appetite suppressants or specialist medicines, Lana can only continue to try to manage what her daughter eats. It means working with nurses and specialist psychologists.

It's another reminder of the complexities of the issues faced by the clinic, which on occasion resorts to drastic action to deal with the

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At 15, Harry weighed 18 STONE — so big he needed a hip replacement. So why ARE there more and more young ones like him?

children in their care. Faced with Tommy's spiralling weight, they decide to admit him as an inpatient for ten days, meaning his diet will be controlled round the clock by hospital staff.

The hope is that a strict timetable can be put in place which can be replicated at home — except it doesn't quite work out like that: while Tommy initially loses a stone, he then, to the hospital's astonishment, puts it back on.

The culprit is none other than Esther, whom staff discover is smuggling in extra food, insisting her son's diet was neither sufficiently varied or enough to

sustain him. Today, she remains unrepentant about her actions.

'As a typical day's menu, he had a slice of toast for breakfast, a jacket potato with cheese and beans for lunch and the same for dinner with two pieces of fruit,' she says.

'It was going from one extreme to another and it's not sustainable in the real world.'

It proves another revealing insight into the complex maze that the clinic's staff have to navigate, from the complicated associations parents place between food and love to the emotional problems behind some children's compulsive need to eat. In Harry's case, we

learn that his father's sporadic presence in his life — here one minute, gone the next — has left him seeking solace in food.

Asked if his weight is connected to his relationship with his dad, he replies: 'I don't want to be that person that finds every excuse but I think it is.'

For paediatric obesity nurse specialist Melanie Wren, Harry's feelings are not atypical.

'When you really talk to the children it's not about hunger, it's an intrinsic need — they almost get a feeling of love when they're eating,' she says. 'What you need to do is deal with the emotional



**15-YEAR-OLD HARRY:
18 STONE**



**5-YEAR-OLD LILY:
7 STONE**

On the scales: Harry is weighed in the clinic. Left, Lana and daughter Lily

Pictures: CHANNEL 4/
JOHN LAWRENCE

trauma that is making them feel that way, that they need that food as a substitute.'

There are certainly no quick fixes. Today, Lily weighs 8st — the same as a small adult woman — and it remains a daily struggle for mum Lana to control her appetite.

'I pretty much have to starve her to get her to lose any weight,' she says. 'Even after a meal she says she's starving — she will pinch her belly and tell it to stop hurting.'

Yet there is, at least, some light at the end of this tunnel.

'She does still struggle daily, but she now has more understanding, which helps,' says Lana. 'She knows what's wrong.'

Six months after filming ended, Tommy's weight is on a downward trajectory: he's lost 3.5st — taking him to 19st — and is sticking to a strict calorie-controlled plan.

While he still suffers from chronic fatigue, his stint in hospital led to more regular sleeping patterns.

'I think being in hospital was a trigger of realising quite how big he had got,' says Esther.

'He had lost control of his own well-being. It made me realise we were all going to have to work together.'

■ **100 Kilo Kids: Obesity SOS** is on Channel 4 at 9pm tonight.

Air rage mum and daughter 'attacked pilot in buggy row'



Charge: Miss Mitaiare

A MOTHER and daughter attacked an airline captain after they were told they couldn't store a child buggy in the cabin, a court heard.

Mary Roberts, 53, and Henrietta Mitaiare, 23, allegedly pushed pilot Guido Keel into the cockpit before biting, scratching and kicking him on the floor.

The pair, who had travelled from Zurich to London with Mitaiare's young daughter,

Daily Mail Reporter

launched the attack after their flight arrived at Heathrow on May 2 last year.

Before they left Switzerland, Mitaiare asked a flight attendant whether her 'expensive' buggy could go in the cabin rather than the hold - but was refused, Uxbridge magistrates' court heard.

An argument started when two airport workers arrived, before Roberts 'stepped in

to calm her daughter down'. After landing at Heathrow Mitaiare asked cabin crew for the names of the Swiss airport workers so she could make a complaint. This prompted Capt Keel to come out from the cockpit, said Arlene De Silva, prosecuting.

Cabin manager Ali Chkerdaa, who had refused to allow Mitaiare to carry the buggy on board in Zurich, said Mitaiare told the pilot: 'Don't meddle with it, you have nothing to do with it.' Mr Chkerdaa said: 'She said Swiss people are racist, because she was a black woman travelling with a child.'

'She said, "Don't touch me." The moment he touched her she went all crazy.'

The court was shown footage in which Mitaiare is heard saying: 'Why did you put your hands on me? Why did you hit a woman? Do you think you have the power?' Capt Keel responds: 'I have the power.'

Miss De Silva said: 'She [Mitaiare] grabbed the captain by the hand and pushed him into the cockpit. There was a tussle. She ended up on top of the captain.'

'The mother was kicking the captain while he was on the floor, saying "Get off my daughter".' The Swiss Air pilot

'She said the Swiss are racist'

sustained scratches to his face and arm and a bite on his upper arm, Miss De Silva said. Friedrich Prieler, the co-pilot, said he was hesitant to use force to stop the struggle because Mitaiare is a woman.

Asked if Capt Keel had failed to show similar restraint, Mr Prieler made reference to the so-called Tokyo Convention, which grants certain immunities for captains on their aircraft if they believe there is a threat to safety. 'He was not punching. He used his weight advantage,' he said.

Mitaiare and Roberts, of south-west London, were removed from the plane by police and arrested. They deny failing to obey the lawful commands of the aircraft's captain and assault by beating.

The trial continues.

US gears up for a super choose day

MILLIONS of Americans headed to the polls yesterday for Super Tuesday - the most important day in the race to the White House so far.

Fourteen states were choosing a Democratic candidate to challenge Donald Trump in the November election.

Frontrunner Bernie Sanders was up against former vice president Joe Biden, who has picked up three endorsements from former rivals.

They were also facing billionaire Mike Bloomberg for the first time. Elizabeth Warren also remains in the race.

Moderate Pete Buttigieg withdrew this week.

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MTG 00429b

March 4, 2020

ON THIS DAY

FROM THE DAILY MAIL ARCHIVE

MARCH 4, 1957

IN WATERLOOVILLE, Hants, they wanted a nameplate for a road. Eventually it arrived... spelt Marilyn Avenue, — after Marilyn Monroe? 'Who's Marilyn Monroe?' asked the locals. And yesterday the plate went to be altered to the spelling Waterlooville has known for 20 years... Maralyn.

MARCH 4, 1965

POP singer Davy Jones, right, [soon to become David Bowie] lost a part in a BBC TV show yesterday because he refuses to get his 15-inch-long hair cut. He said last night: 'I wouldn't have any hair cut for the Prime Minister, let alone the BBC. It took nearly three years to grow and it's part of my stock-in-trade.'



HAPPY BIRTHDAY

TIM VINE, 53. In 2014 the London-born comic became the only person to win the Best Joke At The Edinburgh Fringe award for a second time, with the one-liner: 'I've decided to sell my Hoover... well, it was just collecting dust.' He once held the Guinness World Record for most jokes told in one hour (499). Despite his success, the younger brother of TV's Jeremy Vine says he refuses ever to pay more than £2,000 ('absolute maximum') for a car.

PATSY KENSIT, 52. The former child actress, right, says she's 'worked every year of my life since I was four' (when she appeared in an advert for Birds Eye peas). She was just six when she starred with Robert Redford in The Great Gatsby and 16 when she got cast opposite David Bowie in the 1986 film Absolute Beginners. Describing herself as 'a hopeless romantic', she has married and divorced four musicians, including Liam Gallagher and Jim Kerr.



BORN ON THIS DAY

ANNE HANEY (1934-2001). The U.S. actress appeared in Mrs Doubtfire and played Michael Douglas's secretary in The American President. Explaining why she entered the film industry, she said: 'My husband died, my daughter went to college, the dog got fleas, and the maid quit. So I had to come to Hollywood.'

JIM CLARK (1936-68). The Fife-born farmer-turned-F1 driver was world champion in 1963 and 1965 and winner of a then-record 25 Grand Prix races. Clark died aged 32 after his Lotus-Cosworth careered off the track into a wood at 160mph during a F2 race in Germany.

ON MARCH 4...

IN 1933, Frances Perkins became the first woman to serve in a U.S. cabinet when President Roosevelt made her Labor Secretary.

IN 1966, the London Evening Standard published an interview with John Lennon, in which he said of The Beatles: 'We're more popular than Jesus now.' It set off an international furor when reprinted in a U.S. magazine nearly five months later.

WORD WIZARDRY

GUESS THE DEFINITION: Novena (c1850)

A) Nine-day service and devotion of prayers. B) A recruit. C) A novelty.

Answer below

PHRASE EXPLAINED

Play ducks and drakes: Refers to the game of skimming stones across the water to bounce more times than anyone else's. By the 17th century, it came to refer to squandering one's time and money.

QUOTE FOR TODAY

'Standards are always out of date. That is what makes them standards.'

Alan Bennett, writer, actor and dramatist

JOKE OF THE DAY

WHAT do you call a Roman with a cold?

Julius Sneezer.

Guess the Definition answer: A.

Compiled by ETAN SMALLMAN and ADAM JACOT DE BOINOD

By **Claire Ellicott**
Political Correspondent

WHEN Connie Elson was diagnosed with a rare disease at the age of five, it was already too late for doctors to stop it.

By then the bright and independent little girl was losing her ability to walk, talk and eat as the degenerative brain condition known as MLD paralysed her young body.

But while her diagnosis was devastating and has led to a life of dependency for Connie, it spared her three-year-old brother Joe – who had also inherited the condition – allowing him to be treated before it could take hold.

Connie's parents Nicola and Ian say the fates of their son and daughter illustrate just how important it is to catch condi-

'No longer able to talk, sit up or eat'

tions early. They are backing a campaign to expand the heel-prick test which is given to all newborns so that it includes a far wider range of conditions, including MLD – metachromatic leukodystrophy.

Britain, which tests for just nine diseases, is far behind many developed countries and now trails the likes of Poland, Hungary and Slovakia in testing for severe conditions.

Tory MP Nickie Aiken is leading efforts to bring the UK into line with countries such as the US, which tests for up to 59 conditions, Iceland, which tests for 47, and Italy, which tests for 43.

Mrs Elson said: 'Joe was diagnosed on time only because of Connie. We wish we could have known sooner about Connie and given her a chance.'

'She went from being a very happy and independent little girl to completely dependent on others. She is no longer able to walk,

talk, sit up and even eat. Newborn screening would have caught Connie's condition early.

'The UK is so far behind many other European countries and that needs to be addressed as a matter of urgency.'

'Our children are the most important things in the world and right now they are being let down, it needs to change.'

Mrs Elson, from Cumbria, said that up until the age of four Connie was like any other little girl.

But her parents became worried when she began school and was unable to concentrate and became

clumsy. They initially put this down to her having trouble settling into school but soon realised it was more serious and tests eventually revealed she had MLD. Two months after her diagnosis she took her last steps and just a few months later spoke her last words.

Five years on, Connie is completely dependent on her parents for every aspect of her care.

She has to take a cocktail of drugs to try to keep her as comfortable as possible. She has lost her memory and sight, and suffers seizures. Doctors were unable to offer Connie treatment as the dis-

ease had progressed so swiftly. But as Joe had yet to show symptoms he was offered pioneering gene therapy treatment in Italy. He is doing well.

Mrs Aiken, the new MP for Cities of London and Westminster, is writing to every MP to win their support for expanding the heel-prick test screening programme, which would cost just £42 per child.

Yesterday a leading specialist in rare diseases in children said red tape was the reason Britain was falling behind. Bobby Gaspar, professor of paediatrics and immunology at University College Lon-

don, said: 'Other countries have managed to do this in a much shorter time. There is a sense of caution in the UK. It is a bureaucratic process and the criteria are applied too stringently.'

'Given that we are one of the most technologically advanced nations, and we have such pride in the NHS, it seems anomalous that we're not screening for these conditions.'

'In the post-Brexit era we don't want to be at the bottom of international league tables.'

'We want to have pride in our independent nation.'

Test for rare disease may have spared our girl life of suffering



Left paralysed: Connie Elson with her little brother Joe

INSIDE THIS SATURDAY'S **Daily Mail**

Delicious way to reverse diabetes



With the NHS expert who's transformed so many lives



Plus: Special recipe pullout

Sheridan's baby name dilemma: Storm... or Colin?

PREGNANT actress Sheridan Smith is having difficulty choosing a name for her unborn son.

'We were thinking of naming him after my dad but my dad's name was Colin. As much as we miss and love him, there are cooler names in the world such as Storm and River,' Sheridan tells me at *Pretty Woman: The Musical* at the Piccadilly Theatre, where she was flanked by fiancé Jamie Horn.

She insists she will return to work as soon as the baby arrives in spring. 'I'm chomping at the bit,' Sheridan admits.



■ **ACTRESS** Caroline Quentin, who turns 60 this year, says she doesn't mind growing old. 'Not at all,' she says. 'I'm actually looking forward to it. Life at the moment feels fantastic. I'm working, I'm healthy, Sam and I have three amazing children. Bring it on!' Her husband, Sam Farmer, is 12 years her junior, but she says people no longer make a fuss about the age gap. 'They

did when we first got together, but that's over 20 years ago. 'It's strange, isn't it? If the age gap was the other way around, nobody would be bothered — but if a woman goes out with a younger man, he becomes her toyboy. 'I don't think people care about stuff like that any more. I've got friends in their 30s and friends in their 80s. Age doesn't matter.'

diary@dailymail.co.uk
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SHAK

Friday 13th tempts fate for celebration of V.S. Naipaul's life

HE WAS the greatest writer of our age and it was billed as his final farewell. But next week's memorial for novelist Sir Vidia Naipaul at the National Portrait Gallery has been postponed due to the spread of coronavirus.

Publishers from all over the world were invited to gather on Friday, March 13th to pay homage to the Nobel laureate and Booker prize winner whose work has been translated into 34 languages and who died, aged 85, in 2018.

Oscar-winning actor Jeremy Irons had agreed to give a special reading.

A family friend tells me: 'Nothing

■ **ACTRESS** Miriam Margolyes is truly conflicted. 'I'm happy with my face, but I'm disgusted by my body,' she says. 'I've been on diets all my life. It's a constant battle. If I could migrate my personality and my face onto another body, I'd be delighted. Whose body? Claudia Winkleman's!'

ever stopped Vidia from his intrepid travels, be it a revolution in Iran and witchcraft in Africa or even genteel uprisings in Wiltshire. So it's entirely understandable that it would have to take something as dramatic as a pandemic pestilence to postpone his final farewell.'

V.S. Naipaul penned more than 30 books, including *The Enigma Of Arrival* and *A House For Mr Biswas*,

and was knighted in 1990. Born and brought up in poverty in Trinidad — which he later said was 'a great mistake' as he didn't like the climate or the heat or the loudness and felt he was in the wrong place — he won a government scholarship to read English at Oxford's University College, where he suffered a nervous breakdown.

The service was being organised for next Friday by his widow Nadira, a distinguished Pakistani writer who protects his legacy with lioness-like grit and charm.

His last book, *Grief*, about the death of his beloved cat Augustus, is being published posthumously.

Naipaul had a famously understated wit, once teasing Salman Rushdie by describing Ayatollah Khomeini's 1989 fatwa on the author as 'an extreme form of literary criticism'.

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MATCH EVERY CITY IN A COLUMN TO WIN

TODAY'S CITIES — WEDNESDAY, MAR 4

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INSIDE Saturday's Daily Mail there was a unique Passport to Riches weekly gamecard, and the first four cities were printed on a Passport to Riches page inside the newspaper. Today, in the 'TODAY'S CITIES' box (to the left of these instructions), are four new cities.

HOW TO PLAY

1. Use your unique gamecard from Saturday's Daily Mail to play this week's game (final week).
2. Every day, circle the four cities on your gamecard which match the four cities in the 'TODAY'S CITIES' box (to the left of these instructions).
3. We will print the names of four different cities inside the Daily Mail and The Mail on Sunday every day on the Passport to Riches page, until Friday, March 6.
4. If at any time until Friday you match ALL of the cities in a single column (downwards), you will win the prize shown above it. The player on the example gamecard on the left would win £10,000.

HAVE YOU MATCHED ALL OF THE CITIES IN ONE COLUMN ON YOUR CARD?

HOW TO CLAIM

- If you have matched and circled ALL of the cities in a single column (downwards) on your gamecard, call the claim line on **0345 071 2722** between 9am and 4pm, no later than Friday, March 6, 2020.
- Make sure you have your gamecard ready when you ring for verification. Calls will be charged at local rates.
- Claims will not be accepted after 4pm on Friday, March 6, 2020.

GET TOMORROW'S Daily Mail FOR THE NEXT FOUR CITIES

TERMS AND CONDITIONS: *£1 million is the total prize fund over four weeks. Game open to UK residents aged 18+ only. If you need help with your gamecard, please call 0345 071 2722. Prizes are spread across four separate issues of the gamecards available inside the Daily Mail on February 8, 15, 22 and 29. The promoter reserves the right to declare as void any claims resulting from printing, production or distribution errors. You must retain original newspaper and follow our instructions to verify a claim and claim your prize. Prize must be claimed between 9am and 4pm by the Friday following each gamecard being issued i.e. February 14, 21, 28 and March 6. All entries must be available for verification. Prize will be transferred to winner within 28 days from verification. Publicity may be given to winners and images may be published in the paper and on our website(s). Winners must co-operate fully for publicity purposes. Winners' names are available by sending SAE to 'Passport to Riches Winners' at Promoter's address, up to one month after relevant closing date. Promoter: Associated Newspapers Ltd, 2 Derry Street, London, W8 5TT.

ESPREARE



Iris glitters in gold at Paris debut

THOSE LUCKY breaks just keep on coming.

Jude Law's model daughter Iris made her catwalk debut yesterday at Paris Fashion Week.

As the face of Burberry Beauty, Iris is one of the country's most sought-after young models but has never appeared in a fashion show before.

Wearing a 1980s-style dress with a cummerbund waist in yellow gold and black chiffon overlay, the 19-year-old goddaughter of Kate Moss walked the Miu Miu runway alongside Kaia Gerber on the final day of the autumn/winter shows.

'I'm so happy that Miu Miu is the first ever show I'm walking in,' said Iris, who took her A-levels in philosophy, English literature and art last year. 'One of my first ever modelling jobs was for Miu Miu. I was blown away by the whole experience.'

■ **CHEERS!** Princess Eugenie's husband, Jack Brooksbank, is toasting record profits at his wholesale drinks business. New accounts for Jack Brooksbank Ltd disclose a profit of £42,000 for the year to August 2019 — to take the net worth of the company to £70,000. It's the most profitable year so far for the business, which was established in 2016. In 2018, it made £13,000. Jack is also an ambassador for Casamigos, the tequila brand created by Hollywood star George Clooney and Rande Gerber, husband of supermodel Cindy Crawford.

■ **POET Laureate** Simon Armitage, who has penned eight official commissions since his appointment last May, has yet to receive his stipend of 600 bottles of sherry. 'They are coming year-on-year so there hasn't been a whole consignment arriving by articulated lorry,' he tells me. The bottles will eventually mature in Armitage's garden shed, which he is currently using to record a podcast. 'I already have a few bottles of "trainer sherry" there. I'm sharpening my palate.'



Tilda is her girl's hero

SHE has played everything from the White Witch in *The Chronicles Of Narnia* to the mother of a teenage killer in *We Need To Talk About Kevin*.

Oscar-winning actress Tilda Swinton, who received the Fellowship of the British Film Institute this week, once even assumed a male guise, playing Orlando in an adaptation of Virginia Woolf's novel.

Accompanying her to the celebratory dinner was her daughter Honor, 21 (left), whose trousers sported images of the most androgynous star of them all — David Bowie.

Tilda, who bears a striking resemblance to the singer, collaborated with him on his video *The Stars (Are Out Tonight)*.

Charles digs around to replace head gardener

AS HEAD gardener for Prince Charles's beloved Highgrove home, Debs Goodenough has become one of the women closest to the heir to the throne.

But after 12 years' devoted service, the talented Debs is stepping down and an advertisement for a new head gardener to replace her has appeared on the royal website. 'The Royal Garden at Highgrove was created by

the Prince of Wales over 40 years ago,' it says. 'The unique flora and fauna are managed in harmony with nature to reflect the Prince's commitment to organic and sustainable principles.'

Goodenough is credited as being behind the success of the stunning grounds. There are intimate corners such as a memorial to his Jack Russell, Tigga, and a bench in two of the Queen Mother's favourite colours.

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By **Fiona Parker**

CAR crash victims who used no-win, no-fee lawyers to fight personal injury claims may have been ripped off to the tune of hundreds of pounds.

One claims firm estimates that more than two million may have been overcharged by solicitors who asked clients to pay top rates for the most straightforward cases.

No-win, no-fee claims have boomed ever since the Government began to restrict and later abolish legal aid for personal injury cases in the 1990s.

Under current laws, solicitors make their money on cases they win with a 'basic charge' — usually £600 paid by the other driver's insurance company for claims worth less than £10,000 — and a 'success fee' that comes out of their client's damages.

This success fee is calculated as a percentage of the basic charge, so should not exceed £600 in most cases. And a Ministry of Justice cap also means that success fees should not be higher than 25pc of the damages the claimant has won.

The fee must also reflect the risk taken in fighting the case. So an open-and-shut case should not require a huge success fee.

But costs recovery firm *Checkmylegalfees.com* says many personal injury lawyers have been ignoring how the success fee should be charged and taking a 'blanket rate' of 25pc against the compensation, rather than properly calculating the success fee.

It means that claimants with low-risk cases have been made to pay the same rates as those with claims less likely to succeed.

And some solicitors are charging 25pc of the damages automatically.

A landmark Court of Appeal ruling last year found that one no-win, no-fee firm was not entitled to charge the maximum fee. A judge also found no clear evidence that the claimant had approved the costs incurred.

The former director of the Liverpool firm involved in the case, Hampson Hughes, confirmed that the company imposed a blanket rate of success fees across all similar claims.

In his witness statement he said: 'I also know that many of our competitors charge success fees in the same way that we do.'

Checkmylegalfees.com represents people who believe they have been overcharged by solicitors.

THE firm is understood to have won more than 100 cases in the past two-and-a-half years and has used the Court of Appeal judgment to win back fees for many of its clients. It has recovered £750 on average for each claimant. However, it can also charge success fees which are capped in the same way as personal injury claims.

This means claimants will be charged up to 25pc of their damages through claiming their money back.

Mark Carlisle, founder of *Checkmylegalfees.com*, says that more than two million people may have been overcharged by a personal injury company.

He says: 'We conservatively estimate that the no-win, no-fee law firms have overcharged road traffic accident injury victims £2 billion.'

The overcharging may go back as far as 2013 when the 25pc cap was introduced. It's understood that many firms have changed their charging practices since the Court of Appeal case, in a

bid to avoid further claims. Peter Corbett, 46, was approached by a secretary working for Raims Law within minutes of his accident in Manchester in February 2017.

He says a young employee of the firm ran over to the self-employed joiner after she saw another car go into the back of his Vauxhall Vivaro in stationary traffic. Peter adds: 'I felt harangued. I didn't think she would go away unless I went with her back to the office.'

The Stockport resident ended up signing a conditional fee agreement in which he was told he would pay the firm 25pc of his compensation if he won but nothing more in legal costs.

However, he was not told that the costs Raims Law could

recover from the other motorist's insurer were likely to be fixed at £600 and that he could end up paying a shortfall for the firm's hourly rate charges.

Peter ended up receiving £3,700 in damages in June 2017, but he instructed *Checkmylegalfees.com* when he realised Raims Law had taken a success fee of £925.

The High Court in Sheffield eventually ordered an £835 refund along with £60.53 in interest.

A Raims Law spokesman says that while it does not comment on individual cases, the practice of charging success fees was 'not particularly clear' before the April 2019 Court of Appeal case.

He adds: 'That decision has

assisted solicitors with the way in which certain features of charging success fees is explained to their clients, and most solicitors have made the appropriate changes to their practices to avoid the types of problems that arose in [the case].'

A Law Society spokesman says: 'Every case is unique and personal injury solicitors entering into a conditional fee agreement should never assume a success fee of 25pc applies to all cases.'

An Association of Personal Injury Lawyers spokesman says: 'Solicitors must act in the best interest of their clients and this includes providing a clear explanation of their fees.'

f.parker@daily@mail.co.uk

Injured in a crash? You may have been taken for a ride

A landmark court case has lifted the lid on the rip-off charges of no-win, no-fee injury lawyers for car crash claims. Now millions may be in line for a payout

HOW TO CLAIM

IF YOU think you have been overcharged by a law firm, your first port of call should be the firm you used to pursue your claim. Ask for a full breakdown of costs and make sure you understand what each charge relates to.

If you don't feel you are getting anywhere, take your complaint to the Legal Ombudsman for free. You usually have six years to lodge a case.

Write to: Legal Ombudsman, PO Box 6806, Wolverhampton, WV1 9WJ or call 0300 555 0333.

You could also take your case to a cost recovery firm such as *checkmylegalfees.com*.



NATAYLA COWELL recovered £613.75 from a personal injury firm which cold-called her ten months after she was involved in a crash.

The carer had been driving into work in 2016, when another car hit her Ford Focus.

Natayla, then 25, began to feel whiplash pains across her shoulders a few days later but it wasn't until Cheshire-based Thorneycroft Solicitors called her that she thought she would be entitled to compensation.

The mother-of-two says: 'I asked them how they got my number and they said it was from a database. They kept saying I deserved the money.'

Natayla felt hurried into making a decision and decided to sign a conditional fee agreement with the firm. She had no idea that personal injury claimants have three years to make a claim.

Thorneycroft proceeded with

I won £3,000 for whiplash but had to pay law firm £673

the case by submitting a claim form through the online road traffic accident portal. The other driver's insurer went on to admit liability just under two weeks later. Natayla, 29, who lives in Telford, Shropshire, ended up winning back £2,995 in damages. But the firm took £673.75 in fees from her compensation.

She went on to instruct *Check my legal fees.com* in December 2017. But when the firm requested papers from Natayla's case, Thorneycroft wrote directly to

her and said that it would be seeking 'unrecovered' costs of £731 because she had made a claim against it. Natayla says: 'It was intimidating.'

She continued pursuing her claim. But it was not until July last year that a judge ruled that she had been overcharged and Thorneycroft was ordered to pay her £613.75 plus £88.65 interest. She says: 'I feel they took advantage of my ignorance.'

Thorneycroft did not respond to requests for comment.



Natayla: 'It was intimidating'

Rise of 'free' firms used by millions

NO-WIN, no-fee claims firms emerged in the Nineties, when the government restricted and later abolished Legal Aid for personal injury cases.

It meant those who signed the new Conditional Fee Agreements (CFAs) could make a personal injury claim without having to worry about paying legal costs if they lost.

The no-win, no-fee deals were first allowed for a range of court cases in England and Wales in 1995. Three years later, a move was made to extend them to all civil cases, with the exception of family courts.

It wasn't long before TV adverts showing people falling from ladders or being involved in car accidents became commonplace.

The personal injury market is now valued at nearly £4 billion a year. But the practice has come under considerable criticism from those who believe they make money out of a 'compensation culture'.

And the firms which use the agreements have been accused of making money from



those who make claims against publicly funded bodies, such as the NHS.

Lawyers who use CFAs will say there is no gravy train, because firms lose money from

unsuccessful cases. In the past, these firms have also been accused of using unscrupulous means to get leads for new claimants.

Cold calls from staff asking whether you've been involved in an accident are still common. However, in 2012 a law was introduced to forbid companies who deal with drivers after a car crash, including mechanics and car-hire firms, from selling on clients' details to personal injury lawyers.

Insurers have also become unlikely victims of the industry. Trade body the Association of British Insurers has blamed personal injury lawyers for soaring car premiums.

It says many insurers have had no choice but to increase the cost of cover, to meet the demand of payouts to claimants for injuries such as whiplash.

In a bid to tackle the high number and cost of whiplash claims and tackle fraud, the Government is planning to implement a Whiplash Reform Programme.

MONEY MORSELS

Phone bill hike

MOBILE customers are facing hefty bill hikes. Three, O2, EE and BT Mobile pay-monthly customers will see their bills rise by up to 2.7pc. The rises are mostly at inflation, meaning customers won't be able to leave mid-contract without paying a penalty.

Fraud fund

BANKS will continue paying into a compensation fund for fraud victims until the end of the year. The pot was due to run out at the end of this month, but industry body UK Finance says it will be extended to allow banks time for a permanent arrangement.

Missing benefits

AROUND £16 billion of means-tested benefits went unclaimed last year, according to charity entitledto. Government figures show two in five pensioners are missing out on pension credit, a benefit to top up lower incomes. Around 590,000 eligible households are believed to be without it. It will also guarantee households a free TV licence from June 1.

Online censorship

MORE than four in ten consumers say brands removing critical reviews on the internet are endangering free speech. A survey by review site Trustpilot found 71 pc of shoppers believe companies are tampering with online reviews, with 45 pc saying this causes them to waste money on products.

Isa homes

BRISTOL is the most popular city for people buying their first home with a Lifetime Isa, with 380 such purchases last year. Research by Skipton Building Society shows other hotspots are Birmingham, Manchester and Leeds.

Funeral branch

FUNERAL price comparison website Beyond has opened its first High Street store after 70 pc of providers refused to sign up. The branch in Aylesbury, Buckinghamshire, aims to show families that there are better value alternatives to 'medieval window dressing'.

Mortgage boost

MORTGAGE approvals for house purchases rose to 70,900 in January, the highest since February 2016, according to Bank of England data. The rate is 4.4pc higher than December and is a further sign that buyers were buoyed after December's General Election.

Tesco card woe

TESCO is issuing new cards to 600,000 Clubcard account holders following a security breach. The supermarket believes usernames and passwords stolen from other platforms had been tried out on its websites. It says no financial data was obtained and its systems have not been hacked.

As millions of (often baffling) letters are sent out.. Your guide to cracking those HMRC tax codes

EVERY year the taxman sends out around 28 million tax codes to employees and pensioners — with the bulk landing around this time of year.

The code tells you how much you can earn before you have to pay any income tax. Your

By **Sylvia Morris**

tax code notice might seem dull but if the numbers and letters are wrong it can mean you pay too much, or too little, tax.

So it is vital you check it now before you end up hundreds of pounds out of pocket — or

with a nasty tax bill. One Money Mail reader now has to pay back £90 a month for nearly three years after a mix-up with her tax code means she owes HMRC nearly £3,000.

She fell foul of the system when she started a second job as a teaching assistant in a local school — and received the full personal allowance twice.

The taxman told her in December that she owed £1,631.80 for the tax year ending April 2018 and £1,251.24 for the tax year the following April.

Problems with tax codes most often arise if you have several jobs or have changed employer during the year.

If you have savings interest from banks, building societies or National Savings you can also get caught.

Joanne Walker, technical officer at the Low Income TaxReform Group, says: 'It is important to check your tax code because it is fairly common for them to be wrong. Your code is only as good as the information HMRC has on you.'

But you, not HMRC, are responsible if it is wrong, even though it is the taxman's mistake.

The code is made up of several numbers followed by one, two or three letters. To break it, you need to know what these numbers and letters mean.

If you put a '£' sign in front of the number and a zero at the end, you'll have the amount HMRC deems you can earn a year before you pay tax.

Most people in the UK are entitled to a personal allowance — the amount you can earn without being taxed.

It starts at £12,500 for this tax year. If you keep the full allowance, your code number will be 1250.

The number is followed by a letter. The most common is L, and means you are entitled to the personal allowance and no more.

If you work and have a pension, you may have a normal code on your job and a BR code on your pension.

THIS means you have used up your personal allowance with your job and pay basic rate (BR) tax on the whole of your pension.

If you have an OT code, get it changed as soon as possible. It means all your income is taxed. This could happen on changing jobs if your employer does not have enough details to give you a tax code.

The most common code is 1250L but plenty of allowances can change it. HMRC's usual starting point is 1250 which it alters according to your circumstances.

It lists things that will raise it — such as tax-deductible job expenses, personal savings allowance or marriage allowance. These are then totted up. The total is then cut back by things which will reduce it such as your state pension or tax you owe from previous years.

If, for example, you have a state pension of £9,000, you end up with a personal allowance of £3,500 (£12,500-£9,000) and the tax code 350L which is sent to your private pension provider. It will tax all your pension except the first £3,500.

You could also run into problems and end up with the wrong code if you have more than one job. Each employer might not know what the others are doing tax-wise so HMRC will not have correct information.

Or when you switch jobs the correct information on what you have

TAXMAN'S JARGON EXPLAINED

BR: You have a second job or pension that is taxed at 20pc.

C: You pay the rate of income tax in Wales.

DO: Income from this source is taxed at the higher rate: 40pc.

D1: Income from this source is taxed at 45pc.

L: You are entitled to the personal tax-free allowance of £12,500 and no more.

K: You have a negative amount of personal allowance, possibly because of other income, taxable benefits from your employer and money you owe HMRC.

M: Your spouse or civil partner has transferred 10pc of his or her £12,500 (£1,250) personal allowance to you, known as the Marriage Allowance, reducing your tax bill by £250.

N: The other way round — you have transferred 10pc of your allowance to your partner.

NT: You pay no tax on any of your income.

OT: All your income is taxed. You could get this if you have change jobs and have not had a P45 showing how much tax you have paid so far this year.

S: Your income or pension is taxed at the Scottish rate.

T: Your tax code requires other calculations to work out your current personal allowance.

W1 OR M1: Emergency tax code. HMRC needs more information.

earned so far in the tax year, how much tax you have paid to date has not reached your new employer — or your allowances might change and not show up in your tax code.

Savings income can also cause problems. You can earn £1,000 as a basic rate taxpayer in savings interest from ordinary accounts outside an Isa before you have to pay tax. Higher rate tax payers get £500.

If you earn more, your code will be adjusted. But your code shouldn't change if your interest is below this.

In some cases, savers have paid too much tax. For example if your savings provider tells HMRC it has paid you £750 interest and you also give it the same figure, it can end up that the figures are added together so it looks as if you received £1,500 interest and you pay too much tax.

You will also see your code adjusted if you earn more than £2,000 a year from dividends from shares in funds held outside an Isa.

If you think your code is wrong call HMRC on 0300 200 3300. If you have a personal tax account with HMRC, go to www.gov.uk/personal-tax-account to tell it there's a mistake.

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An unmissable pullout to transform your animal's life

HOW TO HAVE A HEALTHIER HAPPIER PET



by **Emma Milne**

CELEBRITY VET AND AUTHOR

ELGAR was a beautiful, friendly black Labrador. He was one of my favourite patients. When you work anywhere for any length of time as a vet, you become attached to patients as if they were your own animals.

His owner Margaret rang one evening when I was on call — Elgar had collapsed and couldn't stand. At the surgery, tests showed he had a ruptured splenic tumour.

Sadly, the cancer had already spread to his lungs and there was nothing we could do. She and I cried together that evening as she said goodbye to him. He was ten years old.

As I'm sure many of you know only too well, losing a pet is like losing a member of the family. My two dogs, 'the boys', were with me for 15 years through thick and thin, and it still breaks my heart thinking about losing them.

Cancer strikes fear into us all. It's made of our own cells, so it's difficult to kill, and it seems to lurk, silently growing without us knowing. Seeing as most of our pets are mammals like us, cancer is just the same for them.

Tumours are much more common in older animals, but can strike at any age and can be benign or malignant.

Cancer does seem more common these days. Pets, like us, are living for longer, so we see more cases. By far the most common areas affected are the skin, the digestive system and the mammary tissue (what we would call breast cancer in humans), which is the most common in unneutered bitches.

WHY SOME BREEDS ARE MORE AT RISK

THERE are some things that appear to make cancer more likely and, statistically, some breeds appear to be more at risk from certain types of cancer — flat-coated Retrievers, Rottweilers and German Shepherds to name a few.

In fact, according to the last Kennel Club breed health survey

in 2014, around half of flat-coated Retrievers were reported to have died of some type of cancer.

It is known that spaying a bitch before a year of age drastically reduces her risk of mammary tumours, but straightforward links with diet and lifestyle have not so far been fully researched

in dogs. Some owners don't realise that skin cancer is also a concern for pets. It's easy to think their fur will protect them, but it's not as simple as that. Skin cancer comes in many forms in animals.

While it's true that hairless animals and white eared-cats are

susceptible to sun-related cancer like humans, there are many other ways skin cancer can appear in animals. For example, some lumps on the skin can be tumours.

Veterinary charity PDSA advises owners to use pet-safe sun creams that are recom-

What to do when your BEST FRIEND gets the WORST news

mended by vets on their animals, with the focus on protecting the nose and ears.

CHECK YOUR PETS FOR ANY CHANGES

CANCER can go unnoticed, but there are things you can do to be on the lookout.

Watch for unexpected weight loss, especially with a good appetite. Look for changes that might show pain like not eating, limping or pawing at the face. These can be some of the first signs of cancer.

Get used to running your hands over your pet. Lumps and bumps are often nothing to worry about, but can be serious.

In general, if a lump is slow-growing, smooth, not firmly attached and not ulcerated, it's probably benign.

The opposite signs — fast-growing, attached to underlying tissue, ulcerated or with edges you can't quite feel — means you need to see a vet quite urgently.

Thankfully, just as in human medicine, our diagnosis and treatment options have vastly improved in recent years and lots of cases can be treated and have a much better outlook than ever before.

Veterinary medicine and surgery really do parallel the human side these days, so treatment options for cancers are similar, too.

Whether you choose surgery, chemotherapy, radiotherapy or some of the newer options, or even a combination of all of them, will depend on what sort of tumour you are dealing with and where it is on the body.

Solid masses sometimes don't

DO SMALL PETS ALSO GET CANCER?

RSPCA chief vet Caroline Allen says: 'We do see a variety of tumours and cancers in rabbits, rats, mice, guinea pigs and other small pets.'

'Uterine cancer is prevalent in female rabbits over the age of six: they have an 80 per cent chance of getting it. It's a particularly aggressive cancer and sadly by the time you've seen signs, it's generally spread.'

'The way to avoid it is to have them neutered: it's an absolute must. It's the strongest

argument to get your female rabbit spayed, as well as preventing unwanted pregnancy.'

'Handle your pets regularly so you can catch lumps early on. A very fine needle can be used to extract cells. It's worth considering the fact that the costs incurred for treatment will be similar to surgery on larger pets.'

'Chemo would be tricky on such small animals and the increase in lifespan would be relatively small.'

TURN TO NEXT PAGE

HOW TO HAVE A HEALTHIER HAPPIER PET

FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

respond well to chemo because the drugs can't penetrate the lump, while diffuse cancers like lymphoma often respond really well to chemo. The more complex or challenging cancers will usually be tackled by a specialist centre.

WHAT TREATMENTS ARE AVAILABLE?

THE other thing to remember is that we treat animals slightly differently from a dosing point of view. We all know the harrowing side-effects of human chemotherapy — hair loss, vomiting, weight loss and so on — but in general we use lower doses in animals because it may be considered unfair to put an animal through things that it can't understand.

With this in mind, some treatments aim to slow the cancer, not cure it at all costs. Your vet or specialist should talk you through this, so make sure to ask questions so you understand the likely prognosis and side-effects of treatment.

When it comes to cancer and its treatment, people have different views about what is fair and what they are willing to put their animal through.

I've seen and heard of cases that I definitely would not have replicated with my own dogs, but this comes down to the owner's choice and making the decision based on as much information as possible.

It will also depend on the character of your pet. Some are stoic and happy wherever, while others are simply terrified to be hospitalised. A hundred different factors will dictate the path you follow, so try not to worry about it unless it happens.

That said, it's always better to act sooner rather than later so please, if ever you're at all worried, never feel like you're wasting your vet's time. It's better to be safe than sorry — after all, that's why we are here.

WHEN IS THE RIGHT TIME TO LET GO?

WHILE many animals go on to live, happy lives after cancer treatment, says PDSA veterinary nurse JOANNE WRIGHT, sometimes you may have to help them to a peaceful end. She explains:

IT'S ALL about your pet's quality of life and keeping an eye for changes that might indicate this is not what it was.

You need to look at various factors: Can they get up easily? Are they in pain? Is the vet saying they've done all they can?

Remember euthanasia relieves suffering; we are lucky to have that option. That's not to say it isn't distressing for owners.

With a cancer diagnosis, we often know how long an animal has left. My advice is to use that time to do some planning. Ask advice from a veterinary nurse — they are brilliant and often have more time than a vet. There are also now mobile companies that deal with end-of-life treatments, so there are options to have your pet put down at home.

Thankfully, pet bereavement is more widely recognised today. Vets have specific training to deliver assistance. There are also pet bereavement services with helplines and other support.

A DIAGNOSIS of cancer in a beloved animal is devastating for owners. Although it is relatively common in pets, it's important to note that many forms of cancer can be successfully treated or managed to provide your four-legged friend with an excellent quality of life.

And although many owners worry about putting them through cancer treatment, pets tend to handle it well. It's common to feel helpless, but there are ways you can provide support.

Watch your pet closely for signs of improvement or decline and keep your vet informed. Ensure they have a quiet, comfortable place to rest — as well as plenty of nutritional food and fresh water. Cherish the cuddles, the laughs and enjoy your time with them.

Here, three owners describe how they — and their pets — have coped with the big C...

HE LOOKS A BIT SILLY, BUT I MADE THE RIGHT CHOICE

VICCI ROBERTS, 35, runs a doggy day care centre near the home in Bwlchgwyn, Wales, that she shares with her Labrador Sam, 12.

I'VE had Sam since he was eight weeks old and he's my world, a very special part of my life. So when I found a growth on his gums a few years ago, I was relieved when the vet told me it was benign and removed it.

She explained it was likely it would grow back, so when a second growth appeared in his mouth in October last year, I assumed it would be the same thing.

I took him back to Vets4Pets, but a biopsy revealed there were cancerous cells within the growth that could spread throughout the rest of Sam's jaw.

To prevent this, they would need to remove the area around the growth — a large part of Sam's jaw — and his canine teeth.

I was gutted. I really hadn't expected the growth to be anything but benign. But we decided to go ahead with the operation because Sam was otherwise healthy and we wanted to give him the best possible chance of life.

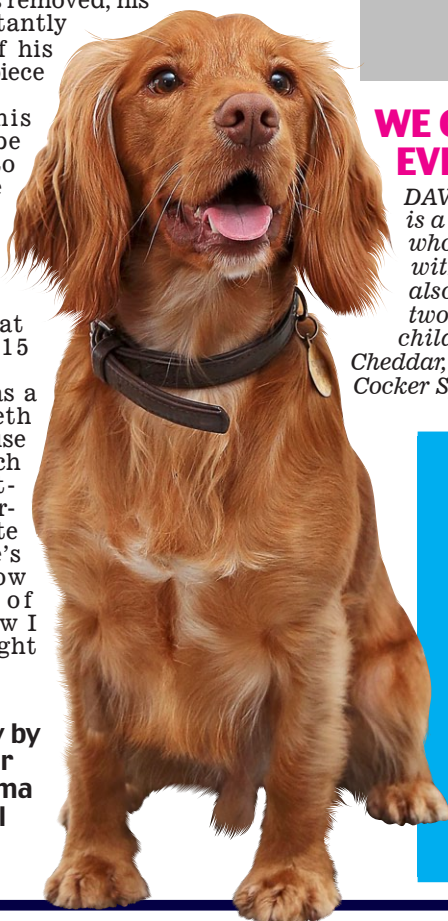
But while he was in surgery, the vet called me to say she was going to have to remove even more of his jaw as the cancer was deeper than we thought. My heart sank but I trusted her to make the right decision, even though it was brutal surgery. It took three and a half hours in the end — a long time for an old dog to be under anaesthetic.

But within a few days Sam was back to his old self, albeit looking a bit silly. Because so much jaw was removed, his tongue constantly hangs out of his mouth like a piece of bacon!

Now all his feed has to be liquidised into soup so he can lick it up — he flicks it everywhere and I mop the floor what feels like 15 times a day.

Sam still has a few back teeth and loves to use them to munch green vegetables and carrots — it's cute to watch. He's so happy now and full of energy, I know I made the right decision.

Taking it day by day: Cheddar has lymphoma of the bowel



Sam's op took 3½ hours — but now he's as happy as Larry

WE CHERISH EVERY WALK

DAVID BROWN, 62, is a retired engineer who lives in Swindon with his wife Chris, also 62. They have two grown-up children and Cheddar, an 18-month-old Cocker Spaniel.

IT ALL kicked off at the end of last year.

We'd had Cheddar since he was a puppy and he's a proper little character who loves chasing a ball — he'll run you off your feet. He was always perfectly healthy until we noticed he had a bit of diarrhoea last November.

We took him to our local vet, who at first thought he had a touch of gastroenteritis and then, when it didn't clear up, colitis

(inflammation of the bowel). After a few days on antibiotics, Cheddar noticeably improved and we thought we'd turned the corner.

But in early December we took him for his inoculation booster and the vet felt his tummy to make sure he was healthy. But then found a lump.

A CT scan and X-ray didn't show what it was, so the vet wanted to operate.

We went home and after an hour

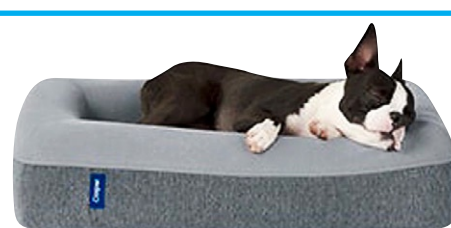
5

OF THE BEST BEDS



MEOWFIA CAT CAVE

From £39.45, [amazon.co.uk](https://www.amazon.co.uk)
AN ECO-FRIENDLY cat bed handmade from 100% merino wool. Can be laid flat or made into a cave.



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A HIGH-QUALITY memory foam bed — great for older pets with joint pain. Available in three sizes.

Daily Mail, Wednesday, March 4, 2020 Page

PUZZLES & PRIZES

£3,000 TO BE WON EVERY WEEK!

PRIZE SUDOKU

**WIN
£500**

3							6	
		4	8		7			
		8	9		1		4	
4			2					
		5						
	9					1		6
	1			2				3
					8	6	2	
9	2		7			4		

4	1	3	9					2
		2			1	7		
9				8				1
		4		5			2	
	2				4	3	1	6
	3							
3					5			
7				9		6		8
							9	

Difficulty rating ★★★★★

			6				9	4
3				8				5
4	1				9		8	
		5	1	3	2			
	9							
	7					6	2	
			2	7	4	5		
					3		7	
9			5			1		

REVEAL the three shaded squares for your chance to win £500. **HOW TO ENTER:** Call **0901 292 5009** and leave today's three-number answer (reading left to right) and your details. Or text **SUDOKU to 65700** with your answer and name. Texts and calls cost £1 plus standard network charges. One weekly winner chosen from all correct entries received between 00.01 Monday and 23.59 Friday. Answers change daily at 00.01. UK residents aged 18+, excl NI. Terms apply, see Page 62.

GENERAL KNOWLEDGE CROSSWORD

1		2		3		4			5	6		7		8
								9						
10								11						
12						13								
			14							15				
16		17												
18														
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21				22						23				
24								25						
26							27							

WIN A LUXURY CROSS PEN

**SEE
BELOW**

ACROSS

- 1 First wife of James II of England and mother of
Mary II and Queen Anne (4,4)
- 5 Heat (6)
- 10 Diacritical mark placed under a 'c' in French (7)
- 11 Low padded seat without a back or arms (7)
- 12 Ballroom dance of Argentinian origin (5)
- 13 Director whose last film was Family Plot in 1976 (9)
- 14 Canadian singer/songwriter whose final album was
You Want It Darker (7,5)
- 18 Hating or distrustful of mankind (12)
- 21 Rapidly executed sets of notes on a harp or piano (9)
- 23 _____ column, newspaper feature about
personal problems (5)
- 24 Broad-minded or generous (7)
- 25 Del Boy's family in Only Fools And Horses (7)
- 26 The FSB is this country's main security agency (6)
- 27 Highest mountain in the UK (3,5)

DOWN

- 1 Louisa May, Little Women novelist (6)
2 _____ Coyle, Irish singer and former member of
3 Girls Aloud (6)
4 Horror franchise centred on the murderous
5 Michael Myers (9)
6 Agatha Christie novel published in 1937 (5,2,3,4)
7 Letter traditionally dropped in cockney speech (5)
8 Extinct elephants with hairy coats and
9 upcurving tusks (8)
10 The Kowloon Peninsula is part of this former
11 British colony (4,4)
12 Character able to speak to animals created
13 by Hugh Lofting (6,8)
14 1974 neo-noir film starring Jack Nicholson (9)
15 One who imports or exports goods illegally (8)
16 Perennial plants cultivated for their ornamental
17 spikes and clusters of pink or white flowers (8)
18 Russian town on the banks of Lake Nero, centre of
19 the Golden Ring (6)
20 Island containing the Troodos Mountains (6)
21 Maurizio, Italian manager of Chelsea 2018-19 (5)

SOLUTION TOMORROW

**WRITE YOUR
LETTERS IN
THESE SQUARES**

Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri

NAME GAME HIDDEN in the grid is the name of a singer/songwriter. Answer the questions, then re-arrange the letters corresponding to your answers to fill in the name. **SOLUTION TOMORROW**

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----

BOX 7: Who wrote the novel upon which the Netflix series *The Stranger* is based?
Harlan Coben (A)
Lee Child (L)
Michael Connelly (S)

Yesterday's answer: **ADAM HILLS**
(1A, 2L, 3S, 4L, 5H, 6I, 7M, 8D, 9A)



Picture: STEVE GRANITZ/WIREIMAGE

GOGEN

CLINK
DRAB
JOIST
LEVY
LIQUEFY
MAP
MIX
MULCHING
RUBY
WHISTLE

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

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

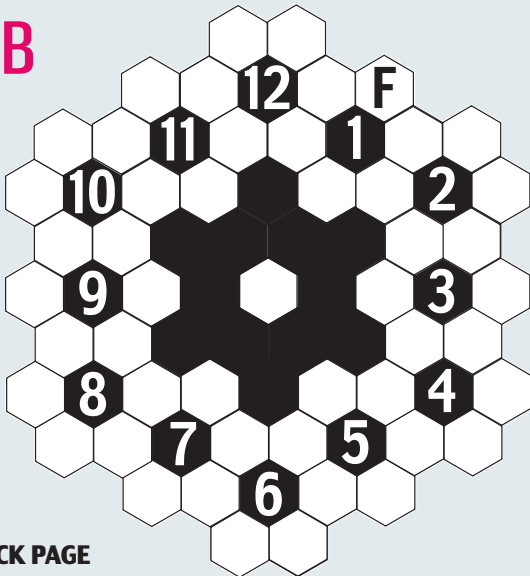
PUZZLES & PRIZES

HONEYCOMB

ALL the solutions read clockwise around their numbers. The solution to clue number 1 starts from the given letter.

1. Erstwhile
2. Sturdy
3. African fly
4. Stems
5. Thin
6. Idea
7. Grunted
8. Light
9. Go off track
10. Eye part
11. Imprison
12. Welcomes

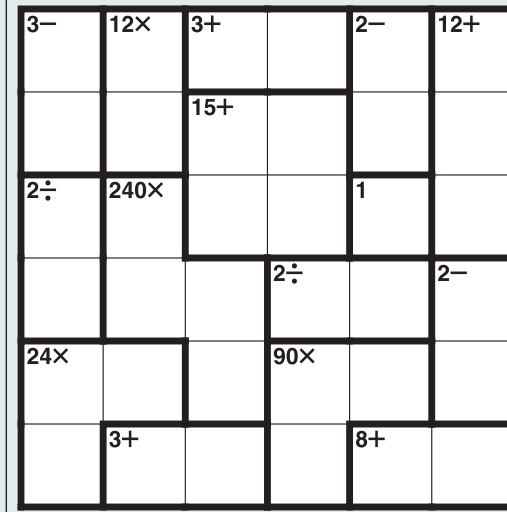
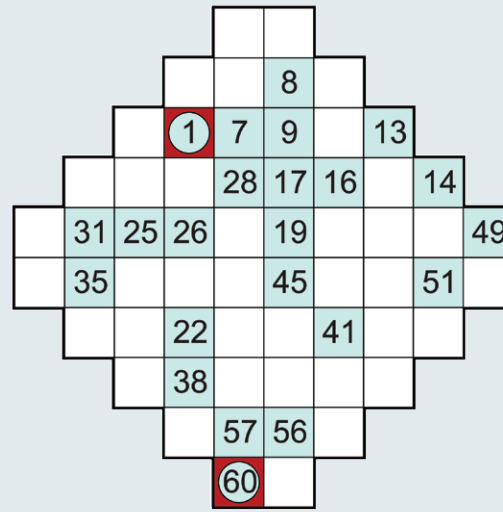
SOLUTION: PULLOUT BACK PAGE



HIDATO

COMPLETE the grid so that all the numbers, 1 to 60, connect consecutively – horizontally, vertically or diagonally. Hint: you don't have to begin with 1 or 60. Working on the mid-numbers might give you a better start.

SOLUTION TOMORROW



MASTERQUIZ

1. What was the maiden name of the former First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt?
2. McCarran International Airport serves which U.S. city?
3. Which peninsula is separated from mainland Greece by the Corinth Canal?

4. Treat Myself is the new album by which American singer-songwriter?
5. On which Caribbean island did Horatio Nelson marry Frances Nisbet in 1787?
6. In Dickens's Little Dorrit, in which debtors' prison is Amy's father detained?

SOLUTION: PULLOUT BACK PAGE

PITCHERWITS™



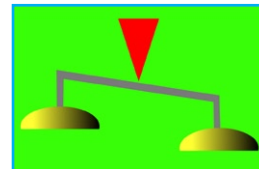
1a. Pinks cannot be picked, scrubbing's not needed (3-5,3)



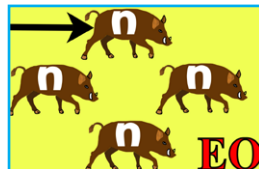
5a. Calls in using gravity? (5,2)



14a. Vassalage deforms all changes (7)



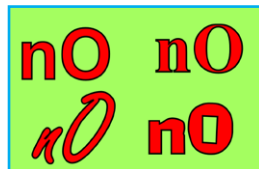
16a. Boar, in enclave, could lean too much (11)



1d. Malaysian place could be a thorn in Oberon's side (5,6)



4d. Could be a ban for Browne on arrival (7,4)



6d. For a reindeer with his own day? (3,4)

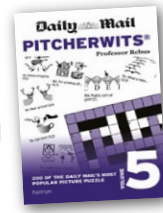


8d. Can be outed or caused by (2,3,2)

PIT your wits against Pitcherwits – the exciting puzzle where some of the answers are in pictures! The solutions to the visual clues fit into the shaded spaces on the grid.

SOLUTION TOMORROW

PITCHERWITS BOOK OFFER

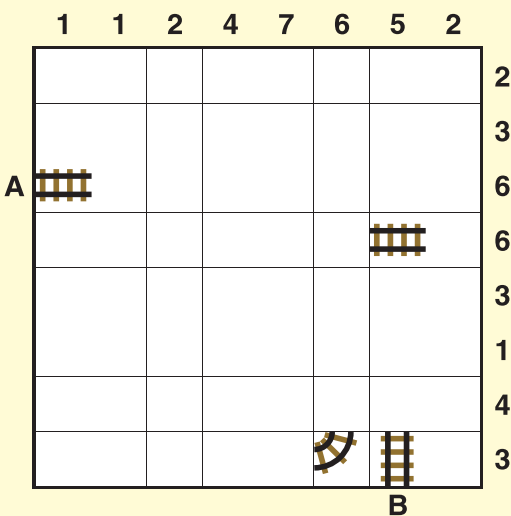


DAILY Mail Pitcherwits Vol. 5 by Professor Rebus is published by Octopus Publishing priced £8.99. Offer Price £7.19 (20 per cent discount) with free P&P. Order at www.mailshop.co.uk or call 01603 648155.

TRAIN TRACKS

LAY tracks to enable the train to travel from village A to village B. The numbers indicate how many sections of rail go in each row and column. There are only straight rails and curved rails. The track cannot cross itself.

SOLUTION TOMORROW

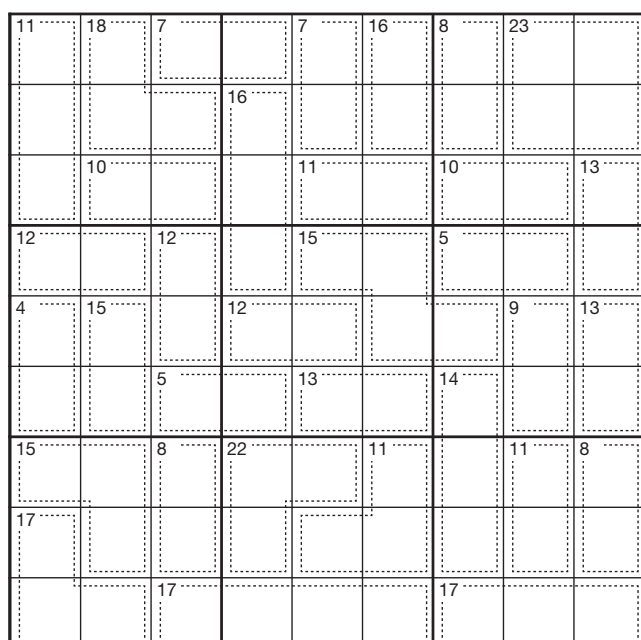


MINDBENDER

1. Becky is driving back home after a short break. If she travels at an average speed of 60mph, the journey will take 50 minutes longer than if her average speed was 15mph faster. How far is she from home?
2. What connects egg, milk and sweet?

3. Which recently appointed Cabinet member possibly UNRAVELS A MARBLE?
4. Which of the following is the odd one out: UFO, Blake's 7, Space Precinct, Space: 1999?
5. Crack the code to find three muscles: HDATJH, QXRTEH, STAI DXS.

SOLUTION: PULLOUT BACK PAGE



KILLER SUDOKU

FILL in squares in the grid so each row, column and each 3x3 square contains all digits from 1 to 9. Each set of cells joined by dotted lines must add up to the number in the top-left corner. Numbers can't be repeated within each set of cells.

SOLUTION TOMORROW

NEED A CLUE? Call 0901 293 6238 or text KILLER to 65700 and receive four clues to today's puzzle. Calls and texts cost £1 plus your standard network charges. Today's clues available between 00.01 today and 23.30 only.

ACROSS

- 1 Picture Clue
- 5 Picture Clue
- 9 Niche edition has its own attention (4)
- 10 Carthaginian royalty who acted at nothing (4)

- 11 Run he built round Indian statesman (5)
- 12 Portfolio, with mixture at the back (4)
- 13 Smooth out singular odds? (4)

- 14 Picture Clue
- 16 Picture Clue

DOWN

- 1 Picture Clue
- 2 Merely a gesture, when back from Indonesia (3)
- 3 Pray without a chance to be nosy (3)
- 4 Picture Clue

6 Picture Clue

- 7 Launch (or get lost!) (4,3)
- 8 Picture Clue
- 14 Airbrushes out the woman (3)
- 15 Half the population is a bit demented! (3)

YESTERDAY'S SOLUTION — ACROSS: 1 And so to bed. 5 Ballroom. 9 Imam. 10 Afar. 11 Their. 12 Eras. 14 Atop. 15 Lockwood. 18 Rose quartz. **DOWN:** 1 All is well. 2 Submits. 3 Oil. 4 DSO. 6 Liken to. 7 Oaf. 8 Mark Spitz. 10 Arcadia. 13 Arc. 16 Oar. 17 Woe.

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QUICK QUIZ

1. Which British author coined the phrase doublespeak?
2. What colour are the flowers of the dandelion?
3. In football, who is Tottenham Hotspur's highest ever goalscorer?
4. Helena is the capital of which American state?
5. In which year did Ronald Reagan first become president of the United States?

SOLUTION: PULLOUT BACK PAGE

KENKEN

EACH row and column should contain 1 to 6 without repeats. Numbers in cages must combine to produce the target number shown at start of that cage using, in any order, the mathematical sign given. Single-box cages can be filled with the number given. **SOLUTION TOMORROW**

	E	P	O	
S				S
I				D
B				Y
	W	E	E	

BOUNDLESS **NINE TO FIVE** FIT the scrambled letters of the given word into the grid to form six five-letter words across and down. **SOLUTION TOMORROW**

WORLD'S SMALLEST, HARDEST CROSSWORD

ACROSS
1. Member of a people of NW India (3)
4. In use (4)
5. Poker player's stake (4)
6. Rocky hill (3)
DOWN
1. Jupiter's spouse (4)
2. Sky-at-night observer (abbr) (4)
3. Inclined trough for washing ore (3)
4. Speed, rate (sl) (3)
SOLUTION TOMORROW

	1	2	3
4			
5			
6			

CROSS NUMBER

THERE MAY BE MORE THAN ONE SOLUTION					25
4					15
		6			19
	4				13
			2		25
25	13	18	16	8	

Today's challenge time: 3 mins 11 secs | Your working time: Min Secs

FILL each square with a number, 1 to 9. Horizontal squares add up to totals on right. Vertical squares add up to totals on bottom. Diagonal squares through centre add up to totals in top and bottom right. **SOLUTION TOMORROW**

CODEWORD

EACH number in our Codeword grid represents a different letter of the alphabet. Today 17 represents G, so fill in G every time the figure 17 appears. You have two letters in the control grid to start you off. Enter them in the appropriate squares in the main grid, then use your knowledge of words to work out which letters should go in the missing squares. **SOLUTION TOMORROW**

COMPLETE Codeword to reveal the six-letter word in the shaded boxes. **HOW TO ENTER:** Call 0901 293 6232 and leave your six-letter answer and your details or text 65700 with the word CODE, your answer and then your name. Texts and calls cost £1 plus standard network charges. One weekly winner chosen from all correct daily entries received between 00.01 Monday and 23.59 Saturday. Answers change daily at 00.01. UK residents aged 18+, exc NI. Terms apply, see Page 62.

1	2	3	3	4	5	6		3	7	8	5	8		1	14
2		2				5		4		7		7		2	15
9	7	9	10		7	11	12	13	6	1	7	4		3	16
14		5		3		2		13		15		4		4	17
16	10	4	13	6	13	3	13	6	1			14		5	18
		7		5		3				9		5		6	19
6	5	17	6	5	18		3	4	2	14	8	9		7	20
5		5				9		13		19				8	21
20			9	10	13	21	22	2	1	15	5	6		9	22
13		7		14		14		8		5		13		10	23
12	13	9	5	8	14	23	5		24	12	13	21		11	24
5		24		5		5				16		8		12	25
8	5	9	24	9		4	14	25	2	5	3	26		13	26

Yesterday: **CODEWORD** Volume Thirteen

**** Volume Thirteen Now Available! ****

£6.95 (inc p&p) cheque/postal order payable to Knight Features: B207 Trident Centre, 89 Bickersteth Rd, London SW17 9SH

Credit card orders via www.codewordbook.co.uk

Selected previous volumes also available. Allow 14 days for delivery. 7618

NEED A CLUE? Text the word **CODEWORD** to 65700 to receive FOUR clues to today's puzzle or call 0901 293 6200. Texts and calls cost £1 plus your standard network charges. Today's clues available between 00.01 today and 23.30 only.

	12	14	23	35		35	19	16	12
30						29			
29						30			
		35				17			
			19						
24	7	23				7	24	23	
24						24			
20						16			
20			15			30			
						3			
			6						
			6			23			
8	6	18						14	12
10						29			
11						30			

KAKURO

FILL in the blank squares of the grid using only the numbers 1 to 9, without repeating any number in any line of blank squares. The lines must be filled in with numbers which add up to the total in the shaded box at the top or beginning of each line. A number in the bottom half of a shaded box gives a downwards total; in the top half, it's a horizontal total. **SOLUTION TOMORROW**

WIN £750

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■ The board on the right shows four rows of letters from a typical Scrabble game. Use each row to form a word of 2-7 letters and write it in the blank squares provided. Then add up the score for each row. Don't forget to use the double and triple word and letter scores — and add a 50-point bonus for every 7-letter word. Blank tiles can be used for any letter but have no score. See tomorrow's paper for the solution.

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Double Word Score

Triple Word Score

PAR SCORE 105-115 by JUDD

FOUR RACK TOTAL TIME LIMIT: 20 MIN

Yesterday's solution: RESOLVE 62 PALATES 59 SPARRY 22 BEIMRED 62 JUDD'S TOTAL: 205

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

WORD SEARCH

THE listed words can all be found in the grid — running forwards, backwards, up, down and diagonally — EXCEPT ONE. For a chance to win, discover which word from the list can't be found in the Word Search.

- AMPERE
- CANDELA
- HERTZ
- JOULE
- KELVIN
- KILOGRAM
- METRE
- MOLE
- RADIAN
- SECOND

HOW TO ENTER: Call 0901 293 6234 and leave your answer and details or text 65700 with the word **WORD**, your answer and your name. Texts and calls cost £1 plus standard network charges. One winner chosen from all correct daily entries received between 00.01 Monday and 23.59 Friday. Answers change daily at 00.01. UK residents aged 18+, exc NI. Terms apply, see Page 62. **SOLUTION TOMORROW**

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PUZZLES & PRIZES

WIN
£500

BRIDGE MASTERCLASS



North
♠ AJ7
♥ AKQ
♦ A9764
♣ 96

East
♠ Q6
♥ 10984
♦ K52
♣ J842

NORTH opened 1♦, and raised his partner's 1NT to 2NT. Your partner leads ♠2, dummy plays low and your queen wins. What next?

DEFENCE becomes great fun when you are able to play detective, and assemble the clues which enable you to defeat a contract.

In this instance, you have a mass of information available from the bidding, the lead, and dummy. ♠2 is a fourth best lead, which means that declarer has concealed a 4-card spade suit with his 1NT response; he also has a minimum 6-7HCPs or he would have raised to game, and he won't have four diamonds or he would have supported partner.

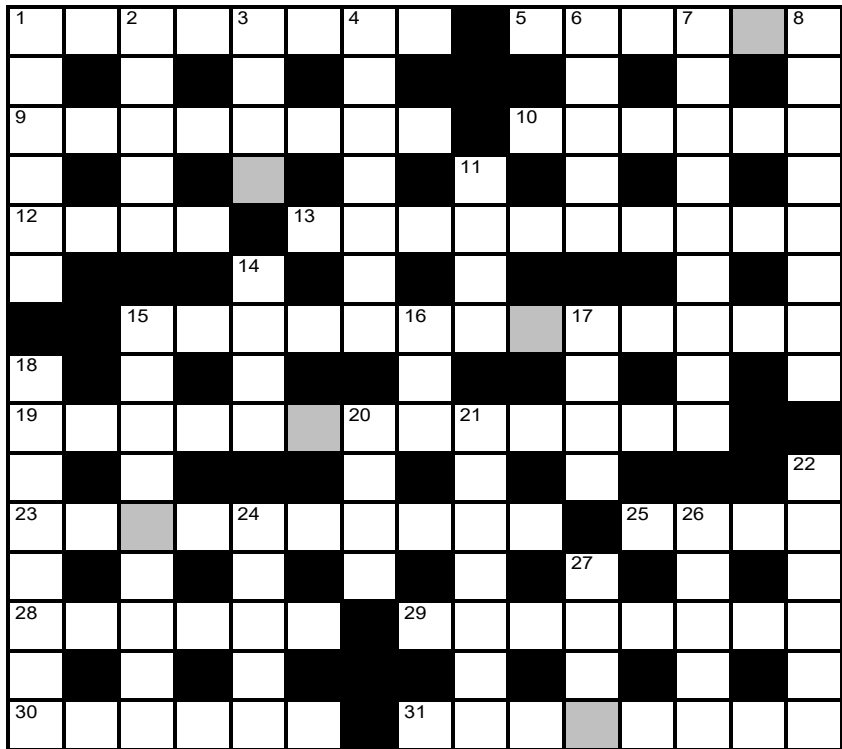
A quick calculation tells you that partner must therefore have 9-10HCPs (including ♠K). You can also see that dummy has six certain winners, and you'll gain the lead once more with ♦K.

You've now worked out that partner is marked with honours in clubs, so you must attack in this suit now, rather than passively returning partner's suit or exiting with a heart. The question now is which club to lead, and we'll see the full deal tomorrow.

PETER DONOVAN

CRYPTIC CROSSWORD

No.16,264



FOR your chance to win, solve the crossword to reveal the word reading down the shaded boxes. **HOW TO ENTER:** Call 0901 293 6233 and leave today's answer and your details, or TEXT 65700 with the word **CRYPTIC**, your answer and your name. Texts and calls cost £1 plus standard network charges. Or enter by post by sending completed crossword to Daily Mail Prize Crossword 16264, PO Box 28, Colchester, Essex CO2 8GF. Please include your name and address. One weekly winner chosen from all correct daily entries received between 00.01 Monday and 23.59 Friday. Postal entries must be date-stamped no later than the following day to qualify. Calls/texts must be received by 23.59; answers change at 00.01. UK residents aged 18+, exc NI. Terms apply, see Page 62.

ACROSS

- Boycott island church's treacherous conditions (5,3)
- Church caretaker very nearly secures some work (6)
- Hollywood genre a sort of 1 Across? (4,4)
- Yell from a topless Greek, excited, grasping essence of fluid (6)
- Not demanding a piece of cake (4)
- Shorts in US and articles from Europe? Rubbish (10)
- She may succeed, cooking new corn crisps (5,8)
- Getting used to new ways, college sect invested in gold quota (13)
- General clergy gets worsted perhaps (10)
- Writer's short article's a fabrication (4)
- Attraction that leads to MOT failure? (6)
- Medic has tug positioned for men on board (8)
- Sister company hosts one RC ambassador (6)
- Superior Sioux struggled to retain gold dedicated to wife (8)

DOWN

- Polish and French self-service food (6)
- An ancient mariner climbs mountains (5)
- Generous type (4)
- A politician ignores mushroom in Paris bun (7)
- Stock joke on the web? (5)
- Simple embargo protecting European vegetable (5,4)
- Assign another rating to idiots in residence (8)
- Aristocrat exercises monarch (4)
- Head count (4)
- Dipstick stops crony moving accelerator (9)
- Average couple avoids one (3)
- Arrest American wearing nothing (4)
- Pub roughly put in wine store tower at entrance (8)
- Unattractive guy managed to drink litres (4)
- Personnel brought in a new levy that's dreaded by farmers (7)
- Article is about son's dissertation (6)
- Policeman seizes fashionable Asian garment (5)
- Beast loves grass coming up (5)
- Feline sound partly interrupts rising (4)

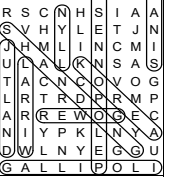
NEED A CLUE? Text **TIP** to 65700 to receive FOUR answers to today's crossword, or call 0901 293 6236. Texts and calls cost £1 plus standard network charges. Today's clues available between 00.01 today and 23.30 only.

SOLUTIONS TO YESTERDAY'S PUZZLES

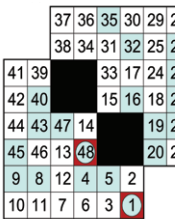
SUDOKU	PRIZE SUDOKU
2 3 6 8 4 5 1 9 7 7 8 5 9 3 1 2 6 4 1 4 9 7 6 2 5 8 3 6 1 4 3 8 7 9 2 5 5 2 3 1 9 4 8 7 6 9 7 8 5 2 6 4 3 1 3 5 2 4 7 9 6 1 8 4 6 7 2 1 8 3 5 9 8 9 1 6 5 3 7 4 2	6 1 3 7 5 8 4 2 9 4 8 5 2 9 1 7 6 3 2 7 9 6 4 3 5 8 1 5 2 8 4 6 9 1 3 7 1 9 4 3 2 7 6 5 8 7 3 6 1 8 5 2 9 4 8 5 7 9 1 6 3 4 2 3 6 2 8 7 4 9 1 5 9 4 1 5 3 2 8 7 6

WORD SEARCH

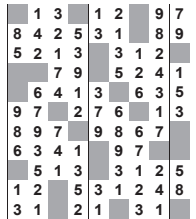
Missing word: CRIMEA



HIDATO



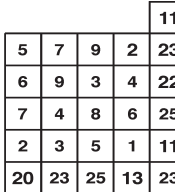
KAKURO



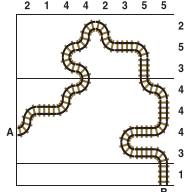
NINE TO FIVE



CROSS NUMBER



TRAIN TRACKS



WORD WHEEL

arvo, avian, aviator, gray, graviton, navar, navigator, nova, ovarian, ravin, raving, roving, vagrant, vain, vair, vang, vara,

variant, varna, vina, vino, virago, virga, voting.

GENERAL KNOWLEDGE

CROSSWORD — ACROSS: 8 Tunstall. 9 Abrams. 10 Peter

Andre. 11 Antz. 12 Tuvalu. 14 Earl Grey. 15 Zermatt. 17 Forrest. 20 Shagreen. 22 De Sica. 24 Brad. 25 Torricelli. 27 Nivôse. 28 Wheatear. **DOWN:** 1 Juneau.

2 Ashe. 3 Catapult. 4 Flodden. 5 Zaheer. 6 Dreamgirls. 7 Smithers. 13 Armageddon. 16 Ed Harris. 18 Old timer. 19 Andrews. 21 Esther. 23 Callas. 26 Etty.

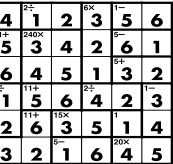
30-SECOND CHALLENGE

www.30secondchallenge.com

START on left with number given and follow instructions as you go across. In 30 seconds, beginners have to complete their own challenge; intermediates have to complete their own challenge and the beginner's; advanced players have to complete their own challenge and the intermediate's. **SOLUTION BELOW**

	Beginner	33	-19	x3	+30	÷6	x9	+4	÷7	+9	x12	YOUR ANSWERS
Intermediate	90	2/18 OF IT	TIMES ITSELF	-16	3/7 OF IT	x9	75% OF IT	-9	1/6 OF IT	x5		
Advanced	18	x15	LESS 30%	+36	4% OF IT	TIMES ITSELF	-35	x3 1/2	+10	PLUS 33 1/3%		

KENKEN



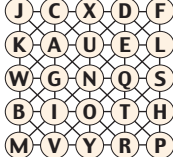
SUDOKU X



CRYPTIC CROSSWORD No. 16,261

ACROSS: 1 Tally-ho. 5 Log off. 9 Optimal. 10 Counter. 11 Tar. 12 Battlefield. 13 Polio. 14 Heartache. 16 Ephemeral. 17 Cargo. 19 Genealogist. 22 Sue. 23 Origami. 24 Dilemma. 26 Agenda. 27 End user. **DOWN:** 1 Two-step. 2 Lateral thinking. 3 Yam. 4 Owllet. 5 Local call. 6 Gruff. 7 Father Christmas. 8 Trudge. 12 Broom. 14 Harmonica. 15 Tacit. 16 Egg nog. 18 Open-air. 20 Again. 21 Indie. 25 Led.

GOGEN



SMALLEST, HARDEST CROSSWORD — ACROSS: 1 Swat. 5 Orle. 6 Cess. 7 Knot. **DOWN:** 1 Sock. 2 Wren. 3 Also. 4 Test.

SOLUTIONS TO TODAY'S PUZZLES

QUICK QUIZ: 1 George Orwell. 2 Yellow. 3 Jimmy Greaves. 4 Montana. 5 1981.

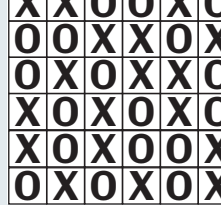
MINDBENDER: 1 250 miles. 2 They may all precede tooth. 3 Suella Braverman. 4 Blake's 7; the others were by Gerry Anderson. 5 Soleus, biceps, deltoid (A becomes L, B becomes M, etc.).

MASTERQUIZ: 1 Roosevelt. 2 Las Vegas. 3 Peloponnese. 4 Meghan Trainor. 5 Nevis. 6 Marshalsea.

HONEYCOMB: 1 Former. 2 Robust. 3 Tsetse. 4 Stalks. 5 Skinny. 6 Notion.

7 Oinked. 8 Kindle. 9 Derail. 10 Retina. 11 Intern. 12 Greets.

KUROSU:



30-SECOND CHALLENGE: Beginner: 300. Intermediate: 195. Advanced: 228.

PASSPORT TO RICHES

MEET ONE OF OUR £1,000 WINNERS

'I have read the Daily Mail every day for years. I can't believe I have won! I plan to give half the money to my daughters and spend the rest on myself and my husband.'

RHONA BUNCE, OXFORDSHIRE



DID YOU KNOW?

IF YOU have cancer, your dog may be the first to know. Researchers say canines can pick up on the change in scent given off by abnormal cells and some dogs are now trained to detect certain human cancers.

MAVIS LOST HER EARS AND WE'VE NICKNAMED HER 'VOLDERPUSS'

RETIRED Barbara Parsons, 60, is married to 61-year-old civil servant Will and lives in Newport with their cat Mavis, 16.

WE ADOPTED Mavis from friends who went travelling when she was just 18-months-old.

Until then, we'd always had black rescue cats — Mavis was our first white and we didn't know they were prone to sunburn on the ends of their ears.

But in 2013, we noticed the tips were slightly red so we took her to the vet, who said it might be skin cancer.

We were told to keep an eye on it. After that I tried putting factor 50 suntan cream on her ears on sunny days, but she wasn't having any of it — she'd paw it off.

But within a year it had got much worse and the vet said it was time to remove her ears. We booked a date for the surgery and went on holiday for a week, leaving Mavis in the care of our next-door neighbour.

We came home to find the tumours on her ears

had erupted — it looked like she'd caught one on the cat flap and shaken her head because there was blood all over next door's house.

It was horrifying and so we took her straight to the vet, who performed the operation immediately. Within two hours we got a call to say 'come and take her home'.

Seeing her without her ears was a shock. She wore a cone around her neck to stop her scratching the wounds and felt very sorry for herself.

We took her home and over the next three weeks — until the cone came off — she gradually improved. We nicknamed her Volderpuss because she looked like the villain in Harry Potter.

She's now 16 and very sprightly. She still loves fresh chicken, mousing and sleeping in bed with me like she did before.

And she still doesn't like my husband and won't eat the food he puts down.

People do a double take when they see her — but to us she's the same old Mavis.

*Bond:
Barbara
with Mavis*

BUSTING THE INSURANCE JARGON

ALTHOUGH some pets may go through life without any major problems, others may find themselves in need of emergency or ongoing veterinary care. One way to prepare for unexpected bills is to take out pet insurance. But which one is best? Here, the PDSA cuts through the jargon...

■ ACCIDENT ONLY INSURANCE: These policies only cover your pet for accidents, NOT illnesses, but premiums are usually cheaper as a result.

■ EXCESS: The amount you pay when you make a claim. This could be a set figure or a percentage of the total claim (known as co-insurance) or both. There can be 'compulsory excess' (set by the insurer) and 'voluntary excess' (where you decide the amount).

■ ELECTIVE PROCEDURE: Treatment that isn't absolutely necessary for your pet's wellbeing, it's

chosen rather than 'essential'. For instance, neutering a healthy pet would usually be considered 'elective'.

■ EXCLUSION PERIOD: This refers to the time between the start date of the policy and the date from which you'll be able to make a claim. This is usually between 10-14 days, but could be longer.

■ LIFETIME COVER: This type of policy will usually cover your pet against any new accidents and illnesses for their entire life (as long as the policy is active). As a result, it will generally cost a bit more, but will offer you full peace of mind. Check for restrictions.

■ MAXIMUM BENEFIT: This means a set limit on claims for each illness or injury. There are no time restraints, but once you reach the stated limit, the insurer won't pay any further claims for that particular condition.



Pulled through: Vicci with Labrador Sam

Pictures: JOHN LAWRENCE/
WARREN SMITH

she called to say there was quite a big blockage they were going to remove.

There followed an anxious three-hour wait for news. In the end, they cut out 1.5 inches of his bowel, which was badly diseased, and sent it off for testing.

Three days later Cheddar was home. A week later we went back for the test results.

We could see something was wrong — the vet was quite

emotional. She sat us down and told us he had an aggressive lymphoma of the bowel and that it was terminal.

It was a hammer blow: there were a lot of tears and just numbness that something like that could happen to such a young dog.

And there was no outward sign of it — he was a happy, bouncy, mischievous dog.

That's what made it so hard. He

had intensive chemotherapy for a month and now he has it once a month with steroids every day.

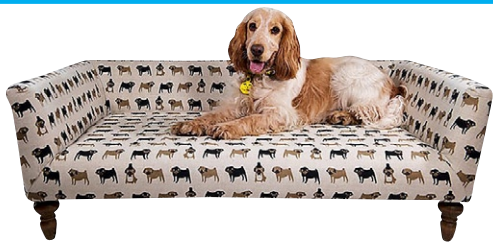
We don't know whether he's got three weeks or three years. We just know it will come back.

So we're enjoying life with him — plenty of walks, taking him to the seaside, meeting up with his friends to chase balls and frisbees. It's been the best it can. But it just feels so unfair.



CALMING PET BED

From £31.18, calmingpet.co
DESIGNED by therapists to help ease anxiety, the cosy fabric mimics the comfort of a mother's fur coat.



CECIL DOG BED

From £150, sofa.com
MADE using a hard-wearing, beech frame, and with washable covers, this bed stands up to muddy paws.



KYALI SQUARE CAT BED

£99, made.com
CATS can jump onto the top of the bed or slip through the side holes and snuggle inside. It's sleek and stylish, too.

HOW TO HAVE A HEALTHIER HAPPIER PET

MY HUSBAND, David, has often been heard to mutter: 'I think you love them more than you love me.' I don't mean to upset him, but, at times, I think he may be right.

After all, my pets are never grumpy, never start an argument and greet me with unalloyed joy whenever I come home. They've also proved to be a devoted source of comfort, love and hilarity in difficult times.

My pack consists of three Chihuahuas, Butch, Frieda and Madge, and a Burmese cat, Suu. The dogs are ranged around my feet as I write and Suu is on my lap, purring loudly and demanding I pause from time to time to tickle her under her chin.

I love them all unconditionally, even when I've had to clean up a little accident or found the corner of the carpet slashed to smithereens.

First, 14 years ago, came Butch. He's a white Chihuahua, on the large side for his breed, who was so tiny when we first went to collect him, he sat in David's hand and, as a joke, Dave said: 'I think we should call this little chap Butch!' The name just stuck.

He came into the family soon after I'd been treated for breast cancer. David hadn't wanted the responsibility of another dog after our two miniature Schnauzers, William and Mary, died a couple of years before my diagnosis.

I knew I wanted another dog to cheer up the house. David was adamant. 'No more dogs!' So, after my treatment I played the cancer card. 'Oh! I've been so ill, I really need a dog to give me something to care for now the boys are grown up and gone.'

I have been accused of using him as a child substitute and, frankly, there's no shame in that. As the nest began to empty and the rigours of chemotherapy made me wonder if life was worth living, it was this youthful, energetic, playful little chap who gazed at me with such soulful and loving eyes and said: 'Come on, get up. Let's play ball in the garden.'

HE NEEDED me and I needed him. He made me get up and his antics made me laugh. He got me going. I've always loved animals. For my fifth birthday I was given a parcel and unwrapped a collar and lead. I was taken out to the shed and there was Taffy — a tiny, ginger Corgi who was almost as excited as I was.

For an only child he could not have been a better chum. He was my friend and confidant, always ready to listen to my worries and give me a kiss and a cuddle when no one else seemed to care about me.

Later, I couldn't take him to university and it was while I was away, in my second year, that he ran away one night and never came home. I missed him terribly. He had always been there to greet me, seeming to know when I was on my way home.

Twelve years later, David and I acquired William and Mary almost from the moment we first got together and they had been wonderful pals for both of us. William came after I'd seen him at a horse show in the New Forest. I was longing for a dog and fell in love with him instantly.

When we went to pick him up

we found he had a sister, Mary — and David agreed with me that, if you can't be at home all day with one dog, you should always have two.

A walk in the morning before work, another as soon as you get back and they don't get lonely during the time you're away because they have each other.

The two of them managed to deal with the arrival of our two boys and, as I look back, gave them both important lessons in how to care for a dependent animal and treat them with affection and kindness. Daily

walks on a nearby common kept us all fit, while at home there was always a dog to curl up with if you'd fallen out with a member of the family.

I shall never know how William managed to survive to the grand old age of 18. He was the canine equivalent of Houdini, always managing to escape unnoticed through the tiniest opening in the front door: a dangerous occupation during the period when we lived in Clapham, not far from the South Circular.

It's maybe worth pointing to the fact that my older boy, Ed,

was three when he came with me to the surgery for William and Mary's jabs and announced he wanted to be 'a doggy doctor'. He's now a vet and keeps a strict eye on Butch who has, like me, a tendency to put on weight if allowed to be greedy!

William and Mary died within two weeks of each other and, honestly, that broke our hearts. Mary was the first to become ill and was taken to the vet, euthanised and carried home to be buried in the garden.

William sank very fast without her. He waited for me to come

home from work and struggled across the kitchen to greet me.

I bundled him up in a blanket and carried him into the car.

Now, William had always hated the vet and the nasty injections. As we began to turn into the road where the surgery was, he rose up, kissed me on the cheek, sighed and died in my arms. I could hear him saying: 'No way! No jab for me thanks. Goodbye.' He really was smart with a pretty determined mind of his own.

We turned round for home, sobbing all the way, and buried him alongside his sister. It was then that David decided there would be no more dogs. I think we both felt we couldn't bear to go through that grief again.

Of course, after my cancer, he gave in and Butch became the loving comfort I needed.

David fell in love as well, constantly playing with Butch in the garden. I couldn't manage long walks when my hips were damaged by the chemotherapy, but, after a hip replacement, Butch has made me walk again.

WHEN I returned to work in London, Butch took my commute by train in his stride, but hated being left alone when I went to the radio studio. That's when Frieda joined us to keep him company when I was absent.

Madge was not intended. I was at a friend's house, looking to find her a dog on the Pets4Homes website. Up popped Madge. 'Look,' said my friend, 'your kind of dog.' I protested. I had two dogs and didn't need three. My friend made the call. The pup, to my amazement, was just round the corner. I couldn't resist. She's the tiniest of the three, gorgeous and a bit of a show off, hence Madonna, shortened to Madge.

Now I had three. Butch is rather shy, eager to please and adores me. Frieda is independent and bossy and Madge is happy as long as she gets a fair share of admiration and cuddles.

My lovely neighbours walk them when I'm at work and Suu, the cat, brought in originally to deal with a mouse problem, comes and goes as she pleases through her cat flap.

They are all my pets and I am their willing slave. We could not be more content. As long as they are here I never feel lonely and neither do they. It's a mutual love affair.

Friends and family are so important when you need support through tough times, but they have their own lives to lead and can't always be there for you.

Pets, however, are always there and somehow seem to know when you're feeling frightened or sad. Butch will gaze at me with those huge eyes full of love and concern, cuddle up during the worst moments and then say: 'Right, let's get some fresh air!'

Pets are, without doubt, the very best medicine.



Loving support: Jenni with her Chihuahua Butch

Picture: KEVIN HOLT

After facing her own cancer diagnosis, Jenni Murray says...

This little chap nursed me back to health

TOMORROW: ARE YOU BUYING THE BEST FOOD FOR YOUR PET?

By **Amelia Murray**

A ring. A 'magic' bracelet. Even a microchip in your shirt cuff... we road-test the gadgets that could transform the way you pay

WAIT, what? You're paying with your *shirt?* asks a wide-eyed barman as I swipe my cuff over his contactless card machine.

I am testing what is claimed to be the world's first ever smart payment shirt, CashCuff — a rather flamboyant garment with a tiny chip about the size of a SIM card in the sleeve. It was launched by a Cambridge-based company, DressCode Shirts, in November.

The shirt is part of a booming industry in wearable payment devices.

Mastercard was one of the trendsetters in 2011 when it gave VIPs at the Isle of Wight Festival wristbands which contained a payment chip.

Barclaycard introduced similar bands in 2014 and a year later Apple Pay launched in the UK which allowed customers to pay using a smartwatch.

In 2017 Visa piloted contactless sunglasses, and in Sweden thousands of people have microchips implanted in their hands which can function as contactless credit cards and key cards.

A report by technology analysts Juniper Research says the number of devices being worn will increase by more than 1,500pc to 1.8million by 2024.

But does wearable payment technology actually make life easier — or are they just a gimmick? I've tested a bracelet, a ring and a shirt to find out.

At £135, the CashCuff shirt is a little pricey and the patterns are very bold — a look the firm calls 'geek chic'.

To use it, you must download the MuchBetter app on your smartphone and verify your identity by uploading a photo of your driving licence or passport. You also need to scan your face using the camera on your phone.

The chip works as a prepaid Mastercard so you must add money to your account before shopping.

THE maximum you can spend in one go is £30, as with a contactless debit or credit card. If you want to spend more you must use your card and pin.

If you want to withdraw the money from your account later this is free.

You must remember to remove the chip from the sleeve before washing and ironing the shirt.

If your shirt is stolen or goes missing, you can switch off its ability to make payments in the app. But you will not be refunded for any money lost if someone else uses it.

Being winter, I find it a faff having to take my coat off as I fumble to find the right part of my cuff to hold against the payment terminal.

Next up is a rather swish-looking gold leather bracelet sold by a Gloucestershire-based firm called Tovi Soga, which began designing wearables in 2016.

When buying Baklava in a local store the shopkeeper looked bemused when I hold my bracelet against his payment terminal.

'What is that?' he says as we wait for the reassuring beep that tells him I'm not about to make a dash with my £1.59 baked goods.

The payment is verified and I do a celebratory jig as he shakes his head and mutters: 'Whatever next.'

Before using your bracelet you must download payment app Pingit, launched by Barclays in 2012, and enter an activation code. You can then top up the pre-paid account with your debit card. There is an auto top-up option which adds money to your account when the balance falls below a set amount. Money can also be sent back to the original card for free.

If you lose the bracelet you can block payments in the app. Pingit will refund your

money if you are a fraud victim. The device can be used abroad with a 2.75pc fee. The bracelet costs £75, but there are other styles available for up to £120. The ends are held together by strong magnets which can make it difficult to get off.

The white plastic-looking 'K ring' (which also comes in black) could be the answer to my prayers.

It costs £99.99 and is both waterproof and scratch-resistant as a result of its zirconia ceramic exterior. But

you should keep it away from any electromagnetic fields, such as your radio. To use it you must set up an account on *mykring.com* with an email address and a password.

London-based company K Wearables also works with Mastercard and you must add money to your account before you can spend with it. It applies 3pc to the foreign exchange rate when used abroad.

Topping up is free with debit card and you can add up to £50 each time. There is a 3pc fee with a credit card.

If you lose it you can switch off the ring via your account.

At a Tesco self-service machine it takes a couple of tries before the

ring connects to the payment terminal. But once I got the knack, it was easy.

James Moar, lead analyst at Juniper Research, says: 'The high price means they do not currently have mass appeal. Most devices are also prepaid but I see this changing in the next, year or so.'

This will make a big difference as I find it too much hassle having to remember to top up my account. I also felt more vulnerable wearing my payment device than when I have a card in a purse or pocket.

So for now I'll be reverting back to my debit card — if only to avoid being the talking point of every shop and bar I enter.

a.murray@dailymail.co.uk

Now you can **WEAR** your wallet!

Bling ring: the device by K Wearables can be used to make contactless purchases

Did you know?

Artist **JMW Turner**, the face of the new £20 note, left £4,100 (worth £328,763 today) in his will written in 1849

Designer handbags become the new must-have investment

DESIGNER handbags are the most profitable luxury investment, according to a new report from Knight Frank.

The Wealth Report today reveals that the collectable accessories have knocked rare whisky off the number one position, looking at one year returns. The value of designer handbags has risen by 13pc over 12 months, it says. Sebastian Duthy, director of Art Market Research, says: 'It's

By **Holly Thomas**

only been possible to create an index on handbags now because of the frequency with which many iconic pieces are coming to auction today.

'While bags made by luxury brands such as Chanel and Louis Vuitton are also highly collectable, it is those made by Hermès that attract the highest prices and

are considered the most desirable.' At a Christie's auction in London in November, a limited-edition Hermès Mini Picnic Kelly 20 bag was sold for £52,500 — after the estimated price was set between £20,000 to £30,000.

Another Hermès bag, a rare matte white Himalaya Niloticus Crocodile Birkin 30, sold for a whopping £125,000. The estimated price was £60,000 to £80,000. The

report showed that over the last year handbags outperformed both whisky and art, which both recorded growth of 5pc. Classic cars, another strong performer in recent years, slipped 7pc.

Over ten years, prices for bags have more than doubled, with a 108pc growth recorded. Although rare whisky tops the charts over the decade, rising 564pc.

moneymail@dailymail.co.uk



Picture: GEORGIE GILLARD

It helped thousands save in old age before being axed, so... Come on Chancellor, brew up a new pensioner bond

By **Miles Dilworth**

CAMPAIGNERS are calling on the Government to deliver a lifeline to savers in the Budget.

National Savings and Investments (NS&I) last month announced cuts to more than a dozen products, while interest rates offered by High Street banks and building societies have been in freefall for months.

Money Mail has long demanded better rates to be paid to savers with our 'Stop Short-Changing Savers' campaign.

Sarah Coles, personal finance analyst at Hargreaves Lansdown, says if Rishi Sunak wants to pull a rabbit out of his Red Box, he could relaunch so-called Pensioner Bonds for the over-65s.

These were introduced by George Osborne in 2015 and offered 2.8pc for a one-year bond and 4pc for a



three-year bond — double the best rates on the market at the time.

More than £1 billion of the bonds were sold in the first two days. The final bonds matured in May 2018.

Ms Coles adds: 'A similar move would reinforce the Government's message that it's committed to supporting people who want to save sensibly for the future.'

'However, the Chancellor would be making an active decision that taxpayers should subsidise better rates for savers, and it's not clear whether he'd be prepared to do that at this stage, and if he was, whether NS&I rates would be his chosen

way to do it.' Last week, Money Mail reported that just one in 50 savings accounts beats the rate of inflation, meaning savers could be losing at least £13.8 billion.

Former pensions minister Ros Altmann says the Chancellor could send 'a major signal to savers' by offering better rates in National Savings and 'more accounts that protect against inflation'.

She says the Government should also consider introducing incentives to save for social care, perhaps with a Care Isa.

Baroness Altmann adds: 'It is so important for the Chancellor to recognise and reward ordinary savers, who are so important to a thriving economy with an ageing population.'

Anna Bowes, of Savings Champion, says the Government could also increase the personal savings allowance. This was introduced in 2016 and allows basic-rate taxpayers to earn interest up to £1,000 tax-free, or £500 for higher-rate taxpayers.

Additional-rate taxpayers don't receive a personal savings allowance. Miss Bowes says the allowance has offered 'a lifeline to a lot of savers' at a time of paltry interest rates, and that increasing the allowance would 'send a positive message that the Government does care about improving things'.

'Rate cuts to NS&I was a very negative message,' she says. 'At the very least, if there is not going to be anything positive, there needs to be no further meddling.'

Experts warn the current Isa system is too complicated and may be putting people off saving. Ms Coles says the range needs to be streamlined. The Government could also relax the 25pc penalty for taking cash out of a Lifetime



Storm in a tea cup: Rishi Sunak posted this snap last week

Isa before the age of 60 for any reason other than to buy your first property. Savers have lost more than £1 million in just two years due to the charge.

Meanwhile, plans to cut higher-rate pension tax relief appear to have been shelved.

Under current rules, you get tax relief on whatever rate of income tax you are on. For example, someone earning £30,000 a year has a tax rate of 20pc, so would get £400 in tax relief if they saved £2,000 into a pension.

Someone on £80,000 a year who paid 40pc tax on their income would get £800 relief on the same amount. It had been thought the Government might strip higher earners of their 40pc tax relief, or level the rates at 30pc each.

But Tom Selby, senior analyst at AJ Bell says doing so 'would

be a colossal political gamble'. 'Not only would it hit millions of core Conservative voters directly in the pocket, it would also risk an all-out war with public sector workers who, through their generous defined benefit pensions, receive a significant proportion of the £35 billion annual tax relief paid out by the Exchequer,' he adds.

As if the Budget wasn't pressure enough, Mr Sunak — who is MP for Richmond, North Yorkshire — found himself in hot water when he tweeted a photo of himself making a cuppa with Yorkshire Tea. It prompted Left-wing calls for a boycott of the company last week.

The Harrogate-based firm pointed out that Jeremy Corbyn posed with the tea in 2017.

m.dilworth@daily mail.co.uk

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SYLVIA MORRIS'S

SAVINGS STAR BUYS

OUR expert's pick of this week's top deals on different types of accounts

ONLINE ACCOUNTS

TYPE	PROVIDER	ACCOUNT	RATE %
Easy access	Goldman Sachs	Marcus	1.30
Fixed-rate bond	Atom Bank	One-year fix	1.60
Easy-access cash Isa	Cynergy Bank	Online Isa 2	1.29
Fixed-rate cash Isa	OakNorth Bank	One-year fix	1.41

BRANCH ACCOUNTS

TYPE	PROVIDER	ACCOUNT	RATE %
Easy access	Family BS	Branch Saver 2	1.21
	Kent Reliance	Easy Access Account 36	1.20
Fixed-rate bond	Kent Reliance	One-year fix	1.50
	Metro Bank	One-year fix	1.40
Easy-access cash Isa	Market Harborough BS	Easy Access Isa 2019/2020	1.25
	Family BS	Market Tracker Cash Isa 2	1.23
Fixed-rate cash Isa	Virgin Money	to March 15, 2021	1.36
	Leeds BS	to June 30, 2021	1.26

FOR MORE BEST-BUY SAVINGS TABLES GO TO: [THISISMONEY.CO.UK/SAVE](https://thisismoney.co.uk/save)

By **Tony Hazell**

WHAT a sobering week it's been for investors. As someone who has been investing for more than 30 years, I have drawn on all my experience to sit on my hands and do very little.

The Hazell family's investments have fallen around 7.5pc from their peak. They could fall again, especially if the coronavirus (dubbed COVID-19) has a widespread impact in the U.S.

But perhaps, like you, I am too busy living my life to delve in and out of the stock market on a daily basis. I won't be selling. My strategy is to buy and hold, taking money only when I need it — such as for our house extension a couple of years ago.

Would it be fair to dub last week the 'Coronavirus Crash'? The FTSE 100 fell more than 11pc and the American Dow Jones had its biggest one-day fall in points terms, of 1,191. But this week has seen a bounce back.

While sudden falls can give pause for thought, a full-scale bear market (with shares drifting down over a prolonged period) can be tougher to endure — and we may yet see this depending on how long this COVID-19 outbreak lasts.

I've invested through a few such periods and always came out smiling at the other end. After the tech boom from January 2000 to January 2003, the FTSE 100 fell by 51pc as events such as the 9/11 terrorism attacks continued the drag on shares.

But when these events end, shares can bounce back rapidly. In March 2003, they rose more than 13pc in just three trading days.

When banks' greed and incompetence led to a crisis, the FTSE 100 fell from 6,348 to 3,497 in less than a year from May 2008 — a 45pc drop.

But the second half of July 2019 saw them rise by almost 10pc, and by mid-September they were up by 25pc.

Anyone who only began investing over the past decade or so — and this means many of those auto-enrolment pensions — will not have had sustained falls.

The lesson is that selling will turn your paper losses into real losses — and you are very likely to miss out on any sudden upturn.

The only thing that might prompt me to sell now is if I needed money in the next couple of months for a big event such as a wedding or house purchase.

There's another often-overlooked aspect to holding shares: the dividend income paid by many companies.

Investment company Link says UK dividend payouts hit £110.5 billion last year. That's £1 for every £20 — or 5pc — invested at the beginning of the year. The yield on the FTSE 100 is currently about 4.7pc, so for every £100 invested you could hope for £4.70 income.

Dividends are not guaranteed, but they are a tempting reason to remain invested.

For my part, I will at some stage be digging into my pension and Isas to help fund my retirement, but that is a few years off yet.

Younger investors can afford to ride out the ups and downs. I have told my stepsons to carry on with their regular monthly investing.

They will be buying at a lower

price than a month ago so will get more for their money — and their investment horizon is hugely further away than mine.

Balance can become more important than ever during turbulent times.

Some investment funds will outperform because of their managers' strategy or the type of shares held. Some parts of the globe may fall further, others recover faster.

But a balanced portfolio should give you some winners among the also-rans.

Ryan Hughes, head of active

portfolios at AJ Bell, warns of 'false diversification, when investors discover that all of their holdings are broadly exposed to the same themes. True diversification means holding assets that perform differently, and over the past week this has meant owning government bonds'.

Falling share prices can also give an opportunity to bargain-hunt if you think the falls are overdone.

The Chinese may buy less whisky for a few months but this is a temporary phenomenon rather than a long-term trend, so why sell Diageo? Fund manager Nick

Train bought Fevertree shares for his Finsbury Growth & Income Trust last month.

I, too, bought the shares last year after a steep price fall. Their continued fall means I am currently sitting on a rather unhealthy loss.

Disappointing Christmas trading had already taken a bite, and fears that coronavirus will mean we go out less and drink less have put them right out of favour.

From a personal perspective, I know one thing: if Mrs H is forced to self-isolate for two weeks with only daytime TV and her husband

for company, the consumption in our household of gin and Fevertree will rocket.

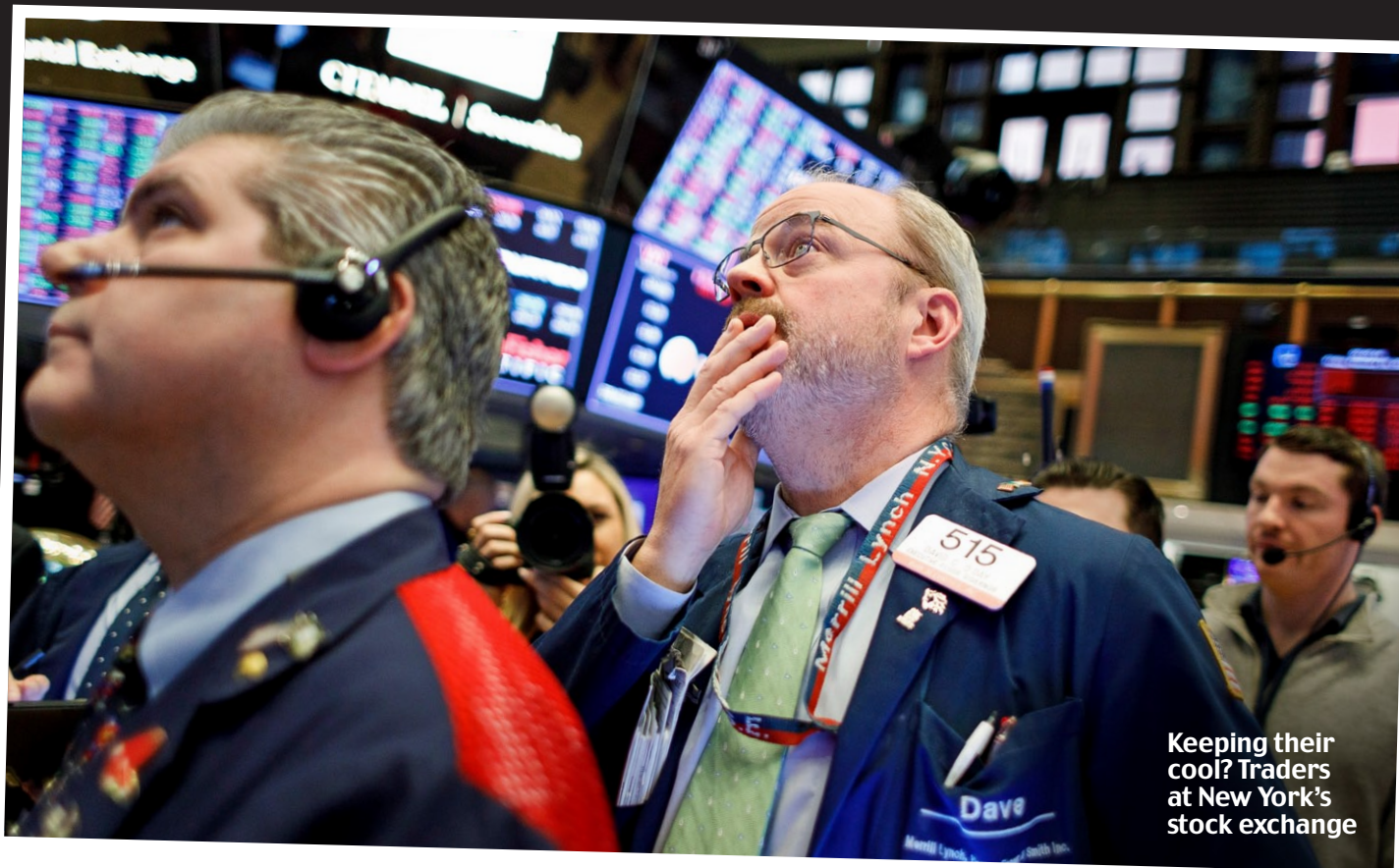
Finally, a fact that may surprise many. FE Analytics figures show the average China fund increased in value by 2.84pc in February following a 4.59pc fall in January.

Ben Yearsley, director of Shore Financial Planning, speculates that we could see a similar pattern once the spread of the virus is under control. 'A "V"-shaped market fall and bounce is quite likely,' he says.

money@mail@dailymail.co.uk

WHY I WON'T BUY INTO THE VIRUS PANIC

... says Money Mail's veteran investor TONY HAZELL, who argues history proves staying calm makes sense



Picture: EPA

Keeping their cool? Traders at New York's stock exchange

Signs of life in the cash Isa market as rates perk up

SAVERS have been given a glimmer of hope with the launch of an easy-access cash Isa at 1.25pc and an Isa draw with £500,000 in prizes to giveaway.

Until now, the so-called Isa season has met with a deafening silence. Some providers have cut rates or even withdrawn their top-paying accounts.

But two new accounts paying decent rates are out this week.

Coventry BS's new Online Isa pays 1.25pc. And from Friday, Nationwide is

By **Sylvia Morris**

giving you the chance to win up to £20,000 if you top up your existing Isa with the building society or open a new one. You need to put in at least £100 between this Friday and April 30.

The draw will take place on May 21 with ten prizes of £20,000, ten of £10,000 and 40 of £5,000. It is open to all savers in England, Scotland and Wales.

Nationwide will offer a new version of

its 1 Year Triple Access Online Isa at 1.21pc from Friday. It limits you to making three withdrawals a year. The rate drops to 0.75pc after 12 months, so you should look to move your money then.

The new Coventry account, with no withdrawal restrictions or short-term bonus, puts it near the top of the best-buys tables. It's an attractive return considering the average rate is just 0.56pc, and some big banks, including Halifax and Lloyds, pay just 0.2pc to new

savers. It is only bettered by Cynergy Bank at 1.29pc and Ford Money at 1.27pc.

Virgin Money pays a slightly higher 1.31pc on its Double Take E-Isa but it is only suitable for savers willing to limit any withdrawals to a maximum of two a year.

Money Mail does not include easy-access accounts with withdrawal restrictions or short-term bonuses in our best-buys tables, but we do keep you informed of what is on offer.

sy.morris@dailymail.co.uk

Get it Together!

Complaints rocket as energy minnow is handed 36,000 extra customers...

WHEN energy minnow OneSelect went bust, another small firm successfully bid for its 36,000 customers and took on their accounts.

It meant the Dunbartonshire-based Together Energy, which had just 100 staff of its own and outsourced a further 40 in South Africa, increased its customer total by 60pc — from

By **Fiona Parker**

60,000 to 96,000 overnight. But since then, the three-year-old firm has crashed to the bottom of consumer group Which?'s ratings table.

Together now has 150,000 customers — 1pc the size of British Gas's 15 million. But the number of letters and emails Money Mail has

received about the supplier dwarfs several of its Big Six rivals.

Industry experts and customers are asking why regulator Ofgem ever allowed such a small firm to take on so many customers.

This newspaper has now handed a dossier of complaints to the supplier and Ofgem, many from readers who have been unable to get through to the supplier's customer service team, or their emails and letters have been ignored.

Mark Todd, co-founder of price comparison site Energyhelpline, says: 'Ofgem should make sure suppliers who take on failed customer bases are able to cope with the increased customer service demands this brings.'

He adds: 'Often for a small company it's a cheap way to get a large number of customers at once.'

Farmer Jan Burrough had to go to the Ombudsman to get £1,120 back from Together Energy — a year after the supplier took over her OneSelect account.

She had been with OneSelect for two years and had built up a large amount of credit, partly due to the fact the supplier had failed to adjust her £176-a-month bill after her son moved his business from her Devon property and her usage dropped.

Jan, 67, and husband Bill, 72, found out Together Energy had taken over their account in December 2018, and a month later she began asking for her credit refund.

She says: 'I called and emailed, but I'd rarely get someone to pick up the phone or reply to an email.'

'When they did, I was told they were still waiting on a final bill from OneSelect.'

Jan had submitted her monthly readings through Together Energy's website.

But the supplier took seven months before it gave her a first bill, which finally brought her bills down to £40.

Yet she was still waiting for her OneSelect balance refund, and eventually she went to the Ombudsman.

It ruled in her favour, but she didn't get her £1,120 refund until December, plus a £40 goodwill gesture.

Together Energy later found that Jan's OneSelect balance had been incorrect and she was actually owed a further £1,100. This refund arrived in Jan's bank account last night.

She says: 'They never gave us a choice when One Select went bust, but I think I'd have preferred to be switched to a Big Six supplier.'

Another former OneSelect customer, John Lyons, had to wait a year for his £239 refund. The retired postal worker applied for the credit in January 2019, and eventually took



Refund: Jan and Bill Burrough with their pet dog, Freebie

his case to the Ombudsman, which ruled in his favour in August.

But John, 73, from Southminster, Essex, didn't receive the money until December, plus £75 compensation ordered by the Ombudsman.

Energy companies can bid to take on a collapsed firm's customers and become a 'supplier of last resort'.

Ofgem has the final say, but says a new supplier would have to ensure a 'smooth transition for customers'.

Last month Together Energy's chief executive Paul Richards apologised to customers, hours before the supplier was featured on the BBC's Rip Off Britain show. In a statement on the company's website, he wrote: 'Taking on these

customers has been a challenge... consequently, we have been late in processing final bills, our communications have deteriorated, and email response has been slow. For that I am very sorry.'

When Money Mail asked Together Energy whether, as a small supplier, it had had the resources to take on so many customers at once, it pointed the finger at OneSelect.

It said it inherited a lot of 'wrongly calculated bills' from OneSelect, and the supplier had been at the bottom of Citizens Advice customer service table when it collapsed.

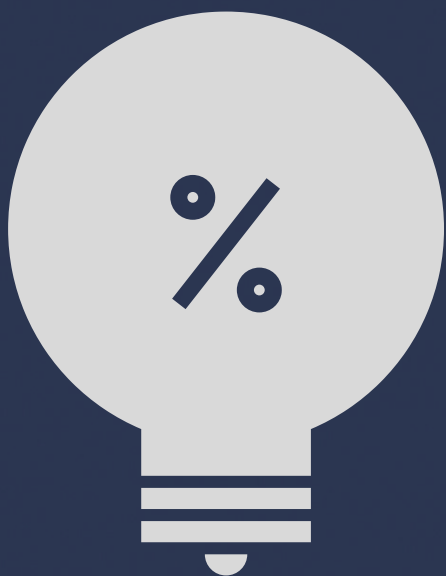
An Ofgem spokesman says: 'We are aware of customer concerns and continue to engage closely with Together Energy as it works to improve its performance.'

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Auto-switching doesn't pay

HOUSEHOLDS using automatic energy switching services could be overpaying by £70 a year because firms are failing to do proper comparisons, charity Citizens Advice has warned.

Auto-switching services promise to keep bill-payers on the cheapest possible tariff by constantly comparing deals on the market.

Yet Citizens Advice says some compare tariffs from fewer than 15

out of around 70 possible energy suppliers. The result is some customers are paying £70 a year more than if they'd found a good deal and switched themselves.

The charity, which is calling for regulation of the services, says some auto-switchers provide inaccurate or unclear information, making it difficult for consumers to make informed choices.

money@mail@dailyemail.co.uk

TSB: The bank that said 'NO' to my frail 86-year-old mother

I TOOK my 86-year-old mother to a TSB branch to open an account because she has been told she can no longer receive her state pension via the Post Office.

We took a birth certificate and several documents, including home insurance, showing her address.

She has mobility issues so making the visit was not easy. My father had been a customer of TSB for 50 years at the same address so he also attended with his passport to identify my mother.

The man we saw seemed to have no further capabilities than inputting my mother's address and birth details and then telling her that her ID was insufficient.

I explained that Mum does not drive and has not been abroad for years so does not have a passport. He did not pick up the phone to ask for advice nor exercise any discretion.

I feel my mother is being discriminated against because of her age. She does not already have a bank account.

Dr A. G., Liverpool.

I FULLY appreciate your frustration. Helping elderly relatives with mobility problems is a task faced by many of us in middle age. When things do not go to plan it can be exceedingly frustrating.

The problem appears to stem from the fact that you were a walk-in customer.

TSB says that if you had phoned to make an appointment, it would have provided you with a list of acceptable documents, such as a state pension letter. The list is available on its website.

You are extremely unhappy about the lack of flexibility or help offered.

You tell me you don't see 'the rational difference' between a letter from the Department for Work and Pensions telling your mum to get a bank account, which has her address on it, and a pension notification letter. She had her birth certificate and was sitting with her husband.

However, that's not the way banks operate now. While it may



Ask TONY

Money Mail's letters page tackles all your financial headaches



which provides the cover for Nationwide. I am still waiting to be paid.

B. S., Essex.

YOU made the claim on June 10 last year and your wife sent all the documentation, including bills for medical treatment, to UK Insurance. It lost or, to be charitable, mislaid them.

It became aware of your claim on July 26 after you have chased it up. At that point, UK Insurance asked for original receipts and medical reports to confirm the your wife's illness. She sent photocopies because, as you say, she had already sent the originals.

UK Insurance subsequently found the originals but these included some receipts from before the incident which, I'm told, confused the issue. Apparently some were for further medication which suggested an infection or shortness of breath.

Nationwide and UK Insurance accept they could have settled the matter sooner. They will be paying £470.51 to settle the claim plus £200 compensation.

A Nationwide spokesman says: 'We apologise for the delays. While we didn't have all the information requested, she had provided enough for us to make a pragmatic decision.'

seem absurd to you and me, financial regulations force banks to subject elderly people to the type of scrutiny they would show a suspected money-laundering drug dealer. TSB says it has now provided a list of acceptable ID.

Incidentally, the person you met in the branch has been with TSB for more than 30 years so has plenty of experience in customer-facing roles.

MY WIFE was taken ill while on holiday in Portugal last May. I made a claim on our Nationwide bank account travel insurance.

Initially I was told the claim was being dealt with, but then received a letter asking for more information, which we had already provided.

So we sent photocopies of documents as we had already provided the originals to UK Insurance, the company

MY PHONE wasn't connecting to my wi-fi. When I called Virgin Media, it transferred me to its Gadget Rescue team. They fixed the problem, but I ended up being charged £25.67 and was told I would have to make six further £5 monthly payments. Why is Virgin charging me for basic customer service?

S. M., Manchester.

YOU were transferred to the Gadget Rescue team because you said your mobile was with a different provider. Your broadband was with Virgin Media, so you shouldn't have had to pay anything. Virgin has apologised, refunded you the £25.67, cancelled the scheduled £5 payments and added £25 as a goodwill gesture.

MY HOLIDAY to Sri Lanka was cancelled last year on account of the bombings. We tried to claim the £10,980 back from our credit card provider, Marks & Spencer, last month but we were told we filled in the wrong forms.

B. H., by email.

M&S says it spoke to you in January to confirm

STRAIGHT TO THE POINT

it would help you claim your money back using a process called chargeback. This can take up to 60 days. A spokesman says it will contact you to answer any questions you might have.

MY WIFE returned £400 of unwanted jewellery to Gemporia, the online jewellery retailer, by post. When it arrived, Gemporia said the package had been tampered with and the jewellery was missing. I made a claim to Royal Mail but it refused to cover our loss.

A. A., Wiltshire.

IT'S important to ensure valuable items are covered in the post in case they are lost or stolen. Royal Mail has looked at your case again but has not offered a refund. Use its Special Delivery services for jewellery as this offers tracking and compensation if things go wrong.

YOU HAVE YOUR SAY

Here are some of your letters and emails about our story last week on how holidays booked online can turn into a nightmare.

I LOOK on comparison sites for the best deals, then I ring the hotel direct. I tell them what I have found and then I ask what they can offer me. Sometimes it can be a cheaper deal as you don't pay booking fees.

L. L., London.

YOU get what you pay for. If you want to have an ultra-cheap holiday, you may find yourself in a dive with no on-site help. A tour operator charges more, but one of its reps is usually there to help.

J. S., Fort William.

I'VE been very impressed with one major booking site mentioned in your article. I also don't think you should always blame the site when something goes wrong. It can only do so much, and then it is up to the traveller to sort themselves out.

C. B., London.

■ WRITE to Tony Hazell at Ask Tony, Money Mail, Northcliffe House, 2 Derry Street, London W8 5TT or email asktony@daily mail.co.uk — please include your daytime phone number, postal address and a separate note addressed to the offending organisation giving them permission to talk to Tony Hazell. We regret we cannot reply to individual letters. Please do not send original documents as we cannot take responsibility for them. No legal responsibility can be accepted by the Daily Mail for answers given.

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We need a saving grace

BRITAIN needs a Budget next Wednesday that will get the nation saving again.

As the experts tell us on Page 48, the new Chancellor Rishi Sunak has plenty of opportunity to incentivise and reward responsible saving.

Whether he will decide it is a worthy cause is another matter.

However, Money Mail believes that savers cannot wait much longer. We are constantly being told that we are not saving nearly enough.

Figures out yesterday also show that 65-year-olds in England can now expect to live around a year longer than a decade ago. We need to be saving now more than ever.

The effect of the coronavirus crisis on the stock market over the past week illustrates just how important it is for us to have savings at hand.

As we explain on Page 49, stocks and shares are really only suited for those who are content to wait for long-term rewards.

You could face big losses if you grab your money when you need it most. And that's why people need

THE LAST WORD

By Ben Wilkinson
MONEY MAIL DEPUTY EDITOR



a happy home for their cash savings. However, with rates as low as they currently are, savers are powerless to stop billions of pounds being eaten away by inflation.

So it is understandable that many will be tempted to take a risk with their nest egg on the stock market or lock away their cash for years in fixed-rate deals — just to get what they consider to be a fair return.

Industry experts tell us the Treasury could let National Savings pull in more cash by offering better rates, and encourage us to save more with special Isas and make the personal savings allowance more generous. It would

be fantastic to see a return of Pensioner Bonds — to reward those who have worked hard to save but cannot afford to take risks to earn a reasonable rate.

What's clear is that the industry is crying out for positive news. Something to show the Government cares about our savings.

Savings needs a solution, but does anyone — the big banks and the Chancellor included — have the will to make it happen?

Give 'em an earful

HEARTLESS fraudsters have been captured on camera at a Delhi call centre mocking their weeping victims as they duped

them into handing over hundreds of pounds.

The reprehensible footage was passed to BBC's Panorama by a hacker who had infiltrated the Indian scam centre's CCTV.

The cynical con sees fraudsters trick people into thinking their computers were infected. They then posed as Microsoft support workers offering to repair the problem — for a fee of course.

It is another example of the many cold-calls Britons now have to deal with every day.

But there was something to savour. The programme also showed how some fed-up people on the receiving end of the calls were answering with a deafening blast of a Klaxon.

Money Mail letters editor Tony Hazell says he has now been inspired to answer scam calls with a loud toot on a referee's whistle.

International scammers target Britons with 21 million cold-calls every month. They are making constant attempts to steal from us — seemingly with impunity.

It's a good reminder that you usually have nothing to gain from

an unsolicited call, but everything to lose. So give a scammer an earful if they come calling.

Bond frenzy

LAST week I asked to hear from those who had had no luck with Premium Bonds. Thank you to all who wrote in to suggest your losing streak might be the longest.

We heard from two readers who were bought the bonds in the year they were launched — 1956 — and have yet to win anything. But with a tiny investment, perhaps 64 years without a win is no surprise.

National Savings describes a frenzy of excitement at the launch more than six decades ago, with 49 million bonds eligible for the first draw. Wouldn't it be nice if a government savings initiative could spark such excitement a today? In the meantime, we would still love to hear from readers who think they have been particularly lucky with the bond draws, even if you don't hold many.

Write to us at 2 Derry Street, London, W8 5TT, or email money@mail@daily.co.uk.

MONEY BEST BUYS

... OUR PICK OF THE TOP DEALS



MORTGAGES

LENDER	RATE	DETAILS	DEPOSIT	FEE	CONTACT
TWO-YEAR FIXES					
Barclays	1.21pc	to 30/04/22	40pc	£999	0333 202 7580
HSBC	1.54pc	to 30/06/22	15pc	£0	0800 494 999
Yorkshire BS	2.77pc	to 31/05/22	5pc	£250	0345 166 9510
FIVE-YEAR FIXES					
HSBC	1.44pc	to 30/06/25	40pc	£999	0800 494 999
Coventry	1.75pc	to 31/03/25	15pc	£999	0800 121 8899
Newcastle BS	2.9pc	to 30/06/25	5pc	£498	0345 606 4488
BASE-RATE TRACKERS					
HSBC	Base +0.64pc	for two years	40pc	£999	0800 494 999
Nationwide	Base +1.39pc	for two years	10pc	£999	0800 302 010
Newcastle	Base +2.15pc	until 30/06/2022	5pc	£0	0345 606 4488
BUY-TO-LET					
Skipton BS	1.49pc	to 31/05/22	40pc	£995	0345 850 1755
Ipswich	2.99pc	to 31/03/22	20pc	£1,149	0330 123 0773
Virgin Money	2.17pc	to 01/05/25	25pc	£995	0345 605 0500

This week you should...

MAKE sure you are on track to save what you need in retirement. The Money Advice Service has a Budgeting in Retirement worksheet which you can download from moneyadvice.service.org.uk. This can help you work out

your income from any pension scheme, annuity or benefits you will receive. You can then fill in your outgoings, such as rent or mortgage payments (if you will still be paying those in retirement), bills and holidays.



CREDIT CARDS

CASHBACK & PERKS				Amex: 0800 032 7642. Barclaycard: 0800 151 0900
PROVIDER	CARD	APR	PERKS	
American Express	Platinum Cashback	22.9pc	5pc cashback up to £100 in first 3 months	
Barclaycard	Barclaycard Rewards Card	22.9pc	£25 bonus plus 0.2pc cashback on spending in the UK and abroad	
SPENDING				Barclaycard: 0800 151 0900. Sainsbury's Bank: 0800 030 4418
PROVIDER	CARD	INITIAL RATE	APR	
Barclaycard	27-month 0pc Transfers and Purchases Card	0pc for 27 months	21.9pc	
Sainsbury's	27-month 0pc Purchase Credit Card	0pc for 27 months	20.95pc	
BALANCE TRANSFERS				Sainsbury's Bank: 0800 030 4418. Virgin Money: 0800 389 2875
PROVIDER	CARD	BALANCE TRANSFER RATE	FEE	
Sainsbury's	29-month Balance Transfer Card	0pc for 29 months	2.74pc	
Virgin Money	29-month Balance Transfer Card	0pc for 29 months	3pc	



ENERGY

UTILITY POINT	YORKSHIRE ENERGY
■ Just Up 20 Wk06 Direct v2	■ Yorkshire Energy Variable
■ Fixed for 12 months	■ Variable
ANNUAL BILL	ANNUAL BILL
£784 0345 557 7878	£820 0113 451 0700
PEOPLE'S ENERGY	BRITISH GAS
■ People's Energy 2 Months Upfront Winter 20 v3	■ HomeEnergy Fix until Nov 2021
■ Fixed for 12 months	■ Fixed 30/11/21
ANNUAL BILL	ANNUAL BILL
£813 0131 285 5510	£1,146 0333 202 9802
Based on national average usage	



CURRENT ACCOUNTS

MOSTLY IN THE BLACK	
NATIONWIDE FLEXDIRECT	
5pc on up to £2,500 for first 12 months	
■ Top interest rate you'll find	0800 30 20 10
TSB CLASSIC PLUS	
3pc on balances up to £1,500	
■ You must pay in £500 every month	0345 835 3844
BANK OF SCOTLAND	
1pc on balances up to £3,999.99 and 2pc on balances between £4,000 and £5,000	
■ You need at least two direct debits set up	0345 721 3141
MOSTLY IN THE RED	
FIRST DIRECT 1ST ACCOUNT	
0pc overdraft to £250	
■ You must pay in £1,000 a month within 3 months for a bonus	03456 00 24 24
NATIONWIDE FLEXDIRECT	
0pc overdraft for 12 months	
■ You must pay in £1,000 per month if you want interest	0800 30 20 10

Sources: L&C Mortgages, GoCompare, Energyhelpline, ONS inflation

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Daily Mail

The complete guide to
**UNLOCKING THE CASH
FROM YOUR HOME**

BY VICTORIA BISCHOFF



Mail Finance
EQUITY RELEASE

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TO THE RESCUE**Saving Lives At Sea, 8pm, BBC2**

RNLI crews around the country get to work in all weathers — even in sunshine, there are rescue calls to answer. In the Humber estuary at Cleethorpes, two teens have got stuck in the mud as the tide comes in, while further north, in Loch Ness, there's a desperate scramble to save a family on their stricken yacht.

CONSUMER REPORT**Health Foods: Are They A Con?, 8pm, Ch5**

PAUL CONNOLLY and Jean Johansson (pictured) investigate health products to see if the big-name brands are really worth the money. Products being put to the test are online intolerance tests and celebrity-endorsed hair products. But are they worth it?

**PICK OF THE DAY****THE TROUBLE WITH MAGGIE COLE, 9PM, ITV**

DAWN FRENCH stars as bubbly local historian Maggie Cole, who puts her foot in her mouth in a truly spectacular way as this promising new, six-part series begins. Life in the beautiful coastal town of Thurlbury seems idyllic, but during an interview with a local radio journalist, Maggie lets the gossip flow

rather too freely — almost as much as the G&Ts — and the whole sorry show is broadcast to the entire town. Bracing for the fallout throughout the close-knit community are her loyal husband, Peter, son Jamie and daughter-in-law Becka (Mark Heap, Phil Dunster and Gwyneth Keyworth, pictured with French).

**CRUEL TRADE****Tigers: Hunting The Traffickers, 9pm, BBC2**

THIS desperately sad programme follows Royal Marine-turned-tiger champion Aldo Kane (pictured) as he works

with wildlife investigators in South-East Asia to gather evidence on the shocking trade in farmed tigers, bred for tiger bone wine and glue. The local authorities seem to be turning a blind eye.

HEALTH CRISIS**100 Kilo Kids: Obesity SOS, 9pm, Ch4**

IT'S a shocking statistic that half of Britain's children are now overweight or obese. This programme comes from a leading childhood obesity clinic in Bristol, and meets three children in dire need of help. One of them is 14-year-old

**BBC 1**

6.00 Breakfast (HD)
9.15 Britain's Housing Scandal (AD,HD)
10.00 Homes Under the Hammer (AD,R,HD) Properties in London, Liverpool and Co Durham.
11.00 Wanted Down Under (R,HD) The Blackledge family fly to New Zealand.
11.45 Saved on Camera (HD)
12.15 Bargain Hunt (AD,R,HD) From Newbury Showground.
1.00 BBC News at One; Weather (HD)
1.30 BBC Regional News; Weather
1.45 Doctors (AD,HD) Part two of two. Rob and Karen have to deal with developments in relation to Abz.
2.15 Jimmy McGovern's Moving On (AD,HD) A former rugby league star is blackmailed by his ex. Drama, starring Mark Addy and Jane Slavin.
3.00 Escape to the Country (AD,R,HD) Nicki Chapman helps a Croydon-based couple to find a Cornish home.
3.45 Money for Nothing (HD) Sarah Moore salvages three items from Woking Recycling Centre in Surrey.
4.30 Ready Steady Cook (HD) Cousins who've both had sight-loss problems compete in the culinary contest.
5.15 Pointless (R,HD) Quiz show.
6.00 BBC News at Six; Weather (HD)
6.30 BBC Regional News; Weather
6.55 Party Political Broadcast (R,HD) By the Labour Party.

BBC 2

6.30 Money for Nothing (R,HD)
7.15 Ready Steady Cook (R,HD)
8.00 See Hear (BSL,HD)
8.30 Great British Railway Journeys (AD,BSL,R,HD) Bodmin to Totnes.
9.00 BBC News at 9 (HD)
10.00 Victoria Derbyshire (HD)
11.00 BBC Newsroom Live (HD)
11.15 Politics Live (HD)
1.00 Hardball (R,HD) Quiz show.
1.45 Best House in Town (R,HD) Three detached properties in St Albans are in the spotlight.
2.30 Terry and Mason's Great Food Trip (R,HD) Terry Wogan and Mason McQueen head to York.
3.00 Red Rock (AD,R,HD) Donna's phone leads the team to the murder site.
3.45 The Great Interior Design Challenge (AD,R,HD) Two designers vie for a place in the quarter final.
4.45 Portillo's State Secrets (AD,R,HD) Michael Portillo reveals how Special Branch spied on a future king.
5.15 Flog It! (R,HD) A special episode revisiting some of the historic venues featured during this series.
6.00 Richard Osman's House of Games (HD) With Chizzy Akudolu, Miles Jupp, Amol Rajan and Ellie Taylor.
6.30 Great British Railway Journeys (AD,R,HD) Michael Portillo visits Stranraer and the Mull of Galloway.

ITV

6.00 Good Morning Britain (HD) News, current affairs and lifestyle features.
9.00 Lorraine (HD) Entertainment and fashion news.
10.00 This Morning (HD) A mix of celebrity chat, lifestyle features, advice and competitions. Including Local Weather.
12.30 Loose Women (HD) Another helping of topical studio discussion from a female perspective, featuring celebrity interviews.
1.30 News; Weather (HD)
1.55 Regional News; Weather (HD)
2.00 Judge Rinder (HD) Cameras follow criminal barrister Robert Rinder as he takes on real-life cases in a studio courtroom.
3.00 Tenable (R,HD) Quiz hosted by Warwick Davis, in which five members of a ukulele band answer questions about top-ten lists, then try to score a perfect ten in the final round; Regional Weather
4.00 Tipping Point (HD) Quiz show, hosted by Ben Shephard.
5.00 The Chase (HD) Contestants Richard, Kati, Lisa and Geoff compete to secure a cash prize.
6.00 Regional News; Weather (HD)
6.25 Party Political Broadcast (HD) By the Labour Party.
6.30 News; Weather (HD)

CHANNEL 4

6.30 Cheers (R,HD)
6.55 Cheers (R,HD)
7.20 The King of Queens (AD,R)
7.45 The King of Queens (AD,R)
8.10 Everybody Loves Raymond (AD,R)
8.40 Everybody Loves Raymond (AD,R)
9.10 Frasier (AD,R)
9.40 Frasier (AD,R)
10.10 Undercover Boss Canada (R,HD)
11.05 Ramsay's Kitchen Nightmares USA (R) Revisiting three restaurants.
12.00 Channel 4 News Summary (HD)
12.05 Find It, Fix It, Flog It (R,HD)
1.05 Posh Pawn (R,HD)
2.10 Countdown (HD) With Rory Bremner in Dictionary Corner.
3.00 A Place in the Sun (R,HD) A duo seek a home in Aquitaine, France.
4.00 A New Life in the Sun: Where Are They Now? (HD) In France, a bar owner gets in trouble with the local police.
5.00 Come Dine with Me (R,HD) Four contestants from Leicestershire compete to host the best party.
6.00 The Simpsons (AD,R,HD) Bart betrays Milhouse during their school sports day.
6.30 Hollyoaks (AD,R,HD) Edward prepares a romantic dinner for Tony and Diane. Meanwhile, Nancy is furious when Darren forgets to pick up Oscar from school.

7 PM**8 PM****9 PM****10 PM****11 PM****12 MNT**

7.00 The One Show (HD) Magazine show, presented by Alex Jones and Matt Baker.
7.30 Match of the Day Live: The FA Cup (HD) Sheffield Wednesday v Manchester City (Kick-off 7.45pm). Gary Lineker presents all the action from the fifth-round tie at Hillsborough, which is followed by the draw for the sixth round. Wednesday have already defeated one Premier League side in Brighton & Hove Albion, away in the third round, but face a daunting task against the holders, who scored four against both Port Vale and Fulham in their previous games in this season's competition. With analysis from Alan Shearer and Micah Richards.

10.00 BBC News at Ten (HD)
10.25 BBC Regional News (Followed by Weather) (Followed by National Lottery Update)
10.35 Eating with My Ex (HD) A woman wants to know why her ex left in the middle of the night.

11.05 Fight Dirty (HD) Two teams go up against each other to clean each others' homes.
11.35 Killing Eve (AD,R,HD) Villanelle lures Eve to Berlin while on a mission to kill a Chinese army colonel. Jodie Comer stars.

12.20 Killing Eve (AD,R,HD) Eve undertakes her first surveillance operation in the countryside.
1.05 Weather for the Week Ahead (HD)
1.10 BBC News (HD)

7.00 The Andrew Neil Show (HD) Interviews, discussion and analysis from Westminster, including the latest on Brexit, with Andrew Neil and guests.

8.00 Saving Lives at Sea (AD,HD) **PICK** The team race to rescue of two teens stuck in mud. Last in series. See Critics' Choice.

9.00 Tigers: Hunting the Traffickers (AD,HD) **PICK** A report on the illegal tiger trade in South-East Asia. See Critics' Choice.

10.00 Live at the Apollo (R,HD) Sarah Millican hosts stand-up comedy at the Hammersmith Apollo, with Tom Allen and Arj Barker.
10.30 Newsnight (HD) (Followed by Weather)

11.15 Win the Wilderness: Alaska (AD,R,HD) The two remaining couples pay a visit to the empty property without Duane and Rena, to get a sense of what their new life in the wilderness will really be like.

12.15 See Hear (BSL,R,HD) A look at a new deaf led storyline being made for the BBC drama *Casualty*.
12.45 Universal Credit: Inside the Welfare State (BSL,R,HD)
1.45 Hospital (BSL,R,HD)
2.45 This Is BBC2 (HD)

7.00 Emmerdale (AD,HD) Marlon feels betrayed by the Dingles, and Kim finds herself in deep water.
7.30 Coronation Street (AD,HD) Daniel resolves to prove his devotion to Bethany.

8.00 Harry Redknapp's Sandbanks Summer (AD,HD) Harry Redknapp welcomes Nick Knowles and Rita Simons to Sandbanks.
8.30 Coronation Street (AD,HD) Bethany realises she needs to leave Weatherfield.

9.00 The Trouble with Maggie Cole (AD,HD) **PICK** New series. Drama, with Dawn French and Mark Heap. See Pick of the Day.

10.00 News (HD) (Followed by Weather)
10.30 Regional News (HD) (Followed by Weather)
10.45 Peston (HD) Political magazine show presented by Robert Peston, featuring interviews with MPs, topical guests and cultural figures.

11.40 Britain Underwater: Fighting the Floods (R,HD) A report from the communities that were hardest hit by the recent storms Ciara and Dennis.

12.30 Ideal World (HD) **3.00** Broadchurch (AD,BSL,R,HD) Ellie and Hardy start to investigate Trish's life.
3.50 ITV Nightscreen (HD)
5.05 Judge Rinder (BSL,R,HD)

7.00 Channel 4 News (HD)

8.00 Kirstie and Phil's Love It or List It (AD,R,HD) Kirstie Allsopp and Phil Spencer meet Christine Attwood and Tony Congdon in Purley, who need help deciding whether they should sell or upgrade their home.

9.00 100 Kilo Kids: Obesity SOS (AD,HD) **PICK** Patients in Britain's leading childhood obesity clinic. See Critics' Choice.

10.00 Home (AD,HD) Peter tries to hold the family together.
10.30 Gogglebox (AD,R,HD) Capturing the households' instant reactions to what they are watching on television from the comfort of their own sofas.

11.35 First Dates (AD,R,HD) Recruitment consultant Chloe sits down with 'geezer' Anthony, actor Josh seeks a leading lady, and dedicated father Rob is paired with former Butlin's Redcoat Donna.

12.30 The Windsors (R,HD) **1.00** Ramsay's Kitchen Nightmares USA (R) **1.50** My Family and the Galapagos (R,HD)
2.45 Come Dine with Me (R,HD)
3.40 Grand Designs (R,HD) **4.35** Location, Location, Location (R,HD)
5.35 Kirstie's Vintage Gems (R,HD)
5.50 Countdown (R,HD)

(R) Repeat. (HD) High Definition. (AD) Audio Description. (b/w) Not in colour. (BSL) British Sign Language.

■ Family viewing ● Generally suitable for all ◆ Caution recommended

Tommy, who weighs 23 stone and is admitted for round-the-clock care.

FILM CHOICES

Secrets In A Small Town, 2.15pm, Ch5

KATE DRUMMOND stars as desperate mother Claire, who leads a frantic search when her daughter fails to come home after a night out with her basketball team. Suspecting that the team know more than they're letting on, Claire is shocked when the local police show little interest.

Hacksaw Ridge, 9pm, Paramount

DIRECTED by Mel Gibson, this fact-based World War II drama tells the story of American conscientious objector Desmond Doss (Andrew Garfield, pictured with Teresa Palmer). Doss was a Seventh-Day Adventist Christian who served as a combat medic while refusing to carry a weapon. (Freeview 31, Freesat 132, Sky 150, Virgin 187)



CHANNEL 5

6.00 Milkshake! Peppa Pig (R) **6.20** Mya Go (R,HD) **6.30** Fireman Sam (R,HD) **6.40** Noddy: Toyland Detective (HD) **6.50** Abby Hatcher (HD) **7.00** Thomas & Friends (R,HD) **7.15** Milkshake! Monkey's Amazing Adventures (R,HD) **7.20** Peppa Pig (R,HD) **7.30** Peppa Pig (R,HD) **7.40** Top Wing (R,HD) **7.55** Paw Patrol (HD) **8.10** Floogals (R,HD) **8.25** Becca's Bunch (R,HD) **8.40** Little Princess (R) **8.55** Ben and Holly's Little Kingdom (R,HD) **9.10** Sunny Bunnies (R,HD)

9.15 **Jeremy Vine** (HD)

11.15 **Nightmare Tenants, Slum Landlords** (R,HD)

12.10 **5 News at Lunchtime** (HD)

12.15 **Paddington Station 24/7** (R,HD)

1.10 **Access** (HD)

1.15 **Home and Away** (AD,R,HD)

1.45 **Neighbours** (AD,HD)

2.15 **Secrets in a Small Town** (2019) (PG) (HD) Fact-based thriller, starring Kate Drummond and Rya Kihlstedt. See Critics' Choice.

4.00 **Friends** (R,HD)

4.30 **Friends** (R,HD)

5.00 **5 News** (HD)

5.30 **Neighbours** (AD,R,HD) Paul discovers that Jane's catfish is his old adversary Mannix Foster.

6.00 **Home and Away** (AD,R,HD) Tori goes home, and learns that Leah is missing.

6.30 **5 News Tonight** (HD)

7.00 **Secrets of the Royal Palaces** (R,HD) Behind-the-scenes tales of the British monarchy's residences, with a royal butler recalling how he ended up dancing with the Queen. (Followed by 5 News Update)

8.00 **Health Foods: Are They a Con?** (HD) Paul Connolly and Jean Johansson lift the lid on health foods and other products. (Followed by 5 News Update) See Critics' Choice.

9.00 **Sarah Payne: 5 Mistakes That Caught a Killer** (HD) Examining the murder of Sarah Payne, an eight-year-old girl who was killed by Roy Whiting in 2000, and the mistakes he made that led to him being arrested and locked up.

10.00 **Millionaire Age Gap Love** Part one of two. The popularity of age-gap relationships among the super-rich, meeting six millionaire couples who are decades apart, as well as two millionaires looking for love.

11.05 **The Chocolate Challenge with The Hairy Bikers** (HD) The competition heats up as the semi-final gets under way, and the four remaining chocolatiers are tasked with creating their own unique chocolate Easter egg.

12.05 **The Woman Who Ate a House** (R,HD) **1.00** The 21.co.uk Live Casino Show (HD) **3.00** Access (HD) **3.10** The Hotel Inspector: Checking In, Checking Out (R,HD) **4.00** Tattoo Disasters UK (BSL,R,HD) **4.45** House Doctor (BSL,R) **5.10** Nick's Quest (BSL,R) **5.35** Wildlife SOS (BSL,R,HD)

▲ Particularly liable to offend

Auntie finds ignorance is bliss in the world of 'yoof' YouTubers

MY TAXI driver in Bristol last week gave me a sideways look, as if I were mad, when I asked which TV programmes he enjoyed. He didn't own a television, he said. He had never owned a television, and he didn't know anyone his age who did.

'My parents watch TV,' he conceded. 'It's for old people, innit, like you. No offence.'

None taken. An Ofcom report last October revealed that more than half of young Britons aged 16-24 did not watch a single minute of any BBC programme in the preceding week — neither on live TV nor on catch-up via iPlayer.

The youth driving the Uber cab admitted he did watch movies sometimes: 'My uncle, he's got Netflix, right. And I know his password.' But most of his screen time, he said, was devoted to YouTube.

Many DIY broadcasters on YouTube, the free video channel owned by Google, attract audiences that the Beeb hasn't dreamed of for decades. Eight-year-old Ryan Kaji from Texas, for instance, reviews toys: 24.2 million people have signed up to watch his daily chattering.

Compare that with the figures for BBC1's biggest hit in years, the Christmas edition of Gavin And

WICKED SEND-UP OF THE NIGHT: Do the Royal Family ever peek at their parodies on *The Windsors* (C4), I wonder? I can't imagine Prince Charles sees the funny side. But perhaps Fergie secretly enjoys Katy Wix's portrayal of her as a vodka-guzzling lush.

Stacey, which sent Auntie into ecstasies by netting 17.1 million — over seven million fewer viewers.

How can the Corporation compete? By hiring YouTube stars and viewers to present a show, perhaps. Four of them, all in that elusive 16-25 age bracket, were sent to Los Angeles to learn about the cosmetics industry in *Beauty Laid Bare* (BBC1).

All four were stilted, awkward personalities, who recited their lines like they were reading them off the label on a box of make-up.

The links between segments, featuring pretend conversations in the back of a limo, were excruciating. But these young people were not pretending to be polished performers. Slick patter went out with Radio 1 DJs.

The foursome were sent to a cosmetics company called ColourPop, whose factory churned out low-cost lipsticks in neon plastic hues for the teen market. They had some prewritten questions: one asked whether staff on the production line were paid minimum wage.

A hovering executive explained this question made the company

WELSH TV VARIATIONS

BBC1: 1.30pm BBC Wales Today; Weather: 6.30 BBC Wales Today. 6.55 Party Political Broadcast: 10.25 BBC Wales Today. 10.30 BBC Wales Live. 11.00 Weather: 11.05 Eating with My Ex: 11.35 Fight Dirty. 12.05am Killing Eve. 12.45 Killing Eve. 1.30 BBC News. BBC2: 11.15pm New Voices from Wales. 11.30 Natural World: Killer Bees of Africa. ITV: 6.25pm Party Political Broadcast. S4C: 6.00am Cw. 11.00 Dysgu Gyda Cw: Yn yr Ardd. 11.15 Dysgu Gyda Cw: Peppa. 11.20 Dysgu Gyda Cw: Heini. 11.35 Dysgu Gyda Cw: Llan-ar-goll-en. 11.50 Dysgu Gyda Cw: Y Dywysoges Fach. 12noon Newyddion S4C a'r Tywydd. 12.05 Ceffylau Cymru. 12.30 Heno. 1.00 Llwybrau'r Eirth. 2.00 Newyddion S4C a'r Tywydd. 2.05 Prynhawn Da. 3.00 Newyddion S4C a'r Tywydd. 3.05 Noson Lawen. 4.05 Cw Byw. 5.00 Stwnsh. 6.00 Adre. 6.25 Darllediad Gwleidyddol gan Llafur Cymru. 6.30 Heno. 7.30 Newyddion S4C a'r Tywydd. 8.00 Pobol y Cwm. 8.55 Newyddion S4C a'r Tywydd. 9.00 Ysgol Ni: Maesinla. 10.00 Mwy o Sgorio. 10.30 Priodas Pum Mil.



CHRISTOPHER STEVENS LAST NIGHT'S TV

Beauty Laid Bare ★★☆☆☆

Back In Time For The Corner Shop ★★★★★

'uncomfortable'. Another of the amateur presenters wondered if the glitter in their lipsticks was biodegradable. 'Maybe don't answer this!' called out the exec.

Afterwards, 25-year-old Casey explained that it was probably better if we didn't know the facts. 'We all eat food — if we knew exactly where our food

came from and what was in it, we'd eat nothing. Sometimes ignorance is bliss.' If that's true, Casey was blissed out.

The Ardern family behind the counter in the grocery store on *Back In Time For The Corner Shop* (BBC2) were much more natural in front of the camera. Mum Jo, in particular, is a star, with her

sleeves rolled up as she churns ice cream in a barrel or wields a mallet and chisel to split a block of ice, the way Sheffield shopkeepers did 100 years ago.

As always, this series is peppered with amusing facts. Who could have guessed that, in the era before refrigerators, Britain's ice was shipped over from Norwegian lakes?

Or that in the Thirties a craze swept the country for one-armed bandits? One local, 88-year-old Reg, was old enough to remember that... and the bomb that dropped in his family's back yard during the Blitz. By a miracle, it didn't go off.

You won't meet many like Reg on YouTube.

"Real laughs & characters we'll enjoy cringing at"

Radio Times

SANDYLANDS

FAKE DEATH LIVING LEGEND

STARTS TONIGHT 10PM

NEW ORIGINAL COMEDY

GOLD

FAMILY FILM
The Addams Family,
BT TV/Sky Store/Virgin Movies

SERVICEABLE, amusing animated outing with a voice cast that includes Charlize Theron, Bette Midler and Oscar Isaac.

OFFBEAT ROMCOM
Straight Up,
6.15pm, Sky Premiere

RORY and Todd (Katie Findlay and James Sweeney) could be soul mates – though it's more a meeting of minds than hearts and bodies. A clever, unusual modern love story.

FOOTBALL
Livingston v Celtic,
7.15pm, BT Sport 1

CELTIC may look like runaway league leaders, but Livingston made Rangers work for a 1-0 win in February, so could they cause an upset tonight?

MURDER MYSTERY
Agatha Christie's Poirot,
8pm, ITV3

A STARRY Syrian adventure for David Suchet's detective, first shown in 2009. Tim Curry, Mark Gatiss, Elizabeth McGovern and John Hannah all feature in a story that dives headlong into a bleak and tangled family situation after a murder at an archaeological dig.

EMIGRES' STORIES
A Very British History,
9pm, BBC4

THE Vietnamese who fled their country in the Seventies and Eighties were

Satellite
choice

known as the 'boat people'. Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher agreed that the UK would take in 10,000 of them, and here, Rachel Nguyen reflects on the experience of her parents – who were two of them.

BODY CONFIDENT
How To Look Good Naked,
9pm, Really

GOK WAN'S series was last seen on Ch4 in 2011, and now, it begins a new run on Really, with Gok back as the presenter. 'You have put everybody else first,' Gok tells Ames, who's had three children and is acutely aware of the impact that has had on her body. Her path back to confidence begins tonight.

NEW MUSICAL COMEDY
Zoey's Extraordinary
Playlist, 10pm, E4

IN THIS innovative U.S. comedy, Jane Levy (pictured) plays the socially awkward Zoey Clarke, who, after a freak accident, finds she is able to hear the innermost thoughts of people around her as songs. Can she use her new powers to improve her own life and the lives of others?

FUNNY GAMES
Hypothetical,
10pm, Dave

JAMES ACASTER receives a ribbing for his disastrous

Bake Off appearance in this new episode of the panel show, which has the best atmosphere of any episode so far this series. Among the strong guest line-up, Nish Kumar is asked to present his strategy for winning Love Island, and Lou Sanders delivers offbeat one-liners.

NEW SITCOM
Sandylands, 10pm, Gold



THIS new nightly three-parter is a mix of two things – a saucy seaside comedy and the lightly poignant story of a grown-up daughter (Natalie Dew) coming to terms with the loss of her estranged father (Sanjeev Bhaskar). Among a good cast, David Walliams and Sophie Thompson (pictured centre right with Simon Bird, Harriet Webb, Hugh Bonneville, Dew and Craig Parkinson) are hilarious as a couple who run a local B&B.

ACTION FLICK
The Counterfeiter,
10.15pm, Sky Premiere

HONG KONG actioner starring Chow Yun-Fat as a mysterious counterfeiter known as the Painter. Aaron Kwok is the frustrated artist who is drawn into the Painter's criminal operations.

Time	BBC 4	E4	ITV2
7.00pm	9 (Scot 68) Beyond 100 Days News and analysis from Washington DC and London; Weather	13 Hollyoaks Edward decides to turn his attentions to Marnie	6 You've Been Framed! Gold A vlogger squirts perfume in her eyes
7.30pm	The Yorkshire Dales Paul Rose explores Swaledale	Man with a Plan Andi makes Adam hang out with Lowell	You've Been Framed! Gold A teenager is knocked over by a runaway tyre
8.00pm	The Victorian House of Arts and Crafts A Victorian Arts and Crafts commune in the Welsh hills sees a group of crafters moving in together	The Goldbergs Murray and Geoff have to find an important cheese steak	Two and a Half Men Walden and Alan arrange a double date
8.30pm		Schooled After watching <i>Rudy</i> in CB's class, a student wants to play football	Two and a Half Men Walden finds himself in grave danger
9.00pm	A Very British History Rachel Nguyen tells the story of Vietnamese refugees who came to Britain in the Seventies and Eighties. Last in series	Celebs Go Dating Dean Gaffney is struggling to find Mrs Right, and Amy Childs cannot wait to tell Frankie Essex about her current boyfriend	Family Guy Joe cheats on Bonnie following bad advice from Peter
9.30pm		Zoey's Extraordinary Playlist New series. Zoey begins to hear the innermost desires of the people around her through song	Family Guy Lois tells Peter about her date with former boyfriend Ross Fishman
10.00pm	The Stuarts Clare Jackson reveals how the unprecedented religious violence of the Wars of the Three Kingdoms shaped British political culture		Celebrity Juice With Stacey Solomon, Samia Longchambon and Joel Dommett
10.30pm		Zoey's Extraordinary Playlist New series. Zoey begins to hear the innermost desires of the people around her through song	10.50 Family Guy Peter promises a favour to a dolphin
11.00pm	Blood and Gold: The Making of Spain with Simon Sebag Montefiore The historian uncovers the truth about Spain's hero El Cid (To 12.00)	The Big Bang Theory Leonard and Penny continue testing their rekindled relationship	11.20 American Dad! A would-be Scrooge ruins the CIA's Secret Santa Party
11.30pm		The Big Bang Theory Leonard breaks his room-mate agreement (To 12.00)	11.50 American Dad! Francine poses as a widow while Stan is away (To 12.20)

A-Z SATELLITE LISTINGS

ALIBI

Sky 132 Virgin 126
11.00am Miss Fisher's Murder Mysteries. **1.00pm** Rush. **3.00** Murdoch Mysteries. **5.00** Major Crimes. **7.00** Motive. **9.00** The Gulf. **11.00** New Tricks.

ANIMAL PLANET

Sky 162
12noon Jeremy Wade's Dark Waters. **1.00** My Cat from Hell. **2.00** Alaskan Bush People. **3.00** Amanda to the Rescue. **5.00** Crikey! It's the Irwins. **6.00** Bondi Vet: Coast to Coast. **7.00** Animal Cops Detroit. **8.00** Nature's Strangest Mysteries: Solved. **9.00** Alaskan Bush People. **10.00** Animal Cops San Francisco. **11.00** Pit Bulls & Parolees.

BBC ALBA

Sky 169 Virgin 161
7.00am Alba Today. **5.00pm** Padraig Post: SDS. **5.15** Su Shiusaidh. **5.20** Na Blegieardan. **5.30** Na Braithrean Cuideachail. **5.40** Treud na Dluth-choille – Grad-Naidheachd. **5.45** Igam Ogam. **5.55** Stoiridh. **6.00** Kung Fu Panda. **6.25** Seonaidh. **6.35** Na Moomins/Moomin Valley. **7.00** Turas a' Bhradain. **7.30** Speaking Our Language. **8.00** An La. **8.30** An t-Eilean. **9.00** 'San Fhuil. **10.00** Scottish Premiership Football.

BT SPORT 1

Sky 413 Virgin 527
11.00am Hibernian v Hearts. **12.30pm** Coppa Italia Preview. **1.00** V8 Supercars Highlights. **3.00** Premier League Review. **4.00** WWE SmackDown Highlights. **5.00** WWE Raw Highlights. **6.00** BT Sport Reload. **6.30** Premier League Reload. **6.45** Live Scottish Football Extra. **7.15** Live: Livingston v Celtic. **10.00** WWE NXT Highlights. **11.00** WWE NXT UK.

BT SPORT 2

Sky 414 Virgin 528
12noon MotoGP: Silverstone 2019. **1.00** MotoGP: San Marino 2019. **2.00** MotoGP: Aragon 2019. **3.00** Live: Salzburg U19 v Derby U19. **5.00** No Filter: How Fury Beat Wilder. **5.30** Premier League Reload. **5.45** Gallagher Premiership Tonight. **6.30** BT Sport Score Best Bits. **7.00** Premier League World. **7.30** Badminton Unlimited. **8.00** Live Rugby Tonight. **9.00** No Filter: How Fury Beat Wilder. **9.30** UFC 248 Countdown. **10.30** UFC: Inside the Octagon. **11.00** PSA Squash.

BT SPORT 3

Sky 417 Virgin 529
11.30am Melbourne City W v Brisbane Roar W. **12.30pm** PSA Squash: Windy City Open. **2.00**

Inside Sailing. **2.30** Hibernian v Hearts. **4.00** FA Cup: Portsmouth v Arsenal. **5.30** Coppa Italia: AC Milan v Juventus. **7.00** Coppa Italia Preview. **7.30** Live: Juventus v AC Milan. **9.45** Premier League Reload. **10.00** Bundesliga Highlights Show. **11.00** BT Sport Score Best Bits. **11.30** Scottish Football Extra.

COMEDY CENTRAL

Sky 112 Virgin 132
11.00am Friends. **4.00pm** My Name Is Earl. **5.00** Friends. **9.00** FILM: Notting Hill. (1999) (15) **11.30** FILM: Leap Year. (2010) (PG)

DAVE (DAYTIME)

Freeview 19 Sky 111 Virgin 127
12noon Timber Kings. **1.00** Top Gear. **2.00** Cops UK: Bodycam Squad. **3.00** Sin City Motors. **4.00** Top Gear. **6.00** Taskmaster.

DISCOVERY

Sky 125

9.00am Jeremy Wade's Dark Waters. **10.00** Nasa's Unexplained Files. **11.00** Wheeler Dealers. **12noon** Gold Rush: White Water. **1.00** Alaska: The Last Frontier. **2.00** Combat Dealers. **3.00** World War Two: The Complete History. **4.00** Building Off the Grid. **5.00** Wheeler Dealers. **6.00** Fast N' Loud. **7.00** Outback Truckers. **8.00** Mighty Ships. **9.00** Richard Hammond's Big. **10.00** Disasters Engineered. **11.00** Massive Engineering Mistakes.

DRAMA (DAYTIME)

Freeview 20 Sky 143 Virgin 130
9.00am The Bill. **10.00** Classic Holby City. **11.00** Classic Casualty. **12noon** The Bill. **1.00** Classic EastEnders. **2.20** London's Burning. **3.20** Monarch of the Glen. **4.20** Bergerac. **5.20** Bread. **6.00** Hi-de-Hi! **6.40** As Time Goes By.

E4 (DAYTIME)

Freeview 13 Sky 135 Virgin 106
9.00am Mike & Molly. **10.00** The Big Bang Theory. **11.00** The Goldbergs. **12noon** Brooklyn Nine-Nine. **1.00** The Big Bang Theory. **2.00** Baby Daddy. **3.00** Mike & Molly. **4.00** The Goldbergs. **5.00** Brooklyn Nine-Nine. **6.00** The Big Bang Theory.

EDEN

Sky 166 Virgin 245

12noon Planet Earth II. **1.00** Planet Earth. **2.00** Life on Earth: A New Prehistory. **3.00** Super Vets. **4.00** Naom's Nightmares of Nature. **5.00** Earth: The Nature of Our Planet. **6.00** Super Vets. **7.00** Planet Earth. **8.00** Planet Earth II. **9.00** Naom's Nightmares of Nature. **10.00** Earth: The Nature of Our Planet. **11.00** Life on Earth: A New Prehistory.

EUROSPORT 1

Sky 410 Virgin 521
8.30am Cycling: Women's GP Le Samyn. **9.30** Alpine Skiing. **10.30** Ski Jumping. **11.30** Biathlon. **12.35pm** Cross-Country Skiing. **2.20** Live Cross-Country Skiing. **4.10** Alpine Skiing. **6.10** Biathlon. **6.40** Cross-Country Skiing. **7.40** Cycling: Strade Bianche. **8.00** Cycling: Tour of Taiwan. **9.00** Biathlon. **10.00** Cross-Country Skiing. **11.00** Biathlon. **11.30** Cycling: Tour of Taiwan.

FILM4

Freeview 14 Sky 313 Virgin 428
11.00am DEATH DRUMS ALONG THE RIVER. (1963) (PG) **12.45pm** THE GENTLE SEX. (1943) (U) **2.35** THE TIN STAR. (1957) (U) **4.30** KIDNAPPED. (1971) (U) **6.50** BEHIND ENEMY LINES. (2001) (12) **9.00** TAKEN. (2008) (15) **10.50** AMERICAN ASSASSIN. (2017) (18) **1.05am** BUFFALO SOLDIERS. (2001) (15)

5STAR (DAYTIME)

Freeview 30 Sky 128 Virgin 151
10.05am The Nightmare Neighbour Next Door. **12.05pm** Can't Pay? We'll Take It Away! **3.00** Neighbours. **3.30** Home and Away. **4.00** House. **6.00** Neighbours. **6.30** Home and Away.

5 USA (DAYTIME)

Freeview 21 Sky 141 Virgin 153
11.10am The Mysteries of Laura. **12.10pm** Law & Order.

FOOD NETWORK UK

Freeview 41 Sky 140 Virgin 278
6.00pm James Martin: Delicious. **7.00** Gordon Ramsay's Ultimate Cookery Course. **8.00** The Hairy Bikers' Food Tour of Britain. **9.00** Gino D'Acampo An Italian Returns to Mexico. **9.30** Gino D'Acampo: An Italian Returns to Mexico. **10.00** James Martin: Home Comforts. **11.00** Mystery Diners.

FOX

Sky 124 Virgin 157
10.00am Bull. **11.00** NCIS. **12noon** Bones. **2.00** The Mentalist. **3.00** NCIS. **4.00** Bull. **5.00** Bones. **6.00** The Mentalist. **7.00** NCIS. **11.00** American Dad!

GOLD

Sky 110 Virgin 124

10.40am Last of the Summer Wine. **12.40pm** Keeping Up Appearances. **1.20** Porridge. **2.00** Hi-de-Hi! **2.40** Dad's Army. **4.40** Last of the Summer Wine. **6.40** The Good Life. **7.20** Porridge. **8.00** Dad's Army. **9.20** Mrs Brown's Boys. **10.00** Sandylands. **10.40** Mrs Brown's Boys. **11.20** Peep Show.

HISTORY

Sky 130 Virgin 270
10.00am Storage Wars. **11.00** Britain's Greatest Bridges. **12noon** River Hunters. **1.00** Forged in Fire. **2.00** American Pickers. **3.00** Storage Wars. **5.00** Pawn Stars. **6.00** Forged in Fire. **7.00** American Pickers. **8.00** Britain's Greatest Bridges. **9.00** The Curse of Oak Island. **10.00** Curse of Superstitious Mountains. **11.00** Storage Wars.

ITV2 (DAYTIME)

Freeview 6 Sky 118 Virgin 115
8.20am You've Been Framed! Gold: Full Throttle. **9.20** Superstore. **10.15** Dinner Date. **11.15** Dress to Impress. **12.15pm** Emmerdale. **12.45** Funniest Ever You've Been Framed! Gold. **1.50** The Ellen DeGeneres Show. **2.45** Dinner Date. **3.50** Dress to Impress. **4.50** Take Me Out. **6.00** You've Been Framed! Gold.

ITV3 (DAYTIME)

Freeview 10 Sky 119 Virgin 117
8.55am The Darling Buds of May. **10.00** That's My Boy. **10.30** Inspector Morse: The Wench Is Dead. **12.40pm** Heartbeat. **1.45** Classic Emmerdale. **2.50** Classic Coronation Street. **3.55**

RADIO 4

FM: 92.4-94.6MHZ; LW: 198KHZ

5.30 News Briefing. **5.43** Prayer for the Day. **5.45** Farming Today. **5.58** Tweet of the Day. **6.00** Today. **8.31** (LW) Yesterday in Parliament.

9.00 Decision Time. Nick Robinson finds out how the UK might handle a pandemic. **9.30** The Curious Cases of Rutherford & Fry. (LW) Daily Service. **9.45** (FM) Book of the Week: Guest House for Young Widows. **10.00** Woman's Hour. Including at 10.41: The Leopard by Giuseppe Tomasi di Lampedusa.

10.55 The Listening Project. **11.00** Class Talk. With Kerry Hudson. **11.30** Alexei Sayle's Imaginary Sandwich Bar. Alexei considers the roots of his rage.

Midsomer Murders: Four Funerals and a Wedding. **5.55** Heartbeat.

ITV4 (DAYTIME)

Freeview 24 Sky 120 Virgin 118
9.15am Minder. **10.20** The Professionals. **11.20** The Sweeney. **12.25pm** Quincy ME. **1.35** Kojak. **2.35** The Saint. **3.40** Minder. **4.50** The Professionals. **5.50** The Sweeney.

ITVBE

Freeview 26 Sky 131 Virgin 119
9.00am LittleBe. **12noon** Income Property. **12.25** The Real Housewives of Beverly Hills. **1.20** Vanderpump Rules. **2.15** Million Dollar Listing: NYC. **3.10** The Real Housewives of New York City. **4.05** The Real Housewives of Dallas. **6.00** Masters of Flip. **7.00** Buying and Selling. **8.00** Dinner Date. **9.00** Sam and Billie Faiers: The Mummy Diaries. **10.00** Growing Up Chrisley. **11.00** Singletown. **12midnight** The Only Way Is Essex.

LIFETIME

Sky 187 Virgin 208

9.00am Judge Judy. **1.00pm** Pawn Stars. **2.00** Storage Wars. **3.00** Little

Women: Couples Retreat. **4.00** Dance Moms. **5.00** Pawn Stars. **6.00** Flipping Vegas. **7.00** Judge Judy. **9.00** My Crazy Sex. **10.00** Storage Wars. **11.00** Hardcore Pawn.

MORE4 (DAYTIME)

Freeview 18 Sky 136 Virgin 147
8.55am Kirstie's Handmade Treasures. **9.15** A Place in the Sun: Winter Sun. **10.05** A Place in the Sun: Summer Sun. **11.05** Emergency Helicopter Medics. **12.10pm** 999: On the Front Line. **1.15** Escape to the Chateau: DIY. **2.15** Four in a Bed. **4.55** The Secret Life of the Zoo. **5.55** Car S.O.S. **6.55** Escape to the Chateau: DIY.

NAT'L GEOGRAPHIC

Sky 129 Virgin 266

9.00am Buried Secrets of WWII. **10.00** Lost Cities with Albert Lin. **11.00** The Mega Crater Mystery: Draining the Ocean. **12noon** Car S. O.S. **2.00** Wicked Tuna. **3.00** Ice Road Rescue. **4.00** Air Crash Investigation. **6.00** Car S.O.S. **8.00** Brain Games. **9.00** Car S.O.S. **10.00** Ultimate Supercar. **11.00** Air Crash Investigation.

RADIO CHOICE

■ THE Dutch are already the tallest people in Europe, but, while average heights in the UK have plateaued, over in the Low Countries, they just keep on growing. As Vybarr Cregan-Reid continues his series **CHANGING WORLD, CHANGING BODIES (BBC WORLD SERVICE, 1.30PM, 11.05PM)**, he hears that a state of mind, rather than just nutrition and genes, appears to affect a nation's average height.

■ SHOTS ring out. A man falls to the floor. An elegantly dressed woman tries to stop the blood, but the man is already dead. For today's instalment of **THE CALIFORNIAN CENTURY (RADIO 4, 1.45PM)**, Stanley Tucci explains how a double assassination in 1978 led Dianne Feinstein to become a reluctant mayor of San Francisco. It was said of Dianne, who is on course to be the longest-serving

12.01 (LW) Shipping Forecast. **12.04** Apeirogon. **12.18** You and Yours. **12.57** Weather. **1.00** The World at One. **1.45** **PICK** The Californian Century. **2.00** The Archers. **2.15** **PICK** Drama: Two Households. **3.00** Money Box Live. **3.30** Inside Health.

4.00 Thinking Allowed. **4.30** The Media Show. **5.00** PM; (LW) Shipping Forecast. **5.57** Weather. **6.00** Six O'Clock News. **6.30** Mark Watson Talks a Bit About Life. New series. The comedian examines the seasons of nature and of life. **7.00** The Archers. Emma makes a big decision.

ITV 3	ITV 4	MORE 4	PICK	QUEST	DAVE	DRAMA	5STAR	5 USA
10 Agatha Christie's Poirot The Dream: A well-known eccentric contacts the sleuth when he is haunted by suicidal nightmares. Last in series	24 The Chase Celebrity Special Gregg Wallace, Denise Lewis, Mark Pougatch and Gina Yashere try to secure a cash prize for charity. Presented by Bradley Walsh	18 6.55 Escape to the Chateau: DIY Dick Strawbridge helps Tim and Rebecca to find their feet after leaving the UK for life in a dilapidated 25-room chateau	11 Hawaii Five-0 The team investigate the death of a scuba diver shot by a gun recently used in another murder, and McGarrett prepares to propose to Catherine	12 American Pickers: Best Of Mike Wolfe and Frank Fritz travel all over in search of rare items that have shaped America	19 Room 101 With Shaun Ryder, Meera Syal and Sam Simmons 7.40 Room 101 With Claudia Winkleman, John Humphrys and Russell Kane	20 7.20 Last of the Summer Wine Howard discovers the pitfalls of using a mobile phone while animal-watching	30 The Maternity Ward Documentary based at Royal Preston Hospital. A dance teacher is desperate to have a water birth after suffering post-natal depression	21 Law & Order Green goes undercover to gather evidence on gun dealers who murdered two detectives
Agatha Christie's Poirot Appointment with Death: An aristocrat's wealthy, overbearing wife finances a North African archaeological dig to find the skull of John the Baptist. Poirot is in attendance, but when the woman is found stabbed to death, the detective struggles to identify the killer among the wealth of suspects. Last in series	World Superbike Highlights Action from both races in the opening round of the season at the Phillip Island Circuit in Victoria, Australia	Jon Snow's Very Hard Questions Desperate Daniels and Leading Lights go head to head as they face tough questions	Elementary Holmes and Watson assist on a manhunt when a serial bomber returns to New York. However, Sherlock deduces that Joan may be tiring of the detective business	Salvage Hunters Drew Pritchard visits a man who is renovating his family's house, as he scours more sites for scrap items	8.20 Have I Got a Bit More Old News for You Extended edition. Comedian Katherine Ryan hosts, with Joe Wilkinson and Gyles Brandreth	Hetty Wainthropp Investigates A victimised German pensioner in a residential home asks Hetty to help to trace his long-lost sister	10 Years Younger in 10 Days Cherry Healey hosts the show in which experts transform people's looks and lives	NCIS: New Orleans Pride goes rogue to take down drug baron Garcia, and launches an undercover operation that could cost the team their careers – and lives
Scott & Bailey Part two of two. The detectives face a wall of silence in their murder investigation	8 Beverly Hills Cop II (1987,15) Wisecracking Detroit detective Axel Foley returns to Los Angeles to investigate the shooting of an old friend. Comedy thriller sequel, starring Eddie Murphy and Judge Reinhold. Includes FYI Daily	The Great Pottery Throw Down The potters take part in the semi-final, facing their biggest challenge as they are asked to create a fully functioning toilet	Instinct Dylan and Lizzie try to work out who would want to murder an acting troupe when two of its members are killed using highly sophisticated poisons	Salvage Hunters Modern-day treasure-hunter Drew Pritchard travels the length and breadth of the UK in search of weird and wonderful objects	9.20 QI Guests Sean Lock, David Mitchell, Danny Baker and regular panellist Alan Davies join host Stephen Fry	Ms Fisher's Modern Murder Mysteries Peregrine bites off more than she expected while investigating a murder at an international cookery school	Filthy House SOS Cleaning duo Jon and Brennan take on some of Britain's filthiest and most cluttered homes. In three days, the pair bring the grubbier homes back to life	Rookie Blue When Andy and Chloe discover a severely beaten man in a vacant unit, their investigation uncovers a criminal operation
		Jon Snow's Very Hard Questions Show No Mersey and Mexborough Bandits go head to head as they face questions on science and history	Air Ambulance ER A boy is knocked down by a car, causing a serious head injury, and a granny proves remarkably calm about her ankle break	Find It, Fix It, Flog It Simon O'Brien finds a barn containing a collection of replica Rolls-Royce cars, and Henry Cole tries driving a tractor	Hypothetical Nish Kumar, Jen Brister, Rob Beckett and Lou Sanders are posed increasingly absurd hypothetical situations	New Tricks The team reinvestigate the murder of a clerk, and discover new evidence that casts doubt on the guilty verdict of the man executed for the crime	Hoarders: Landfill in My Living Room People with a compulsion to hoard, including a father whose relationship with his daughter has become strained	Law & Order: Special Victims Unit A female student claims to have been assaulted
Inspector Morse The Wench Is Dead: The Oxford detective becomes obsessed with solving a murder committed in 1859. John Thaw stars (To 1.20)	8 11.10 Crank (2006,18) Action thriller, starring Jason Statham and Amy Smart (To 12.55)	11.05 24 Hours in A&E Paramedics bring a 12-year-old girl into resus after she falls down a flight of stairs, and a couple are concerned for their baby (To 12.10)	The Force: Essex An injured drunk man starts spraying his blood over officers in Southend-on-Sea (To 12.00)	How Do They Do It? The production of Ford's Transits How Do They Do It? How wood-burning stoves work (To 12.00)	Dara O Briain's Go 8 Bit Guests Gregg Wallace and Jodie Kidd play a series of video games, including <i>Spy Hunter</i> , <i>Total War: Rome II</i> and <i>Battlefield 1</i> (To 12.00)	11.15 Waking the Dead Feature-length episode. Boyd is given the chance to prove his theory that a murderer had a partner (To 1.55)	8 Angels & Demons (2009,12) Thriller sequel, starring Tom Hanks and Ewan McGregor (To 1.45)	10.55 Law & Order: Special Victims Unit A high-school sex party sparks a debate when those involved contract measles
								11.55 Law & Order: Special Victims Unit Starring Mariska Hargitay (To 12.55)

PBS AMERICA

Sky 174 Virgin 273
11.50am World's Greatest: Animal Encounters. **1.00pm** Byzantium: A Tale of Three Cities. **2.10** Steven Raichlen's Project Fire. **2.40** Reconstruction: America After the Civil War. **3.55** Nuremberg – Nazis on Trial. **5.05** Byzantium: A Tale of Three Cities. **6.15** World's Greatest: Animal Encounters. **7.20** Byzantium: A Tale of Three Cities. **8.30** Reconstruction: America After the Civil War. A look at the period from 1877 to 1896. **9.45** Nuremberg – Nazis on Trial. The trial of Luftwaffe chief Hermann Goering. **11.00** Byzantium: A Tale of Three Cities. The transformation of Istanbul.

PICK (DAYTIME)

Freeview 11 Sky 152 Virgin 165
11.30am Caught Red Handed. **12.15pm** Caught Red Handed. **1.00** Police Force: Australia. **2.00** Border Patrol. **3.00** Nothing to Declare. **4.00** Border Security: Canada's Front Line. **5.00** Stargate SG-1. **6.00** Star Trek: The Next Generation.



female Senator in U.S. history, that she didn't mind what people did in bed, as long as they were in bed by 11pm – an attitude that has defined her political career.

7.15 Front Row. Arts news. **7.45 The Book of Strange New Things.** By Michel Faber. **8.00 The Moral Maze.** **8.45 Lent Talks.** Anglican priest Rachel Mann reflects on her identity as a trans woman. **9.00 Costing the Earth.** **9.30 Decision Time.** With Nick Robinson. **10.00 The World Tonight.**

QUEST (DAYTIME)

Freeview 12 Sky 144
10.00am Wheeler Dealers. **11.00** Chasing Classic Cars. **12noon** American Pickers: Best Of. **1.00** Railroad Alaska. **2.00** Deadliest Catch. **3.00** Gold Divers. **4.00** Salvage Hunters. **5.00** Outback Truckers. **6.00** Wheeler Dealers.

REALLY

Freeview 17 Sky 142 Virgin 128
11.00am Antiques Road Trip. **1.00pm** Celebrity Fantasy Homes. **2.00** Fantasy Homes by the Sea. **3.00** French Collection. **4.00** DIY SOS: The Big Build. **6.00** Celebrity Antiques Road Trip. **7.00** Antiques Road Trip. **9.00** How to Look Good Naked. **10.00** The Bad Skin Clinic. **11.00** Helicopter ER.

SKY ARTS

Sky 122 Virgin 123
12noon Discovering: Dustin Hoffman. **1.00** The South Bank Show Originals. **1.30** Watercolour Challenge. **2.00** Callas, Kennedy, Onassis: Two Queens for a King. **4.00** Tales of the Unexpected.

■ ON THE night before a wedding, a grim and terrible discovery is made. The bride and groom come from farming families in Northern Ireland. There have been bitter divisions between the clans, but they have been healed; then, the past is, literally, dug up. Amy Molloy (pictured) stars in the powerful drama **TWO HOUSEHOLDS (RADIO 4, 2.15PM)**, based on Claire McGowan's crime thriller.

10.45 Book at Bedtime: Apeirogon. **11.00 Ken Cheng: Chinese Comedian.** **11.15 Cracking Up.** **11.30 Today in Parliament.** **12.00 News and Weather.** **12.30 Book of the Week: Guest House for Young Widows.** **12.48 Shipping Forecast. 1.00 As BBC World Service.**

5.00 Discovering: Julia Roberts. **6.00** Discovering: Richard Gere. **7.00** Portrait Artist of the Year 2020. **8.00** Passions. **9.00** Norman Lear: Just Another Version of You. **11.00** The Directors.

SKY ATLANTIC

Sky 108
9.00am Without a Trace. **10.00** The West Wing. **12noon** Blue Bloods. **1.00** CSI: Crime Scene Investigation. **2.00** The West Wing. **4.00** Without a Trace. **7.00** CSI: Crime Scene Investigation. **8.00** Blue Bloods. Henry suffers a heart attack during Thanksgiving. **9.00** Angels in America.

SKY COMEDY

Sky 113 Virgin 122
12noon The Mindy Project. **1.30** Modern Family. **2.30** Everybody Hates Chris. **3.30** Parks and Recreation. **5.00** 30 Rock. **6.30** Modern Family. **7.30** The Mindy Project. **9.00** The Righteous Gemstones. **9.45** Work in Progress. **10.15** Sex and the City. **10.50** The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon. **11.50** The Late Late Show with James Corden.

RADIO 2 FM: 88-90.2MHZ

5.00 Vanessa Feltz. **6.30** Zoe Ball Breakfast. **9.30** Ken Bruce. **12.00** Jeremy Vine. **2.00** Steve Wright. **5.00** Sara Cox. **7.00** Jo Whiley. **9.00** The Folk Show with Mark Radcliffe. **10.00** Trevor Nelson's Rhythm Nation. **12.00** O.J. Borg.

RADIO 3 FM: 90.2-92.4MHZ

6.30 Breakfast. **9.00** Essential Classics. **12.00** Composer of the Week: Price. **1.00** Lunchtime Concert. **2.00** Afternoon Concert. **3.30** Choral Evensong. **4.30** New Generation Artists. **5.00** In Tune. **7.00** In Tune Mixtape. **7.30** Radio 3 in Concert. The BBC Symphony Orchestra and Chorus perform Beethoven's Missa Solemnis in D. **10.00** Free Thinking. **10.45** The Essay: Women Writers to Put Back on the Bookshelf. **11.00** Night Tracks. **12.30** Through the Night.

RADIO 5 LIVE

MW: 693/909KHZ

5.00 Morning Reports. **5.15** Wake Up to Money. **6.00** 5 Live Breakfast. **9.00** Your Call. **10.00** Emma Barnett. **1.00** Nihal Arthanayake. **4.00** 5 Live Drive. **7.00** 5 Live Sport. **7.45** FA Cup Football. **10.30** Geoff Lloyd. **1.00** Up All Night.

SKY ONE

Sky 106 Virgin 110
11.00am NCIS: Los Angeles. **1.00pm** Hawaii Five-0. **3.00** MacGyver. **4.00** Modern Family. **5.00** The Simpsons. **5.30** Futurama. **6.30** The Simpsons. **9.00** SEAL Team. **10.00** Avenue 5. **10.35** Intelligence. **11.35** The Russell Howard Hour.

SKY PREMIERE

Sky 301 Virgin 401
11.45am GODZILLA: KING OF THE MONSTERS. (2019) (12) **2.00pm** THE 2020 TOP TEN SHOW. **2.15** THE COUNTERFEITER. (2018) (15) **4.30** KILLERS ANONYMOUS. (2019) (15) **6.15** STRAIGHT UP. (2019) (15) **8.00** GODZILLA: KING OF THE MONSTERS. (2019) (12) **10.15** THE COUNTERFEITER. (2018) (15)

SKY WITNESS

Sky 107 Virgin 112
12noon Elementary. **1.00** Blue Bloods. **2.00** Law & Order. **3.00** The Real A&E. **4.00** Stop, Search, Seize. **5.00** Border Security: Australia's Front Line. **8.00** Ghost Whisperer. **9.00** Criminal Minds. **10.00** CSI: Crime Scene Investigation. **11.00** Law & Order: Special Victims Unit.

SKY WOMEN IN FILM

Sky 310 Virgin 410
12noon MISS CONGENIALITY. (2000) (12) **2.00** MISS CONGENIALITY 2: ARMED AND FABULOUS. (2005) (12) **4.00** MAMMA MIA! HERE WE GO AGAIN. (2018) (PG) **6.10** MEAN GIRLS. (2004) (12) **8.00** MEAN GIRLS 2. (2011) (12) **9.50** MISS CONGENIALITY. (2000) (12) **11.50** MISS CONGENIALITY 2: ARMED AND FABULOUS. (2005) (12)

SKY MAIN EVENT

Sky 401 Virgin 511
11.00am Live One-Day International Cricket. **7.00pm** Sky Sports Tonight. **8.00** Live PGA Tour On The Range: Arnold Palmer Invitational. Join some of the PGA Tour's stars on the range ahead of the Arnold Palmer Invitational. **8.30** Sky Sports Tonight. **10.00** The Debate. **11.00** Live NBA: The Warm Up.

SKY PREMIER LEAGUE

Sky 402 Virgin 512
12noon The Debate. **1.00** Premier League Years. **3.00** PL Best Goals 92/93. **4.00** PL Greatest Games. **5.00** PL 100 Club: England's Finest. **5.30** Premier League 100 Club. **6.00** PL Legends. **7.00** Premier League World. **7.30** The Tyler Archives. **8.00** Best PL Goals 17/18. **9.00** Premier League World. **9.30** Premier League 100 Club. **10.00** The Debate. **11.00** Premier League World. **11.30** The Tyler Archives.

SKY FOOTBALL

Sky 403 Virgin 513
12noon Football Countdowns. **12.30** Football Years. **1.00** EFL Greatest Games. **1.30** SPFL Greatest Games. **1.45** One2Eleven. **2.00** EFL Play-Off Final Highlights. **3.00** Football's Greatest Players. **3.30** Football Countdowns. **4.00** Football Years. **4.30** EFL Play-Off Final Highlights. **5.30** Football League Archive 2017. **5.45** SPFL Greatest Games. **6.00** Carabao Cup Final. **7.00** MLS. **7.30** EFL Goals: Leagues 1 & 2. **8.00** Best Goals: Carabao Cup 2019/20. **8.30** EFL Championship Highlights. **9.30** EFL Highlights. **10.00** Best Goals: Carabao Cup 2019/20. **10.30** EFL Greatest Games. **11.00** One2Eleven. **11.15** EFL Greatest Games.

SKY CRICKET

Sky 404 Virgin 514
10.55am Live One-Day International Cricket. **7.00pm** On Safari with Makhaya Ntini. **8.00** World Cup Cricket Classics. **8.15** Best of England v South Africa. **9.00** One-Day International Cricket. **10.00** World Cup Cricket Classics. **10.15** Best of England v South Africa. **10.30** One-Day International Cricket. **11.30** Women's ICC World T20 Cricket.

SKY MIX

Sky 145 Virgin 520
12noon Netball Superleague. **2.00** Fight Night International. **3.00** NFL. **4.00** My Icon. **5.00** NBA Classic Games. **7.00** Netball Superleague. **9.00** Rugby 7s. **10.00** Fight Night International. **11.00** Premier League World. **11.30** My Icon.

SMITHSONIAN

Freeview 57 Sky 195
12noon Apollo's Moon Shot. **1.00** Helicopter Wars. **2.00** The Pacific War in Colour. **3.00** An American Aristocrat's Guide to Great Estates. **4.00** The Hunt for Escobar's Hippos. **5.00** Air Warriors. **6.00** America in Colour: The 1930s. **7.00** Air Warriors. **8.00** The Wild Andes. **9.00** Tattoo Odyssey. **10.00** Aerial America. **11.00** The Wild Andes.

SONY CHANNEL

Freeview 48 Sky 157 Virgin 189
12noon Starsky & Hutch. **1.00** T.J. Hooker. **2.00** Hart to Hart. **4.00** Murder, She Wrote. **6.00** Charlie's Angels. **7.00** M*A*S*H. **9.00** Classic Who Wants to Be a Millionaire?

SONY MOVIES

Freeview 32 Sky 321 Virgin 425
1.00pm THE DEADLY ROOM: GARAGE SALE MYSTERY III. (2015) (12) **2.50** STAND YOUR GROUND. (2013) (PG) **5.00** SONY MOVIE NEWS EXTRA. **5.10** EVOLUTION. (2001) (PG) **7.05** THE

PINK PANTHER. (2006) (PG) **9.00** MONEY MONSTER. (2016) (15) **11.05** A MOST VIOLENT YEAR. (2014) (15)

SONY MOVIES ACTION

Freeview 40 Sky 323 Virgin 426
12.10pm THE PERSUADERS! **1.10** TRAIL STREET. (1947) (U) **2.55** THE BEDFORD INCIDENT. (1965) (PG) **5.05** THE BATTLE OF SINAI. (1969) (PG) **7.10** SUPER CYCLONE. (2012) (12) **9.00** END GAME. (2005) (12) **11.05** OFFICER DOWN. (2005) (12)

SYFY

Sky 114 Virgin 138
11.00am Stargate Atlantis. **1.00pm** Star Trek: Voyager. **3.00** Star Trek: The Next Generation. **5.00** Star Trek: Deep Space Nine. **7.00** Warehouse 13. **8.00** Merlin. **9.00** Marvel's Runaways. **10.00** FILM: The Sweeney. (2012) (15)

TALKING PICTURES TV

Freeview 81 Sky 328 Virgin 445
11.30am FILM: We Joined the Navy. (1962) (U) **1.30pm** Treble One: A Tribute. **1.55** FILM: Time, Gentlemen, Please! (1952) (U) **3.35** FILM: Portrait of Clare. (1950) (PG) **5.25** FILM: Spring in Park Lane. (1948) (U) **7.15** FILM: Trouble in Store. (1953) (PG) **9.00** Rumpole of the Bailey. **10.05** FILM: The Mirror Crack'd. (1980) (PG)

TCM

Sky 315 Virgin 415
7.30am GUNSMOKE. (1953) (U) **9.20** THE COWBOYS. (1972) (PG) **11.55** CATTLE TOWN. (1952) (U) **1.30pm** THE FASTEST GUN ALIVE. (1956) (PG) **3.30** ARIZONA RAIDERS. (1965) (U) **5.30** FORT WORTH. (1951) (PG) **7.15** FRENCHIE. (1950) (PG) **9.00** DIRTY HARRY. (1971) (15) **11.10** CHARLEY VARRICK. (1973) (15) **1.30am** CHEYENNE AUTUMN. (1964) (U)

W

Sky 109 Virgin 125
12noon Tipping Point. **2.00** My Dream Home. **5.00** Sun, Sea and Brides to Be. **6.00** Tipping Point. **7.00** My Dream Home. **8.00** Inside the Ambulance. **9.00** Emma Willis: Delivering Babies. **10.00** Finding Joy. **10.35** Inside the Ambulance. **11.40** One Born Every Minute.

YESTERDAY

Freeview 25 Sky 155 Virgin 129
12noon Impossible Railways. **1.00** Secrets of Britain. **2.00** Walking Through History. **3.00** Underground Worlds. **4.00** Impossible Railways. **5.00** Secret Nazi Bases. **6.00** Nazi Victory: The Post-War Plan. **7.00** Underground Worlds. **8.00** Impossible Engineering. **9.00** Porridge. **10.55** Impossible Railways. **11.55** Underground Worlds.

ARIES Mar 21 - Apr 20 **WE TEND** to leave important debating to the people we elect to govern us. Meanwhile, we devote our energy to mundane matters. Does single-origin coffee brewed in an Italian cafetiere really taste much better than instant? What if you have an unexpected guest? It wouldn't be right to serve them an inferior blend. Just as opinions differ on the best way to make one of our favourite drinks, they differ in other areas of your life. Do what you can to avoid a storm in a coffee cup today. To hear valuable information about the changes you can implement in March, call your month ahead forecast: 0906 751 5601.

TAURUS Apr 21 - May 21 A TOMATO pip is not a tomato. A vineyard full of grapes is not a case of wine. A ticket to an event is not a concert. Yet they are all optimistic signs that a process is off to a very promising start. You're in possession of a seed of an idea or a basketful of encouraging ingredients. You're right to feel uplifted. Yet it's important that you plant your seed in the right position and that you know what you're doing with the products in your shopping bag. You're under no pressure to take action today. March brings the Equinox! For your light-shedding, hope-giving, worry-quashing, month-ahead forecast, call 0906 751 5602.

GEMINI May 22 - June 22 **WILD** horses can't make some people see the error of their ways. They are just irrational, demanding and unrealistic. If anyone tries, tactfully, to tell them, they're easily affronted and, all too often, it makes their behaviour worse. But why are we surprised? Surely, we've learned by now that that's what they do. Today offers valuable insight into the cause of someone's behaviour. Knowledge is power — and the revelation will make a significant difference to a key relationship. This is the exciting Equinox month. Take full advantage of the inspiration March brings. Call 0906 751 5603.

CANCER June 23 - July 23 **THE** equivalent of the 'gold rush' is happening under our oceans where there are huge untapped quantities of precious minerals lying in vents on the seabed. Let's hope the people involved aren't just concerned with profit and consider the wellbeing of the marine life. But with

OSCAR CAINER

MERCURY returns to Aquarius today. It's revisiting issues that may pick at old scabs. But though damage and baggage feature in all our lives, the cosmic climate suggests that all's fair now — at least in love, if not war.

Mercury's relationship with Venus boosts reconnection with old allies and bonds formed over shared battle scars. Sometimes it's more important to be right than happy. With kind words we may get to be both.



diamonds being one of the commodities, you have to wonder. Anything goes when it comes to getting more of what we want. You face a dilemma today. Will you go along with what everyone else thinks is fine? A new month! An action-packed astrological picture. A forecast that could transform your life! Call 0906 751 5604.

LEO July 24 - Aug 23 **IT'S** A horrid feeling when someone asks you questions, pretends to be interested, yet isn't paying attention to your response. We feel patronised. Yet we hardly notice when we do the same thing to ourselves. How often do you take your own thoughts and feelings seriously? How often do you doubt your understanding of a situation or your intuition? When people overlook us, we sometimes even think that we're to blame. It's about to become clear that your instincts are right. Trust them. For exciting news about the potential delights in store for you this month, call your March forecast: 0906 751 5605.

VIRGO Aug 24 - Sep 23 **IT'S** hard for some people to believe that computers are relatively new additions to our lives. Yet there are lots of folk who never even saw one when they were at school, let alone had lessons on how to use them. The people who create curriculums have absolutely no idea of what skills we'll need in the future. It might be worth reconsidering some of the things that you were taught not to question. While Mercury is retrograde, reviewing an outmoded idea will bring a very helpful revelation. A rare Astrological Blue Moon brings exciting creative power. Use it and transform your life. For valuable news, call 0906 751 5606.

LIBRA Sep 24 - Oct 23 **CAN** you ever have too much of a good thing? Maybe. But surely it's better to have that than to have too much of a bad thing? And if a bad thing is bad just because we've had too much of it, then surely, in essence, it might really be a good thing! Still, any amount of something bad is not good. There's a chance that you're putting up with something in your life because you're worried about not having enough of something else. Yet any sense of 'lack' leaves room for something good. March is due to be amazing! For four-minutes of news that could transform your life, pick up the phone! Call 0906 751 5607.

SCORPIO Oct 24 - Nov 22 **WHEN** the great detective Sherlock Holmes needs some time to reflect, he plays the violin. It's an activity that occupies his mind in such a way that it gives his unconscious brain the space to meander around all the clues and evidence so that all the strands can begin to come together to form a solution. I don't want to spoil the illusion by reminding you that he is a fictional character! There is, nonetheless, something we can learn from him. Don't rush — and trust your hunches today. Even if you don't usually call your in-depth phone forecast, there's great news in your March prediction. Call 0906 751 5608.

SAGITTARIUS Nov 23 - Dec 21 **STRESS** and strife. Worry and woe. Is any of it ever really necessary? How often do we let an issue get under our skin, consume our every moment and eat its way into our soul — only to discover that we had nothing to worry about? It's often the people who prophesy

doom and gloom who cast the longest shadows. You've done everything in your power to allay a current issue, prevent a potential problem and circumvent an upcoming obstacle. All that's left to do is relax! The Equinox month brings potential for positive change. Make March a month to remember. Call 0906 751 5609.

CAPRICORN Dec 22 - Jan 20 **MOST** parents worry that they're over-protecting their children; that by shielding them from the harsh reality of the world, they're preventing them from developing the resources to deal with life on planet Earth. Sooner or later, they say: 'They're going to have to realise that it's a cruel world out there.' Yet if this is what we teach our children, surely we're creating a self-fulfilling prophecy? There is light and laughter, even in the darkest places. A reason to have faith in humanity presents itself to you today. A Welcome to March! Your powerful prediction for the month is ready. For inspiring insight, call 0906 751 5610.

AQUARIUS Jan 21 - Feb 19 **LET'S** try something different. Instead of the same old forecast format, let's make a list. Why don't you write down everything you can't achieve, the plans you'll never make, your insecurities and doubts. Great. Now add the dream you've been working towards because, really, what are the chances? How does that feel? Not great. No! A continual stream of negativity isn't ever helpful. It's time to throw that list away! You can take a significant step towards a bright new future today. The Equinox month brings celestial creativity and real reasons for hope. To take full advantage, call 0906 751 5611.

PISCES Feb 20 - Mar 20 **SOMETIMES**, the responsibility of making a conscious decision is just too much. Instead, we prefer not to do anything and wait and see what happens. Of course, we rarely do this consciously! We just find ways to procrastinate. We trick ourselves and fill our time with 'distractions'. Meanwhile, the important issue sits at the top of our 'to-do' list. Eventually, when whatever happens happens, we can say it's not our fault. Do what you can to stop a situation from resolving itself today. It's March! For uplifting news on how the month holds exciting opportunities for you, call 0906 751 5612.

Landline calls cost 80p a minute, plus your phone company's access charge. From a mobile phone, dial 87177 (calls cost 65p/min for O2 network, 75p/min for all other networks). To report a phone line problem, call 0800 138 9789

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KAREN KELLY, THATCHAM

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PETERBOROUGH

email: pboro@dailymail.co.uk

No bugs, please, I'm a vegetarian

WHEN I was at school around 70 years ago, a new headmistress arrived and set up a vegetarian table for lunch, which I joined. We were allowed to bring in our own protein, such as nuts and cheese, and were provided with extra vegetables. One day we found a large, dead caterpillar in the greens. A deputation went to the mistress on duty with the offending dish. She looked down her nose and said: 'Most unfortunate, isn't it. Now go back, remove the caterpillar and eat your meal.' All ten of us were kept in the



canteen until it closed because we never did eat those greens!

Mrs Mary Stanley,
Bognor Regis, W. Sussex.

Sign language



HEDGING ITS BETS? Is the Ritz the Pitz? The signage at my local Wetherspoons needs a little TLC.

Tony Halliwell, Lincoln.

Out of the mouths of babes

ONE of my great-grandsons, three-year-old George, was playing with his cousin Sebastian, aged seven. When George said, 'I'm really, really cross', Sebastian started to

laugh at him. Little George looked at him with great indignation and said: 'You go to your room immediately.'

Mrs Mary Cooper,
Market Rasen, Lincs.

Wordy Wise

CARTLESS — left without wheels.
FARELESS — thumbing a lift.
CASELESS — travelling light.
CORELESS — no hard centre.
MARELESS — all male stud.

CARDLESS — back to cash.
CAPELESS — crusader left exposed.
CAGELESS — allowed free run.

T. John Foster, Stafford.

Picture that!



POSH NOSH: My Mr Uppity-style spud baked up a treat!
Kathy Mayhew, London E4.



© ROGER HARGREAVES

Today's poem

THE PAST IS A FOREIGN COUNTRY

The Britain of my childhood
I see through rosy eyes,
For us children in the Fifties
Our limits were the skies.

People seemed much
kinder then,
Less hurried, keen to smile,
And everyone was so polite
They queued in single file.

It's true there were
wet summers
And often heavy fogs,
But in the cold,
damp winters
Open fires burned
fragrant logs.

Children's television
programmes
Were broadcast just once
a day,
But we youngsters
never minded —
We went outside to play.

In cinemas they played
the Anthem
As soon as films had ended,
And we each stood
to attention,
All our realms defended.

That was Britain way
back then
Like a distant fairy tale,
A pleasantly recalled
dream
That is not Great Britain
now.

I suppose each generation
Will look back on years
gone by
And they will, too, be full
of praise.
'It was all wonderful,'
they'll cry.

Claire Summers,
London NW11.

Limerick

Such destruction is difficult
to pardon,
And feelings will
only harden
Against the eco brigade
Who wielded pick
and spade
To trash a beautiful garden.

Peter Thomas,
Widnes, Cheshire.

Nursery Rhyme For Our Times

Hey diddle diddle,
We've all had a giggle
At Boris's family life.
No wonder he's having
No time to examine
The floods — now he's
taking a wife!

Ken Irons,
Newport, Isle of Wight.

LETTERS

Priti steely

I HOPE Boris Johnson stands firmly beside Priti Patel when it comes to her differences with civil servant Sir Philip Rutnam, who has resigned as the Permanent Secretary at the Home Office.

It is the Government's responsibility to come up with policies which affect and improve our lives, and the civil service's job to find and advise on the best way of achieving them.

If Sir Philip didn't like some government directives, it was still his department's job to undertake this task.

When it comes to law and order, criminal justice and immigration, Priti Patel seems to have a steely determination to get things done.

MICHAEL FINNIS,
Barton-upon-Humber, Lincs.

GOOD luck to Sir Philip Rutnam with his constructive dismissal case. I have long had misgivings about the workings of government.

Boris Johnson has expressed that he has full confidence in his Cabinet. I wish I could say the same.

INA CHARLTON,
Ffynnonogroyw, Flintshire.

THE dynamic Home Secretary isn't a weak Jim Hacker type of minister that a Sir Humphrey Appleby can outsmart and manipulate.

ANN WILLS, Ruislip, Middlesex.

Hysteria is contagious

FLU kills thousands a year in Britain, so why are we in terror over a few dozen cases of coronavirus in a population of 66 million?

Coronavirus is not smallpox, the black death or a zombie apocalypse. It is akin to the flu, and more than 98 per cent of people who get it will recover. What's wrong with us — are we all snowflakes?

Dr J. C. EDWARDS,
Goostrey, Cheshire.

NO LARGE gatherings, a drastic reduction in foreign travel, flight cancellations, no more cruises, streets deserted.

Surely we only have to ban save-the-planet bunfights such as Greta Thunberg's school protests and we have the Brave New World envisaged by Extinction Rebellion.

RAYMOND NORMAN,
Hemingstone, Suffolk.

I USED to tease a friend who wore gloves when pushing a supermarket trolley. I'm not laughing now.

SHIRLEY HARRIES,
Angmering, W. Sussex.

Turning a blind eye

THE police are developing an app to allow the public to report crimes and provide photographic evidence. Don't be lulled into thinking this will result in more crimes being solved or even dealt with by the police.

I have submitted many images to the police of motorists ignoring road signs and exiting roads incorrectly. Each was timed and dated, and the registration number, make, model and colour of the car was evident.

The police said their policy was only to intervene when an accident that involved injury to a person had occurred. So it appears breaking the law is OK.

The app will not cut the workload of police. In fact, the public's vigilance will result in them being overloaded with clear infringements of the law. But as they won't be hate crimes, the police won't want to know.

DES MORGAN, Swindon, Wilts.

Health divide

A STUDY claims a decade of austerity has damaged the nation's health and life expectancy.

In 1990, I led Knowsley Council's policy objective in Merseyside to bring together health professionals and community providers to address poor public health and its causes for the first time.

Research in Huyton on the rates of chronic heart and respiratory disease, stroke, lung cancer and infant mortality showed a huge

Write to: Daily Mail Letters,
2 Derry Street, London W8 5TT
email: letters@dailymail.co.uk

CELEBRATE LIFE OF A LOVED ONE

HAVE you lost a relative or friend in recent months whose life you'd like to celebrate? Our column on Friday's letters page tells the stories of ordinary people who lived extraordinary lives. Email a 350-word tribute to: lives@dailymail.co.uk or write to: Extraordinary Lives, Daily Mail, 2 Derry Street, London W8 5TT. Please include a contact phone number.

disparity between the northern and southern parts. Reasons identified included differing levels of employment, low expectations in education and welfare dependency.

The council's project received a vast amount of money for more than 20 years from the government and the European Regional Development Fund. If money were the answer, the causes of health inequities ought to have been reduced or eradicated.

The project was so innovative that it became a template for the NHS primary care trusts.

Health inequities have been exacerbated by policies allowing all-day drinking and the relaxing of gambling laws. Gordon Brown's government, which axed funding for disadvantaged families, commissioned the long-term study on life expectancy that naively suggests throwing more money at problems.

PETER FISHER, Liverpool.

Positive action

GRETA THUNBERG continues to preach all over the world, but I have yet to see her do anything positive.

She attracted thousands of children playing truant to a protest in Bristol. In the same edition of the Mail that covered this event was a photo of a large group of smiling children clearing up litter on Chesil Beach in Dorset. That truly warmed my heart.

ELENA CHRISTE,
Holmfirth, W. Yorks.

Mob mentality

IN HIS column on the threat to free speech (Mail), John Humphrys had the courage to highlight the danger of the mob, whose sole object is to shut down any opinion that conflicts with their own ideology, usually through social media.

He quotes the transgender issue as a typical example. Any opposing views are pounced on by zealots who refuse to listen to anyone who expresses doubts about the advisability of gender dysphoria treatment for young children.

DAVID MORGAN,
Shrewsbury, Shropshire.

Power of touch

HAS Dr Max Pemberton visited a care home lately and spent time with the residents (Mail)?

My mother, who is in the late stages of Alzheimer's disease, is in a nursing home, and I have worked in a care home doing activities with residents.

I am impressed by the way staff spend any spare time chatting and holding hands with the residents. They are especially aware of those who do not get many visitors.

Far from being neglected, their emotional needs are seen as of equal importance to their physical ones.

Elderly people living alone or in busy hospitals are much more at risk of a lack of human touch.

TRUDY FERMER,
Uckfield, E. Sussex.

Ethical farming

I AM amazed mothers cook different meals for their vegan children (Femail). Unlike my husband, I don't eat red meat, but I still cook it for him, and we don't have separate utensils and pans. Do vegetarians and

■ SEND your contributions to Peterborough, Daily Mail Letters, 2 Derry Street, London W8 5TT

Scandal of homes left to the floods

FISHLAKE village, near Doncaster, had not flooded for almost 100 years. In 2007, when the River Don overflowed both banks, some fields between Stainforth and Fishlake flooded, but no water reached the village. A few houses in Stainforth had some limited flooding due to blocked and poorly maintained drainage. The politicians keep spouting about the millions of pounds given for flood defences since 2007, but there have been no improvements on the west side of the River Don at Fishlake, which is why the village flooded in November. The east side had a wall built more than 3ft above the height of the opposite bank in 2009/2010, hence in the 2019 floods, Fishlake got the lot. The Environment Agency keeps saying that dredging does no good, but when the River Don used to be dredged from one end to the other, the banks were never topped. This dredging was stopped in the 1970s to save money. The European Water Framework Directive, introduced in 2000, prevents dredging from being carried out. Now we are out of the EU, can we have some action to protect our properties and lives? I have been calling for efforts to



Inundated: Homes and gardens in Fishlake were flooded last November

prevent flooding since 2009 and have sent numerous letters to politicians, the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, the Environment Agency, the metropolitan borough council and the mayor of Doncaster. I have received replies on House of Commons headed paper

acknowledging receipt of my letters, but nothing has been done because politicians don't listen to the people. But after the flooding experienced throughout the country this winter, the public will not be fobbed off with lame excuses and false promises.

DAVE CROUCHER, Doncaster, S. Yorks.

vegans want a world with no cows grazing in the fields, no lambs frolicking in spring, no pigs enjoying mud baths?

They must realise no one is going to farm them for fun. It would be better to lobby for ethical and organic farming.

We could certainly do with eating less meat. By all means lobby to get rid of intensive farming, which is not good for animal welfare, our health or the planet.

I hope the farmers and scientists of the future will find a way to sustain a healthy planet for all creatures, and not just try to impose their will on everyone else.

JEAN WAREING, Potton, Beds.

Football farce

WHEN I retired as a Football League linesman and referee in the Southern League, I said they wanted to replace us with robots.

With VAR, I've been proved to be correct. The laws of association football state the referee's decision is final, but this does not appear to be the case any more thanks to VAR, which stands for Very Awful

Referee. If VAR is to continue, then for all decisions apart from offside, the referee should look at the pitch-side monitor and make the final call.

Instead, VAR is left to the interpretation of another official who more often than not is far less experienced. The man in the middle should be in control of all decisions.

ALAN WARD, Sleaford, Lincs.

Good hair day

ASHFORD isn't the only town over-run with hair salons (Mail). It has a population of 74,000 and 28 hairdressers in the town centre.

My town of 41,000 residents has 20 salons. I haven't noticed

locals being better groomed! While clothes and food retailers are struggling to compete with the internet, you can't order a haircut on Amazon.

JIM SOAR, Tonbridge, Kent.

I say!

HERE are some famous examples to add to Craig Brown's list of how to conjugate politicians (Mail).

Bertrand Russell started the ball rolling with: I am firm, you are obstinate, he is a pig-headed fool.

I am righteously indignant, you are annoyed, he is making a fuss over nothing.

I have reconsidered the

matter, you have changed your mind, he has gone back on his word.

Bernard Woolley came up with two classics in Yes, Prime Minister:

I have an independent mind, you are eccentric, he is round the twist.

I give confidential Press briefings, you leak, he's being charged under section 2A of the Official Secrets Act.

When George Osborne was Chancellor, his funding policy for different types of energy was described as:

I receive public spending, you get tax incentives, he gets a subsidy.

BOB BELL, Croydon, Surrey.

LETTER OF THE WEEK

WIN our Letter Of The Week Magic Mug, courtesy of Printer Pix. These reveal our Daily Mail Letter Of The Week design when hot. To create personalised photo gifts (see example, right), visit printerpix.co.uk. The Letters Editor will announce the Letter Of The Week each Friday. Write to: Daily Mail, Letters, 2 Derry Street, Kensington, London, W8 5TT, email letters@daily.co.uk or fax on 020 7937 7493, including your full postal address and telephone number.

Printerpix



DEBATE Is BBC radio ignoring its core audience?

HOW I agree that BBC radio is obsessed with 'yoof' culture (Letters). Radio 1 and 2 hardly differ in their choice of music, and the presenters are childishly manic and tiresome. These stations should merge, leaving room for the more discerning listener who likes a good song from Sinatra, a bit of swing by Glenn Miller and a show-stopping number from the stage or screen.

RAPH FORD, Musbury, Devon.

IT'S not just Radio 2 and 4, we have the same problems on Radio 3. The frequent programme trailers are extremely annoying. Programmes appear to be geared to attracting a younger audience — on Saturday

afternoons, there is a video games music programme. Also, it seems fashionable to have presenters talking us through their favourite music while it's playing. The standard reply to complaints is: 'We can't please everyone.' Well, they could if the station played uninterrupted music.

F.M. LATTY, East Bridgford, Notts.

I'VE been listening to Radio 2 for years and thoroughly enjoy presenters Trevor Nelson and Ken Bruce. I also like lively Sara Cox and Zoe Ball. And where would we be without PopMaster?

LESLEY BELL, Leeds.

IS THE strategy of employing zany, verbose radio presenters more to do with a requirement for less music to

be played? There has been an increased number of phone-ins, silly games, quizzes and chats with various guests. Steve Wright's 30 minutes of non-stop oldies is followed by 15 minutes of chat with a celebrity who happens to be in the building to redress the balance.

ROB PRICKETT, Milton Keynes, Bucks.

ALL WE want is the music we've grown up with, information about the artists and some light-hearted discussion. Terry Wogan got it right and Ken Bruce does, too. The last thing we want early in the morning is inane, loud chatter and Primal Scream.

LYNN DOHERTY, Narberth, Pems.

Straight to the POINT

■ WEARING two hospital gowns for modesty (Letters) is typical of the public sector attitude to spend more, waste more.

JOHN COLLINS, Bourne End, Bucks.

■ HOW many children does Boris have? As long as he keeps his promises to those who voted him in, I don't care about his private life.

JANE PARKER, York.

■ IF BORIS visited the flood victims, he would be about as useful as a bucket with a hole in it.

RONALD BALL, Farnborough, Hants.

■ BOWLS players glancing through the window of a changing room in a girls' school (Mail)? I bet most have trouble seeing the full length of the bowling green.

K. MATTHEWS, Carlton, Notts.

■ WHAT an unfortunate name for Nigella Lawson's new book: Cook, Eat, Repeat. Does it mean every recipe gives you indigestion?

ROZ MEIKLE, Taunton, Somerset.

■ LONDON has new statues of film stars, but not one honouring Princess Diana.

ANNA BROOKS, Calveley, Cheshire.

■ FLYING home from Tenerife, I spotted a woman with an unusual face mask: she had cut her bra in half and tied it on with string to keep abreast of the coronavirus problem.

FRANK BUSBY, Evesham, Worcs.

■ CONGRATULATIONS to the couple celebrating their diamond wedding (Letters). We have been married for 70 years — our platinum wedding — and still go to the shops most days.

KEN & ELIZABETH HAWKINS, Nottingham.

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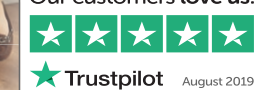
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ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS

Compiled by Charles Legge

QUESTION Why are freight trains on the electrified West Coast Main Line pulled by diesel locomotives?

THE simple answer is that a diesel loco is a go-anywhere machine, while electric locos are limited to electrified lines.

In the early days of overhead line electrification, many sidings and loops were electrified along a route, but today most of these little-used tracks have been de-wired or even removed as a cost-saving exercise. The electrified routes serve only passenger trains.

So while the main line is electrified, the departing and arriving destinations of freight trains are not. Conventionally, a wired reception road might have been provided in a terminal, and a second shunting loco would have been used to take the freight vehicles to the unloading facilities, but this is an unnecessary cost if a train loco could do the job.

Container traffic presents the difficulty of requiring the containers to be lifted by a crane or heavy duty forklift truck. This can't easily be done safely where there are high-voltage overhead wires.

Hybrid passenger units can use on-board batteries or a diesel engine when not all of the route is electrified, but I am not aware of any such freight locos.

From the operational perspective, nothing is as flexible as a go-anywhere traction unit, and freight services generally operate terminal to terminal.

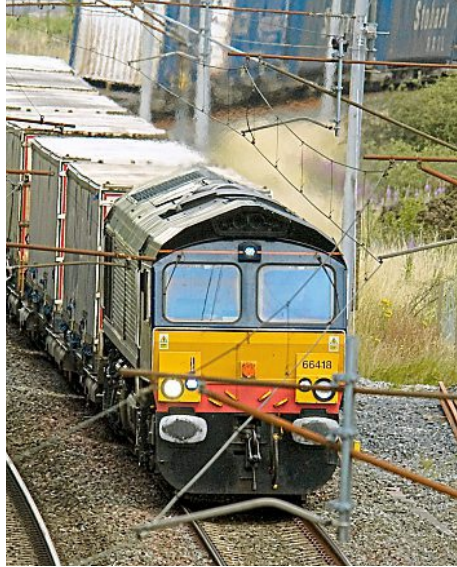
If things go wrong and trains have to be diverted, a freight loco will still be able to complete its journey. But if the wires are down or the diversion route is not wired, the electric loco will stop dead.

C. E. Sayers-Leavy, retired rail industry engineer, Broadstairs, Kent.

QUESTION U.S. Democratic presidential candidate Joe Biden accused someone of being 'a lying, dog-faced pony soldier'. Is this a film quote?

FOLLOWING Joe Biden's poor performance in the Iowa caucus, Madison Moore, a 21-year-old economics student, asked the former vice-president: 'How do

Freighting the good freight!



Picture: ALAMY

Sparking controversy: A diesel train under the main-line wires in Cumbria

you explain the performance in Iowa and why should the voters believe that you can win the national election?

'It's a good question,' Biden replied. 'Number one — Iowa is a Democratic caucus. You ever been to a caucus?'

When she nodded, he surprisingly said: 'No, you haven't. You're a lying, dog-faced pony soldier.' The crowd responded with nervous laughs.

Biden attributes the phrase to a John Wayne movie. At a 2018 election event for North Dakota Democratic senator Heidi Heitkamp, he used the phrase to refer to her Republican opponent, Kevin Cramer. Biden said: 'There's a line in a movie where an Indian chief turns to John Wayne and says: "This is a lying, dog-faced pony soldier."' Cramer won.

This had Wayne aficionados scouring his 180 or so movies for the quote. The closest is in John Ford's 1949 classic *She Wore A Yellow Ribbon*, which grandly announces: 'So here they are, the dog-faced soldiers, the regulars, the 50-cents-a-day professionals, riding the outposts of the nation from Fort Reno to Fort Apache, from Sheridan to Starke.'

Biden may be conflating this with *Pony Soldier*, a 1952 Western starring Tyrone Power as a member of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police. Pony soldier was a Native American nickname for these officers.

The term 'dog-faced' does not feature, but Chief Standing Bear says: 'The pony soldier speaks with a tongue of the snake that rattles.'

Simon Burrows, Truro, Cornwall.

QUESTION Some Dukes of Clarence have been famous, others infamous. Is there a current Duke?

THE title derives from the town of Clare in Suffolk. William the Conqueror gave it to Richard FitzGilbert, whose descendants, the de Clare family, became Earls of Clare, Hertford and Gloucester.

The title has become associated with bad luck. The 10th and last earl, Gilbert de Clare, was killed at the Battle of Bannockburn in 1314.

His lands were inherited by his grandniece, Elizabeth de Burgh. She married Lionel of Antwerp, third son of Edward III, who was nearly 7ft tall. He was elevated to 1st Duke of Clarence. After Elizabeth died in 1363, Lionel wed Violante Visconti in May 1368. The marriage was short-lived. Lionel died in Alba in Italy on October 17, and was rumoured to have been poisoned.

The dukedom was recreated for Thomas of Lancaster, second son of Henry IV and brother to Henry V. Thomas led the English to a disastrous defeat to the French and Scottish at the Battle of Bauge in 1421, where he was surrounded and killed in a rash charge. He left no legitimate issue.

The title was recreated for George Plantagenet, Duke of Clarence, the younger brother of Edward IV. He helped his brother take the Crown from Henry VI in the Wars of the Roses, but their relationship soured. He was sent to the Tower of London, where he was reputedly drowned in a butt of Malmsey wine.

William IV was the third son of George III. In 1789, he was created Duke of Clarence and St Andrews. He succeeded his elder brother, George IV, in 1830, becoming the penultimate monarch of the House of Hanover. He left no issue and was succeeded by his niece, Victoria.

Prince Albert Victor was the eldest son of Albert Edward, Prince of Wales, the future Edward VII. He was made Duke of Clarence and Avondale on May 24, 1890 — Queen Victoria's 71st birthday. Two years later, he died from flu.

This was the last use of the title. There was speculation that Prince Harry might be made Duke of Clarence on his marriage, but the unfortunate title was eschewed by the Queen.

Caroline Langham, Swaffham, Norfolk.

■ IS THERE a question to which you have always wanted to know the answer? Or do you know the answer to a question raised here? Send your questions and answers to: Charles Legge, Answers To Correspondents, Daily Mail, 2 Derry Street, London, W8 5TT. You can also email them to charles.legge@dailymail.co.uk.

A selection will be published, but we are not able to enter into individual correspondence.

TODAY'S RECIPE: Prawn tikka masala

TASTIER than a takeaway. Serves 4.

Ingredients

1 large onion, chopped
1 tsp grated ginger
2 large garlic cloves
1 tbsp rapeseed oil
2-3 tbsp tikka paste
400g can tomatoes
2 tbsp tomato puree
½ tbsp brown sugar
3 cardamom pods



200g basmati rice
3 tbsp ground almonds
300g king prawns
1 tbsp double cream
½ bunch of coriander

Method

1 Put onion, ginger and garlic in a food processor and blitz to a paste. Heat oil in a large pan, add onion paste and fry until lightly golden. Stir in tikka paste and fry for one minute more. Add tomatoes, tomato puree, sugar and bashed cardamom. Bring to a simmer and cook, covered, for ten minutes.
2 Cook rice following pack instructions.
3 Discard cardamom, then blitz curry with a hand blender. Return to pan, add almonds and prawns, and cook for five minutes. Stir through cream and coriander. Serve with rice.

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QUESTIONS

Q: How were Dalek voices created in early Doctor Who episodes?

Nick Fletcher, Malton, N. Yorks.

Q: Which Royal Navy ship was the last to 'hoist the battle flags and engage the enemy'?

John Mason, Southsea, Hants.

Q: What film are Rodney and Grandad watching in the opening scene of the Only Fools And Horses episode Thicker Than Water?

Paul Leclercq, Portsmouth, Hants.

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(Hotel stay & tour)

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• Days 13 - 14 Washington DC
(Hotel stay & tour)• Day 15 Philadelphia
(Hotel stay & tour)• Days 16 - 18 New York
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• Day 20 Bar Harbor (Maine)

• Day 21 Halifax (Canada)

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• Day 22 Sydney (Canada)

• Day 24 St. John's (Canada)

• Day 29 Cork (Ireland)

• Day 30 Falmouth

• Day 31 Southampton
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Escape

A TOAST TO MARMALADE

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AS EVERY Peruvian bear knows, it's wise to keep a marmalade sandwich under one's hat in case of an emergency.

And Paddington couldn't imagine a more convivial place than Dalemmain House in Cumbria, just three miles off the M6 near Penrith. Saturday, March 14 sees the 15th annual Marmalade Awards take place here.

It's hosted by Jane Hasell-McCosh, whose family has owned this delightful country estate for more than 300 years.

The awards ceremony was founded in the dark days of 2005, when the impact of foot and mouth disease created an urgent need for new sources of income.

Hasell-McCosh set out to raise spirits at a tough time. Paddington



Delightful: Dalemmain House in Cumbria and, inset, awards host Jane Hasell-McCosh

experienced some setbacks too, so he would be thrilled to know that today the competition receives more than 3,000 entries, with marmalade flowing in from all over the world.

Indeed, so successful has the event become that it has grown into a weekend-long festival featuring presentations, focus sessions and activities (a turn on the juicing bicycle, anyone?).

It has also seeded an entirely

separate marmalade festival in Yawatahama, Japan. That city happens to be home to Miyuki Kokubu, a former Marmalade Awards Gold Star winner.

Miyuki began making preserves when she realised that she needed to do something with all the fruit she had left over from her citrus aromatherapy oil creations. She will be at Dalemmain's festival this month to tell the tale.

The marmalade entries are

arranged in the state rooms, and, after the winners of categories including 'Dark and Chunky Marmalade' and 'Octogenarians and Upwards Marmalade' are announced, the top-rated jars form a 'Marmalade Altar'.

Previous winners have been emboldened to try unusual things. Blanka Milfait from the Czech Republic, who won the coveted Double Gold in 2013, was inspired to go on a marmalade expedition

in her campervan. She travelled more than 6,000 miles, visiting over 40 countries from Gibraltar to Iceland. She is also returning to Dalemmain, to recount her journey.

Neat, on toast, in cakes, in ice cream, in gin, or even with pork and lamb meatballs as a lemon marmalade cream sauce — however you take it, Dalemmain will have it covered.

And if, like a certain bear, you need to sleep it off, Jane Hasell-McCosh recommends the Ullswater Association for bed and breakfast options in the area.

That way, you can return early on the Sunday and bag the best seat for the live judging of the deadly serious Marmalade — the England versus Australia marmalade contest.

Just be sure to let Aunt Lucy know that one didn't over-indulge and get indigestion. Of course, a wise bear would never let such a thing happen...

DANIEL PEMBREY

TRAVEL FACTS

TICKETS to the Dalemmain Marmalade Festival cost from £5.50 at dalemmain.com/marmalade-festival. B&B doubles at Sharrow Bay (sharrowbay.co.uk) from £185. Find more information about nearby accommodation at ullswater.com.

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WESTERN EUROPE

5 JULY 2020, 7 NIGHTS, ARCADIA

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INSIDE **£606[^]**

SEAVIEW **£626[^]**

BALCONY **£703[^]**

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INSIDE **£1012[^]**

SEAVIEW **£1060[^]**

BALCONY **£1321[^]**

Fares based on 16 October 2020. Fares & itinerary vary by date.

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31 OCTOBER, 28 NOVEMBER 2020, 2 JANUARY, 6 MAR 2021, 14 NIGHTS, IONA

Southampton - Vigo - Gibraltar - Alicante - Barcelona - Valencia - Cadiz - Lisbon - Southampton

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SEAVIEW **£819[^]**

BALCONY **£867[^]**

Fares based on 2 January 2021. Fares & itinerary vary by date.

THE NORTHERN LIGHTS

25 NOVEMBER 2020, 12 NIGHTS, ARCADIA

Southampton > Andalsnes > Tromso > Narvik > Stavanger > Southampton (J016)

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SEAVIEW **£1060[^]**

BALCONY **£1350[^]**

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4	Kingstown, St Vincent & The Grenadines	(09:00 - 18:00)
5	Fort de France, Martinique	• FREE EXCURSION (08:00 - 23:00)
6	Pointe-a-Pitre, Guadeloupe	(08:00 - 19:00)
7	Road Town, Tortola	(10:00 - 19:00)
8	Philipsburg, St. Maarten	• FREE EXCURSION (08:00 - 19:00)
9	Roseau, Dominica	(09:00 - 19:00)
10	Basseterre, St. Kitts & Nevis	(09:00 - 19:00)
11	St John's, Antigua	• FREE EXCURSION (08:00 - 18:00)
12	Fort de France, Martinique	(08:00 - 23:00)
13	Pointe-a-Pitre, Guadeloupe	(08:00 - 19:00)
14	Castries, St. Lucia	(08:00 - 18:00)
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01 DEC 2020	SOLD	SOLD	£2,279	£1,999	SOLD	£2,379	£2,799	£3,299	£4,499
15 DEC 2020	£2,299	SOLD	£2,779	£2,399	£2,699	£2,869	£3,279	£3,779	£4,979
29 DEC 2020	£2,299	£2,599	£2,779	£2,399	£2,699	£2,869	£3,279	£3,779	£4,979
12 JAN 2021	SOLD	SOLD	£2,399	£2,079	SOLD	£2,479	£2,799	£3,299	£4,549
26 JAN 2021	£1,899	SOLD	£2,399	£2,079	SOLD	£2,479	£2,849	£3,299	£4,549
09 FEB 2021	SOLD	SOLD	£2,449	£2,099	SOLD	£2,499	£2,849	£3,349	£4,549
23 FEB 2021	£1,999	SOLD	£2,449	£2,099	£2,299	£2,499	£2,849	£3,349	£4,549
09 MAR 2021	£2,099	SOLD	£2,549	£2,199	£2,399	£2,599	£2,949	SOLD	£4,649
23 MAR 2021	£2,199	£2,399	£2,649	£2,299	£2,499	£2,699	£3,149	£3,649	£4,749

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For many, finding suitable and affordable travel insurance is simple and often a straightforward process, but this isn't the case for everyone. Those who are unable to find cover for their holiday either decide not to go on holiday or travel without any insurance at all, which is very concerning.

Mrs Briers was looking for cover for her holiday to Japan but found it incredibly difficult to get travel insurance due to her pre-existing medical conditions, with many insurers unable to cover her at all. After Mrs Briers visited PayingTooMuch.com, she found that not only could we insure her, but the policy would only cost £134.

Mrs Briers said: "I had been diagnosed with a series of conditions, one of which is very rare and so I was being

Sample Quote*

PayingTooMuch.com	£47.85
Post Office	£88.03
Co-Op Travel Insurance	£106.12
The AA	£109.49

*Premiums based on two travellers, both age 60, travelling to Spain for one week, 25.06.20 – 02.07.20. Traveller one diagnosed with angina, taking medication. Traveller two has diabetes, taking medication. Quotes correct 24.01.2020

denied travel insurance from all the 'big' companies and had given up hope. No one would cover me at all. I thought at the time that the only way to get insurance products was going direct to one of the 'big' insurers, but to no avail. When I found PayingTooMuch.com it opened

a whole new world of travel possibilities for me, for which I will be forever grateful!

Aaron Hackett from PayingTooMuch.com said: "As a broker, we have many comprehensive policies on our panel which allow customers with pre-existing medical conditions the chance to find not only the best policy for their needs, but an affordable one too."

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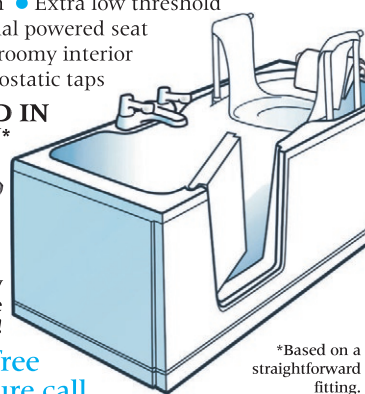
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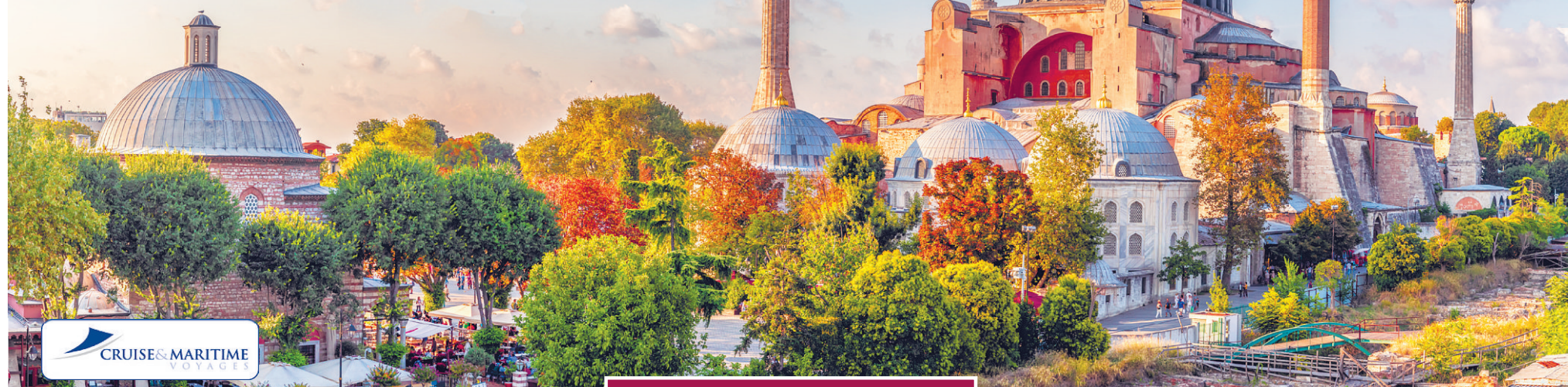
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OCTOBER 2021

- Sat 9 **Embark the new flagship, *Amy Johnson*, and depart London Tilbury for her Maiden Season Black Sea & Mediterranean Voyage**
- Tue 12 **Lisbon, Portugal** (arrive late am)
- Wed 13 **Cádiz, Spain** (arrive early pm)
- Sat 16 **Palermo, Italy**
Sicily's main city has a unique culture and a real mix of architectural styles. Wander the streets of the old city to find out more about this eclectic melting pot, or see all the major sights from an open top bus
- Tue 19 **Nessebar, Bulgaria** (arrive midday)
- Wed 20 **Constanta, Romania**
- Thu 21 **Odessa, Ukraine** (depart late night)
Take time to soak up the great heritage of this fantastic coastal resort. From the 19th century five-domed Russo-Byzantine Uspensky Cathedral to the Italian baroque style Opera House, you will be enchanted
- Sat 23 **Istanbul, Turkey** (depart late night)
This city offers one intriguing adventure after another from the opulent Topkapi Palace, the 17th

century Blue Mosque, and the largest covered market in the world, the Grand Bazaar

- Mon 25 **Piraeus (for Athens), Greece** (depart late night)
- Wed 27 **Limassol, Cyprus**
- Thu 28 **Ashdod (for optional tours to Jerusalem*), Israel**
- Fri 29 **Port Said (for optional tours to Cairo*), Egypt** (depart late night)

NOVEMBER 2021

- Mon 1 **Valletta, Malta**
A tiny island with an epic and heroic history, Malta makes for a scenic, unforgettable stop. The 16th century walled capital of Valletta, with its Grand Harbour, is a treasure chest bursting with baroque architecture
- Tue 2 **Catania, Sicily, Italy**
- Fri 5 **Gibraltar**
- Sun 7 **Vigo (for optional tours to Santiago de Compostela*) Spain**
- Wed 10 **Arrive in London Tilbury**

Dates not mentioned are spent relaxing at sea

CRUISE & MARITIME VOYAGES' NEW FLAGSHIP - AMY JOHNSON

Amy Johnson will become the proud new flagship of the Cruise & Maritime Voyages fleet in April 2021. Given her size she will provide a very generous, spacious and relaxing feel. As a celebration of the courageous exploits of past female explorers and adventurers, Cruise & Maritime Voyages have recognised their remarkable achievements by naming their new ship after Amy Johnson, the pioneering English pilot who was the first woman to fly solo from London to Australia.

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Amy Johnson offers no less than 11 different lounges and bars including Raffles Bar, The Orient, Dome Observatory, Ocean Bar and Taverner's Pub, so there's a wide choice of contrasting venues to choose from. Restaurants on board offer fantastic dining opportunities including the attractive Waterfront Restaurant which serves breakfast, lunch and dinner or for something more casual, there's the buffet-style Pantry. At lunchtimes, when the weather is fine, the Alfresco Grill adds more choice. Specialty dining options** The Fusion, Grill and Chef's Table present truly intimate and delightful settings and outstanding menus.

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shimmering waters, dotted with silver-leafed olive trees and pretty villages. Tickle your taste buds during a wine tour with wine samples which you can savour with some delicious nibbles of breadsticks, cheese and olives.



• **Days 6 - 7 Venice** (Hotel stay)

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• **Day 8 Venice** (Embark Queen Victoria)

• **Day 9 Šibenik**

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• **Day 11 Strait of Messina**

• **Day 12 Cagliari**

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• **Day 14 Gibraltar**

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CORONAVIRUS CHAOS

Shares tank after shock US rate cut

■ Dow falls 786 points

■ Trump urges Fed to do more

■ Carney vows help for UK firms

by Hugo Duncan

SHARES on Wall Street tumbled last night after the first emergency interest rate cut in the United States since the financial crisis spooked investors worried about the coronavirus.

The Dow Jones Industrial Average fell nearly 1,000 points before finally closing down 786 points, or 2.94pc, amid escalating fears over the impact of the deadly epidemic on the global economy.

The latest sell-off came after the Federal Reserve cut rates from between 1.5pc and 1.75pc to a range of 1pc to 1.25pc.

Fed chairman Jay Powell (pictured), who has been criticised by President Donald Trump for setting rates too high, said the virus 'poses evolving risks to economic activity'. The Dow rose more than 300 points in the immediate aftermath of the rate cut as investors welcomed the bold move.

But shares then slammed into reverse amid fears that there was little authorities can do to shield economies.

George Lagarias, chief economist at Mazars, said: 'This is one of the very few times in recent financial history that the Fed fires its bazooka, and nothing happens. Markets did not follow the move with an exuberant rally.'

'Rate cuts don't stop viruses or mitigate demand and supply damage from people not being able to leave their homes.'

With stock markets tanking, Trump demanded more rate cuts. He said on Twitter: 'The Federal Reserve is cutting but must further ease and, most importantly, come into line with other countries/competitors. We are not playing on a level field. Not fair to USA. It is finally time for the Federal Reserve to LEAD. More easing and cutting!' The Australian central

bank also cut rates, to a record low of 0.5pc, and pledged to take further action if necessary. Other central banks are ready to act, including the Bank of England, European Central Bank and Bank of Japan.

It is feared the outbreak, which started in China but has spread around the world, disrupting air travel and hampering business, could tip countries into recession. Chancellor Rishi Sunak is expected to use next week's Budget to support the economy.

And Bank of England Governor Mark Carney yesterday said the authorities stood ready to protect small firms. 'We don't want viable businesses to go out of business because of the very necessary steps that need to be taken to

protect and serve the British public over the course of the near future,' he said.

The International Monetary Fund and World Bank last night said they will adopt a 'virtual format' for next month's spring meetings instead of convening some 10,000 government officials, business leaders and other delegates in Washington.

The World Bank also revealed that it would make an emergency funding package worth £9.2bn available to developing countries which are struggling to cope with the Covid-19 outbreak.

Finance ministers and central bankers from the G7 nations of the US, Canada, UK, Japan, Germany, France and Italy also held a

conference call yesterday to discuss the epidemic. Following the call, they said: 'Given the potential impacts of Covid-19, we reaffirm our commitment to use all appropriate policy tools to achieve strong, sustainable growth and safeguard against downside risks.'

'Alongside strengthening efforts to expand health services, G7 finance ministers are ready to take actions, including fiscal measures where appropriate, to aid in the response to the virus and support the economy.'

'G7 central banks will continue to fulfil their mandates, thus supporting price stability and economic growth while maintaining the resilience of the financial system.'



■ **OLYMPIC CONCERN** Temporary power group Aggreko is monitoring the potential impact of coronavirus and the Tokyo 2020 Olympics. The group is among firms providing power for the upcoming games in Tokyo, but there are fears Japan may postpone the event due to the outbreak. It unveiled a 13pc rise in underlying pre-tax profits to £199m for 2019.

■ **TRADING BOOST** Online trading platform CMC Markets raised its profits forecasts amid increased trading volumes due to Covid-19. Profits for the year to the end of March should beat current market estimates of £199m to £202.3m.

■ **RECRUITER WOE** Recruitment giant Robert Walters has seen shares come under pressure after it warned the outbreak is likely to affect 2020 profits. Shares fell 5.7pc as the group reported 2019 pre-tax profits of £47.4m – down 6pc.

■ **VISA WARNING** Revenues will be lower than previously expected at credit company Visa in the first three months of 2020 due to the coronavirus.

Visa said: 'We anticipate that this deteriorating trend has not bottomed out yet.'

■ **SUPPLY FEARS** The boss of consumer goods firm Intertek Andre Lacroix said: 'Our 2020 performance will be affected by the temporary disruption to the supply chains of our clients in China and any impact it might have on global trade activities.'

However, he added that it was too early to say exactly what impact the virus will have on the FTSE 100 company, which works in 100 countries. Shares rose 1.7pc, or 88p, to 5412p.

■ **INSURANCE BILL** Insurer Direct Line said the UK's recent winter storms are set to cost it at least around £35m, while it revealed a £1m bill so far for coronavirus travel claims.

The Churchill and Green Flag owner said Covid-19 has the potential to affect its travel business results this year, while the disruption in equity markets could knock investments and the speed of claims payouts.

Most coronavirus claims so far cover cases where customers were due to travel to countries where the Foreign & Commonwealth Office has advised against all but essential travel.

Greggs double whammy

GREGGS said its sales were battered by the February storms as retailers brace for a slump in demand caused by coronavirus.

The on-the-go bakery said growth slowed as people stayed home in the recent wet weather.

It also suffered a flood at its bakery outside Cardiff, putting production out for around four weeks. The chain, which has 2,050 shops, had a record-breaking 2019 with pre-tax profits up 31pc to £108.3m, on revenue of almost £1.2bn, up 13.5pc.

It is the sixth consecutive year of growth. Shares rose 3.6pc, or 76p, to 2166p, and the dividend rose 25.8pc to 44.9p.

Greggs said 10pc growth in January, fell

to 'low-single digit' growth in February. Its shops were battered by recent storms and now face shoppers deserting high streets due to the coronavirus.

Chief executive Roger Whiteside said that Greggs would continue to open 100 stores per year, and had capacity to supply 2,500. 'There are 20,000 food-on-the-go locations in the UK. For Greggs, we just don't know the number,' he said.

Bosses are looking at openings in train stations and airports, click-and-collect, a delivery service from Just Eat, and will start serving in five Asda stores. International expansion is also seen as an option, but not before 2025.

Business rates demand

BUSINESS leaders are pleading for the Chancellor to shake up Britain's broken business rates regime.

In a letter to Rishi Sunak as he prepares for his first Budget next week, organisations have demanded urgent reform.

With the struggling High Street facing a fresh onslaught from the coronavirus, groups including the British Chambers of Commerce (BCC), the Federation of Small Business, the British Retail Consortium and the British Beer and Pub Association, want business tax reduced.

Adam Marshall, director-general of the BCC, said: 'The system is one of many upfront costs holding back the growth potential of companies across the UK.'

'It's time for the Government to deliver on its manifesto pledge to review and reduce

business rates so firms can invest in their people and prospects instead.'

James Lowman, chief executive of the Association of Convenience Stores, said: 'The system is no longer fit for purpose.'

Businesses say the system unfairly taxes those with lots of property – such as shops, pubs and cafes – while giving online sellers a competitive advantage.

High rates have been cited in dozens of cases of businesses going under, and critics say the tax risks turning thousands of UK main shopping streets into ghost towns.

The call comes as high streets brace for a slump if shoppers stay home to avoid catching the coronavirus. The rates raise £30bn for the Treasury each year, and businesses say the smallest firms should not pay the tax at all, to support start-ups.

Virus reveals debt trap

THE big question about Covid-19 is: do the authorities know something we don't? This was not my observation but that of a UK FTSE100 chairman employing 130,000 staff around the world with a big presence in the US and China.

The decision of America's central bank, the Federal Reserve, to slash its key interest rate by half a percentage point to a target range of 1pc to 1.5pc is intended to be reassuring.

It is a signal that the Fed has the back of consumers and commerce. Coming as it did after finance ministers from the G7 leading nations issued a relatively calm statement, market operators also might wonder if the Fed knows something we don't.

One possibility is that US interest rates have been unjustifiably high, as Donald Trump often claims.

With inflation well under control the Fed acted because it has the room to do so. UK rates at 0.75pc are much lower, so the scope for an eye-catching reduction, before the economy comes juddering to a halt, is more finely balanced.

The goalposts have moved a long way

Alex Brummer



CITY EDITOR

since the broader group of G20 finance ministers met in Riyadh just a couple of weeks ago. The International Monetary Fund claimed the dial on the prospects for global output had barely moved, and lowered its official forecast by just 0.1pc.

The OECD has come roaring back and warned that already feeble output of 2.9pc for the developed world could be halved to 1.5pc. Given that much of the EU is stagnating and Britain is adjusting to Brexit and Japan is in negative territory, then, at the very least, large parts of the world could be heading into recession territory.

Central banks spend a great deal of time, post the financial crisis, gaming all kinds of scenarios, from IT meltdowns to housing

market collapses. As far as one knows, a coronavirus has not recently been on the menu. This reminds us that you never quite know where the next shock will come from.

What we do understand is that when the tide goes out it is much easier to see the detritus left behind.

One of the enduring big worries about future risk, which was cited by the IMF in its Global Financial Stability Report last autumn, is the extraordinary level of corporate debt worldwide.

The Fund estimated that the company debt-to-risk ratio (borrowings by firms unable to cover their interest rate costs with earnings) could rise to \$19trillion (£14.8trillion) this year, or 40pc of outstanding company debt. That is higher than during the financial crisis.

So while it is possible to argue that, with interest rates already at super-low levels, a cut is not going to encourage consumers to go and buy a new house or car, it could mean the difference for companies being effectively bust or kept on life support.

Last year in the UK the risks of being over-exposed to debt were starkly demonstrated when lenders withdrew support from Thomas Cook.

The problem for publicly quoted companies, as we saw during and after the financial crisis, is that most debt is covenant-

heavy. When the share price falls, the debt-to-equity ratio climbs, and banks get nervy and call in or decline to renew loans.

That can create a cascade of defaults and collapses. As a medical event, the worst-case forecasts for Covid-19 might seem grossly overdone. But for the markets it is the real deal.

Australia led the field overnight by cutting rates and the Fed has played its card. Mark Carney's last act as Governor could well be to follow the leader.

Seasoned Wood

THERE is nothing very impressive, you might think, about the latest result from Go Compare, with operational profits down sharply and revenues flat at £152.4m.

Look underneath the bonnet, though, and it is possible to see that chairman Peter Wood's internally funded drive to grab a share of a market of 13m energy consumers, who never switch suppliers, is paying off.

Using the Look After My Bills, Autosave and Weflip brands, it has grabbed 300,000 customers, 80,000 more than expected.

The big selling point is that the Go Compare site does the job automatically, switching consumers to the cheapest tariff, without the customer having to do anything other than supply a meter reading.

Way to go.

BT probes Huawei's treatment of workers

BT is probing claims that controversial equipment supplier Huawei has been linked to slavery in China.

The telecoms giant's probe comes after researchers claimed subcontractors were using Muslim workers in factories where 'conditions strongly suggested forced labour'.

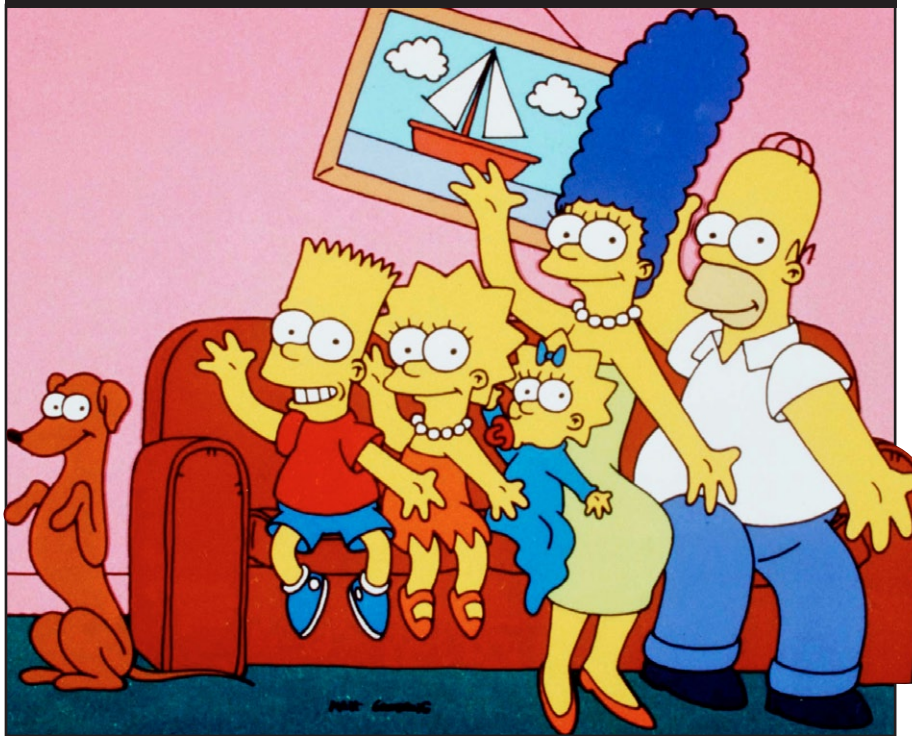
Similar conditions were found in the supply chains of firms including Apple, BMW, Gap, Nike, Sony and Volkswagen, the Australian Strategic Policy Institute said. BT was urged to look into the allegations by Tory MP Bob Seely, a vocal opponent of the Government's decision to let Huawei supply kit to the UK's 5G mobile network.

BT said: 'Forced labour is never acceptable in our own operations or suppliers, and we have engaged with Huawei in connection with these allegations.'

The claims have emerged after China was accused of persecuting Muslim minorities, forcing them to live in concentration camps. It is thought up to 1m people have been detained.

Huawei said: 'We require all suppliers to comply with international standards and laws. We have read the report and are looking into the matter.'

SKY AND DISNEY SEAL DEAL FOR STREAMING SERVICE



MEDIA giant Disney has struck a deal with Sky to make its new streaming service available in Britain.

Disney, which owns Star Wars, Marvel, Pixar and National Geographic, will launch Disney Plus in the UK on March 24. It will be available generally to the public on the internet.

But the deal means Sky TV customers can access it through their set-top boxes. The partners said they had struck a 'multi-year' agreement but did not reveal details of when it will expire or how much Sky paid.

It is thought the broadcaster outbid

rivals such as BT and Virgin Media to seal the deal. Disney Plus is seen as a major competitor to Netflix, with the platform lining up a formidable stable of content for subscribers.

The service will feature content such as The Simpsons (pictured) and X-Men, which it acquired from Rupert Murdoch's 21st Century Fox last year.

It will cost £5.99 per month. Sky boss Jeremy Darroch said: 'We've built a strong partnership with Disney over three decades and we're pleased our customers in the UK and Ireland can continue to enjoy their content.'

Lidl crowned the fastest growing UK supermarket

LIDL is now the fastest-growing supermarket in Britain, according to the latest market data.

Sales at the German discounter rose by 11.4pc in the 12 weeks to February 23, taking the top spot for the first time since 2017, data provider Kantar said. Ocado, whose home delivery business is expected to receive a boost from the coronavirus outbreaks, saw growth slow slightly to 10.8pc.

Aldi's total sales rose 5.7pc, which handed it a 7.9pc share of the market.

But in a sign its growth is running out of steam, analysts at Shore Capital said sales may be falling once new store openings are stripped out.

Sainsbury's was the only supermarket among the Big Four to grow, increasing sales by 0.3pc. Tesco and Asda dipped by 0.8pc and 1.2pc respectively while Morrisons' sales were 2pc lower than the same period last year, and as a result its market share fell to 10.2pc.

Fraser McKevitt, head of consumer insight at Kantar, said: 'Sainsbury's has performed well

by Tom Witherow

this period despite a challenging market. Lidl has been benefiting from its store expansion programme for a number of years. The new locations have helped to bring in nearly 900,000 additional shoppers.'

The Sainsbury's boost comes months before chief executive Mike Coupe bows out after his failed merger with Asda.

Overall grocery spend in the last three months was up by 0.7pc year-on-year, the fastest rate since November.

Waitrose, owned by struggling John Lewis Partnership, which releases its results tomorrow, saw its sales fall 1.3pc year-on-year.

All supermarkets are braced for the impact of coronavirus and are expecting an impact. However firms with a large delivery network are expected to benefit, and on Monday Ocado shares jumped.

Last month, sales of hand sanitiser increased by 255pc, while liquid soaps were up by 7pc, Kantar reported.

Hotel chain gambit

BUDGET hotelier Travelodge is targeting jobless parents to fill 4,000 housekeepers roles around the school run.

The employees will make up rooms at its new hotels and provide summer cover. A parent doing 25 hours a week can earn £11,300 per year. Rebecca Baker, of Travelodge, said: 'We have made it our mis-

sion to help unemployed parents return to work and housekeeping is a great route in.'

The move by the firm, which runs 573 hotels, comes amid a crisis in supply of labour. The minimum wage is rising and the number of people coming to the UK from Europe could fall because of new immigration rules.



THE new boss of Strepsils owner Reckitt Benckiser

has bought 17,241 shares in the company for £1m.

Laxman Narasimhan, who joined last September, paid £58 each. It comes on top of his generous golden



DIRECTOR'S DEALS

Laxman Narasimhan, 52
Reckitt Benckiser chief executive

hello, which saw him scoop over £7.5m in share and cash awards to replace incentives he forfeited on leaving Pepsico.

Since taking over

Narasimhan, 52, has quietly scrapped the plans of his predecessor, Rakesh Kapoor, to split the business and spin off its hygiene and home business.

Northern spirit

A WHISKY distillery is set to open in the far north of Scotland to meet demand.

The operation at John O'Groats is being opened by married local entrepreneurs Derek and Kerry Campbell, and is scheduled to open in 2021, producing up to 60,000 litres a year. It will be the first whisky distillery in John

O'Groats since 1837. Scotch whisky accounts for almost £5bn of annual British exports, with 42 bottles shipped every second in 2019.

Kerry Campbell said: 'The whisky will be unlike that from any other distillery, due to our coastal location and the impact the local climate will have on our spirit as it matures.'

FTSE 100 6718.20 63.31 0.95% H:7686.61 L:6580.61	FTSE 250 19682.65 380.95 1.97% H:22108.29 L:18640.65	FTSE All Share 3749.09 42.26 1.14% H:4257.93 L:3673.61	DOW 25917.41 785.91 2.94% H:29551.42 L:24815.04	NIKKEI 21082.73 261.35 1.22% H:24083.51 L:20261.04	HANG SENG 26284.82 6.86 0.03% H:30157.49 L:25281.30	DAX 11985.39 127.52 1.08% H:13789.00 L:11346.65	Brent Spot 52.16 0.41 0.79% H:68.91 L:49.67	Gold 1607.04 8.21 0.51% H:1674.81 L:1447.60
£/\$ 1.2818 ▲ 0.0043 H:1.3348 L:1.2066	£/€ 1.1468 ▲ 0.0009 H:1.2038 L:1.0762	Tourist Rates Aus\$.....1.85 Can\$.....1.63 DenKr.....8.17 Euro€.....1.10 Jpn¥.....131.34 NZ\$.....1.90 SAR.....18.59 SwFr.....1.17 TurkI.....7.55 US\$.....1.22 WWW.TRAVELLEX.CO.UK FOR INDICATION USE ONLY						

NMC Health to be booted out in FTSE 100 reshuffle

FOLLOWING months of turbulent trading, NMC Health, Tui and Kingfisher are all set to lose their spots on the prestigious FTSE 100.

They will be expelled from the blue-chip index this month in the next reshuffle, which is based on last night's prices.

FTSE Russell conducts a reshuffle every quarter to ensure major indices contain the biggest firms by market value.

NMC has had a stunning fall from grace, losing around two-thirds of its value following questions raised by US short-seller Muddy Waters about the private hospital group's financial health.

Companies already in the FTSE 100 must at least be in the 110 biggest firms on the London Stock Exchange's Main Market to stay, while a company can be promoted if it rises to 90th place or higher.

NMC shares, which are suspended from trading, were worth 938.4p last night, valuing it at £2bn and making it, roughly, the 176th biggest firm. Tui was also in

MARKET REPORT

by **Francesca Washtell**

an automatic exit position even though it rose 3.2pc, or 18.6p, to 608.8p, valuing it at £3.5bn.

The travel group has shed around a third of its value as a result of coronavirus fears pummelling tourism stocks.

For Kingfisher – up 2pc, or 3.6p, to 188.6p – things are trickier.

The retailer has not fallen enough to be automatically demoted but it will be pushed out by the strong performance of three companies on the FTSE 250: gambling firm GVC, up 1.3pc, or 10p, to 802.6p yesterday, utilities group Pennon, which climbed 2.8pc, or 30.5p, to 1140.5p and Intermediate Capital Group, 3.9pc, or 63p, higher at 1667p.

These stocks have grown so much that they have automatically qualified to be promoted.

It will be another major blow for the retail sector, which lost Marks & Spencer, up 4.1pc, or 6.45p, to 163.80p, two reshuffles ago in September after being a constituent of the index since its inception in 1984. The shake-up comes into effect on March 23.

Easyjet is tipped to be the UK airline worst-affected by Covid-19. Analysts believe the hit will be temporary for London's four listed carriers and kept their 'buy' ratings on all four.

As well as a general lift in mood of markets yesterday, this will go some way to explaining why Easyjet (up 0.7pc, or 7.5p, to 1070p), Ryanair (up 3.1pc, or 0.35p, to 11.88p), British Airways-owner IAG (up 7.2pc, or 31.3p, to 464.4p) and Wizz Air (up 1.8pc, or 61p, to 3385p) all climbed higher.

The FTSE 100 and the FTSE 250 closed higher, with the premier index rising 1pc, or 63.31 points to 6718.2, and the mid-caps lifting 2pc, or 380.95, to 19682.65. Build-

ers merchant and Wickes-owner Travis Perkins edged 1.9pc higher, up 28p, to 1472.5p, as it shrugged off a 'challenging' market and swung back into the black last year. Profits hit £123m in 2019, from an £84m loss the year before, as revenue rose 3.2pc to £6.9bn.

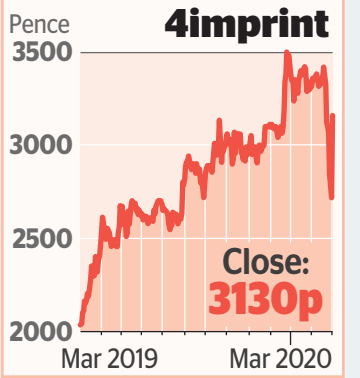
A recovery at Wickes comes as Travis Perkins closes in on spinning off the business.

Industrial equipment rental group Ashtead said a 13pc rise in revenue over the first nine months of its financial year was driven by growth in the US. Profits rose from £888m in the same period the year before to £947m – though it got a tepid response as stock rose 0.04pc, or 1p, to 2408p.

Gambling software group GAN jumped 15.4pc, or 22p, to 165p after it filed documents that draw it closer to listing on the Nasdaq exchange in New York.

And ex-chief executive of Amigo Holdings, Glen Crawford, has snapped up shares worth around £1.2m, shoring up investor confidence in the guarantor lender. It rose 2.4pc, or 0.9p, to 39.1p.

STOCK WATCH



■ **BUSINESS** boomed in the US last year for promotional products maker 4imprint.

It sells pens, bags and other wares that can be customised with a company's name and branding on items such as freebies often found at conferences. Revenues surged 17pc to £671m as turnover in North America jumped 17pc, while total profits rose 22pc to £42m.

Shares in 4imprint, which took 1.6m orders for customised products last year, rose 15.1pc, or 410p, to 3130p.

	High	Low
Aerospace & Defence		
Aston Martin.....	292¼ +1¼	1181 291
BAE Systems.....	612 +1¼	669 443½
Meggitt.....	550½ +7½	697½ 489½
QinetiQ.....	342½ -½	387¼ 267
Rolls-Royce.....	635¼ +20	941¼ 600½
Senior.....	145½ -2	235 141¼
TI Fluid Systems.....	195½ +5½	273 155¼
Ultra Electronics.....	1963 +36	2292 1441

	High	Low
Banks		
Banco Santander.....	284¼ +1	402 283¼
Bank of Georgia.....	1513	1755 1252
Barclays.....	139½xd+3¼	192½ 136½
BGEQ Group.....	1686 +6	1818 1252
HSBC Hldgs.....	509½xd+10	680½ 509¼
Lloyds Banking.....	48½ -½	67¼ 48½
Royal Bank of Scot.....	170½ -2	270½ 170½
Stan Chartered.....	538¼ -12¼	738½ 538¼
TBC Bank Group.....	1276 -24	1706 1150
Virgin Money UK.....	147½ +½	220½ 104½

	High	Low
Beverages		
Barr (AG).....	546 +12	975 526
Brivvic.....	882 +15½	1068 850
C&G Group.....	330 -½	410½ 3½
Coca-Cola HBC.....	2582 +67	3074 2299
Diageo.....	2820½xd+9	3625½ 2765½

	High	Low
Chemicals		
Croda Intnl.....	4744 +54	5375 4554
Elementis.....	98½ -½	184½ 98½
Johnson Matt.....	2501 +26	3454 2279
Synthomer.....	277 +¼	420¼ 276¼
Victrex.....	2128 +64	2540 1845

	High	Low
Construction & Materials		
Balfour Beatty.....	243½ +½	295 194¼
CRH.....	2757 +39	3100 2279
Galliford Try.....	150½ +3½	190½ 102½
Grafton Gp.....	851½+12½	990 645½
Ibstock.....	252½-28¼	322¼ 208½
Marshalls.....	726 +16	876 543
Polypipe Group.....	547½ +9	619 372¼

	High	Low
Electricity		
Contour Global.....	175 -¼	222½ 163
Drax Gp.....	266½ +6	386¼ 251
SSE.....	1578½xd+32½	1686½ 1008

	High	Low
Electronic & Electrical Equipment		
Halma.....	2054+56½	2244 1595
Morgan Advanced.....	286¼+10½	324¼ 232½
Oxford Instruments.....	1410 +4	1654 963
Renishaw.....	3408 +8	4638 3232
Spectris.....	2786 +91	3005 2234

	High	Low
Equity Investment Instruments		
3i Infrastructure.....	300 -½	317½ 270½
Aberforth Smr Cos.....	1240½xd+22	1546 1114
AJ Bell.....	360 +5½	477 285
Alliance Trust.....	777 +12	876 730
Apax Global.....	161 +9½	185½ 148½
AVI Global Trust.....	715 +7	802 695
Baillie Giff Japan.....	690	848 675
Bankers InvTst.....	946 +12	1032 851
BBGI Sicav.....	160½xd+2½	170 156
BlackRock Smir.....	1530 +54	1794 1298
BMO Global Smir.....	129½ +1¼	150 126
Caledonia Inv.....	2975 +75	3120 2875

TOP RISERS

	CLOSING PRICE	DAILY CHANGE	REASON
4imprint	3130p	+15.07%	Revenue jump
Rotork	306.8p	+9.61%	Higher profits
IAG	464.4p	+7.23%	Share recovery
Harbourvest	1732p	+7.18%	Market mood
Trainline	475.5p	+6.97%	Investor sentiment

	High	Low
City of London IT.....	393xd +4	448½ 382
Edin Inv Trst.....	540xd +7	652 528
European Opp.....	823 +17	926 708
F&C Inv Trst.....	695 +5	786 672
Fidelity Euro.....	233 +2	253 205½
Fidelity China.....	250 +5½	272 218
Fidelity Spec Val.....	240½ +5½	280½ 230
Finsbury G&I Tst.....	829 +18	958 795
Foresight Solar.....	116xd +1	127 112
GCP Infra Inv.....	123xd +3	134 117
Genesis Emg.....	743 +11	818 686
Greencoat UK.....	143xd +½	152¼ 133¼
Harbourvest.....	1732+116	1868 1406
Herald Inv Trst.....	1360 +28	1530 1205
HG Capital Trst.....	267½	267½ 237
HICL Infr.....	175¼ +½	183 156½
JPM American.....	465xd +3	524 421
JPM Emerg Mkt.....	982 +27	1088 878
JPM Indian IT.....	651 +11	790 628
JPM Japan IT.....	394 +4	477½ 383
Jupiter Fund.....	315¼ +4	432 300
Law Debenture.....	590 +12	654 552
LXI REIT.....	131½ +1¼	140½ 125
M&G.....	202½ +9	251½ 193½
Mercantile IT.....	242 +7	278½ 188
Monks Inv Trst.....	935 +15	1026 809
Murray Intl Tst.....	1078 +10	1286 1056
Next Energy Solar.....	117½ +2	126½ 114
Pantheon Intl.....	2200 +90	2620 2020
Perpetual Inc&Gth.....	288½ +4½	342 282½
Pershing Square.....	1384½xd+12	1578 1224
Personal Assets.....	42750+450	44050 39950
Polar Cap Tech.....	1590 +54	1746 1220
Pollen Street.....	856 +8	884 802
Renewables Infra.....	135½xd+4	139¼ 115½
RIT Cap Partners.....	2000 +76	2180 1886
Schroder Asia.....	441 +5	485½ 424½
Scottish Inv Trst.....	733 +9	843 715
Scottish Mortgage.....	605½+22½	659 472
Sequoia Econ Infra.....	113 +4	118½ 110
Smithson Inv.....	1248 +38	1388 1105
Syncona.....	244 +2	275½ 203
Temple Bar IT.....	1210 +6	1486 1162
Templeton Em.....	792 +24	876 731
Vietnam Enter.....	420 +10	509 404
VinaCapital Vietna.....	285 +8	357½ 270½
Witan Invest.....	201½xd+3½	235 196
Wide Healthcare.....	3100 +95	3330 2495

	High	Low
Food Producers		
Assoc Brit Foods.....	2279 +17	2708 2106
Bakkavor.....	105 -¼	149½ 93¼
Cranswick.....	3450 +76	3852 2488
Greencore Gp.....	214½xd+5½	281¼ 193½
Hilton Food Gp.....	1012 +47	1118 902
Tate & Lyle.....	727 +16	801½ 663¼

	High	Low
Industrial Transportation		
Clarkson.....	2550 +30	3110 2200
Fisher (James).....	1828 +32	2260 1680
Royal Mail.....	161½	268½ 161½
Signature Avi.....	291¼	406 291¼

TOP FALLERS

	CLOSING PRICE	DAILY CHANGE	REASON
Ibstock	252.40	-10.05%	Challenging trading
Hunting	302.00	-7.25%	Profit taking
Puretech	285.00	-5.94%	Volatile stock
Hiscox	1206.00	-5.49%	Profit taking
Playtech	242.50	-4.19%	Analyst note

	High	Low
Industrials		
Bodycote.....	767½ +19	971 652
Hill & Smith.....	1376 +47	1510 1049
IMI.....	1040 +38	1206 906
Melrose Ind.....	206½ +3½	248½ 160¼
RHI Magnesita.....	2956 -34	5000 2956
Rotork.....	306¼+26½	341¼ 269¼
Smith (DS).....	322½ +6¼	394¼ 307½
Smiths Gp.....	1557½+25	1769½ 1378
Smurfit Kappa Gp.....	2684 +78	3010 2096
Spirax-Sarco.....	8755+210	9415 6850
Vesuvius.....	430¼+11¼	642 341
Weir Gp.....	1272½ -4½	1814 1250½
Leisure Goods		
Games Workshp.....	6615½xd+3457350	2800
Watches of Switz.....	340¼+14¼	392¼ 270
Life Insurance		
Aviva.....	346 +2¼	438½ 343¼
Legal & General.....	265¼+10½	318½ 216¼
Phoenix Gp.....	708 +10¼	803 634¼
Prudential.....	1263 -7	1790 1263
St James Place.....	1016+14½	1199½ 913½
Stan Life Aberdeen.....	279½ +4¼	336½ 238½
Media		
4imprint.....	3130+410	3500 2110
Ascential.....	330½ +2½	421¼ 319
Auto Trader Gp.....	516½ -2½	607½ 469½
DailyMail&GenTst.....	744 +19	877 632
Euromy Inst.....	1072 +14	1498 1036
Future.....	1176 +26	1572 736
Informa.....	655¼ -4½	892 655¼
ITV.....	116¼ +1	156½ 103½
Moneyprmtk.com.....	315½ +8¼	417¼ 307¼
Pearson.....	554 +4	927 550
RELX.....	1920½+35	2099 1606
Rightmove Group.....	625½ +6½	701¼ 495
WPP.....	755 +14½	1077½ 740½
Mining		
Anglo American.....	1903+58½	2266 1666½
Antofagasta.....	778½ +3	1022½ 752
BHP Group.....	1462½+13¼	2049 1418½
Centamin.....	141¼ +6½	153½ 79½
Evraz.....	330½ +13	709½ 317½
Ferrexpo.....	135¼ +2	301¼ 123
Fresnillo.....	649¼+29¼	921¼ 539½
Glencore.....	191¼ -2	340¼ 191¼
Hochschild Mining.....	174¼ +9½	227 152
Kaz Minerals.....	423¼ +1¼	738½ 380¼
Polymet Int.....	1266½+44½	1345 772½
Qim Tinto.....	3821½+101½	4976½ 3608

	High	Low
Nonlife Insurance		
Admiral Gp.....	2186 +46	2330 2014
Beazley.....	530½xd+1½	628 504½
Direct Line Ins.....	324 +11¼	366½ 270½
Hastings Gp.....	166 +4½	231½ 161½
Hiscox.....	1206 -70	1777 1206
Lancashire Hldgs.....	728 +3	807 640½
RSA Ins Gp.....	522 +4	597 501½
Sabre Insurance.....	288½+12½	332½ 235½
Oil & Gas Producers		
BP.....	415½xd+3¼	582½ 396½
Cairn Energy.....	137 -2½	207¼ 137
Energean Oil&Gas.....	677 +19	1082 654
Premier Oil.....	78½ +1½	118½ 65
R Dutch Shell A.....	1723½xd+7½	2612 1661½
R Dutch Shell B.....	1721½xd +9	2622 1663½
Tullow Oil.....	32½ +½	250 32½
Oil Equipment & Services		
Hunting.....	302 -23½	657 290¼
Petrofac.....	299¼ -9¼	527¼ 299¼
Wood Gp(J).....	359¼ +2½	598½ 319½
Pharmaceuticals & Biotechnology		
AstraZeneca.....	7172½+1627878	5644
Decura Pharma.....	2710 +54	3068 2348
Genus.....	3416+184	3416 2178
GaloSmithKline.....	1608½xd-22	1846 1501½
Hikma Pharma.....	1879½-19½	2200 1556½
Puretech.....	285 -18	336 161½
PZ Cussons.....	190½xd+5¼	227 178¼
Reckitt Benckiser.....	5786 +38	6688 5721
Real Estate		
Assura.....	77½ +3	83½ 56¼
Big Yellow Gp.....	1133 +49	1240 955½
BMO Comm Prop.....	97½xd +¼	124¼ 96½
British Land.....	504¼+10¼	638¼ 468¼
Grt Portland Est.....	870¼+25¼	966 649½
Capl & Count Prop.....	209 +9	

by **Francesca Washtell**

AN AMBITIOUS project to build a potash mine in the North York Moors has been saved from collapse despite a backlash from furious shareholders.

Sirius Minerals investors voted in favour of a £405m rescue takeover put forward by FTSE 100 mining giant Anglo American.

Just over 80pc of votes were cast in favour and nearly 20pc against. That meant the result was close as Anglo needed to secure the support of 75pc of votes for it to pass.

It was expected to be a close call after angry retail investors pledged to vote it down because they felt it undervalued the company.

Anglo offered 5.5p per share to buy Sirius, which is much less than many private shareholders will have paid for their stock.

Sirius had an estimated 85,000 private investors who held around 50pc of its shares. This is a much higher proportion than for most companies.

The voter turnout was around 43pc – which is higher than the roughly one-third who tend to vote at Sirius meetings.

Sirius bosses insisted it would run out of money and collapse within weeks if Anglo's offer wasn't voted through.

It has spent years developing a huge mine in the North York Moors national park, near Whitby, to access a naturally occurring fertiliser called polyhalite.

Chairman Russell Scrimshaw said: 'The positive outcome from today's meeting secures a return for shareholders, and provides greater certainty in terms of safeguarding the project, protecting the jobs of our employees, and allowing the community, region and the UK to continue to benefit from the project.'

Sirius has estimated that its sprawling Woodsmith Mine would generate £100bn for the UK economy over the next 50 years.

The result of the vote, which was released late last night, came after a meeting in London where angry shareholders grilled bosses about

the deal and why the company has ended up on the brink of collapse.

Sirius installed extra security guards at the meeting in the City after what Scrimshaw described as online 'abuse' and 'threats of violence' against management.

Sirius was trading at 24p a share last April and peaked at around 44p in August 2016. But the shares collapsed last September after it failed to raise £400m that would have given it access to more cash needed to complete the mine, after the Government

declined to commit to guaranteeing funding.

Shareholders rallied together to urge the company to either get a better offer from Anglo or find an alternative deal that would have seen it stay on the stock market.

Cliff Weight, a director at investor body ShareSoc who oversaw a Sirius Shareholder Group, said: 'Many individual shareholders will be thankful that they get 5.5p – which was the only offer on the table.'

'The 20pc backlash is very high and reflects the enormous dissatis-

faction of many individuals who financed this project in its early stages and, very sadly, have now lost significant sums.'

Major institutional shareholder Jupiter Asset Management urged the company to seek a better offer, and hedge fund Odey Asset Management last week said it would vote against the deal.

Chief executive Chris Fraser (pictured) yesterday said: 'This is not a great price, but it is the price, and the alternative is most likely administration.'

Anglo American seals Sirius Minerals deal

Potash miner saved despite backlash



Boris bounce for builders

BRITAIN's construction industry powered up last month as Brexit uncertainty lifted and the controversial High Speed 2 (HS2) project was finally approved.

The sector grew for the first time since April, and the IHS Markit/CIPS construction purchasing managers' index rose from 48.4 in January to 52.6, its highest since 2018. Above 50 indicates growth.

Firms reported a surge of orders, with February's numbers at their highest since

2015. Some said contracts from the HS2 rail network and other transport projects could boost their businesses.

Max Jones, at Lloyds Bank Commercial Banking's infrastructure and construction team, said: 'The mood among contractors is broadly positive after HS2 was given the green light. Next week's Budget has the potential to improve the outlook further given the Government's hints that infrastructure will feature prominently.'

£292m British Steel bill

TAXPAYERS face a hefty bill after British Steel was finally rescued by Chinese buyers – 292 days after it collapsed.

The company ran out of cash in May due to poor trading, rising costs and the weak pound. Since then it has been kept afloat, while losing an estimated £1m a day, by the Government while a buyer is sought.

Yesterday China's Jingye, which has been in talks for months, confirmed it will take control of the company from Monday.

But taxpayers face a bill for keeping it

afloat since May – possibly as much as £292m. That is after accounts showed British Steel made a loss of £371.6m in the year to March 31.

Accountants at EY have reportedly been making £1m a week for running it on behalf of the Official Receiver, which claimed reports of losses of £1m a day were inaccurate, but declined to say how much the cost to taxpayers would be. The takeover saves around 3,700 jobs, with 400 roles axed.

Jingye has vowed to pump in £1.2bn.

Bailey to face court grilling

THE Bank of England's new Governor is preparing to defend himself in court alongside RBS in a fresh claim brought by a victim of the lender's toxic Global Restructuring Group (GRG).

Andrew Bailey and the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) are named as defendants in a legal claim brought by Chris Gordon, 44, a former property developer.

It is another headache for Bailey, head of the FCA, who is to be grilled by the Treasury Select Committee today over whether he is the right person to take over as Governor of the Bank of England this month.

In a trial due to be heard in a Belfast High Court later this year, Gordon alleges RBS deliberately ran his property development business into the ground following the bank's £45.5bn taxpayer bailout in 2008.

He claims RBS, through its subsidiary Ulster Bank, fraudulently or negligently advised him to take out complicated interest rate hedging products on his loans.

Gordon also alleges that Bailey and the FCA failed in their duty to supervise RBS.

An FCA spokesman said: 'Mr Gordon has issued a claim in Northern Ireland against a number of parties. Mr Bailey and the FCA maintain that the claim is without merit.'

RBS declined to comment.

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Honeysuckle to take on Benie in battle of mares

UNBEATEN Honeysuckle will miss Tuesday's Unibet Champion Hurdle to instead go head to head with Benie Des Dieux in a tasty battle for the Close Brothers Mares' Hurdle on the opening day of the Cheltenham Festival.

Henry De Bromhead-trained Honeysuckle had been as short as 4-1 to add the Champion Hurdle to her success in the Irish Champion Hurdle at Leopardstown last month.

Her participation would have given jockey Rachael Blackmore the best chance yet for a female jump jockey to win one of the Festival's crown jewel races — the Queen Mother Champion Chase and Gold Cup are the other two.

Blackmore is still likely to ride in the race, with De Bromhead-trained Irish Champion Hurdle runner-up Petite Mouchoir also in the line-up.

The two-and-a-half-mile Mares' Hurdle is half a mile longer than the Champion Hurdle and Peter Molony, racing manager to Honeysuckle's owner Kenny Alexander, said that had been a factor in the decision.

Molony said: 'In our opinion, she's a two-and-a-half-mile mare — that's her optimum trip. I've read somewhere that we're lacking in ambition but if

By MARCUS TOWNEND

Racing Correspondent

taking on Benie Des Dieux is lacking ambition, I don't know what ambition is! It will be a great race.

'Let's hope everything turns up in one piece.'

Honeysuckle is 6-4 for the Grade One Mares' Hurdle but in facing Benie Des Dieux — the odds-on favourite — she must take on a fellow mare who has won all her eight completed starts since being bought in France to join the Willie Mullins stable.

Those wins include last season's French Champion Hurdle. Benie Des Dieux also won the 2018 Mares' Hurdle and would have won last year's race if she hadn't fallen at the last.

Blackmore has never been beaten in seven rides on Honeysuckle, who threw in some slow jumps when winning the Irish Champion, including one at the last hurdle that threatened to cost her victory.

Going to the longer race next week means her jumping should be put under less pressure.

Today is the penultimate declaration stage for the Champion Hurdle. Entries can also be supplemented at a cost of £22,500.

■ **SHAKEM UP'ARRY** will represent owner Harry Redknapp in Saturday's Imperial Cup at Sandown. Trainer Ben Pauling said: 'He's definitely going to be better over further but he will be suited by the stiff finish. I think he will be a live contender.'

■ **BRIAN HUGHES** (right) took his title race-lead back out to 18 (133-115) with double at Newcastle.



CATTERICK RTV

2.20 —SELLING HANDICAP HURDLE (5) £6,892 added (£3,509) 1m 7f 156yds (8)

- 2F/L DAHILLS HILL 33 (H) (S) Laura Morgan 8-11-13
- 559 THE HERDS GARDEN 26 (P) (C&D) D McCain 11-11-12
- L80-TIM ROCCO 12 (PT) (D) (S) Oliver Greenall 8-11-9
- 4U7 PEPPER STREET F42 (T) Sam England 5-11-7
- 5P8 HIGHWAYMAN 38 D Thompson 7-11-5
- 6B GLOBAL THRILL 19 (PT) (D3) (S) B J Llewellyn 11-10-5
- 733 FLANAGANS FIELD 19 (B) (D3) (GS) B J Llewellyn 12-10-4
- PPP SKA RIDGE F22 (PT) Rebecca Menzies 8-10-0
- PROBABLE SP: 6-4 Flanagan's Field, 4 The Herds Garden, 5 Tim Rocco, 6 Dahills Hill, 10 Pepper Street.

2.50 —NOVICES' CHASE (4) £9,300 added (£5,133) 3m 1f 54yds (5)

- 3P1 DJANGO DJANGO 49 (S) Jonjo O'Neill 7-11-4
- 32L COOLE HALL 68 (P) Mrs R Dobbin 8-10-12
- 3L3 JAMMIN MASTERS 34 (P) W Greetax 9-10-12
- 4-L4 STAY HUMBLE 50 Miss P Robson 7-10-12
- LL-2 STRADIVARIUS DAVIS 60 A M Thomson 7-10-12

PROBABLE SP: 13-8 Django Django, 5-2 Coole Hall, 7-2 Jammin Masters, 8 Stay Humble, 8 Stradivarius Davis.

3.20 —MARES' NOVICES' HURDLE (4) £6,400 added (£4,159) 1m 7f 156yds (10)

- 141 ILAYA 36 (HT) (D2) (S) M Hammond 6-11-10
- 026 LADY BABS 30 A Crook 6-10-12
- 407 LIGHTENING DANCE 27 D McCain 6-10-12
- 7P7 MILADYGRACE 33 P Kirby 5-10-12
- 606 MOVIN'ON UP 47 (P) Thompson 5-10-12
- 7P7 PICKING PEACHES 52 R M Smith 5-10-12
- 06 VICKY CRISTINA 13 J Holt 5-10-12
- 06 VIVA JEZ VEGAS 14 Tjade Collier 5-10-12
- 8-32 ZOUTOISE 111 T R George 5-10-12
- 16 SIMUL AMIGOS 29 Mrs D Sayer 4-10-4

PROBABLE SP: 4-5 Zoutoise, 11-8 Ilaya, 10 Lightning Dance.

3.50 —HANDICAP CHASE (4) £9,800 added (£5,458) 1m 7f 145yds (7)

- 364 NIVEN 12 (P) (D) (S) P Kirby 7-12-0
- 96L GO LONG 46 (P) (D) (S) E Williams 10-11-12
- 7-3 PULL TOGETHER 106 Stuart Edmunds 8-11-6
- 564 LAS TUNAS 62 (T) (D2) (S) R M Smith 8-10-12
- 3L4 RINGARINGAROSIE 4 (D3) (S) M Toddhunter 7-10-10
- L6P KING GOLAN 15 (BT) Kenny Johnson 9-10-8
- L75 MY RENAISSANCE 114 (T) (D3) Sam England 10-10-3

PROBABLE SP: 9-4 Niven, 3 Pull Together, 9-2 Las Tunas, 7 Ringaringarose, 8 Go Long, King Golan.

TRACK FACTS: L-H course. GOING: Soft-heavy in places. Top jockey: Brian Hughes. Top trainer: D McCain. Headgear first time: 2.20 Pepper Street, Ska Ridge, Tim Rocco, 2.50 Coole Hall, 3.20 Movin'on Up, 4.50 Gordie, 5.25 Frascato Bello. Longest traveller: Go Long (3.50) 275 miles. Drop in Class: 4.50 Wishing And Hoping is down 2 grades on last run (Class 3 to Class 5). First run since wind surgery: None today.

EXETER

- 2.00 — GETAROUND (B Carver) 16-1 1; The Jitterbug 7-2(4ndFav) 2; Young Buck 7-2 3. 6 ran. (Ella Pickard). 141, 1/2. Tote: 12.90; 5.20, 1.30. Ex: 50.40. Tf: 170.80. CSF: 46.43.
- 2.30 — FORTESQUE (H Nugent) 7-2Jifav 1; Quick Wave 5-1 2; Samburu Shujaa 7-2Jifav 3, 6 ran. (H Daly). nk, 161. Tote: 3.40; 2.00, 3.40. Ex: 19.10. Tf: 69.60. CSF: 30.50.
- 3.00 — SUNNY LEDGEN (R Patrick) 66-1 1; Ballybreen 7-2F 2; Kiwi Myth 7-1 3. 14 ran. (Andrew Martin). 1/4, 3/4. Tote: 139.90;

- 19.10, 1.70, 2.50. Ex: 808.10. Tc: 1907.81. Tf: 1908.80. CSF: 296.58.
- 3.30 — JACK VALENTINE (C Deutsch) 7-4F 1; Bonanza Sam 66-1 2; Mille Sussurri 7-2(2ndFav) 3, 12 ran. (Miss V Williams). 2/5, 1/6. Tote: 2.80; 1.40, 10.00, 1.70. Ex: 110.70. Tf: 314.00. CSF: 152.80.
- 4.00 — TUDORS TREASURE (T J O'Brien) 3-1(2ndFav) 1; Ballybough Nora 4-1 2; On The Road 15-8F 3, 7 ran. (Robert Stephens). shd, 1/4. Tote: 3.20; 1.60, 2.50. Ex: 18.00. Tf: 46.70. CSF: 16.27.
- 4.30 — DAYTIME AHEAD (B Carver) 6-1 1; Top Gamble 14-1

- 2; Stage Summit 20-1 3. 10 ran. (R Hodges). nk, 4/5. Tote: 8.90; 4.90, 1.90, 3.60. Ex: 88.70. Tc: 1592.20. Tf: 1407.40. CSF: 78.89.
- Jackpot Not won, pool of £47,388.13 carried over.
- Placepot £977.30. Q'pot £228.30.
- NEWCASTLE**
- 1.2F — MAYO STAR (B Hughes) 1-5F 1; Sainthe Mhor 10-1 2; Bonny Houxty 4-1(2ndFav) 3. 6 ran. (N Richards). 4/5, 1/2. Tote: 1.10; 1.10, 2.70. Ex: 4.20. Tf: 6.70. CSF: 4.65. NR: Dionysis.
- 2.50 — DARIUS DES SOURCES (S Quinlan) 15-2 1; Casimir Du Clos 20-1 2; Donald Dux 10-1 3. 12 ran.

LINGFIELD SSR

2.30 —LADBROKES 'PLAY 1-2-FREE' ON FOOTBALL HANDICAP (Formcast) (6) (3-Y-0) £5,593 added (£2,782) 1m 4f (12)

- 101 (3) 00-334 VERTICE 16 M Botti 9-7
- 102 (12) L70-7 CRITIQUE 39 (B) Ed Walker 9-5
- 103 (11) 07-9 PAINT IT BLACK 49 S Kirk 9-4
- 104 (7) 84659-8 SLAVONIC DANCE 16 J Boyle 9-4
- 105 (6) 027L-6 SARACEN STAR 18 (P) J S Moore 9-1
- 106 (4) 0-40 SHARNEY 42 Archie Watson 8-13
- 107 (1) 0867-45 DEPARDIEU 9 F Brennan 8-11
- 108 (10) LL-6 GOLDEN TIMES 83 M Johnston 8-10
- 109 (2) 007-67 DAME DENALI 49 A Carson 8-7
- 110 (9) 089-5 EVAPORUST 40 (P) M Usher 8-7
- 111 (8) 00-784 SEA BRIGHT 18 M Atwater 8-7
- 112 (5) L65-876 CONTRACT KID 16 (P) M Loughnane 8-7

PROBABLE SP: 4 Vertice, 9-2 Critique, 5 Evaporust, Golden Times, 10 Dame Denali, 12 Saracen Star, Paint It Black, Contract Kid, Sea Bright, 16 Depardieu, 20 Slavonic Dance.

FAVOURITES: ———— 1 (W 9-9).

2019: Glutnforpunishment 3 9 9 (Danny Brock) 4-7 Fav N Littmoden drawn (2) 2 ran.

3.00 —BETWAY HANDICAP (4) £9,250 added (£5,208) 1m 4f (7)

- 201 (7) 1125-4-3 GIVING GLANCES 25 (P) (C&D) A King 5-9-7
- 202 (3) 14-76L0 BERRAHHI 17 (CD) J Best 9-9-6
- 203 (4) 41135-L EMENEM 25 (C2) S Dow 6-9-4
- 204 (4) 412/07L- TOUCHTHESOU J41 (E) G L Moore 5-9-1
- 205 (1) 5L112-2 RENARDEAU 25 (P) (C&D2) Ali Stronge 4-9-0
- 206 (6) 621L-L6 LEXINGTON LAW 33 (V) (C&D2) A King 7-8-11

PROBABLE SP: 6-4 Renardeau, 7-2 Giving Glances, 5 Emenem, 6 Berrahi, 10 Touchthesoul, 12 Lexington Law, 20 Oummullion.

FAVOURITES: ———— 2 (W 8-7). AGES: ———— 4

2019: Love Rat 4 8 7 (Philip Prince) 5-2 S Dixon drawn (3) 3 ran.

3.30 —LADBROKES WHERE THE NATION PLAYS NOVICE STAKES (5) (3-Y-0) £5,300 added (£3,429) 1m 2f (6)

- 301 (3) 2-1 LONDON ARCH 55 C Fellows 9-9
- 302 (1) IHEARALOTOFSTORIES M Atwater 9-2
- 303 (4) 322 PITCHER'S POINT 20 (BF) J Gosden 9-2
- 304 (5) 7 QUANTUM DAWN 26 M Johnston 9-2
- 305 (2) ROCKMORE J Portman 9-2
- 306 (6) MARGUERITEDEVALOIS J Gosden 8-11

PROBABLE SP: 5-4 Pitcher's Point, 7-4 London Arch, 14 Quantum Dawn.

FAVOURITES: ———— 2 1

2019: Sea Of Marengo 3 8 11 (Rhiani Ingram) 1-5 Fav Paul George drawn (2) 2 ran.

TRACK FACTS: JACKPOT MEETING. L-H Polytrack course. GOING: Standard. STALLS: 1m outside; remainder inside. DRAW ADVANTAGE: Low. Top jockey: Luke Morris. Top trainer: M Johnston. Headgear first time: 2.30 Critique, Saracen Star, 3.00 Giving Glances, 4.00 Misty, Odds On Oli, 5.00 Black Prince. Longest travellers: Golden Times (2.30), Quantum Dawn (3.30), Lion Tower (4.30), Desert Safari (4.30) 270 miles. Drop in Class: 2.30 Golden Times is down 2 grades on last run (Class 4 to Class 6). First run since wind surgery: None today.

KEMPTON RTV

5.15 —32RED HANDICAP (2) £25,000 added (£15,562) 1m 1f 219yds (6)

- 1 (4) 31/18LL- STAR OF BENGAL 158 (P) (DBF) J Gosden 5-9-7
- 2 (5) 151-321 HOME BEFORE DUSK 14 (P) (CD) K Dalglish 5-9-1
- 3 (3) LL11-1L FELIX 23 (T) (D2BF) M Botti 4-9-0
- 4 (2) 12L39/6 WHITE MOCHA 30 H Palmer 5-8-10
- 5 (1) 344-111 LUCKY'S DREAM 20 (D7) J Williams 5-8-3
- 6 (6) 5L8-LL MYTHICAL MADNESS 14 (B) (D3) S Dow 9-8-2

PROBABLE SP: 9-4 Home Before Dusk, 11-4 Felix, 3 Lucky's Dream, 4 Star Of Bengal, 12 White Mocha.

FAVOURITES: ———— 1 0 1 0 3 0 1 (W 9-3). AGES: ———— 5 5 4 5 4 5 4

2019: Matterhorn 4 9 9 (Joe Fanning) 8-11 Fav M Johnston drawn (2) 7 ran.

5.45 —100% PROFIT BOOST AT 32REDSPOTS.COM HANDICAP (DIV 1) (6) £6,569 added (£3,105) 1m 3f 219yds (11)

- 1 (10) 213048- BIRD FOR LIFE 120 (P) (C&D2) M Usher 6-9-8
- 2 (4) 8544-57 FRONASAC 20 (BF) D Kubler 5-9-6
- 3 (3) L57-543 EMBRACE THE MOMENT 9 (P) J Williams 4-9-6
- 4 (7) 272264- BALLYDOYLE J23 G L Moore 5-9-4
- 5 (9) 24-2353 CRIMMUNION KID 4 (V) M Appleby 4-9-4
- 6 (8) 52172-7 HENRY CROFT 45 A Carroll 7-9-4
- 7 (5) 0L-5214 DOUBLE LEGEND 17 (B) (C&D2) Mrs A Perrett 5-9-4
- 8 (1) L110-23 HERM 32 (D2BF) P Evans 6-9-1
- 9 (11) 48354-0 DINDSALO 62 (PT) M Scudamore 7-8-13
- 10 (6) 113-1 SONGO (Silbox) 7 (H) (CD) M Harris 4-8-13
- 11 (2) 88456-0 INCREDIBLE DREAM J13 (P) (D) C Allen 7-8-7

PROBABLE SP: 7-2 Songo, 5 Herm, 11-2 Crimmun, 6 Embrace The Moment, 7 Ballydoyle, Double Legend, 8 Fronasac, 14 Henry Croft.

FAVOURITES & 2019: No corresponding race.

6.15 —100% PROFIT BOOST AT 32REDSPOTS.COM HANDICAP (DIV 2) (6) £6,569 added (£3,105) 1m 3f 219yds (11)

- 1 (5) 945400/ GLENDUN J164 (C) J Eustace 6-9-7
- 2 (9) 146-275 WILLKOMMEN 17 (P) (D) M Botti 4-9-6
- 3 (8) 8831-13 BE FAIR 12 (C&D2) A Carroll 4-9-4
- 4 (2) 32L3-33 LUCK OF CLOVER 29 A Balding 4-9-4
- 5 (6) 44L- BRAMBLEDOWN J60 G L Moore 4-9-4
- 6 (10) LLL0-50 SURREY BLAZE 12 (B) (D2) J Tuitt 5-9-4
- 7 (1) 40540-1 WALLY'S WISDOM 44 (T) (C&D2) J R Jenkins 8-9-1
- 8 (3) 62646-L JAWSHAN 57 (P) J Williams 5-9-0
- 9 (7) 2800-53 GENUINE APPROVAL 8 (PT) (D3) J Butler 7-8-13
- 10 (4) 37L30 MIRABAI 19 J Chapple-Hyam 4-8-8
- 11 (11) 868-85L ROCKSTAR MAX 19 D Coakley 4-8-6

PROBABLE SP: 7-2 Be Fair, 4 Wally's Wisdom, 5 Luck Of Clover, 6 Brambledown, 7 Genuine Approval, 10 Glendun, 12 Willkommen, 14 Jawshan, 20 Mirabai, Rockstar Max.

FAVOURITES & 2019: See Div 1.

6.45 —32RED CASINO NOVICE STAKES (5) (3-Y-0) £6,000 added (£3,881) 1m (11)

- 1 (9) 9-2 CEMHAAN 22 J Gosden 9-5
- 2 (9) 5 EAGLESGLEN 13 Tom Clover 9-5
- 3 (6) 53 EL SALVAJE 13 D M Simcock 9-5
- 4 (4) 8-64 NOTE BLEU 35 G L Moore 9-5
- 5 (3) 2-0 TRIGGER HAPPY 8 (T) J-R Auvray 9-5
- 6 (2) 4 WIN WIN POWER 18 R Hannan 9-5
- 7 (11) 3 AFFABLE 29 R Beckett 9-0
- 8 (10) 86 HO LENG LUI 22 W Jarvis 9-0
- 9 (7) 9-5 LADY PENDRAGON 42 Martin Smith 9-0
- 10 (5) 97 SONG OF POMPEIA 18 L McLennan 9-0

PROBABLE SP: 13-8 Cemhaan, 9-2 Win Win Power, 5 Affable, 6 Note Bleu, 8 El Salvaje, 14 Storming Jibrel, 16 Ho Leng Lui.

FAVOURITES: ———— 3

2019: I'm Available 3 8 11 (Oisín Murphy) 6-1 A Balding drawn (9) 10 ran.

TRACK FACTS: PRINCIPAL MEETING. R-H Polytrack course. GOING: Standard to slow. STALLS: Inside. DRAW ADVANTAGE: Low. Top jockey: Oisín Murphy. Top trainer: J Gosden. Headgear first time: 6.15 Surrey Blaze, Willkommen, 7.15 Tranchee, 8.15 Amor Kethley. Longest travellers: New World Tapestry (7.15) Ireland; Home Before Dusk (5.15) & Chookie Dunedin (7.45) 397 miles. Drop in Class: 5.45 Bird For Life is down 2 grades on last run (Class 4 to Class 6); 7.15 New World Tapestry (4). First run since wind surgery: 5.45 Dindsale

RACING RESULTS

- (C Grant). 2/4, 2/5. Tote: 9.40; 3.20, 8.30, 4.40. Ex: 198.60. Tc: 1539.68. Tf: 1100.80. CSF: 151.64.
- 3.20 — OSCAR CEREMONY (H Brooke) 4-1 1; Kings Eclipse 8-1 2; Skyhill 9-4(2ndFav) 3. 5 ran. (Stef Kenner). 1/5, 2/5. Tote: 4.30; 1.90, 3.00. Ex: 23.60. Tf: 73.90. CSF: 29.23. NR: P Dixon.
- 3.50 — ORKAN (J Hamilton) 9-2(2ndFav) 1; Lostock Hall 13-2 2; Ted Veale 8-1 3. 8 ran. (M Walford). 2/4, 1/5. Tote: 5.00; 1.50, 2.20, 1.60. Ex: 35.70. Tf: 234.54. Tf: 291.20. CSF: 36.02. NR: Elite Icon.

- 4.20 — SHE'SASUPERMACK (C O'Farrell) 15-8F 1; Haul Us In 4-1 2; Molly Carew 9-4(2ndFav) 3. 4 ran. (I Jardine). 3/4, 1/4. Tote: 2.40; Ex: 9.40. Tf: 21.50. CSF: 9.12.
- 4.50 — WETLANDS (H Hughes) 7-4F 1; Drenagh 2-1(2ndFav) 2; Fabuleux Du Clos 16-1 3. 8 ran. (N Richards). 3/4, 1/7. Tote: 2.70; 1.40, 1.10, 3.70. Ex: 7.10. Tf: 48.60. CSF: 5.59.
- Placepot £806.50. Q'pot £78.90.
- SOUTHWELL**
- 5.00 — RED STRIPES (H Shaw) 9-2-1; Moveonup 5-2F 2; You're Cool 11-2 3. 7 ran. (Mrs L Williamson). 1/4, 2/4. Tote: 4.50; 2.80, 1.10. Ex:

ROBIN GOODFELLOW

- 2.30 Vertice
3.00 Renardeau
3.30 Pitcher's Point
4.00 Welooof
4.30 Corvair
5.00 Banta Bay

GIMCRACK

- 2.30 Evaporust
3.00 RENARDEAU (nap)
3.30 Pitcher's Point
4.00 Al Daiha
4.30 Desert Safari (nb)
5.00 Mr Fox

4.00 —BOMBARDIER 'MARCH TO YOUR OWN DRUM' HANDICAP (6) £5,593 added (£2,782) 1m 1yds (11)

- 401 (10) 7762-26 WELCOF 27 (C&D2) J Butler 6-9-7
- 402 (8) 174036- RUN AFTER GENESIS 65 (P) B Johnson 4-9-7
- 403 (11) 03472-2 AL DAIHA 54 (H) Ed Walker 4-9-6
- 404 (7) 476L-15 TANQUEEB 27 J Williams 4-9-6
- 405 (6) 97925-1 THE WARRIOR 18 (C&D2) L Carter 8-9-4
- 406 (2) 9116-53 PURPLE PADDY 18 (D3) J Fox 5-9-1
- 407 (9) 8205-16 MY LAW 19 M Appleby 4-8-12
- 408 (4) 2981-05 ODDS ON OLI 16 (T) (D2) R Fahey 5-8-11
- 409 (5) 0059-12 MISTY 40 (V) R Beckett 4-8-11
- 410 (3) 187-641 RIVAS ROB ROY 8 (B) (C) J Gallagher 5-8-10
- 411 (1) 34356-3 ACCOMPLICE 13 (C&D2) M Blanshard 6-8-10

PROBABLE SP: 3 Rivas Rob Roy, 9-2 Al Daiha, 6 The Warrior, 7 Purple Paddy, 8 Misty, 10 Tanqueeb, Welooof, Run After Genesis, 14 Accomplish, 16 Odds On Oli.

FAVOURITES: ———— 0 3 1 1 (W 9-7). AGES: ———— 11 5 7 6

2019: Toriano 6 9 10 (D Alberca-Gavilan) 6-4 Fav N Littmoden drawn (6) 4 ran.

4.30 —LADBROKES HOME OF THE ODDS BOOST HANDICAP (3) (3-Y-0) £11,500 added (£7,246) 6f 1yds (7)

- 501 (6) 51-111 WILL TO WIN 25 (C&D2D2) S Cristford 9-9
- 502 (7) 1132-3 DESERT SAFARI 14 (D2) M Johnston 9-7
- 503 (5) 5113L-3 HAMISH MACBETH 8 (D2) H Palmer 9-3
- 504 (2) 221-1 CORVAIR 44 (C) S Cristford 9-1
- 505 (1) 811 LION TOWER 28 (D2) M Johnston 8-7
- 506 (4) 1-4 HURCLE 27 R Fahey 8-7
- 507 (3) 4331-71 TRIPLE SPEAR 34 M Appleby 8-5

PROBABLE SP: 11-4 Corvair, 3 Will To Win, 4 Lion Tower, 11-2 Hamish Macbeth, 8 Desert Safari, 10 Triple Spear, 12 Hurcle.

FAVOURITES: ———— 1 2 (W 9-0).

2019: Champagne Mondays 3 8 7 (Philip Prince) 11-10 S Dixon drawn (2) 2 ran.

5.00 —HEED YOUR HUNCH AT BETWAY HANDICAP (6) £5,593 added (£2,782) 1m 7f 169yds (14)

- 601 (10) 674L8-5 FINAL CHOICE 51 (P) (D) Adam West 7-9-7
- 602 (4) 3086-63 HERON 19 B Johnson 6-9-6
- 603 (7) 71411-9 STYNES 29 (T) G McPherson 10-9-2
- 604 (2) 5781-39 UNCLAE BERNIE 37 (P) (C&D) Sarah Hollinshead 10-9-1
- 605 (1) L025-4L EZZRAH 40 M Atwater 4-9-1
- 606 (5) 43144-4 BANTA B

SKY BEATING BBC IN TUG-OF-WAR FOR FLINTOFF

THE BBC are battling Sky Sports to secure Andrew Flintoff as the face of their Hundred television coverage. The former England all-rounder has largely kept his distance from cricket since his retirement 10 years ago, resisting many offers to join the massed ranks of ex-England players in the commentary box. Flintoff has instead focused on building a new career in entertainment, starring in shows such as *Top Gear* and *A League of Their Own*, but with the controversial Hundred competition to be aimed at a younger audience, his services are more in demand than ever this summer. The BBC and Sky are both understood to have made a pitch, with the

EXCLUSIVE
By **MATT HUGHES**
Chief Sports Reporter

satellite network leading the race because they have the rights to more matches and an established, award-winning cricket broadcast team. *Sportsworld* columnists Nasser Hussain and David Lloyd will lead Sky's coverage, but they are also looking for new faces. The BBC will televise live cricket for the first time in 21 years this summer, having also won the rights to two England Twenty20 games, but with just 10 Hundred matches in their portfolio, they are understood to be struggling to fill

their team. Radio 1 DJ Greg James is believed to have turned down an approach, with former England cricketer and Sky pundit Isa Guha their only confirmed signing to date. The ECB confirmed yesterday that the Hundred's £600,000 prize pot will be split equally between the men's and women's competitions, despite the fact the women will play fewer matches. It is an indication of the governing body's commitment to levelling up the men's and women's games. 'This is a great announcement for women's sport,' said England captain Heather Knight. 'Women's professional cricket is on an exciting journey and, while there is still a way to go to realise

gender parity, this is a significant step in the right direction.' Meanwhile, Natalie Sciver has criticised the ICC's failure to provide a reserve day for tomorrow's Twenty20 World Cup semi-finals as rain looks set to scupper England's attempt to become double world champions. India v England and South Africa v Australia at the Sydney Cricket Ground are under threat. If no result is possible, the winners of Group A and B will go through to Sunday's final at the MCG — sending England and hosts Australia tumbling out. 'In Australia you don't expect it to rain, but it is towards the end of the summer so you have to be prepared,' said Sciver.

SHAFALI VERMA
BECAME India's youngest T20 player at 15. Now 16, she has this World Cup's best strike rate, of 161
GETTY IMAGES

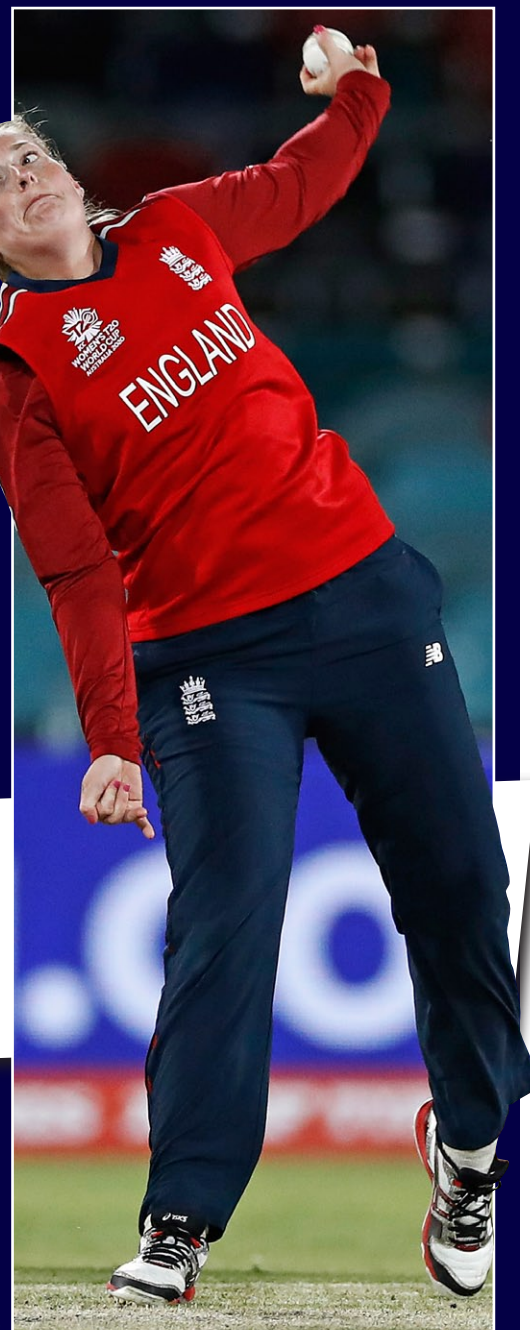
WORLD'S BEST BATTER VS WORLD'S BEST BOWLER

I'M BACKING ENGLAND TO COME OUT ON TOP IF RAIN STAYS AWAY!

NASSER HUSSAIN'S VERDICT



SOPHIE ECCLESTONE
THE spinner, 20, has 50 wickets in 34 internationals. Took 3/7 against West Indies to seal semi spot
GETTY IMAGES



THE FIRST thing England's women should do ahead of tomorrow's Twenty20 World Cup semi-final against India is get their shoes on and do whatever the opposite is of a rain dance.

Yesterday's wash-out here between South Africa and West Indies was a big result because it means the South Africans top Group B ahead of an England side who will now be eliminated if bad weather gets in the way of their semi-final in Sydney tomorrow — because India have a superior group record.

There is no reserve day for the semi-finals. So if no play is possible — and a 10-over game is the minimum permitted in knockouts — the two group winners go through and England

will pay the price for their slow start to the tournament.

England do not often lose to South Africa but that opening defeat — when they were having a poor run of form and had missed out on the final of the tri-series with Australia and India — could prove very costly.

They can only hope it does not come to that because, since then, England have been excellent, with Nat Sciver and Heather Knight outstanding. They bat particularly well together, rotating the strike and running hard — and are both in superb nick. Knight has had a new lease of life out here after the disappointment of last summer's Ashes.

I hope England stick to the make-up of the side they fielded in their last group game against West Indies, when they brought in an extra bowler, Mady Villiers, and left out their extra batter Lauren Winfield. There's nothing

wrong in both Tammy Beaumont and Winfield playing, but having them at six and seven — and they have been as low as seven and eight when Katherine Brunt has been promoted in the line-up — is a waste because they can only face a handful of deliveries there, whereas an extra bowler can have four overs if required.

It made more sense to promote Beaumont to opener, even though she didn't come off in the last game, and move Amy Jones to the middle order, where she looked far more fluent against West Indies.

England will now play in the first semi-final and that may suit them because the groundsman could leave a bit of moisture in the SCG pitch to stop it deteriorating too quickly with two games being played on the same surface in the same day.

If that pitch is slow and low, it will suit India, particularly

Poonam Yadav, who bowls lobs with lots of variation that are difficult to pick and get away. England need to go right back in their crease to play her rather than charge at the ball.

And India are very strong at the top of the order, where 16-year-old Shafali Verma — whose performance in this tournament have lifted her to No 1 in the T20 world batting rankings — shows no fear and tees off from the start.

She bats a bit like Virender Sehwag did and is the biggest reason India have the best record in the tournament in the power-play. Anya Shrubsole swinging it in to Verma may cramp

her up and be the best option. But England's spinners have been excellent, too, particularly Sophie Ecclestone. She is now the top-ranked T20 bowler, replacing Australia's Megan Schutt — who had been No 1 since March 2018. Ecclestone has taken eight wickets here, second only to Yadav.

England will prefer to play India now even though the other group runners-up, Australia, will be without the injured Ellyse Perry for the rest of the World Cup.

If there is a bit of grass on the SCG pitch, my gut feeling is England will win, but if it's slow and low, watch out for India — and keep fingers firmly crossed the rain stays away!



T20 WORLD CUP SEMI-FINAL
INDIA v ENGLAND - TOMORROW, 4am
LIVE ON SKY SPORTS and 5 LIVE SPORTS EXTRA



EXCLUSIVE
INTERVIEWby Will
Kelleher

LIAM WILLIAMS is here to explain the human side to the Saracens salary cap saga.

The Wales and Lions full-back is the highest profile player to leave the disgraced Premiership club, after Saracens were hammered by a £5.36million fine and 105-point deduction for breaking financial rules.

It was confirmed last week that Williams will re-join the Scarlets after securing early release from the relegated English and European champions.

Williams, 28, has not played this season after damaging ankle ligaments in the week of the World Cup semi-final. But he is fit for Wales's trip to Twickenham in the Six Nations this Saturday.

Now Williams has opened up to *Sportsmail* about a horrible four months in which he was in the eye of a storm. 'It was a tough time

'It's irrelevant to me. I still have my trophies'

and quite abrupt how it all ended,' he says. 'Two weeks before the Six Nations, I had to put my house on the market and find a new one here in Wales quickly.

'That was the worst part. I called my girlfriend Sophie as soon as I had to make the decision, and she was upset.

'She was a bit scared about moving house. I said, "Leave it to me". We thought we had six months left in London to spend time with our friends before the end of the season. That was the hardest part.'

Williams had intended to go back to Wales this summer, regardless of Saracens' relegation. 'My early move had nothing to do with the issues at Saracens. It was to do with the injury.

'I was going to be signed for a year but only play a few games, so I said, "I'm happy to go back", and home being home, it was easier. I'm not getting any

IT WAS HORRIBLE TO BE STUCK IN SARRIES STORM

Liam Williams on sudden end to his stint with shamed club ...and the personal toll it took

WILLIAMS THE WELSH WONDER

AGE 28 POSITIONS WING, FULL BACK HEIGHT 6ft 2in WEIGHT 13st 5lb

TEAM GAMES TRIES
 SCARLETS 106 29
 2011-17

SARACENS 31 21
 2017-20

WALES 62 14
 2012-present

B&I LIONS 3 0
 2017

■ 2017 Pro12
 ■ 2018 Premiership
 ■ 2019 Premiership
 ■ 2019 European Champions Cup
 ■ 2019 Six Nations (Grand Slam)

CAREER
HONOURS

136 DAYS since Williams' last appearance, in the World Cup quarter-final win over France in Oita on October 20. His ankle ligament injury ruled him out of the 19-16 semi-final defeat by eventual winners South Africa.

90.5 THE WELSHMAN won 19 of his 21 Premiership games, a win rate of 90.5 per cent. It is the third highest rate in history for players with at least 10 appearances in the competition, behind only Leicester's Jono Stuart (93.8) and Sarries' own Gregg Botterman (92.9).

ENGLAND v WALES
3 DAYS TO GO

younger, so it was time to come home, maybe start a family and pass knowledge on to the younger guys. Hopefully Scarlets can go and win the Challenge Cup.

'In the Six Nations, I wouldn't have been with Sarries anyway. There would have been a handful of games left afterwards, so I understand their reasoning for letting me go back to Wales.'

Williams has now moved into his new home and is a Scarlet again. His return is a huge boost to Welsh rugby. He — like the rest of the Sarries players — is not at fault for the murky financial

dealings at the club. And Williams does not feel bitter.

Nor does he believe his three trophy wins in north London are tainted. 'I don't know what was going on behind the scenes, or how and how much people were getting paid,' he says.

'It's totally irrelevant to me. I still have my trophies, we still won the league twice and the Champions Cup.

'It was amazing — the ethos, what they stand for. I became a better player, playing week-in week-out with their Lions and other guys at Saracens. The

European Cup win against Leinster was the best. I had never won that.

'I did what I set out to do, and had a great two and a half years living in London. I made some life-long friends and we'll always keep in touch whether it's via WhatsApp, FaceTime or playing them on *Call of Duty* online.

'I speak to the boys all the time. Saracens is not a great place to be at the moment, but it is what it is. They're going down to the Championship and I'm sure they have a good enough squad to get them back up.' Amid all the

domestic dramas, Williams has been on the long road to recovery from injury.

Days before Wales's semi-final defeat by South Africa at the World Cup, he was tackled by Ryan Elias and James Davies in training. The collision snapped two of Williams's ankle ligaments and tore another.

'It was s***, but life goes on,' he says of missing the semi-final in Japan, which he watched on crutches before flying home in October for surgery.

'I'm not a very good watcher. At training I've been running on my

If you beat England, it's an easier trip to the Co-op

SAM WARBURTON may have seen the Wales-England rivalry become friendlier in recent years, but he has called on his players to make themselves heroes at Twickenham on Saturday.

The Lions captain on two tours, who also led Wales for six years as he won 74 caps, is now part of head coach Wayne Pivac's back-room team.

And Warburton is no stranger to the white-hot atmosphere of the cross-border clash. Having

By WILL KELLEHER
in Cardiff

won twice at Twickenham, in 2012 and at the 2015 World Cup, Warburton wants his squad to follow his example.

'There are great memories going to Twickenham and hopefully we can replicate them,' he said.

'If the boys do get a win, it will be one of the highlights of their careers. It's a fantastic place to go. I always got on really well

with the England boys on the Lions tour. I know that's not what Welsh fans want to hear — they want to hear of a huge rivalry. But I really liked the English lads.

'Rather than the personal rivalries, the players get energised over the history of the game and the occasion.

'That does mean a lot. To

represent Wales at Twickenham and get a win down there is massive and you know how much it means to the country.

'It's a much easier trip to the Co-op to get your milk because everyone is so happy,' added Warburton (left).

'As players we all know each other, so the personal

rivalry has gone, but the national rivalry is still there.

'I remember in 2012 when we won, Ryan Jones told me, Dan Lydiate and Taulupe Faletau to enjoy it because away wins at Twickenham are rare.

'I thought, "Ah, don't worry, we'll come back and do this again". But you learn the hard way that it's a tough place to go. 'I've always thought it was my favourite place to play outside our own stadium.

'People who say Twickenham





21

LIAM WILLIAMS scored 21 tries in 31 games for Saracens after moving from Scarlets in 2017, including a try on his last appearance for the club in the Premiership final victory over Exeter last June.

Good to be back: Williams in training with Wales
HUW EVANS

tod for the past few weeks, which is tough.'

Looking at Welsh rugby's new era from the stands, he has seen what head coach Wayne Pivac is trying to implement — having been coached by the New Zealander at the Scarlets — and believes it will take time for it all to gel. 'We are still learning how the coaches coach, and they are learning how we operate,' he explains.

At Twickenham, Williams will face his former Saracens teammates Jamie George, Maro Itoje, Owen Farrell, Elliot Daly,

George Kruis and Ben Earl. He cannot wait.

'I used to go up to Penlan Rugby Club near Swansea with my dad and brother to watch games and there was a different feeling for the England-Wales game,' he says.

'It's the biggest one for us here in Wales, isn't it? The boys are excited. Everybody is on edge.'

That is where Williams likes it; out of the frying pan of salary cap politics and into the fire of the Six Nations.

'It's lovely to be back,' he says. 'This is what I get paid to do!'

From Back Page

they could have told him to alter his route had the issue been flagged up in advance. Alternative flight routes via America were available, but the issue was not picked up until hours before the squad had gathered at Pennyhill Park.

If the matter had not been raised and Vunipola had come into camp, the entire squad would now have been at risk.

England were reluctant to divulge any specifics on Vunipola's absence yesterday, with forwards coach Matt Proudfoot initially claiming he was absent because of a 'medical issue'. When pressed on the matter, he insisted: 'I can guarantee you it is not coronavirus.'

But eventually the RFU confirmed Vunipola's absence was for precautionary isolation.

An RFU spokeswoman said: 'Mako Vunipola is not in the camp on medical grounds. He is not sick, but it is a precaution.'

The virus has already wreaked havoc on the tournament, with Ireland's game against Italy in Dublin cancelled because of fears about mass gatherings. However,

He could have put everyone at risk

Vunipola's absence is softened by the form of fellow props Joe Marler and Ellis Genge. Marler has built a reputation as England's strongest scrummager, while Genge is a fine impact player.

'We were excited to have Mako back, but we have great depth in our looseheads and they have been playing well,' said Proudfoot.

Marler and Genge were last night retained in a 27-man squad, which also included Mark Wilson, the versatile back-rower. Wilson was sidelined by injury after the World Cup but could make his comeback after returning to action for Sale, where he is spending the season on loan from Newcastle.

Speedster Anthony Watson is also in the squad and could make his first England appearance since the World Cup final.



Vunipola: flew via Hong Kong

Mako mess is just embarrassing

COMMENT

By **SIR CLIVE WOODWARD**

how Mako was allowed to come back via Hong Kong, given the need for self-isolation for anybody returning from that part of the world.

Who, if anybody, from the England set-up was in touch with Mako during his trip back home to Tonga? I assume somebody was keeping him in the loop on developments and discovering whether he would be available for the Wales match.

Given that he rushed out there over a personal issue, surely somebody within the England set-up should have sorted out the logistics for him and, as soon as the coronavirus situation escalated, come up with a route back via Auckland and the USA or perhaps even South America?

In pure playing terms, this isn't a massive setback. What with injuries as well, England have not seen a huge amount of Mako recently and in Ellis Genge and Joe Marler they have two great replacements.

As I have argued elsewhere, this might be the time for Genge to assume a starting role above a fit and healthy Mako.

But none of this sends out a great message regarding England being on top of things.

Think back to the World Cup final when they arrived 35 minutes late and Owen Farrell had to rush out for the coin toss not really knowing which end was which when asked what he wanted to do. Those are just a couple of the more obvious examples of how the detail and distractions played a major role in England's non-performance.

Attention to detail is everything in sport at this level. To be world-class on the field of play you have to be world-class off the field of play. Frankly, this is just embarrassing.

Chess king Tuilagi is out to check the Welsh

By **NIK SIMON**

Tuilagi added: 'Pretty much the same! I just want to get the ball in my hands as early as possible; try to get some momentum. With Eddie Jones, you've got to go from the start.'

Tuilagi could be reunited in the centre with Henry Slade for the first time since the World Cup.

Both players have been hit by injuries but Jones now has the option to rejig his midfield for the Twickenham clash.

'I love having Henry back in the team,' said Tuilagi. 'I just give him the ball and try to follow him around because he's an all-round player — run, kick, pass.'

Slade added: 'I think the reason it works so well is because we have different strengths and weaknesses that complement each other nicely. He gets us over the gain line really well, but we can also use him as a decoy.'

'We get on pretty well off the pitch, too — but he kills me at chess!'



Opening gambit: Tuilagi likes to attack from the off GETTY IMAGES

to buy your milk!

has a bad atmosphere have not been there.

'It's brilliant, particularly when the Welsh fans go down and it becomes a competition of who can be the loudest.'

Warburton delivered positive injury updates on Dan Biggar, George North, Josh Navidi and Liam Williams, who are all fit. Biggar went off early for Northampton against Saracens on Saturday having hyper-extended a knee, but Wales will give him every

chance to start the big match at Twickenham. 'At this stage, we're confident,' said Warburton.

'They would wait for a player like Dan. It puts our team selection on hold for a while because we have to wait to see how he turns up. He's ticking all the boxes.'

After a head-knock against France, North is expected to play, as are Williams and flanker Navidi, who has had hamstring trouble.

London Marathon under threat as virus spreads

LONDON MARATHON bosses are holding crisis talks amid growing fears that next month's race will be cancelled because of coronavirus.

The number diagnosed with the virus in the UK increased to 51 yesterday — and Health Secretary Matt Hancock has refused to rule out shelving the marathon. As one of the largest sporting events in the world, involving around 45,000 runners and up to a million spectators on the capital's streets, the outbreak risks associated with the race on April 26 are being discussed by organisers. While no timeframe has been given on a final decision, they cited advice from the government that all mass events

CORONAVIRUS CHAOS

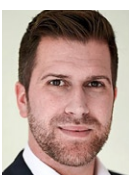
By RIATH AL-SAMARRAI and JONATHAN McEVROY

are currently being instructed to proceed as normal. A statement to *Sportsmail* from Hugh Brasher, the London Marathon event director, read: 'We are monitoring closely the developments relating to the spread of COVID-19 and noting the updates and advice given by the UK Government, World Health Organisation and UK public bodies.' It emerged yesterday that this summer's Tokyo Olympics could also be

postponed in response to the global crisis. In the first official recognition that the Games may be moved from their July 24-August 9 slot, Japanese Olympics minister Seiko Hashimoto said his country's contract with the International Olympic Committee meant they had the whole of 2020 in which to stage them. Hashimoto said: 'This could be taken to mean the Games being postponed until later this year.' The IOC executive board met in Lausanne yesterday and moved to ease concerns, despite the spread of coronavirus from China to more than 60 countries at a cost of more than 3,000 lives so far. An IOC statement read: 'The IOC encourages all athletes

to continue to prepare for the Olympic Games.' Meanwhile in Formula One, Italy-based Ferrari fans will be kept out of Bahrain and Vietnam for races there as a result of coronavirus-based travelling restrictions imposed yesterday. However, F1 bosses remain adamant those two races will go ahead and are working with authorities in both countries to expedite team personnel — rather than supporters — through the airports on arrival. As it stands, only the Chinese Grand Prix — scheduled for April 19 — has been postponed. The first race in Melbourne is set to go ahead as planned a week on Sunday.

CYCLING



EXCLUSIVE
by DAVID
COVERDALE

THE former Great Britain rider now masterminding Denmark's team says it is 'laughable' for British Cycling to blame a brain drain for their decline.

Dan Bigham has hit back after British Cycling performance director Stephen Park claimed one of the reasons his squad are no longer dominant is because Brits who 'acquired knowledge' on the national programme have taken that expertise to other countries.

Bigham, who rode at the 2018 Track Cycling World Championships and is now a performance engineer for Denmark, suggests British Cycling are struggling because of 'complacency' and 'flaws in their system'.

And he revealed that Park asked him to share his secrets 12 months ago — without offering to pay for the Derby-based rider's intellectual property (IP).

GB won only four medals at last week's Track Cycling World Championships, which led to Park warning we should 'temper our expectations' ahead of this summer's Olympics in Tokyo.

He added of GB's rivals: 'A lot of them have got Brits involved, who have acquired knowledge from their time at British Cycling and gone on to trade that effectively.'

Bigham was one of the brains behind the world record Denmark set last week in the men's team pursuit, an event GB have won at the last three Olympics.

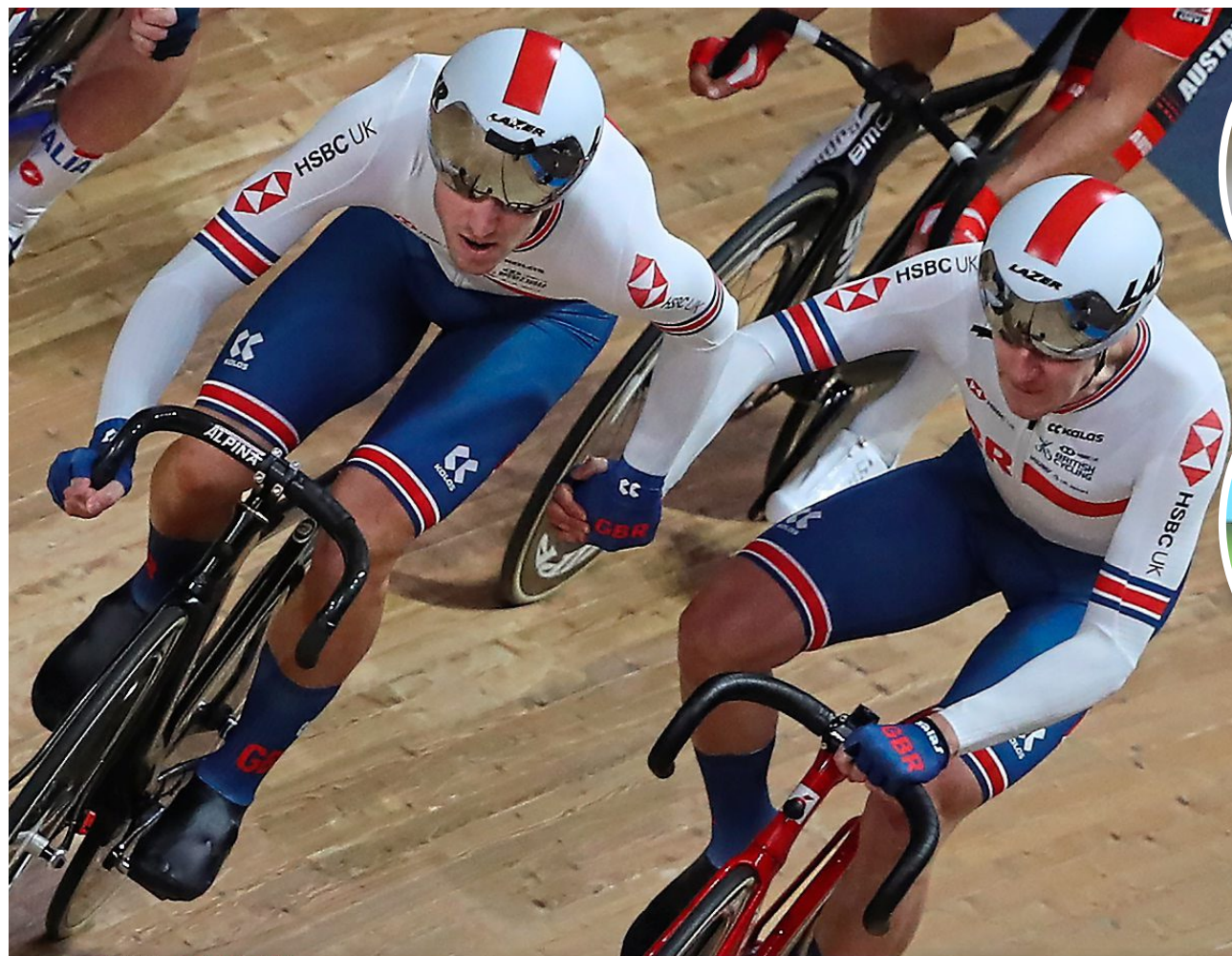
Responding to Park's comments, he told *Sportsmail*: 'It's laughable. I think they are looking in the wrong place.'

'It's funny for them to be claiming that suddenly their IP going elsewhere is why they are not performing. I think there are other things at play.'

'Their downfall is not because of the work that we are doing, it's because of flaws in their system that they need to address. But it's not in my interest to point out a million different things that I think they could do differently or better — my job is to make sure we beat them.'

The medal table in Berlin was topped by the Netherlands, who beat GB to gold in the men's team sprint and were coached by Brit Mehdi Kordi. He worked previously with Britain's para-cycling squad.

Simon Jones is Cycling Australia's performance director, having been British Cycling's head coach until 2007, and 2008 British



No laughing matter: Bigham (above) says Park (top) is 'looking in the wrong place' to explain GB's decline REX/PA

GB CYCLING'S EXCUSES ARE LAUGHABLE

Former Britain star — now with rivals Denmark — blames his old team's slump on complacency

Olympic silver medallist Ross Edgar is Australia's sprint coach.

GB have the biggest cycling budget of any Olympic nation and topped the medal table in the sport at the last three Games. Yet Bigham said: 'They have probably been a bit complacent and not tried new things.'

'Having had more in hand, maybe they have not pressed so

hard on physiology because they know they will find 10-15 per cent improvement on technology.'

'Maybe they've rested on their laurels and now they are on the back foot and it's probably too little, too late.'

'It's not my place to say where I think they are spending money wrong, but I've heard some funny stories about how they've spent

it. If they don't do well in Tokyo, they are going to have some questions to answer.'

Bigham has a Masters in engineering and was an aerodynamicist for Mercedes in Formula One before focusing on cycling. He says he was deliberately 'left in the dark' about British Cycling's data during his time riding with the team in 2018.

'When I was there trialling, I never had any access to their IP,' he said. 'They were quite vocal about why, given that my job outside of riding is effectively selling the knowledge that I own to cycling teams. So I've definitely not stolen anything.'

Bigham has previously revealed frustrations at British Cycling for ignoring performances of British riders on his trade team, who have regularly beaten the national team at World Cup events.

That is why he met Park last year and British Cycling's then head of performance support Paul Barratt, who has since joined Team Ineos. Bigham added: 'It was a weird meeting to say the least. The intention was around how the teams can crossover and they kind of said they would be interested in putting something in place.'

'But they said they would also like me to do a whole once-over of how they do things because they said they develop blind spots.'

● TEAM INEOS sporting director Nicolas Portal has died at the age of 40. The former professional cyclist was a part of Chris Froome's four Tour de France wins from 2013 to 2017.

A statement from Ineos — formerly Team Sky — said the Frenchman died at home in Andorra yesterday. Froome said on Twitter: 'My thoughts are with Nico's wife and children tonight. He was the kindest, happiest guy I knew and always lived life to the fullest. Rest In Peace Nico.'



Southgate tells Kane and Rashford they must prove fitness to feature at Euros



MATT HUGHES

Chief Sports Reporter in Amsterdam

GARETH Southgate last night warned Harry Kane and Marcus Rashford that they must prove their fitness by playing for their clubs before the end of the season in order to ensure they have pivotal roles for England at this summer's European Championship.

The England boss was speaking at the UEFA Nations League draw in Amsterdam, where his side were drawn with Belgium, Denmark and Iceland for the second edition of the new tournament, which will start in September. But preparing for Euro 2020 is his immediate priority.

The hamstring and back injuries sustained by Kane and Rashford respectively in January have presented Southgate with a major headache, particularly given Jamie Vardy remains reluctant to make himself available for selection, but both should be fit before the end of the season.

Southgate emphasised that match fitness is just as important for both players as completing their rehabilitation, however, which will place the onus on Jose Mourinho and Ole Gunnar Solskjaer to ensure they are given significant game-time as both Tottenham and Manchester United chase Champions League qualification.

'All I know is that both players will give themselves the best possible chance of being fit and available before the end of the season, not only for us but also for their clubs,' Southgate said.

'They have to get back playing club football. Their clubs all have important matches. Then we are hoping both come through with no issues ahead of the summer for us.'

Southgate was more supportive of under-fire goalkeeper Jordan



England's missing men: Kane (left) and Rashford
GETTY IMAGES

NATIONS LEAGUE: HOW IT ALL WORKS...

GROUP 1

HOLLAND

ITALY

BOSNIA-HERZ

POLAND

GROUP 3

PORTUGAL

FRANCE

SWEDEN

CROATIA

GROUP 2

ENGLAND

BELGIUM

DENMARK

ICELAND

GROUP 4

SWITZERLAND

SPAIN

UKRAINE

GERMANY

ENGLAND'S RECORD

W15 D5 L3

W12 D4 L3

D1 W1 L1

■ **TEAMS** play each other home and away in September, October and November.

■ **THE** four League A group winners qualify for the Nations League Finals in June 2021. Bottom sides are relegated to League B.

■ **THE** two highest-ranked group winners who do not qualify directly for the 2022 World Cup are handed the safety net of a play-off place for Qatar.

■ **ALL** the other Home Nations are in League B, with Wales and the Republic of Ireland drawn together alongside Bulgaria and Finland. Scotland face the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Israel, while Northern Ireland face Austria, Norway and Romania.

with, but he made outstanding saves at the end of the game. That is the life of a goalkeeper.'

Southgate did his best to appear unconcerned about the potential impact of the coronavirus, which has led to doubts over whether a friendly against Italy at Wembley will take place as planned on March 27 following the rapid spread of the virus near Milan.

Denmark are due at Villa Park four days later and their players will soon be familiar to Southgate given the draw for League A of the Nations League. England will play the Danes, Belgium and Iceland home and away next autumn, with the group winners proceeding to the finals in the summer of 2021, and the bottom team relegated to League B.

Southgate said of coronavirus: 'The reality is we don't know, it is an ever-changing picture for everybody, in every walk of life. We're updated all the time by government, with the current advice that it is not looking to be an issue, but none of us know what the next few weeks will hold.'

Pickford, who made his seventh major error of the season last Sunday when allowing a long-range shot from Bruno Fernandes to fly through his hands in Everton's 1-1 draw with Manchester United.

The 25-year-old has invariably performed well for England, however, and remains Southgate's first-choice goalkeeper despite

his indifferent Premier League form with the manager offering unqualified backing.

'Jordan's performances for us, throughout, have been outstanding,' Southgate said.

'I think he has been a key part of some big, big results that we have had. I think that is clear to everybody, but in goal you are always under the spotlight. If you're the

England goalkeeper that is the reality of the job so I don't think he will be shying away from that. All the time I have known him he has been a very resilient character.

'He has a very experienced manager at Everton now to help with it, so I am expecting him to bounce back. The weekend goal is one he would want to do better

Daly desperate to rain on USA's World Cup parade

ENGLAND defender Rachel Daly says she is out for revenge on the USA for rubbing last summer's World Cup victory in her face.

The 28-year-old, who plays for Houston Dash in the National Women's Soccer League (NWSL), says the fanfare around the four-time world champions made it more difficult to get over the Lionesses missing out on their first World Cup final. Ahead of facing England's old foes in their SheBelieves Cup opener here tomorrow night,

SHEBELIEVES CUP

CLAIRE BLOOMFIELD
in Orlando

Daly said: 'There were billboards everywhere. Walking into the airport, the first thing I see is, "Welcome home USA, World Cup champions", and then they do parades, and it's kind of in your face.'

'You can avoid it when you go

home (to England). It might be in the newspapers, but for me, it was literally everywhere. It's quite hard.'

Many of the USA squad became household names after they followed up their 2-1 semi-final defeat of England by beating Holland 2-0 to win the trophy.

And Daly (right) says that attracted fans in their droves to Dash's home fixtures, though the Harrogate-born player admits she

couldn't help but feel envious that she wasn't the main attraction.

'When Seattle came to town, we would get more fans because Megan Rapinoe was playing,' she said.

'That was frustrating because more people would show up just for her and I'm thinking, "I wish they were coming for me because we had won the World Cup". That was tough.'

According to US



WATCHING BRIEF...



USA v ENGLAND



Kick-off: Tomorrow, midnight (UK time) at Exploria Stadium, Orlando.
TV: **LIVE** on BBC Two from 11.40pm.

Soccer, more than 12,000 tickets have been sold for the opening double-header at Exploria Stadium that sees Spain take on Japan in an earlier kick-off before England face the hosts.

Pep: Sky's the limit for Foden

From Back Page

police and fans. UEFA made an exception when allowing City to stage a rearranged game with West Ham on a Champions League night last month, as the reason for the original postponement — the impact of Storm Ciara — was deemed to be a *force majeure* which they class as an exceptional event.

In 2013, Premier League clubs were docked £1.12million of UEFA television revenue as punishment for scheduling clashes over the previous two seasons.

But they have since signed a memorandum of understanding, that was renewed in 2017, pledging it would not happen again.

However, UEFA have allowed City and the Premier League to bend the rules on this occasion as well even though the date of the Carabao Cup final was known for over a year and the League have had plenty of time to come up with an alternative date.

City are already involved in a bitter dispute with UEFA over Financial Fair Play regulations, with the club taking their appeal against a two-year Champions League ban to the Court of Arbitration for Sport.

Arsenal were understood to be reluctant to play next week due to the short notice for travelling fans. But they are willing to go along with City's request only due to the congested fixture schedule.

If Guardiola's side can defend their 2-1 first-leg lead against Real Madrid and continue to make progress in the Champions League, they would have no free midweeks for the rest of the season.

Meanwhile, the City manager claimed yesterday the sky is the limit for midfielder Phil Foden after his dazzling Wembley display, praising the youngster's exemplary attitude. Foden was man of the match as City beat Aston Villa on Sunday — his first start for over a month.

The midfielder (above) has not

complained about a lack of game time and Guardiola indicated that approach is bearing fruit.

'I want the best for him,' said Guardiola. 'I'm delighted about his performance and his behaviour in the good and bad moments. He works and it pays off. It's about improving.'

'With this behaviour, he can reach whatever he wants. Every time we decide to let him play, he plays at a high level.'

Leroy Sane is not being considered for tonight's fifth-round FA Cup tie at Sheffield Wednesday, with Guardiola more likely to bring him back into the team in the Premier League.

Second-placed City are 22 points behind Liverpool in the league, which means the FA Cup and Champions League have grown in importance for the club.

Sane, who has been out for seven months with knee ligament damage, played for the Under 23s last Friday but Guardiola said: 'Leroy is not ready. Sheffield Wednesday is an important game. Maybe it will be easier to play in the league, where we don't have a chance to win it, than these cup games that we need to be focused to get through.'

Guardiola has told Joao Cancelo, the £60m signing from Juventus, that he is in control of his destiny. Cancelo has made only 16 starts and was left out of Sunday's 22-man squad. Guardiola said: 'We are here to help him. I can suggest things but the players have to decide the rest. If they follow me, it's not a problem. If they don't follow me, they have a problem — their problem, not my problem.'



**SHEFF WED
v MAN CITY**



Kick-off: 7.45pm, Hillsborough.
TV: **LIVE** on BBC One.
Referee: Michael Oliver.



No hurry: Mourinho is easing Parrott into first team REX

By ADRIAN KAJUMBA

JOSE MOURINHO has urged teenager Troy Parrott to follow the Scott McTominay route to becoming a Premier League regular. The Tottenham manager has given Parrott the same pep talk he gave McTominay before blooding the Scot at Manchester United, stressing to him that he is the 'privileged one' to be exposed to the first team. Mourinho is encouraged by what he has seen of late, not least by the 18-year-old's scoring performance for the Under 23s against Wolves on Monday, 24 hours after a Premier League appearance against the same opponents. Mourinho, who will have Parrott on the bench as his team take on Norwich in the FA Cup tonight, said: 'I told

Mourinho tells Parrott he's the 'privileged one'

him before the Wolves game, "Every time you play with the kids of your age, you have to show your colleagues why you are the privileged one". 'I was not worried about scoring goals or not scoring goals. I was worried about attitude. What he can do. The way the other kids look at him. He has to go there and show his attitude, professionalism and how privileged he is. 'Every time he was playing with the kids, it was with the mentality of "I shouldn't be here" and "I am too good to



**TOTTENHAM
v NORWICH**



Kick-off: 7.45pm, Tottenham Hotspur Stadium.
TV: **LIVE** on BBC iPlayer.
Referee: Paul Tierney.

be here". I had the same words with Scott McTominay. The moment we started changing that, lots of things started changing for him.' Meanwhile, Spurs have confirmed Victor Wanyama will join Major League Soccer side Montreal Impact on a free transfer.

Clubs beef up global scouting Traore surgery fear

PREMIER LEAGUE clubs have strengthened their global scouting teams as they prepare to take advantage of relaxed post-Brexit regulations on homegrown players. *Sportsmail* exclusively revealed yesterday that top-flight clubs are close to striking a deal with the FA to ease work permit regulations for overseas players. If those plans are rubberstamped by the FA and the government, clubs would be permitted to have up to three players in their squads

EXCLUSIVE By SAMI MOKBEL

who would not require work permits. And Premier League clubs are preparing for this new landscape by investing heavily in their global scouting networks, so they can strike when the time comes. They are focusing on laying down stronger roots in South America, Africa and Asia. Tottenham, Manchester United and Newcastle are among the clubs to have upped their South

American representation already. The focus will largely be on overseas players aged 18 and over due to new rules forbidding the signing of players any younger than that. But clubs will continue to monitor those under 18 amid concerns the changes will put them at a significant disadvantage to their European rivals. One source indicated clubs are considering partnerships with foreign clubs which could allow them to sign their best talents once they turn 18.

WOLVES star Adama Traore may need surgery after dislocating his left shoulder for the third time this season.

The winger picked up the injury in a tussle with Tottenham defender Japhet Tanganga in Wolves' 3-2 Premier League win on Sunday. He suffered the same problem in the reverse fixture at Molineux in December and also in the draw at Manchester United in January.

Wolves hope Traore, 24, will be available for their home game against Brighton on Saturday and for the rest of the league campaign, as they look to maintain their

By TOM COLLOMOSSE

challenge for the top four and extend their run in the Europa League. They face Olympiacos in the last 16 later this month.

But Wolves manager Nuno Espirito Santo is concerned about the apparent weakness.

Traore is keen to avoid surgery for as long as possible, because he is also desperate to secure a place in the Spain squad for Euro 2020. Traore, who was born in Barcelona, is yet to win a senior cap.

Outstanding form for Wolves this season has made Traore a target for some of

Europe's top clubs, with Barcelona monitoring his situation.

Traore, who came through the Catalan club's ranks before joining Aston Villa in 2015, is high on Barca's wanted list.

● **LEICESTER** recorded a pre-tax loss of £20.2million for the financial year to May 2019, though the results do not include the £80million they received from Manchester United for defender Harry Maguire.

The figures do include the £8.8m compensation paid to Celtic for Brendan Rodgers and his staff last February and reflect investment in a new £100m training ground.

Bruce relishing Cup run as Almiron starts

FREE-scoring Newcastle United are into the quarter-finals of the FA Cup — now there is a statement that requires a double take.

But there you have it, not since 2006 have the Magpies made it to the last eight and they are now just one game away from a first Wembley appearance in 20 years.

They are also the competition's top scorers this season — despite having the lowest goal return in the Premier League.

The caveat to that 11-goal haul, of course, is that they needed two replays against League One opposition to get this far, but what a relief the Cup is proving when offset against their dismal league form.

It would not be Newcastle without a scare and a three-goal lead was shrunk to one in what proved to be a fraught final quarter of an hour.

Not that Steve Bruce cared. He needed this after four league games without a goal. There were also 5,000 expectant away supporters here.

Come the end, progression was achieved at the expense of a West Bromwich side that showed 11 changes and included 39-year-old Gareth Barry.

Bruce believes this can boost their flagging campaign, saying: 'It can be a tonic. Make no mistake, the Premier League is the most important and this can only help. We've had a difficult time.'

'It wouldn't be Newcastle United without a drama and, in the end, we made hard work of it. But for a large period I was delighted and I'm delighted for the supporters.'

'We're a unique club, a 400-mile round trip and to have over 5,000 here is fantastic. This is a great competition, now let's go further.'

Miguel Almiron proved the difference between the sides with two goals to bring his Cup tally to four this season — he has two in 13 months in the league — and Bruce was rewarded for fielding just about his strongest side.

Allan Saint-Maximin was included from the start despite the manager stating on the eve of the game he was a major doubt with hamstring and back issues.

And it was Saint-Maximin who laid on Almiron's opener with a slick through-ball that was gratefully swept into the far corner of the net



CRAIG HOPE at the Hawthorns

WEST BROM	2
Phillips 74 Zohore 90+3	
NEWCASTLE	3
Almiron 33, 45+1 Lazaro 47	

by the Paraguayan. Earlier, Saint-Maximin had hit a post from 35 yards as Newcastle enjoyed much the better of the first half.

The period climaxed with Almiron's second goal in stoppage time as he lashed the ball home from Joelinton's clever back-heel.

It was 3-0 only 75 seconds after the interval when, from Saint-Maximin's cross, goalkeeper Jonathan Bond pushed the ball into the incoming Valentino Lazaro and the Inter loanee bundled in his first goal for the club.

West Brom's Matt Phillips claimed what looked a consolation goal on 74 minutes. But with Almiron and Saint-Maximin substituted, the visitors retreated — repeatedly squandering possession and inviting pressure.

The late home dominance told when substitute Kenneth Zohore scored during stoppage time and still Albion pressed for an equaliser.

Boss Slaven Bilic said: 'I was so pleased with how we reacted late in the game. We just ran out of time.'

It was not to be for West Brom. Perhaps it is meant to be for Newcastle in the Cup this season.

WEST BROMWICH (4-3-3): Bond 5; Furlong 6, O'Shea 5, Bartley 5, Gibbs 5; Harper 5, Barry 5 (Krovinovic 57, 6), Brunt 5.5 (Tulloch 86); Phillips 6, Austin 6 (Zohore 67, 6), Edwards 5. **Subs not used:** Al-Habshi, Townsend, Peltier, Fitzwater. **Scorers:** Phillips 74, Zohore 90+3. **Manager:** Slaven Bilic 5.

NEWCASTLE (4-2-3-1): Darlow 7; Manquillo 6.5, Lascelles 6.5, Schar 6, Rose 6; Bentaleb 6.5, S Longstaff 6.5; Lazaro 7 (Lejeune 90), **ALMIRON** 8 (Shelvey 71, 6); Saint-Maximin 7 (Gayle 80); Joelinton 7. **Subs not used:** Elliot, Yedlin, Ritchie, M Longstaff. **Scorers:** Almiron 33, 45+1, Lazaro 47. **Booked:** Rose, Bentaleb, Darlow. **Manager:** Steve Bruce 7. **Referee:** Anthony Taylor 6.

On a high: Almiron is hoisted after his second

GETTY IMAGES



McGOLDRICK ENDS DROUGHT AND SHARP BAGS WINNER

NOT even Pele or Puskas could stop Chris Wilder's Sheffield United train from rolling on.

Dreams of Europe and now the last eight of the FA Cup. When will Wilder's powers wane?

Here, Reading pushed their visitors beyond 90 minutes. But, at the end of a long, tense tie, United stood tall thanks to one of their shortest stars. Billy Sharp netted an extra-time winner after George Puskas' penalty cancelled out David McGoldrick's first club goal in nearly a year.

Even after Sharp's intervention, Pele came within a whisker of forcing penalties. But, instead, United are in the quarters for the first time since 2014. After only a minute, McGoldrick

READING	1
SHEFF UTD	2

AET; 1-1 at 90 minutes

DANIEL MATTHEWS at the Madejski Stadium

buried a free header from seven yards and, soon, the visitors' unrelenting possession began to suck the life out of the game. But, then, three minutes before half-time, a lifeline for Reading. From a harmless ball into the box, Andy Rinomhota went down under a challenge from George Baldock. It looked a soft call from referee Kevin Friend but Puskas didn't care. He beat Dean Henderson. Game on.

The goal seemed to shock United, who struggled to re-establish a foothold. Instead it was Reading who, despite being 16th in the second tier, were on the front foot. They created little to show for it and, eventually, paid the price. United had to wait until the 105th minute before a chance eventually stuck, with substitute Sharp making no mistake after Freeman's cross reached him at the back post. Not even their famous names could help Reading come back this time. Wilder was delighted with the hard-fought

win. 'The biggest thing is getting through,' said the Blades boss. 'We got the job done and found a way to win. It was a difficult night for us.'

READING (4-5-1): Cabral 6; Ylalom 5.5, Morrison 5.5, Miazga 6, Obita 6; Meite 6.5 (McCleary 105), Rinomhota 6.5 (S Baldock 105), Swift 6.5, Ejaria 6.5 (Pele 98, 6), Olise 6 (Timbe 98, 6); Puskas 6.5. **Subs not used:** Walker, Moore, Blackett. **Scorer:** Puskas 43. **Booked:** Rinomhota. **Manager:** Mark Bowen 6.5. **SHEFFIELD UNITED** (3-5-2): Henderson 6; Basham 6, Egan 6.5, O'Connell 6; G Baldock 5.5, Lundstram 6, Berge 6 (Robinson 99, 6), Freeman 6.5 (Retso 105), Osborn 6.5; McGoldrick 6.5 (**SHARP** 79, 7.5), Mousset 5.5 (McBurnie 61, 6). **Subs not used:** Verrips, Jagielka, Zivkovic. **Scorer:** McGoldrick 2, Sharp 105+1. **Booked:** Retso. **Manager:** Chris Wilder 6. **Referee:** Kevin Friend 5. **Attendance:** 15,129.



LAST NIGHT'S RESULTS

EMIRATES FA CUP FIFTH ROUND

CHELSEA.....(1)	2	LIVERPOOL....(0)	0
William 13			
Barkley 64	40,103		
READING.....(1)	1	SHEFF UTD.....(1)	2
Puskas 43 (pen)		McGoldrick 2	
		Sharp 105+1	
		AET; 1-1 at 90mins	
WEST BROM....(0)	2	NEWCASTLE... (2)	3
Phillips 74		Almiron 33, 45	
Zohore 90+3		Lazaro 47	

SKY BET LEAGUE ONE

IPSWICH.....(0)	0	FLEETWOOD....(1)	1					
		Evans 40	15,678					
		P W D L F A GDpts						
Coventry.....	33	17	13	3	47	30	17	64
Rotherham.....	34	18	8	8	60	35	25	62
Portsmouth.....	33	17	8	8	51	32	19	59
Wycombe.....	34	17	8	9	45	40	5	59
Sunderland.....	34	16	10	8	46	28	18	58
Fleetwood Tn....	33	16	10	7	49	36	13	58
Oxford Utd.....	34	16	9	9	58	35	23	57
Peterboro.....	34	16	8	10	66	40	26	56
Ipswich.....	35	14	10	11	46	35	11	52
Doncaster.....	33	14	9	10	50	33	17	51
Gillingham.....	34	12	14	8	40	32	8	50
Burton Alb.....	33	12	11	10	46	45	1	47
Blackpool.....	33	11	11	11	43	41	2	44
Bristol Rvs.....	33	11	9	13	35	46	-11	42
Shrewsbury.....	33	10	11	12	29	39	-10	41
Accrington.....	34	10	10	14	46	51	-5	40
Lincoln City....	34	11	6	17	41	44	-3	39
MK Dons.....	34	10	7	17	36	46	-10	37
AFC Wim'dn.....	34	8	10	16	39	52	-13	34
Rochdale.....	33	9	6	18	36	56	-20	33
Tranmere.....	32	6	8	18	32	58	-26	26
Southend.....	34	3	7	24	36	84	-48	16
*Bolton.....	32	5	9	18	25	64	-39	12
								*Deducted 12pts

SKY BET LEAGUE TWO

EXETER.....(1)	1	CREWE.....(0)	0					
Parkes 32		Nottingham 61	4,221					
PLYMOUTH.....(3)	3	GRIMSBY.....(0)	0					
Bakinson 22, Hardie 30								
Jephcott 40	9,327							
SWINDON.....(1)	2	SCUNTHORPE..(0)	0					
Doyle 41, 77	7,583							
		P W D L F A GDpts						
Swindon.....	35	21	6	8	62	37	25	69
Crewe.....	36	19	9	8	64	42	22	66
Plymouth.....	36	19	8	9	58	39	19	65
Exeter.....	36	18	11	7	52	40	12	65
Cheltenham.....	35	17	12	6	52	27	25	63
Northampton..	36	17	7	12	53	38	15	58
Port Vale.....	36	14	14	8	50	44	6	56
Colchester.....	36	14	13	9	49	37	12	55
Bradford.....	36	14	12	10	44	38	6	54
Salford City....	36	12	11	13	47	46	1	47
Forest Green..	35	12	10	13	41	40	1	46
Crawley Tn.....	36	10	15	11	48	47	1	45
Cambridge U..	36	12	9	15	39	46	-7	45
Grimsby.....	36	11	11	14	43	51	-8	44
Walsall.....	35	12	8	15	37	48	-11	44
Newport C.....	34	11	10	13	31	37	-6	43
Oldham.....	36	9	14	13	44	54	-10	41
Scunthorpe....	36	10	10	16	44	54	-10	40
Ley Orient.....	35	9	12	14	45	54	-9	39
Carlisle.....	35	9	12	14	37	53	-16	39
Mansfield.....	35	8	11	16	46	54	-8	35
Morecambe....	36	7	11	18	35	59	-24	32
*Macclesfield..	36	7	15	14	32	44	-12	30
Stevenage.....	35	3	13	19	23	47	-24	22
								*Deducted 6pts

VANARAMA NATIONAL LEAGUE

BARNET.....(1)	2	BOREHAM WD..(0)	2
Reynolds 11		K Smith 61	
McCallum 79		Marsh 73	
CHESTERFIELD..(2)	3	HARROGATE T..(2)	4
Denton 26		Stead 9, 60	
Mandeville 29		Thomson 34	
Boden 82		Muldoon 90	
CHORLEY.....(1)	1	EASTLEIGH....(0)	2
Hall 2		Barnett 60, 90	
FC HALIFAX....(0)	1	SUTTON UTD... (0)	0
Rodney 88 (pen)			
SOLIHULL MRS..(0)	0	HARTLEPOOL... (0)	1
		Keena 86	
AFC FYLDE.....(1)	1	NOTTS CO.....(1)	2
Williams 18		Boldewijn 13, Long 76	

VANARAMA NATIONAL LEAGUE

North: Brackley 0, Boston Utd 0, Leamington 0, King's Lynn Town 0, York 1 Hereford FC 4. South: Billericay 0 Havant and W 1.

SCOTTISH PREMIERSHIP

HIBERNIAN.....(0)	1	HEARTS.....(0)	3
Hallberg 89		Clare 53 (pen)	
		Bozanic 65	
		Washington 80	
LADBROKES SCOTTISH — Ch'ship:			
Ayr 0 Dundee Utd 0, Dundee 0 Alloa 0, Inverness 3 Morton 2, Partick 0 Queen of South 0. League 1: Clyde 2 Montrose 1, Dumbarton 2 Forfar 0, Raith 1 Falkirk 1. League 2: Cowdenbeath 2 Albion 1, Stirling 0 Stenhousemuir 0.			

SPORT IN BRIEF

TODAY'S ACTION

(7.45 unless stated)

EMIRATES FA CUP 5TH ROUND	
Leicester v Birmingham.....	
Sheff Wed v Man City.....	
Live on BBC 1	
Tottenham Hotspur v Norwich.....	
Live on BBC Interactive	
SCOTTISH PREMIERSHIP: Kilmarnock v Aberdeen, Livingston v Celtic, Motherwell v Ross County, Rangers v Hamilton, St Mirren v St Johnstone.	
SCOTTISH CHAMPIONSHIP: Arbroath v Dunfermline.	
SCOTTISH LEAGUE TWO: Brechin v Annan Athletic.	

CRICKET

ICC WOMEN'S WORLD TWENTY20 - GROUP B — Group B, Sydney: Thailand 150-3 (20 overs; N Chantam 56), Pakistan abandoned, no result (opt each). West Indies v South Africa abandoned without a ball bowled, no result.

ROSS ROCKET R

Barkley clinches spot in the last eight after Adrian's early howler

ROSS BARKLEY'S critics reckon he hangs on to the ball too long. A moment like that came along in the 64th minute last night. Barkley striding through, Pedro in a prime scoring position, various observers willing him to pass, just pass mate, for God's sake pass.

Yet, as feared, Barkley held on to it. Just long enough to score one of the goals of the season. Just long enough to score the goal that confirmed there would be no domestic Double for Liverpool this year.

On the last two occasions Chelsea have knocked them out of the FA Cup, 1997 and 2012, they have gone on to win it. Keep playing like this and they will take some stopping this year, too. Chelsea were the better side, pretty much start to finish, and had the game's star turn in 18-year-old Billy Gilmour. For all the clamour over Liverpool's young players in this competition, it was Gilmour who stole the show from Curtis Jones and Neco Williams.

Deployed in Jorginho's deep pivot position, the Scotland Under 21 midfielder played just like him except with greater discipline, speed and vigour. The role does not have to be as ponderous as sometimes Chelsea make it, as Gilmour proved.

Unafraid to put a foot in, unafraid to collect the ball from the back, unafraid to pick a pass and to do all of that with vim, he set Chelsea's tempo in a way Jorginho often does, but to their detriment. It was a huge leap of faith for Frank Lampard to use him in such a vital role, but Gilmour did not let him down. Fabinho, in the same position for Liverpool, came up short by comparison.

Yet the night was crowned by Barkley. He was outstanding in midfield, too — his best performance for some time — and his goal was a marvel, an echo of one Eden Hazard scored here against Arsenal in 2017. Hazard's dribble was perhaps better that day, but Barkley's charge started deeper, south of the centre circle in his own half. Olivier Giroud set him away by winning a counter-attacking header against Jones — but Barkley's run summed up Chelsea's energy and ambition.

He simply powered through, with Joe Gomez backing off to significant cost. Pedro presented a handy passing option at the end but Barkley ignored him and went optimistically for goal instead.

It beat Adrian to his right, giving Chelsea the cushion they desired and deserved, and smoothing a path into the quarter-finals. It was a goal that merited the defeat of Liverpool, whose invincibility is now very much in past tense.

By the end, Jurgen Klopp had introduced Mohamed Salah and Roberto Firmino from the bench, but they never looked like finding a way through. Kepa Arrizabalaga,

MARTIN SAMUEL

Chief Sports Writer
at Stamford Bridge



CHELSEA

Willian 13
Barkley 64

LIVERPOOL



2

0

restored to Chelsea's first team like a cup understudy, which must have felt a mixed blessing, had been outstanding in the first half but was called upon less and less.

The match belonged very much to Chelsea, who hit the bar twice in the second half through a Mason Mount free-kick and a good shot from Giroud, battling through on the edge of the area.

Yet make no mistake, Liverpool were not happy to surrender this. It was not a case of Klopp giving up on the FA Cup, certainly not on the back of a 3-0 reverse at Watford and a 1-0 defeat at Atletico Madrid. Three of the first-choice back four were present, plus Fabinho in midfield and Sadio Mane up front. Given the points gap between these teams, Klopp would have hoped to have had enough. No manager sets out to lose — certainly not to a significant rival such as Chelsea.

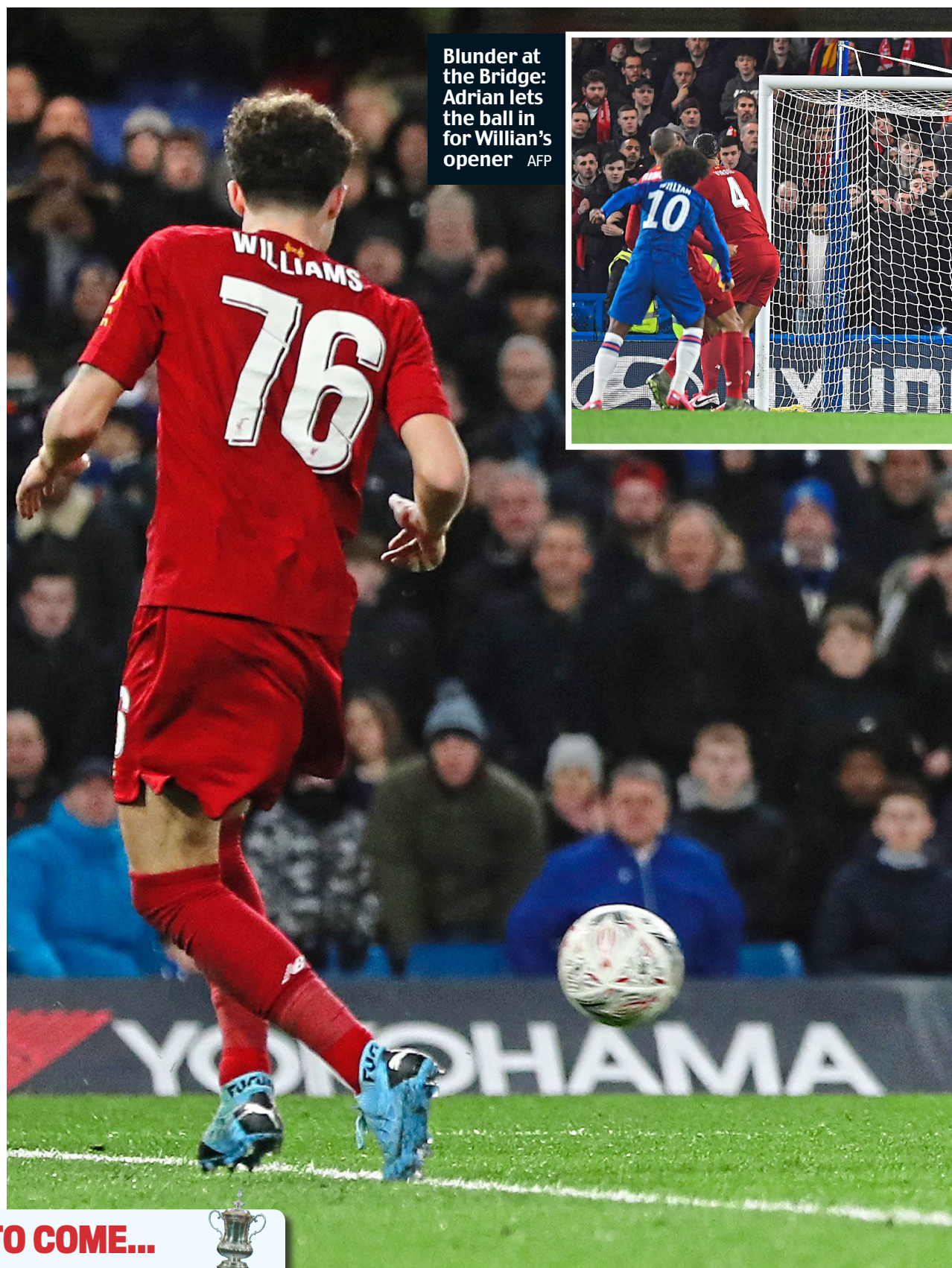
Normal service should be resumed on Saturday at home to Bournemouth and everyone knows where Liverpool's priorities lie this season. Yet winning is a habit and it is one Liverpool have lost of late. This was their third defeat in four games, their worst run across all competitions since the end of the 2017-18 season, although that did include the Champions League final, and a semi-final against Roma which began with Liverpool holding a 5-2 first-leg lead.

So a deserved Chelsea win, but an excellent game, made all the better for the smattering of youth in the ranks, and the odd senior player with a point to prove, like

Arrizabalaga, who stopped as many shots in a matter of first-half seconds as he had in the games before he was dropped.

His opposite number, Adrian, did not fare as well and was culpable for the first goal after 13 minutes, along with Fabinho. Gomez played a pass to Fabinho. It wasn't the best, but it was better than the Brazilian made it appear.

Fabinho always looked troubled bringing it under control and he



Blunder at the Bridge: Adrian lets the ball in for Willian's opener AFP



STILL TO COME...

TONIGHT

Leicester v Birmingham 7.45pm, Facebook

Sheff Wed v Man City 7.45pm, BBC One

Tottenham v Norwich 7.45pm, BBC iPlayer

THURSDAY

Derby v Man Utd 7.45pm, BT Sport 1

QUARTER-FINAL DRAW:

Tonight, BBC after Sheff Wed v Man City



Pedro whose shot was deflected across goal, to the feet of Willian. He hit one with such venom it seemed capable of leaving a smoking hole in anything that blocked its path. Instead, Adrian matched it with a stunning stop.

Will anyone remember that, though? Probably not — they'll think about the error instead, his third mistake to cost a goal this season, more than any other Liverpool player. That's the goalkeeper's lot in life.

And sometimes the blame game is simply a matter of luck. Antonio Rudiger made a complete howler after only three minutes but, fortunately for him, nothing came of it. Attempting a long ball out of defence, he struck it squarely at a red shirt, the rebound favouring Mane, whose shot was saved by Arrizabalaga at the second attempt.

That was nothing compared to his heroics in the 20th minute,

mind, when a goalmouth scramble erupted that was so chaotic it almost became a throwback to those 1970s FA Cup ties, played on bogs of pitches between teams whose shirt numbers had been obscured by mud with no fresh laundry available.

Divock Origi, Mane and Adam Lallana all had a crack, Arrizabalaga made block after block after block. He celebrated as though the Cup had been won, and maybe Lampard allowed himself a satisfied inner smile, too.

That was the goalkeeper Chelsea hoped to have signed for world record money, the one who had appeared so desperately out of sorts before being dropped and replaced by Willy Caballero.

If Lampard has a win over Liverpool, a place in the FA Cup quarter-final, Billy Gilmour, and the old Arrizabalaga back after this, it really was a special night for Chelsea.

OCKS REDS



SPEED OF BARKLEY SHOT: 85.23mph

SHOT DISTANCE: 20yds

TIME FROM BOOT TO GOAL: 0.48sec

TIME: 64mins

**Clincher:
Barkley
lets fly to
make it 2-0**

**PICTURE:
ANDY
HOOPER**

2
LIVERPOOL have lost back-to-back games for the first time in 14 months, since defeats at Man City and Wolves in January 2019. They have also lost three away games in a row for the first time since November 2014.

Klopp: Two massive mistakes cost goals

From Back Page

players and you can't do that in the living room at home.' Klopp's seven changes to the side who lost at Watford included giving starts to youngsters Neco Williams and Curtis Jones, as well as fringe players Adrian, Adam Lallana and Takumi Minamino. 'Losing 2-0 is not good,' the manager added. 'But it's easy to explain. We made two massive mistakes around the goals.' Despite being virtually assured of winning their first league title in 30 years, Liverpool have now lost three of their last four matches in all competitions — failing to score in

three of them. 'It's more easy to explain when you win than when you lose,' said the German. 'I have no arguments against the numbers. Everyone can interpret it as they want. I know the number and it's not cool. 'We don't want to concede and we want to score more. But we're not 100 miles away and the boys are strong. Usually you don't get a lot of chances against us but now we have to admit in the last four games we conceded too many goals. 'I'm not worried about momentum. We never thought it would be easy. We have done very well but tonight was not good enough and that is what we have to accept.'

Scouser Barkley said: 'It was brilliant, a massive result. Scoring against Liverpool is a dream for me, supporting Everton and having played for them. But getting into the next round is the main thing.' Lampard, whose side join Arsenal, Newcastle and Sheffield United in the last eight, said: 'It's hard to be comprehensive against Liverpool; they remain in the game because of the team they are. 'But we can't ask for any more. The spirit, the work ethic, the quality. You've got to defend really well to keep a clean sheet against them. What a team they are. And we defended with everything, played well and deserved to win the game.'

PLAYER RATINGS



By SAMI MOKBEL
AT STAMFORD BRIDGE



CHELSEA
(4-2-3-1) TEAM AVERAGE **7**

LIVERPOOL
(4-3-3) TEAM AVERAGE **5.8**

KEPA ARRIZABALAGA 7.5
Recalled to starting XI and made crucial stops. Has surely done enough to keep his place.

CESAR AZPILICUETA 6.5
Chelsea skipper was involved in a good tussle with Origi. The defender won the battle.

ANTONIO RUDIGER 7
Eased his way back into the groove after starting draw at Bournemouth on the bench. Dominant.

KURT ZOUMA 6.5
Lacked composure at times but on the whole a sturdy performance from the defender.

MARCOS ALONSO 7
Had his hands full trying to keep tabs on Mane, but stuck to his task diligently.

BILLY GILMOUR 8
Produced a performance way beyond his 18 years. Full of composure and vision. A big future.

MATEO KOVACIC 7
Worked tirelessly for his team until limping off. Easy to see why his manager adores him.

WILLIAN 7
Looked embarrassed to celebrate his goal. It was reward for his industrious display. Limped off.

ROSS BARKLEY 7.5
Forced Fabinho's mistake for Chelsea's opener and scored a brilliant goal. Pleading night.

PEDRO 6.5
A threat down the left and didn't shirk his defensive duties at the other end.

OLIVIER GIROUD 6.5
Kept his place in Tammy Abraham's absence. Unspectacular but played an important role.

SUBSTITUTES
Mount 6 (for Kovacic, 42min)
Jorginho 6.5 (for Willian, 51)
James (for Giroud, 90)
Not used: Caballero, Tomori, Anjorin, Batshuayi.

FRANK LAMPARD 7.5
Once more his team came good against one of the elite. The Blues boss will be delighted with this comprehensive victory.

REFEREE CHRIS KAVANAGH 6.5
A relatively routine game to officiate. No glaring errors.

ADRIAN 4
Calamitous mistake to let Willian fire Chelsea ahead. A night to forget for the Spaniard.

NECO WILLIAMS 6.5
Not overawed by the task of trying to shackle Pedro. Showed bundles of composure.

JOE GOMEZ 6
Fit again but looked uneasy as he tasted domestic defeat for first time since January 2018.

VIRGIL VAN DIJK 6.5
Hardly broke sweat but could not inspire his team, as he so often does, on a tough night.

ANDY ROBERTSON 6
Fully occupied by Willian, who helped keep the Scot's impact in attack to a minimum.

FABINHO 5.5
Usually so assured but his sloppiness on the edge of his own box led to Willian's opener.

ADAM LALLANA 6
Tried his best to inspire Liverpool. Continued to break through the lines but to no avail.

CURTIS JONES 5.5
Clearly a talented kid but the game passed him by. Has a big future, nonetheless.

SADIO MANE 6.5
Liverpool's biggest threat but could not break down a resolute Chelsea defence.

TAKUMI MINAMINO 5.5
Still trying to pick up the pace of English football. Plenty of work-rate, little quality.

DIVOCK ORIGI 5.5
Cut a frustrated figure in attack before being subbed as Liverpool chased the game.

SUBSTITUTES
Milner 5.5 (for Jones, 70)
Firmino 5.5 (for Origi, 70)
Salah (for Lallana, 80)
Not used: Loneragan, Matip, Chirivella, Oxlade-Chamberlain.

JURGEN KLOPP 6
His all-conquering team are stuttering at the worst possible time. Another frustrating game for the German after the winter break.

ATTENDANCE 40,103

KO BLOW STUNS KLOPP

Barkley kills off Liverpool Treble dream

SAMI MOKBEL

at Stamford Bridge

JURGEN KLOPP was forced to defend his team selection last night as Liverpool's dreams of an historic Treble were dashed by Chelsea.

Adrian's horrible error gifted Willian the opener before Ross Barkley's solo effort booked Frank Lampard's side a place in the FA Cup quarter-finals.

'We made seven changes because we knew it would be intense,' said Klopp, whose team lost their unbeaten Premier League record on Saturday, 3-0 at Watford. 'We made the changes because there would be a lot of sprints, because of how Chelsea play in midfield.'

'It was clear we needed acceleration. It's a learning process for the young

← TURN TO PAGE 83, COL 1



FA CUP - 5th ROUND
CHELSEA.....2
LIVERPOOL...0

Blues cruise:
Ross Barkley
celebrates
making it 2-0
GETTY IMAGES

City win fixture fight with UEFA

By **MATT HUGHES**
and **SAMI MOKBEL**

MANCHESTER CITY have convinced UEFA to let them play their Premier League fixture with Arsenal next week despite the match clashing with Champions League games. City held talks with Arsenal and the Premier League yesterday over when to play a game originally scheduled for last Sunday. Pep Guardiola's side were otherwise engaged winning the Carabao Cup and the clubs agreed on March 11 as the best alternative date. City were keen to play the game next Wednesday because they are short of midweek slots for the rest of the season. But the European governing

**GB CYCLING IS A
LAUGHING STOCK**
SEE PAGE 78

body were reluctant to accept City's request as Liverpool host Atletico Madrid in the second leg of their Champions League last-16 tie at 8pm on the same day.

An agreement between the Premier League and UEFA, signed in 2017, states that television coverage of domestic matches in the top division must finish at least 15 minutes before the kick-off of European games.

Arsenal's trip to the Etihad Stadium is due to be televised by Sky — they selected their games before Christmas — and the broadcaster would not have wanted an earlier kick-off, which would also have presented complications for the

← TURN TO PAGE 80, COL 1

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ENGLAND RED-FACED AT MAKO VIRUS FARCE

ENGLAND were left embarrassed last night after Mako Vunipola was hurriedly sent into international isolation because of coronavirus fears. The Lions prop was named in England's squad to face Wales, but quickly pulled out when medical staff realised he had flown back to England from Tonga via Hong Kong. He is not showing any

By **NIK SIMON**

symptoms but was ordered not to come into camp as a precaution and will be homebound for 14 days. He did, however, train with his club Saracens yesterday. Vunipola had spent a fortnight in Tonga for personal reasons and travelled

back through the infected area over the weekend. He will miss Saturday's Six Nations clash at Twickenham and is almost certain to be ruled out of next week's finale against Italy.

Although Vunipola was responsible for his own travel arrangements, the matter left England red-faced because

← TURN TO PAGE 77, COL 3

QUICK CROSSWORD

8,478

ACROSS

- 1 Tree or shrub (6)
4 Circumference (5)
7 Board game (10)
8 Unlikely (4)
9 Remains of something burnt (5)
11 Small shallow dishes (7)
13 Impassive or expressionless (7)
15 Baa (5)

DOWN

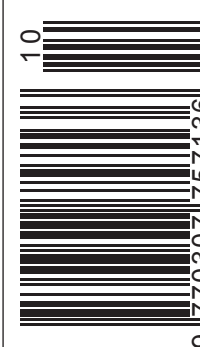
- 1 Long-playing records (6)
2 Modelling material (4)
3 Clumsy (7)
17 Gentleman, in short (4)
18 Affirm emphatically (5,5)
20 Planet (5)
21 Continue to have (6)

ACROSS

- 4 African country (5)
5 Alcoholic spirit (3)
6 Suspends (5)
7 Woman's garment (6)
10 Jumped on one foot (6)
12 Temporal (7)
14 Concept or idea (6)
15 Pour fat over during cooking (5)
16 Flashlight (5)
17 Biting insect (4)
19 Make a mistake (3)

TUESDAY'S SOLUTION (No. 8,477): — ACROSS: 1 Haggard. 5 Raft. 7 Ran. 8 Thumbs up. 9 Belle. 10 Loop. 13 Tale. 14 Cant. 18 Dame. 19 Craft. 21 Downside. 22 Inn. 23 Stay. 24 Dead end. DOWN: 1 Hardback. 2 Gangland. 3 Anthem. 4 Double. 5 Reboot. 6 Foul. 11 Paradise. 12 Destined. 15 Tannoy. 16 Remind. 17 Eczema. 20 Cost.

SOLUTION TOMORROW



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The Mail is published by ANL, 2 Derry St, London W8 5TT.

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