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CITY CHIEFS FIRE BACK AT CORBYN

CATHERINE NEILAN
@CatNeilan

CITY bosses hit back at Jeremy Corbyn last night after the Labour leader launched a stinging personal attack on some of the country's most prominent business figures.

Retail tycoon Mike Ashley, branded a "bad boss" by Corbyn, told *City A.M.* the Labour leader was "clueless" and accused him of lying.

Meanwhile hedge fund manager Crispin Odey, who was blasted by Corbyn as one of the "greedy bankers... who makes millions betting against our country", described the ad hominem attack as "ridiculous".

Speaking before the party faithful at an event in Battersea, Corbyn railed against "the establishment elite," naming self-made billionaire Sir Jim Ratcliffe and the Duke of Westminster in addition to Ashley and Odey as examples of those who Labour would "go after".

Sports Direct boss Ashley rubbished the claims — which included a reference to a specific instance in which one of Ashley's employees was allegedly "forced to give birth in a warehouse toilet because she was terrified of missing her shift". He said that the Islington North MP was "not only a liar but clueless".

In a surprising turn, Ashley added he agreed "the system is corrupt", but that "the real problem" was a lack of action by politicians such as Corbyn.

CBI boss Carolyn Fairbairn also weighed in on the attack, saying: "Labour has been silent on the value business brings for too long, focusing solely on the negatives... It is wrong to ignore the hundreds of thousands of brilliant british businesses working tirelessly to provide great jobs."

Odey, a Conservative donor, told *City A.M.* that it was "ridiculous that [Corbyn] should make it personal — but I don't take it personally".

The asset management boss hit back at Labour's previous assertion that hedge fund managers were shorting the pound as part of a no-deal conspiracy, saying: "It's so ludicrous I don't know where to start."

He called on Boris Johnson and the Conservatives to deliver a manifesto that championed "a policy of enterprise and low tax" to counter Labour's "one story — to steal the wealth, not build the wealth".

Emma Jones, chief executive of small business association Enterprise Nation, lambasted Corbyn's remarks, saying "clubbing entrepreneurs over the head in order to cultivate votes feels rather misinformed, and paints the nation's 5m wealth creators in an unhelpfully divisive light".

Late last night shadow treasury minister Clive Lewis told the BBC he believed "billionaires shouldn't exist", adding: "Let people make money, let people run a business, but we need to make sure the grotesque levels of inequality in this country are reduced."

DEEP RECESSION IN HONG KONG
Protests continue as GDP plunges

ANNA MENIN
@annafmenin

HONG Kong officially entered a recession for the first time in a decade yesterday, as the territory saw further violent protests on Halloween.

The financial hub's economy shrank by 3.2 per cent in the three months to the end of September, much more than the 0.6 per cent contraction that had been estimated.

The contraction represents the first time Hong Kong has entered recession since the global financial crisis in 2009.

Last night, typically boisterous Halloween celebrations merged with anti-government protests to produce a surreal combination of tear gas and street parties.

Police have responded harshly to the ongoing protests, which have expanded from grievances against a proposed extradition bill to a wider uprising against Beijing's influence in the territory and a lack of democratic freedoms.

FTSE 100▼ 7,248.38 -82.40 FTSE 250▼ 20,021.50 -93.60 DOW▼ 27,046.23 -140.46 NASDAQ▼ 8,292.36 -11.62 £/$▲ 1.294 +0.004 £/€▲ 1.160 +0.003 €/$ 1.115 unc.

CITY A.M.

THE CITY VIEW

The City will watch the election with interest

THE FATE of the financial services industry is rarely a battleground in election campaigns but though the City won't get much attention (beyond Labour's ham-fisted criticism of it) the future of financial and professional services will certainly be determined by the next six weeks of campaigning. Labour have made clear to City leaders and business groups that they have set their sights on the sector. A Financial Transaction Tax would only be the start. And as for the Tories? It's conceivable that the election result could leave the party in office but not in power, unable to pass a Brexit deal and leaving the City yet again contemplating a no-deal departure — or at least many more months of uncertainty.

It is of course possible that Boris Johnson returns with an enhanced majority and in those circumstances the government would need to urgently review the City's competitiveness and attractiveness. As we reported yesterday, the tax burden on this vital sector climbs ever higher while the weight of regulation makes genuine innovation and growth extremely difficult.

Beyond Brexit, work must be done to ensure that the City retains its truly global status. The latest figures from the Office for National Statistics (ONS) illustrate the importance of this international connectivity. Exports from UK financial services and insurance firms surged to a record high of £82bn last year, up from £78bn in 2017. The sector's trade with the EU also increased from £30bn in 2017 to £32.6bn in 2018, while services exports to the US, Canada and Japan all grew.

As City groups were keen to point out yesterday, the figures underline the importance of the sector, but they should also focus the minds of all sensible politicians and regulators who wish not only to protect this national asset, but see it grow yet further. Parties in this election should also reflect on their promises to spend as-yet-unaccounted for billions on improved hospitals, more police officers and infrastructure plans, and it would be wise for them to remember that the City — whether they like it or not — is the engine room of the British economy. The ONS export data proves the success of a sector contending with unprecedented political uncertainty, but continued growth cannot be taken for granted. The next government must do all it can to safeguard and strengthen this vital national asset. The old adage about the goose and the golden eggs remains very relevant today.

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'IT'S DONALD FROM WASHINGTON' The phone-in US President takes aim at Corbyn, Johnson's deal and Nato in Farage interview

IN A BOMBASTIC phone interview with Brexit Party leader Nigel Farage yesterday, US President Donald Trump laid into Jeremy Corbyn saying the Labour leader would be "so bad" for Britain. Speaking on LBC Radio, Trump also called Boris Johnson "a fantastic man", while warning that the PM's Brexit deal could lead to difficult future trade negotiations between the UK and US. Meanwhile across the Atlantic, US politicians voted the impeachment inquiry against Trump through to the next stage.

BT boss: Next PM must back fibre

JOE CURTIS

@joe_r_curtis

1.44%

BT'S NEW chief executive Philip Jansen yesterday urged the next government to put a full-fibre rollout at the very top of its to-do list as he warned the UK is growing hungrier for data.

While British homes currently have just five connected devices on average, BT predicts that number will soar to 100 within just five years as smart devices enter UK households.

Jansen warned that any rollout must work for BT's shareholders, who have seen the telecom giant's share price plunge 22 per cent over the past year.

Calling a full-fibre rollout a "no brainer" for the next government, Jansen said that whichever party wins the December election, they must ensure that Brits get full-fibre broadband as quickly as possible.

"Whoever is sitting in that seat in Number 10 will understand that fibre and digital infrastructure need to be built at rapid pace," he said.

"I hope it's up there at the top of the list."

Shareholders have expressed fears that BT could raid its dividend to fund a full-fibre broadband rollout as it seeks to bring faster connections to 4m homes and businesses by March 2021.

However BT yesterday maintained the dividend that Patterson cut heavily this time last year, handing investors an interim payment of 4.62p per share.

It also kept profit flat at £1.33bn for the six months to the end of September as revenue slipped two per cent to £11.5bn.

BT's share price rose 1.4 per cent to 204.7p by market close yesterday.

Altria swings to loss amid Juul backlash costs

EDWARD THICKNESSE

@edthicknesse

THE BACKLASH from the crackdown on vaping knocked Altria to a $4.5bn (£3.5bn) loss yesterday, as its 35 per cent stake in e-cigarette maker Juul turned sour.

The company reported a net loss of $2.6bn, or $1.39 per share in the third quarter ended 30 September, from a profit of $1.9bn, or $1.03 per share.

Shares of the US maker of Marlboro fell 2.5 per cent yesterday to $44.79. The tobacco giant bought its stake in Juul for $12.8bn last December, in an attempt to make up for falling sales of traditional cigarettes.

At the time Juul's market value was a staggering $38bn, but recent regulatory changes have led to the possibility of the company's products being removed from the market.

WHAT THE OTHER PAPERS SAY THIS MORNING

FINANCIAL TIMES

CIVIL SERVICE WARNS OF NO-DEAL BREXIT FATIGUE

The next UK government will find it difficult to encourage civil servants and businesses to prepare for a no-deal Brexit in 2020 after "crying wolf" no fewer than three times this year, Whitehall and industry figures warned yesterday. As the latest Brexit deadline of 31 October passed without taking effect, Whitehall officials and business leaders said there was a limit to how often the UK could prepare for a no-deal departure.

SEC SUED BY PROXY ADVISER ISS OVER NEW RULES

The fight between investor advisory firms and the US Securities and Exchange Commission escalated on yesterday as Institutional Shareholder Services sued the regulator, claiming its rights to free speech had been infringed.

THE TIMES

EX-TORY SANDBACH DEFECTS TO SWINSON'S LIB DEMS

A former Conservative MP has defected to the Liberal Democrats, boosting Jo Swinson's party on the first full day of campaigning in the General Election. Antoinette Sandbach, who represents the Cheshire seat of Eddisbury, is the fifth former Tory to join the Lib Dems in recent months.

ISIS NAMES NEW LEADER AFTER DEATH OF BAGHDADI

So-called Islamic State (Isis) yesterday officially confirmed the death of its leader, Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, and named his successor, calling on followers to pledge their allegiance to the new "caliph".

THE DAILY TELEGRAPH

PROFITS PLUNGE AT MIKE ASHLEY'S INVESTMENT ARM

Profits tumbled by £80m at sportswear billionaire Mike Ashley's private investment business despite an uptick in sales. Accounts for Mash Holdings, published late, saw pre-tax profits fall to £20.8m in 2018 from £102m a year earlier, on revenues of £3.5bn, up by £200m. The firm owns the tycoon's controlling stake in Sports Direct.

THREE TOP PRESENTERS TACKLE BBC OVER PAY GAP

BBC presenters Sarah Montague, Louise Minchin and Joanna Gosling have been named among 121 women who, it is claimed, began equal pay grievances against the BBC.

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

PINTEREST'S LOSSES WIDEN AS EXPENSES BALLOON

Pinterest said losses widened in the third quarter as costs and expenses more than doubled, sending shares sliding 19 per cent in after-hours trading yesterday. The online image-sharing company posted a loss of $124.7m (£96.4m) compared with a loss of $18.9m in the same quarter last year.

KRAFT HEINZ BEATS PROFIT EXPECTATIONS AS SALES DIP

Sales of Kraft Heinz's beleaguered products fell more than anticipated in the third quarter, but the food maker beat profit expectations after a year of weak results and strategic turmoil, the company announced yesterday.

Fiat Chrysler and Peugeot owner agree mega deal

ALEX DANIEL

@alexmdaniel

FIAT CHRYSLER (FCA) and Peugeot owner PSA have agreed to go after a merger which would create an automotive industry titan with €170bn (£147bn) in revenue .

PSA and FCA yesterday said they had decided to "work towards" a deal which would give shareholders in each company 50 per cent ownership of the new firm, creating the fourth-largest car maker in the world.

The new company would be listed in Paris, Milan and New York, and would be headed up by Carlos Tavares as chief executive.

Fiat's John Elkann, who had previously pursued a merger with French rival Renault, would be the new company's chairman.

French finance minister Bruno Le Maire welcomed the plan, which would give Paris a say in two of the world's top four car makers. France holds a 12 per cent stake in PSA.

The French government was blamed for blocking the collapse of Fiat's proposed merger with Renault earlier this year.

"It gives us critical size to face the dual challenges of autonomous vehicles and electric cars," Le Maire said yesterday.

The companies assured workers the combined group would have no need to close factories to hit savings targets. That should reassure PSA's British workforce of 3,000 people, many of whom make Vauxhall cars at its Ellesmere Port factory.

The merger, once completed, is expected to generate €3.7bn in annual synergies. Prior to completion of the deal, FCA said it would pay its shareholders a €5.5bn special dividend. It would also hand investors its shares in robot-making unit Comau.

BIGGEST CAR COMPANIES IN THE WORLD BY REVENUE (USD)

FIRM	REVENUE
1. Volkswagen	$278bn
2. Toyota	$273bn
3. Daimler	$198bn
4. Fiat and PSA	$190bn
5. Ford	$160bn

Google, Apple and Facebook enable illegal slaves, BBC investigation finds

ANNA MENIN

@annafmenin

TECH giants Google, Apple and Facebook are enabling an illegal online slave market in which domestic workers are bought and sold through apps, a BBC News Arabic investigation has found.

Google and Apple have approved and provided apps used for the sale of domestic workers on their app stores, while programme makers found hundreds of domestic workers for sale on Facebook-owned Instagram.

BBC reporters found a 16-year-old girl being offered for sale as a domestic worker on Kuwaiti app 4Sale for $3,800 (£2,934), and followed her subsequent rescue and return home to Guinea.

The undercover reporters were repeatedly urged to break Kuwait's laws on domestic workers by keeping wages low, confiscating their passports, and denying time off work.

One seller, who told filmmakers he was a policeman, advised them the worker he was selling should have "no telephone" and should not be allowed outside.

"Selling people is nothing short of draconian savagery and yet why is it a modern-day practice of slavery that takes place in... our world," said anti-slavery lawyer Parosha Chandran.

LIFT OFF Chinese investment firm Fosun set to purchase Thomas Cook brand name

CHINESE investment giant Fosun appears set to snap up the Thomas Cook brand along with the intellectual property assets of the failed travel company, the Financial Times reported last night. Fosun is a frontrunner, ahead of rivals Tui.

That's the Spirit: US firm snaps up Bombardier's Belfast plant

ALEX DANIEL

@alexmdaniel

THE BELFAST manufacturing base of Canadian aerospace firm Bombardier, which accounts for 3,600 jobs, was yesterday picked up by US rival Spirit Aerosystems as part of a $500m (£386m) deal.

Bombardier, the province's biggest employer, had sparked concerns that people could lose their jobs when it put the unit up for sale earlier this year, along with its operations in Morocco as part of a bid to streamline its business.

The news was seen as another blow to Britain's beleaguered manufacturing sector, which has already endured major job cuts by Honda, Ford and GKN Aerospace.

But unions welcomed yesterday's announcement, which sees the business unit transfer to one of the world's largest independent producers of aerospace parts.

Susan Fitzgerald, trade union Unite's regional officer for the area, said the announcement came as "no surprise."


England Rugby
O2
Bring it home
Be their armour
#WearTheRose
Rugby Football Union. The RFU Rose and the words England Rugby are official registered trademarks of the Rugby Football Union.

VAULTING AHEAD Dame Minouche Shafik current choice for Bank of England leader

EGYPTIAN-born Dame Minouche Shafik is the current government's favoured candidate to succeed Mark Carney as the governor of the Bank of England, the BBC reported last night. She has previously served as deputy governor of the Bank.

PPI charge sinks LLoyds profit in the third quarter

SEBASTIAN MCCARTHY
@SebMcCarthy

LLOYDS Banking Group narrowly avoided tipping into the red yesterday after taking a major third-quarter dent from the mis-selling of payment protection insurance (PPI).

The lender's pre-tax profit was reduced to £50m, falling 97 per cent from the same period last year after setting aside £1.8bn for PPI provisions.

It takes the bank's total bill for the PPI scandal to close to £22bn.

Jefferies analysts said that the PPI charge "casts a pall over otherwise respectable [not stellar] performance".

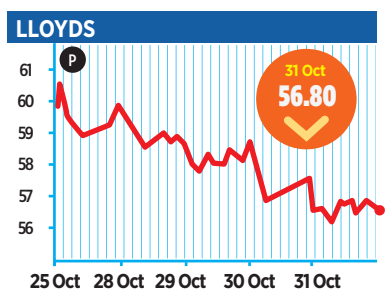
The broker kept its "buy" rating on the bank's shares, saying that the "underlying credit picture is better than the prevailing consensus".

Shares in the bank closed down 1.4 per cent to 56.80p at the end of trading yesterday.

Antonio Horta-Osorio, group chief executive at Lloyds, said: "I am disappointed that our statutory result was significantly impacted by the additional PPI charge in the third quarter, driven by an unprecedented level of PPI information requests received in August."

City watchdog the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) set a deadline of 29 August for PPI compensation complaints, sparking a last-minute surge in claims.

John Moore, a senior investment manager at Brewin Dolphin, said: "The bank's net interest margin remains healthier than many of its peers, albeit slightly down on earlier in the year. Overall, it's another resilient set of results from Lloyds and its track record on cost-cutting has helped set the bank apart from many of its competitors."



BOTTOM LINE

IT WAS more trick than treat in Lloyds Banking Group's Halloween statement yesterday, as it became the latest major bank to report higher-than-expected costs from the PPI scandal. Following in the footsteps of Barclays, RBS and Santander, the lending giant revealed charges totalling £1.8bn following a flood of compensation claims. There were bright spots, however — the firm impressed the City with its cost-cutting programme and the net interest margin held up better than expected.

The firm also revealed that it would soon be beginning the hunt for a successor to its chair Norman Blackwell.

Lloyds will be hoping that by the time they find a successor to Lord Blackwell, the entire PPI saga will have entered the history books.

But the combination of macroeconomic uncertainty, low interest rates and fierce competition means directors at the banking group will still be holding back much cause for celebration, whoever the appointee is. **SEB MCCARTHY**

IN BRIEF

GOALS SOCCER CENTRES ACQUIRED IN PRE-PACK DEAL

Five-a-side football operator Goals Soccer Centres was acquired yesterday by rival Soccerworld and private equity firm Inflexion. Goals was hit by an accounting scandal after its auditor BDO discovered it had mis-declared VAT amounting to at least £13.2m. The company delisted its shares from Aim in August after it declared it was unable to file accounts. Inflexion and Soccerworld have agreed to acquire Goals through new vehicle Northwind 5s Limited. The deal will take place through a pre-pack administration with Deloitte appointed as administrator. The price paid for Goals is understood to be around £27m. Goals said its profit since 2009 may have been overstated by as much as £40m. It owed Royal Bank of Scotland £30m.

JUDGMENT IMMINENT IN £600M LLOYDS GROUP CLAIM

The long-awaited judgment in a financial crisis-era shareholder action against Lloyds Banking Group and five former directors of Lloyds TSB is expected imminently, according to people close to the case. The £600m claim focused on Lloyds TSB's acquisition of HBOS in 2008 at the height of the financial crisis. The claimant group of 300 institutions and nearly 6,000 individual shareholders alleged that when they voted to approve the deal they lacked key information about HBOS's financial health. The case went to trial in the High Court in late 2017 and lasted for five months. A spokesperson for Lloyds said: "The group made its case in court that the claims were without merit. We await judgment."

WATCHDOG URGES POLICE TO STOP FACIAL RECOGNITION

The head of the UK's data protection watchdog yesterday called for the creation of legal guidance on the use of live facial recognition (LFR) and urged the police to exercise restraint in their use of the technology. Video surveillance coupled with the use of facial scanning software should only be used when it is "strictly necessary for the law enforcement purpose" and there is "demonstrable benefit to the public," according to guidance issued by the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO). Information commissioner Elizabeth Denham has outlined the "high statutory threshold" that must be met before LFR can be used following increased scrutiny of the technology's use in the UK. LFR is currently used at King's Cross station.

Profit slumps at Shell as low oil prices hit home

EDWARD THICKNESSE

@edthicknesse

SHELL was the third oil supermajor to feel the strain of low oil prices this week as profit fell 15 per cent in the third quarter.

However, yesterday's third-quarter results still led Shell to comfortably beat analysts' expectations, posting earnings of $4.8bn (£3.7bn) — well ahead of the $3.9bn anticipated.

The oil giant had a boost in oil and liquefied natural gas to thank for offsetting the impact of oil prices, which have fallen 17 per cent year on year.

Shares in Shell fell over four per cent yesterday to 2,223p.

Chief executive Ben van Beurden said: "This quarter we delivered strong cash flow and earnings, despite sustained lower oil and gas prices. Our earnings reflect the resilience and ability of our market-facing businesses to capitalise on market conditions"

However, he went on to say that prevailing macroeconomic conditions would cause uncertainty over the pace of Shell's proposed annual buyback of $25bn worth of shares.

The Anglo-Dutch company, the world's biggest dividend-payer at $16bn a year, had planned to boost payouts to investors through dividends and share buybacks to $125bn between 2021 and 2025.

Earlier this week, both BP and Total reported sliding profit as ongoing low prices continued to affect the wider market.

Michael Hewson, chief market analyst at CMC Markets, said: "I'm struck by the similarity with BP — both companies have seen very positive developments in the downstream, but big declines in the upstream."

Chief financial officer Jessica Uhl said the returns from Shell's so-called transition businesses gave the company confidence it could thrive in the move to more sustainable energy.

ON THE CHARGE EDF makes a move into electric vehicles with Pod Point acquisition

EDF IS in talks to buy electric vehicle charging point company Pod Point, Sky News revealed yesterday. Pod Point, which was set up in 2009, has 1700 charge points across the UK, and has partnerships with PSA, Sainsbury's, and the National Trust.

Nabuh Energy on the brink as Ofgem demands late payments

EDWARD THICKNESSE

@edthicknesse

NABUH Energy's future was in doubt yesterday as Ofgem demanded it pay outstanding green fees by the end of the day.

If the supplier fails to pay, it faces further enforcement action, including the possibility of having its licence revoked. The Sheffield-based company, which came bottom of Citizens Advice's quarterly customer service rankings, owes £872,200.

On Tuesday Ofgem ordered Gnergy to make a similar outstanding payment of £673,876 by 31 October.

Earlier this month Toto Energy had its licence revoked after failing to make its payment on time.

Oil giants face cuts to reach climate targets

EDWARD THICKNESSE

@edthicknesse

THE WORLD's largest oil and gas suppliers must cut combined production 35 per cent by 2040 to keep emissions within international climate targets.

According to a new report released this morning by think tank Carbon Tracker, none of the major oil producers are currently on track to be in line with the Paris agreement by 2040, despite public statements to the contrary.

US companies Conoco Phillips and Exxon Mobil, the world's largest oil company, need the largest cuts, of 85 per cent and 55 per cent respectively.

Shell has the most aligned portfolio but still requires cuts of 10 per cent to meet demand.

Report author Mike Coffin said: "The industry [wants] to have its cake and eat it — reassuring shareholders and appearing supportive of Paris, while still producing more fossil fuels."

The report comes at the end of a week in which BP, Shell and Total, three of the world's largest oil companies, have posted major losses in their third-quarter results.

BA profit stoops after September profit warning

STEFAN BOSCIA

@Stefan_Boscia

PILOT strikes and fuel costs have dented third quarter profit for the owner of British Airways, in line with its September profit warning.

International Airlines Group (IAG) posted a third-quarter operating profit of €1.42bn (£1.22bn), representing a 7.7 per cent annual decline.

IAG said the figures were affected by British Airline Pilots' Association (Balpa) strike action, which resulted in 2,325 flights being cancelled.

This led to a 1.5 per cent fall in passenger unit revenue.

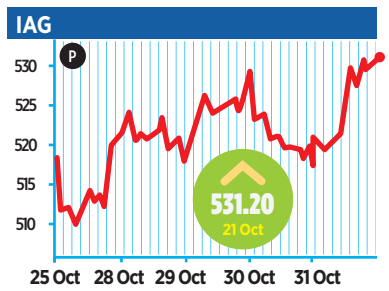
Fuel costs for the quarter were up by 6.1 per cent, also contributing to shrinking profits.

The trading update said it expected IAG profit for 2019 to fall by €215m (£185m). The company initially published this expectation in a September profit warning.

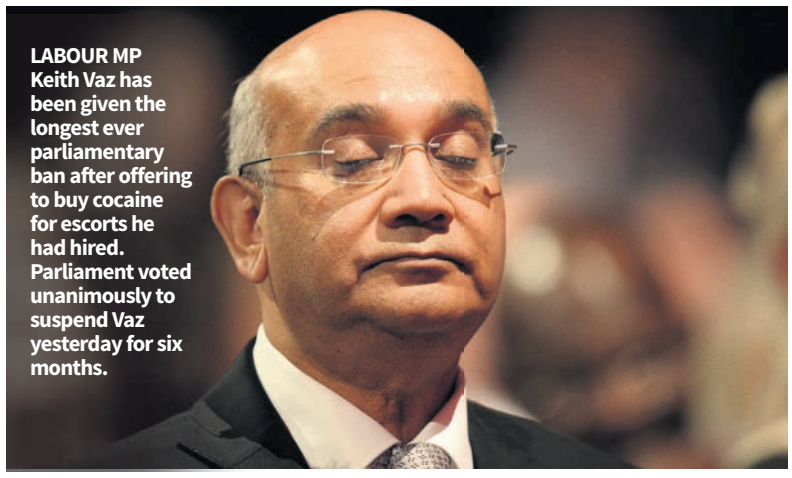
IAG chief executive Willie Walsh said: "These are good underlying results. As we said in September, our performance has been affected by industrial action by pilots' union Balpa, and other disruption including threatened strikes by Heathrow airport employees."

BA pilots went on strike on 9 and 10 September, but cancelled further industrial action on 27 September, in a battle for higher wages.

Shares in IAG finished up 2.19 per cent to 531.20p yesterday.



SUSPENDED Labour MP gets longest ever parliament ban over drug-buying scandal



LABOUR MP Keith Vaz has been given the longest ever parliamentary ban after offering to buy cocaine for escorts he had hired. Parliament voted unanimously to suspend Vaz yesterday for six months.

People's Vote chaos continues as staff are threatened with sack

HARRY ROBERTSON

@henrygrobertson

THE PEOPLE'S Vote campaign was plunged further into chaos yesterday as workers were threatened with the sack and staff in turn urged the organisation's chair to resign.

The second referendum campaign group has been in disarray in recent weeks due to bitter divisions over tactics that led to the sacking of two senior figures.

Many staff members have refused to turn up for work since the sacking of McGrory and Baldwin.

Yesterday a person close to Rudd told the BBC they will be sacked unless they return. A staff member told the BBC that the People's Vote campaign was falling victim to a "coup" by "a multi-millionaire".

Javid and Hugh Grant locked in handshake row

STEFAN BOSCIA

@Stefan_Boscia

ACTOR Hugh Grant has defended himself from allegations that he is elitist for not shaking the hand of chancellor Sajid Javid.

Javid told the Evening Standard that the actor was "incredibly rude" for refusing to shake his hand at a recent film premiere.

Javid said: "I wonder if people like Hugh Grant think they are part of the elite and they look down on working class people no matter what station they reach in life."

The comments sparked an angry Twitter response from Grant.

Grant said he told Javid: "If you don't mind, I won't shake your hand because you were rude and dismissive to the victims or press abuse when you met them as culture secretary."

Mark Zuckerberg defends political ads on Facebook after Twitter rolls out ban

ANNA MENIN

@annafmenin

FACEBOOK co-founder and chief executive Mark Zuckerberg has defended his decision to allow political advertising on the social network after Twitter boss Jack Dorsey threw down the gauntlet over the issue.

Dorsey announced on Wednesday that all paid-for political advertising would be banned from Twitter, in a move that has piled pressure on Facebook to follow suit.

The Twitter boss said that "political message reach should be earned, not bought".

In comments made on a call with investors following the release of Facebook's quarterly results on Wednesday, Zuckerberg defended his platform's policy.

"In a democracy, I don't think it's right for private companies to censor politicians or the news," he said.

"And it's hard to define where to draw the line. Would we really block ads for important political issues like climate change or women's empowerment?

"Instead, I believe the better approach is to work to increase transparency," Zuckerberg added.

The chief executive said that adverts from politicians would account for less than 0.5 per cent of Facebook's revenue next year.

Johnson's £100,000 Arcuri grant deemed 'appropriate' in audit

STEFAN BOSCIA

@StefanBoscia

A £100,000 grant given to US businesswoman Jennifer Arcuri by Boris Johnson has been deemed "not unreasonable" and "appropriate", despite the funding being intended to grow the UK tech sector.

The Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) grant was given to Arcuri's US-based company Hacker House earlier this year. The tech company was awarded the cyber skills grant, despite it being "designed to increase the number and diversity of those working in the UK's cyber security industry", according to the department.

A report from the Government Internal Audit Agency (GIAA) yesterday said that the decision to give the grant was based on the assumption that Hacker House could grow the UK's cybersecurity sector from afar.

EDITOR'S NOTES

News and views from the City, Westminster & beyond

CHRISTIAN MAY @CHRISTIANJMAY CHRISTIAN.MAY@CITYAM.COM

Corbyn leads his troops into a vicious class war

RUNNING an election campaign on the basis of a question is a risky business. Ted Heath found this out after the 1974 election during which he'd asked the voters: "Who runs Britain?" The response was clear: "Not you." Yesterday, Jeremy Corbyn launched his own pitch for Number 10 with a rather more divisive, even sinister, inquiry: "Whose side are you on?"

The Labour leader wants to know whether you're on the side of yacht-based tax dodgers, or children with special educational needs. Once you've got to grips with that philosophical humdinger, consider his next question: big polluters or children with reduced lung capacity? Greedy bankers who make millions betting on other people's misery or underpaid nurses? Sex offenders or food bank volunteers? OK, I made that last one up — but the rest are genuine propositions offered by Corbyn in a speech that went far beyond highlighting social ills and actually identified individuals that a future Labour government would, presumably, send to the gulags. The young Duke of Westminster (property tycoon), Mike Ashley (bad boss), Crispin Odey (fat cat), Rupert Murdoch (billionaire media baron) and Sir Jim Ratcliffe (makes his money by polluting the environment) were all targeted.

Corbyn has been waging a class war for years and the next logical step is to target real people. Perhaps he thinks Ratcliffe is a class traitor? After all he grew up in a council house, the son of a joiner, before going on to make a few billion. "It makes me sick," the Labour leader might have said, "to see a council house boy build his own company, employing 20,000 people in advanced engineering and manufacturing."

There was a time when the Labour party put tackling injustice and inequality at the heart of its mission without relying on crass, divisive and ignorant rhetoric. Those days are long gone. And so as Corbyn tours the country demanding to know "whose side are you on?" he should consider the possibility that the answer is "not yours".

STOOD UP

It's disappointment for the incoming Lord Mayor (the 692nd) as the traditional Lord Mayor's Banquet at the Guildhall has been postponed thanks to the election. The PM gives a foreign policy speech at the event each year, which also marks the new Lord Mayor's arrival. It was due to be held on 11 November, but has been pushed into the new year. Will Corbyn have to iron his white tie and tails?

Since we didn't leave the EU yesterday we can afford to spend a bit more time talking about it, which is what I'll be doing on Sunday afternoon at the always excellent Battle of Ideas festival at the Barbican. Along with Lord Glasman, Joan Hoey of the Economist and King's professor Anand Menon I'll be debating whether the vote to leave the EU has changed British politics irreversibly, and where the focus should be for a domestic renewal. Come along and join us.

I'm looking forward to the inaugural *City A.M.* PA Awards. We've teamed up with Harrods Corporate Service to launch the hunt for the City's best PA or EA. These vital roles are often part diplomat, part organisational supremo, calling for creativity, energy, discretion and judgement. The winners will be announced at the decadent Bob Bob Cite in the Square Mile on 11 December and nominations close on 20 November. Search for *City A.M.* PA Awards to join in.

CAN I QUOTE YOU ON THAT?

Who started that rumour? Must have been Corbyn

US President Donald Trump tells Nigel Farage that he has no desire to include the NHS in any future trade deal

On Wednesday evening I was in the crush of a rush-hour tube carriage, and a short way out of Chancery Lane I heard a woman standing close to me say that she felt faint and needed to sit down. By the time I turned around she had collapsed into the arms of another passenger and a group of commuters were attempting to make space on the seats for her. I was nearby, though not close enough to help her onto the seats. All I could do as we pulled into Holborn was activate the emergency alarm to ensure that the train didn't depart the station. "She's turning blue" was the last thing I heard before darting out of the carriage and calling for help. I ran the length of the platform asking in each carriage for a doctor (to no avail) and when I reached the end I turned to see TfL staff running down the platform towards the carriage I had left . Not feeling able to help any more and not wishing to be a spectator, I left. I do not know what happened to her, or if she's now OK. I hope she is. I wish I knew.

Partner profit at Grant Thornton's British arm falls in scandal-hit year

JAMES BOOTH

@Jamesdbooth1

PARTNER profits at embattled accountancy firm Grant Thornton UK dropped this year after the company was embroiled in a series of scandals and its chief executive stepped down following an internal coup.

In a year to forget for the UK's sixth-largest accountancy firm, partner profits fell nearly six per cent to £323,000 from £343,000, it announced yesterday.

The number of partners grew from 188 to 200 and revenue increased modestly to £501.8m from £490.8m last year.

Last October, the firm's chief executive Sacha Romanovitch — the first woman to run a major UK accountancy firm — stepped down after a press briefing purporting to come from a group of 15 partners at the firm savaged her leadership style.

The briefing accused Romanovitch of pursuing a "socialist agenda" and said the firm had no focus on profitability under her leadership.

Her successor, Dave Dunkley, took over in November and will be under pressure to improve partner profits.

Other issues in his in-tray include the audit watchdog's investigation into the firm's audit of Patisserie Valerie, after a £94m black hole was found in the cafe chain's accounts.

Dunkley said he was "confident that the changes I have made set us up to maximise the market opportunities in the future, [and] generate higher levels of profitability".

The firm also said it was delaying its financial accounts for six months.

It said a "later year-end better matches the seasonality of our business."

Christine Lagarde has urged countries with budget surpluses to increase spending

Eurozone marks unexpectedly steady GDP in the third quarter

ANNA MENIN

@annafmenin

EUROZONE GDP grew steadily in the third quarter, defying market expectations of a slowdown while headline inflation slowed due to a sharp drop in energy prices.

GDP in the EU's 19 member states grew 0.2 per cent on the previous quarter between July and September, according to preliminary figures published yesterday by the EU's statistics office, Eurostat.

Economists had been expecting 0.1 per cent growth for the quarter, according to Reuters data.

Incoming European Central Bank head Christine Lagarde has called on countries with large budget surpluses to increase spending in order to stimulate growth.

MPs urge banks do more to stop economic crime

SEBASTIAN MCCARTHY

@SebMcCarthy

MPs HAVE said that regulators should consider slapping sanctions on financial firms which have not introduced certain anti-fraud measures by March next year.

Banks have been told by the Treasury Select Committee to do more to protect and reimburse consumers exposed to economic crime.

Watchdogs should weigh up the possibility of sanctioning companies that do not introduce measures such as the Confirmation of Payee, which will cross reference payee names with account numbers and sort codes, by March 2020, the influential group of MPs said.

"With scams getting ever-more sophisticated, it's clear that economic crime is a serious and growing problem in the UK," said Rushanara Ali, the Treasury committee's lead member for the inquiry.

Galliford Try joins the Winters of discontent

STANDARD Chartered, Lloyds Banking Group, Aviva and BT Group: even the Investment Association (IA) must have been surprised by the rich seam of targets it uncovered when it launched a campaign to curb the lavish pension perks enjoyed by the chief executives of listed companies.

A quarter of FTSE 100 bosses have seen their pension contributions reduced in line with their staff since the investor body embarked on its crusade. That's decent progress given the grumbling it elicited across boardrooms.

There are still recalcitrants, however. In the next few days I expect Standard Chartered to confirm that it has halved pension contributions for chief executive Bill Winters and chief financial officer Andy Halford from 20 per cent of their overall fixed pay.

To say that has been a grudging move on Winters' part would be understating it: he labelled shareholders "immature" for voting against the bank's remuneration report earlier this year.

The rather more mature IA recently went a stage further, promising to issue a red-top warning on any company which pays more than 25 per cent of salary in pension contribution to executives or fails to align the pension award for a new chief exec in line with their workforce.

Shareholders have an early test case: Galliford Try, the FTSE 250 housebuilder. I understand that its remuneration report has received a red-top alert over the decision to reduce new chief executive Graham Prothero's pension contribution from 20 per cent to 15 per cent of his salary. It's a cut, but it hasn't brought Prothero in line with the rest of Galliford Try's workforce.

Mark Kleinman

Andrew Ninian, the IA's director of corporate governance, describes this as "fundamentally an issue of fairness". For the sake of not much more than £20,000, Galliford Try risks joining the ranks of corporate miscreants at its annual general meeting on 11 November.

Coming as a bitter General Election campaign threatens to shine a spotlight on inequality, executive pay and corporate excess (witness Jeremy Corbyn's remarks yesterday), Prothero and his colleagues might find themselves in political cross-hairs. There are more egregious cases of tin-eared boardrooms in Britain — but arguing about fairness won't wash, Try as Galliford might.

CITY'S LABOUR'S LOST

It has become a cliche in the City to suggest that the only thing feared more by London's financial centre than a no-deal Brexit is the prospect of a Corbyn-led Labour government.

Expect that axiom to become even more prevalent during a bitter election campaign.

I'm told that on Wednesday, shadow chancellor John McDonnell, met a group of City trade associations to hammer home the message: Labour would immediately seek to introduce a financial transactions tax, and launch a public inquiry into Britain's financial services industry.

For the Association of British Insurers, Innovate Finance, UK Finance, the IA and TheCityUK, this was hardly a revelation. And there was a collective sense McDonnell had showed good faith by turning up to address them within hours of parliament approving the election.

Nevertheless, there remains profound unease among financiers that Labour's approach to rebalancing the UK economy would be to apply a massive brake to the City's future growth, rather than attempting to fuel the expansion of other sectors.

A HALF-BAKED AUCTION?

Luke Johnson isn't one for keeping a low profile. Devastated by the discovery of a fraud at Patisserie Holdings that sent the cafe chain-owner hurtling into insolvency, the entrepreneur was back scribbling his weekly business column for the Sunday Times within months.

Now, he's also back on the deal trail, buying the 10-pin bowling operator Allstar Lanes and preparing to put Bread Holdings, the owner of Gail's, on the market.

When Johnson last explored a sale of Gail's, he turned to KPMG to handle the process. Not this time: as the company's auditor, it has been ruled offside by a self-imposed ban on conducting all-but essential consulting work for audit clients.

I can't help but think, though, that KPMG might feel a sense of relief about having to relinquish the sale mandate: after the crisis at Patisserie Holdings, the advisers might need something stronger than coffee before signing off the vendor due diligence work.

Mark Kleinman is City Editor at Sky News @MarkKleinmanSky

Tumble dryer company Whirlpool slammed by MPs over safety record

JAMES BOOTH

@Jamesdbooth1

MPs TODAY slammed tumble dryer company Whirpool for its attitude to safety.

A report by the Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (Beis) Select Committee said it was "astonishing" that four years on from Whirlpool revealing defects in its tumble dryers as many as 800,000 defective models could still be in homes.

The machines were sold under brands such as Hotpoint and Swan.

MPs welcomed the recall of Whirlpool's defective machines, announced in July, but said it took "far too long" to reach the decision.

The MPs slammed Whirlpool's use of non-disclosure agreements and criticised its "efforts to deflect the concerns of... customers rather than focusing on... safety problems".

The report also criticised Whirlpool's response to the Grenfell fire disaster which killed 72 people.

The Grenfell inquiry found that the fire was likely to have started in a Whirlpool fridge-freezer on the fourth floor of the block.

Whirlpool suggested that the fire could have been started by a cigarette falling from a higher floor.

The report said "its [Whirlpool's] contention that the Grenfell Tower fire might have been caused by a stray cigarette is improbable and questions whether it takes its safety responsibilities seriously".

Whirlpool replied, saying: "People's safety is our top priority."

CROSSING THE FLOOR Carpetright mulls £15m takeover bid from largest shareholder

EMBATTLED retailer Carpetright is in last ditch rescue talks with its biggest investor. The flooring specialist, headed by boss Wilf Walsh, is mulling a £15.2m offer from shareholder Meditor amid fears that it will not be able to pay off its debt pile.

Crest Nicholson shares slump on profit warning

JESS CLARK

@jclarkjouno

FTSE 250-listed housebuilder Crest Nicholson issued another profit warning yesterday as new chief executive Peter Truscott outlined a strategic overhaul of the business.

The developer said profit before tax is expected to be between £120m to £130m for the year to 31 October, down as much as 32 per cent year on year.

The firm's share price dropped over five per cent to 388.4p yesterday after the company issued its fourth profit warning in two years.

The company also said it will report a one-off charge of £17m in the year, due to new fire safety regulations on completed buildings.

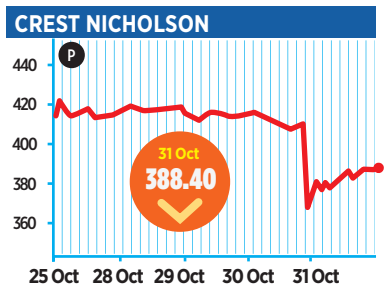
Profit before tax is expected to fall the following year to be between £110m to £120m in 2020, before returning to growth in 2021.

Truscott, who joined the firm in September, unveiled new proposals to steady the business such as reducing land sales and increasing the number of sales outlets.

Russ Mould, investment director at AJ Bell, said: "Profit warnings often come in the early stages of a new chief executive's tenure if they have done a review of the business and found unsatisfactory practices.

"You often have to wait up to six months for a review to be completed, so to have a profit warning only seven weeks after Truscott joined would imply that the strategic challenges were glaringly obvious and needed addressing immediately."

Truscott said: "We are taking decisive action to ensure the business moves further and faster to make the most of the opportunities in front of it. While current market conditions remain uncertain, the prospects for Crest Nicholson over the medium term remain highly attractive."



BACKLASH Wework founder accused of discriminating against former top executive

THE FORMER chief of staff to ousted Wework boss Adam Neuman has accused him and the company of discrimination, saying she was belittled for getting pregnant and forced out of her job when she took maternity leave and after raising concerns.

Google calls for protections in Texas-led US antitrust inquiry

JONATHAN STEMPEL

GOOGLE yesterday petitioned a Texas judge to ensure that the US state-led probe into possible antitrust violations by the advertising and search company will not compromise its confidential business information.

The request by Google and its parent Alphabet came after Texas attorney general Ken Paxton, who is leading the probe by 48 US states, Washington, DC and Puerto Rico, hired two consultants who have worked for Google rivals or critics.

Google wants an order preventing the consultants Cristina Caffarra, an economist who has worked for Microsoft and News Corp, and Eugene Burrus, a former Microsoft lawyer, from disclosing sensitive information or working for rivals until one year after their consultancies end.

Paxton's office had no immediate comment. Technology-related companies such as Google, Amazon, and Facebook have faced growing antitrust concerns from regulators and politicians. *Reuters*

IN BRIEF

THOMSON REUTERS SEES QUARTERLY PROFIT RISE

Media conglomerate Thomson Reuters has reported a surge in operating profit for the third quarter, ahead of analysts' estimates. Operating profit at the Canada-based company jumped 51 per cent to $262m (£202m) for the three months to September, ahead of $173m for the same period a year ago. Thomson Reuters said the increase reflected a "revaluation" of the warrants it holds in Refinitiv, which the London Stock Exchange agreed to buy from Blackstone for $27bn in August.

CO-OPERATIVE BANK AND CAPITA RENEW DEAL

Capita has been tasked with running the Co-operative Bank's mortgage servicing operations for the next six years, in a contract win which indicates a once-strained relationship between the two is back on course. The £141m deal comes after a public spat in September 2016, in which the Co-operative Bank claimed the London-listed firm had failed to deliver on elements of the plan. Months later, Capita said the two had "resolved their contractual differences".

AMERICAN AIRLINES GETS VOCAL ON BOEING FIASCO

American Airlines' flight attendants union still has safety concerns about the Boeing 737 Max and is demanding an active role in the relaunch of the grounded aircraft, its president told Boeing's chief executive in a letter seen by Reuters. "The 28,000 flight attendants working for American Airlines refuse to walk onto a plane that may not be safe and are calling for the highest possible safety standards to avoid another tragedy," it said.

All Saints has welcomed its sixth consecutive year of sales growth

All Saints back in black after boost from wholesale and licensing arm

JESS CLARK

@jclarkjourno

FASHION retailer All Saints returned to profit in its latest full-year results after increasing focus on its wholesale and licensing businesses.

Operating profit in the 12 months to 2 February was £3.6m, up from a loss of £6.2m the previous year.

The east London-based company reported a loss before tax of £26.1m, compared to £32.8m in 2018. Revenue increased from £327m to £330.9m, driven by 40 per cent boost in the firm's non-retail divisions such as wholesale, franchising and licensing.

All Saints' gross profit margin increased to 65.3 per cent compared with 64.9 per cent as the retailer reduced promotional activity during the year.

Chief executive Peter Wood has overseen an overhaul of the firm's strategy since his appointment in September last year, increasing investment in the retailer's core fashion offering and launching new products such as fragrance and watches.

In the first half of the current financial year — to 3 August — the firm reported year-on-year sales growth of 15 per cent, and a 63 per cent increase in non-retail revenues.

Travel sick: Lack of demand brings Air France-KLM profit down to earth

Trade tensions and a litany of geopolitical problems have dampened demand

ALEX DANIEL

@alexmdaniel

THE PARENT company of Air France has warned that its income from people buying plane tickets fell in the last quarter, as "geopolitical uncertainties" hit its business.

Shares in Air France-KLM fell as much as 12 per cent yesterday as the firm reported that net profit had halved during late-summer trading. They eventually recovered to one per cent down.

The company encompasses both French airline Air France and Dutch KLM, which between them operate 26 daily flights to Paris and Amsterdam from Heathrow and London City airport.

Air France-KLM's net income fell to €366m (£315.2m) over July, August and September, a 53 per cent drop on the same period last year.

The firm reported a 0.6 per cent fall in passenger unit revenue — an important industry measure which pits sales against flight capacity.

Passenger numbers rose 2.1 per cent, with 29,119 people flying with the airline over the period.

"People's inclination to travel is not at its peak," said Frederic Gagey, chief financial officer of Air France-KLM, citing social and political unrest in Algeria, Argentina, Brazil, Hong Kong and Lebanon among "a number of crises around the world".

Directors at the firm predicted the trend of slowing demand would continue to hurt figures towards the end of the year.

Nuclear plant in India falls victim to cyber attack

ALEX DANIEL

@alexmdaniel

INDIA yesterday admitted its newest nuclear power plant had fallen victim to a cyber attack, illustrating how exposed one of the most valuable sectors to the emerging economy is to cyber criminals.

The Kudankulam nuclear power plant was hacked using malware which is designed to extract data. The software has been linked to Lazarus Group, which is known to have ties to North Korean-backed outfits

India's state-owned Nuclear Power Corporation (NPCIL) said malware had been found in the system, but that it was "isolated from the critical internal network". However, cybersecurity experts have disputed this claim, saying critical information had been compromised.

NPCIL runs 22 commercial nuclear reactors in the country, which can produce up to 6,780MW.

Indian MP Shashi Tharoor said: "With NPCIL confirming the cyber attack on Kudankulam, the National Cyber Security Coordinator and NSA [National Security Agency] must address public concerns about this dangerous intrusion on India's critical infrastructure".

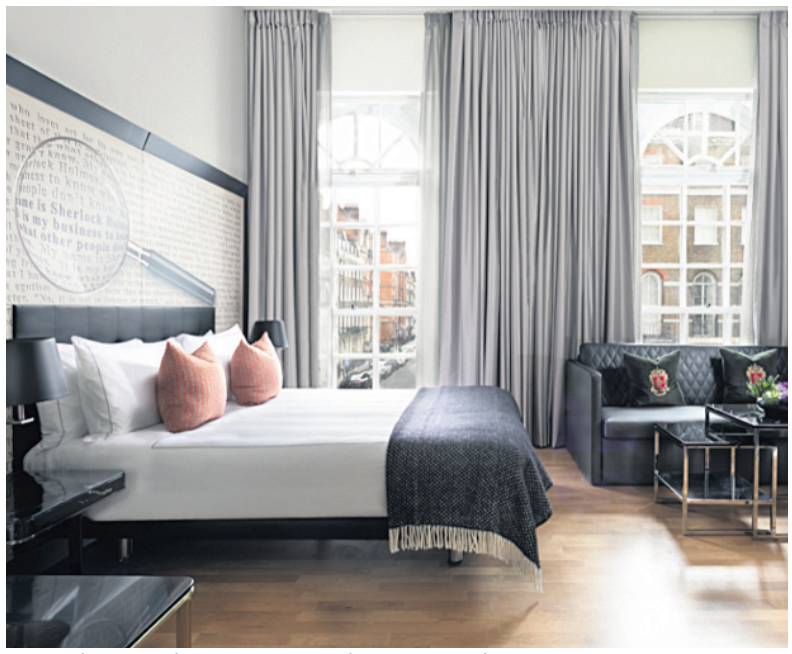
"Why has it taken so long for the government to create and fortify India's cyber capabilities in order to punish, deter and repel such attacks?"

Emily Orton, co-founder of cybersecurity giant Darktrace, told *City A.M.* the attack was a "wake-up call" to the Indian government, but also had ramifications across the globe.

"We assume that our critical infrastructure is bulletproof and that it's reliable... The reality is that cyber threats mean those physical systems are now increasingly vulnerable."

"The reality is today, you can't keep the bad guy off your network. If an attacker really wants to get onto your system, they will find a way. So the new game is stopping the activity from escalating and catching it very early, a bit like your immune system catches a virus at a very early stage before you're affected by it."

The hack was first identified by Virus Total, a virus scanner site owned by Google parent company Alphabet. Virus Total flagged a data dump which was related to the India malware earlier this week.


PPHE will expand its Art'otel range with new hotels in Battersea and Hoxton

London hotel room rates push up sales growth at Park Plaza owner

JESS CLARK

@jclarkjourno

FTSE 250 hotel group PPHE, which operates Park Plaza hotels, reported revenue growth in the third quarter yesterday, driven by a strong performance at its London destinations.

The company, which is also developing two London Art'otels in Battersea and Hoxton, said like-for-like revenue increased 5.6 per cent to £120.2m in the three months to the end of September.

A hike in average room rates, particularly in the UK, boosted like-for-like revenue per available room by 3.9 per cent to £116.3m.

The group, which has a strategic partnership with hotel operator Radisson, said it expects to spend £300m on new developments going forward, including a branch of its art-focused Art'otel brand in New York.

This month the company launched the Park Plaza Vondelpark in Amsterdam following a £9m investment and opened Park Plaza Utrecht.

'Make pensions simpler,' says Guy Opperman

ALEX DANIEL

@alexmdaniel

LONG, confusing workplace pension statements could be a thing of the past if a government initiative, set to be unveiled today, comes to fruition.

Pensions minister Guy Opperman wants providers to be clearer and more concise about savers' pension prospects, and will today warn that he will legislate if he does not see change imminently.

The Department for Work and Pensions could even bring in measures which limit statements to two sides of A4 paper.

Opperman wants statements to tell savers how much money is in their pension pots and how much they could have when they retire.

"Pension statements are too long, too wordy, full of jargon and confuse savers. People don't read them, or if they do they can't make head nor tail of them," he said.

"Simpler statements provide clear information that people will actually understand and this will encourage them to save more."

He added: "I want pensions schemes to drive forward real change quickly but, if necessary, I will consider regulation.

"Savers who have more than one pension pot and receive more than one statement find it hard to compare them. Simpler statements will fix this."


Sales of Nintendo's new Switch Lite console boomed over the summer

Nintendo's second-quarter income doubles as Switch Lite brings boost

NORIYUKI HIRATA

NINTENDO's second-quarter operating profit more than doubled, blowing past analyst estimates, on strong demand for its Switch console.

Nintendo sold 4.98m units of its hybrid home-portable Switch device in the six months to September and 1.95m handheld-only Switch Lite units that went on sale in September.

It would be "premature" to raise Nintendo's full-year hardware sales forecast for Switch from 18m units, chief executive Shuntaro Furukawa told reporters in Osaka yesterday.

The Switch Lite launch is part of the Kyoto-based firm's drive to expand the device's appeal beyond hardcore gamers, with the arrival of two Pokemon titles next month expected to drive demand for the low-cost version of the device.

Nintendo, which drew in millions of casual players with the its Wii Fit game and balance board gadget 12 years ago, faces ever more competition from smartphone apps to video streaming.

Nintendo's operating profit for the July-September quarter was 66.8bn yen (£478m) versus 30.9bn yen a year earlier. That was well above an average forecast of 50bn yen from analyst estimates. *Reuters*

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LONDON REPORT

FTSE plunges amid US-China tension and Shell results

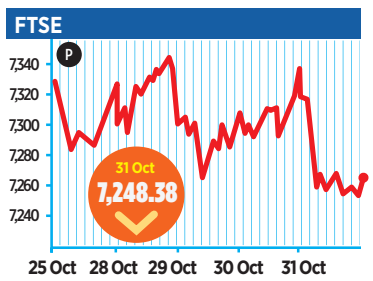
THE FTSE 100 blue-chip stock index dropped more than one per cent on yesterday, under pressure from results-driven falls in **Shell** and **Lloyds** and the latest tensions over the US-China trade situation.

The main index ended 1.1 per cent lower on its worst day in a month, lagging its European counterparts, while losses in the domestically-focused FTSE 250 were capped at 0.5 per cent in response to stronger sterling.

A report that Chinese officials have doubts over sealing a comprehensive long-term trade deal with the US diverted attention away from the Fed's widely-expected interest rate cut.

Aside from the trade uncertainty, losses among blue-chips were down to Shell, the index's most valuable company, which tumbled more than four per cent after warning that uncertain economic conditions could slow its $25bn share buyback.

Homebuilder **Crest Nicholson** dropped 5.1 per cent after warning that its annual profit could plunge by as much as a third.



BEST OF THE BROKERS

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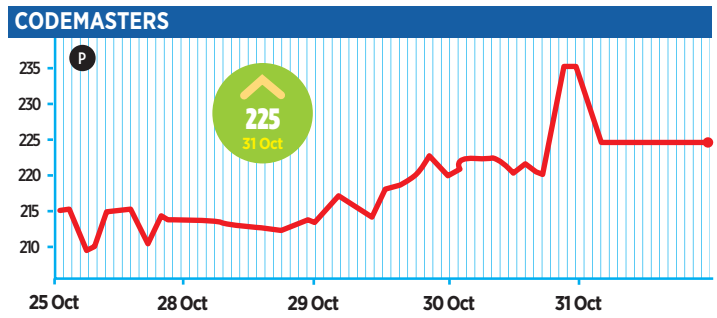
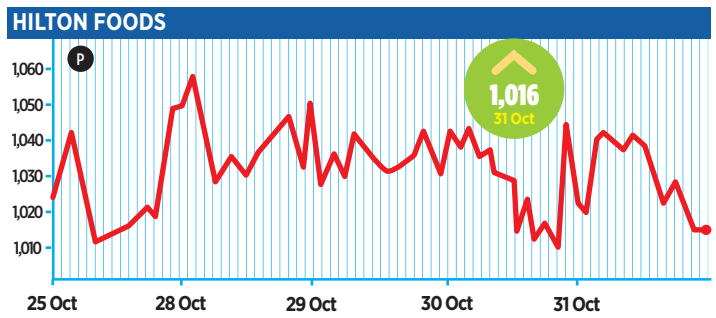


Codemasters shares were full speed ahead yesterday following the news the game maker announced it had extended its contract to produce games in the popular F1 franchise until at least 2025. Liberum analysts think the game will remain highly profitable, rating the company as "buy", with a target price of 310p.



Hilton Food has taken a bigger bite out of the market, and now packages all of Tesco's red meat products, the company said in a trading update yesterday. Peel Hunt analysts say Hilton is making progress in vegetarian and vegan products in Europe, and rate the company as "buy" with a target price of 1,150p.

NEW YORK REPORT

Wall St retreats on trade cloud

US STOCKS fell yesterday as conflicting tones surrounding a possible trade deal between the United States and China eclipsed strong earnings reports from **Apple** and **Facebook**.

Mixed signals around trade gave investors reason for caution after a Bloomberg report said Chinese officials have doubts about whether it is possible to reach a comprehensive long-term trade deal with Washington and US President Donald Trump.

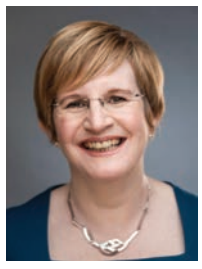
The decline was the second for the S&P 500 in the past seven days, after the benchmark index notched intraday record highs in the past three sessions and a closing record in two of the past three days.

Apple rose 2.3 per cent after the iPhone maker forecast sales for the holiday shopping quarter ahead of expectations. Facebook gained 1.8 per cent after reporting an uptick in users.

The Dow Jones Industrial Average fell 140.46 points, or 0.52 per cent, to 27,046.23, the S&P 500 lost 9.21 points, or 0.30 per cent, to 3,037.56 and the Nasdaq Composite dropped 11.62 points, or 0.14 per cent, to 8,292.36.

CITY MOVES WHO'S SWITCHING JOBS

CRIPPS PEMBERTON GREENISH



Leading law firm Cripps Pemberton Greenish has announced the appointment of Melanie Stancliffe as partner at its London office. Melanie, who is ranked as an expert in legal directories Legal 500 and Chambers and Partners, joined the team on 30 October. With over 21 years' experience, she advises senior executives, professionals and corporates on a range of employment matters including terminations, boardroom disputes and high value tribunal claims. She has particular experience in the sectors of IT, technology, financial services and retail. Melanie commented: "I'm excited to join Cripps Pemberton Greenish, the firm has a great reputation for supporting businesses and individuals for all their needs, including its employment work, highlighted by its recent rankings in key legal directories. I am delighted to work with the team to continue to build on this reputation, and add to its offering to clients."

WINCKWORTH SHERWOOD

National law firm Winckworth Sherwood has grown its commercial property team with the appointment of its new partner Jamie Barton. Jamie joins from Knights and will be based in Winckworth Sherwood's Oxford office, bolstering the firm's expertise in the rapidly developing Thames Valley growth area. Jamie previously worked at at Brook Street des Roches, before the firm was acquired by Knights earlier this year, where he helped to build up an impressive client base, acting nationally for retail and leisure industry clients including McDonald's, Arcadia Group and charities including Oxfam. Jamie commented on his new role: "Winckworth Sherwood boasts a genuinely impressive reputation in the property sector and its values are closely aligned to our own. Both Richard and I are particularly pleased to be moving to a firm which values its client relationships and will allow us to build on our existing connections nationally and in the local community."

MAYER BROWN

Mayer Brown has expanded its tax transactions and consulting practice with the addition of Matthew Mortimer, who joins the firm as a partner in London. Matthew previously served as special counsel at Milbank. Matthew will maintain an extensive practice, including advising on the taxation of banking, corporate and structured finance transactions, as well as on debt restructurings, mergers and acquisitions and investment fund formation. Mayer Brown's senior partner in London, Sally Davies, commented on the new appointment, saying: "We are delighted to welcome talented lawyers such as Matthew to our platform to serve the complex needs of our clients in the UK and around the world."

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NEWS

China's factory activity plunges for sixth consecutive month in October

GABRIEL CROSSLEY

FACTORY activity in China shrank for the sixth straight month in October and by more than expected, while service sector growth eased as firms grapple with the weakest economic growth in nearly 30 years.

The world's second-largest economy is facing heightened risks from slowing global demand and the Sino-US trade war, adding pressure on politicians to roll out more stimulus to avoid a sharper slowdown and bigger job losses.

The Purchasing Managers' Index (PMI) fell to 49.3 in October, China's National Bureau of Statistics said yesterday, versus 49.8 in September.

The 50-point mark separates growth from contraction on a monthly basis. Economists polled had expected the reading would be unchanged from September.

Weighed down by cooling domestic demand, low investment and a trade war with the US, China's economic growth slowed to a low of six per cent in the third quarter, raising expectations that Beijing will need to roll out more support measures soon.

New export orders fell for the 17th month in a row in October, with the sub-index down to 47.0 from 48.2 in the previous month.

Total new orders, which includes those for export and domestic use, fell back to contractionary territory and erased September's fleeting growth, suggesting continued weakness in demand at home.

Demand contraction would put a dent on prices and further chip away the already-thin margin for manufacturers.

In September, China's producer prices posted the steepest decline in more than three years, while industrial profits shrank for the second month.

Reuters

Falling London housing prices hit Foxtons sales

JESS CLARK

@jclarkjourno

LONDON estate agent Foxtons yesterday reported falling sales revenue in the third quarter as house prices in the capital took a hit.

Sales revenue slumped 15 per cent to £8.4m, down from £9.9m as ongoing political uncertainty led to lower volumes, falling prices and fewer high value sales.

"Ongoing political uncertainty continued to weigh on volumes and prices in the London residential sales market," Foxtons said in a statement yesterday.

"We believe this to be a resilient performance given the market backdrop," it added.

Group revenue for the third quarter was down seven per cent to £32.5m from £35.1m in the previous year.

Foxtons said it grew its share of the lettings market after it made improvements to its rental offering and decided not to increase charges to landlords following the introduction of the tenant fee ban this year.

However, the lettings business reported lower revenue in the third quarter, down four per cent to £22.1m, due to tenant fee regulation changes in June.

FTSE 100	FTSE 250	FTSE ALL SHARE	DOW JONES	NASDAQ	S&P 500
7248.38	20021.50	3993.46	27046.23	8292.36	3037.56
▼ 82.40	▼ 93.60	▼ 39.34	▼ 140.46	▼ 11.62	▼ 9.21

£/€	1.1603	▲ 0.0037	€/$	1.1151	▼ 0.0002
£/$	1.2939	▲ 0.0042	€/£	0.8616	▼ 0.0026
£/¥	139.77	▼ 0.6234	€/¥	120.48	▼ 0.9372

GILTS

	Price	Chg	High	Low
Tsy 2.000 20	100.94	0.01	102.2	100.9
Tsy 3.750 20	102.63	0.01	105.5	102.6
Tsy 4.750 20	101.40	-0.01	105.4	101.4
Tsy 2.500 20	354.45	0.00	360.7	352.7
Tsy 8.000 21	111.90	0.04	118.6	111.5
Tsy 4.000 22	108.32	0.06	110.6	108.2
Tsy 1.875 22	114.26	0.10	118.3	114.0
Tsy 0.500 22	100.20	0.06	100.8	98.2
Tsy 2.250 23	106.97	0.09	108.0	105.3
Tsy 0.125 24	112.14	0.13	115.8	110.9
Tsy 2.500 24	367.60	0.17	377.9	360.3
Tsy 5.000 25	124.26	0.13	126.1	122.9
Tsy 1.250 27	134.48	0.29	141.1	129.2
Tsy 4.250 27	130.23	0.21	132.8	124.0
Tsy 6.000 28	148.74	0.23	152.2	142.1
Tsy 0.125 29	128.13	0.39	134.7	119.8
Tsy 4.750 30	144.07	0.28	147.9	133.9
Tsy 4.125 30	383.93	0.36	404.2	361.1
Tsy 4.250 32	142.01	0.31	146.4	130.3
Tsy 1.250 32	156.88	0.48	167.7	145.5
Tsy 0.125 36	148.83	0.66	162.5	135.4
Tsy 4.250 36	150.09	0.41	155.7	135.0
Tsy 4.750 38	165.13	0.51	171.8	147.0
Tsy 0.625 40	169.42	0.76	185.7	153.4
Tsy 4.500 42	169.49	0.61	176.7	147.2
Tsy 3.500 45	152.01	0.68	159.0	128.9
Tsy 4.250 46	172.91	0.74	181.0	146.4
Tsy 4.025 49	179.68	0.78	188.9	150.5
Tsy 0.500 50	198.77	1.21	222.9	173.7
Tsy 0.250 52	195.66	1.25	221.1	168.8

AEROSPACE & DEFENCE

	Price	Chg	High	Low
BAE Systems	576.2	0.4	588.2	443.9
Cobham	157.8	-0.9	168.3	96.8
Meggitt	624.4	-1.4	643.0	458.0
QinetiQ Group	315.2	2.2	318.2	267.0
Rolls-Royce Holdi	709.0	-3.4	988.4	702.0
Senior	184.7	0.7	278.6	174.0
Ultra Electronics	1950.0	7.0	2252.0	1232.0

BANKS

	Price	Chg	High	Low
Bank of Georgia G	1299.0	15.0	1755.0	1252.0
Barclays	167.8	-0.6	178.9	136.2
Close Brothers Gr	1383.0	-5.0	1605.0	1227.0
HSBC Holdings	583.0	-5.0	680.6	579.7
Lloyds Banking Gr	56.8	-0.8	66.6	48.6
Royal Bank of Sco	212.7	-1.0	270.4	177.7
Standard Chartere	701.0	-11.8	736.8	549.5
TBC Bank Group	1280.0	-14.0	1710.0	1150.0
Virgin Money UK	137.5	-0.2	275.8	104.4

BEVERAGES

	Price	Chg	High	Low
Barr (A.G.)	555.0	0.0	975.0	540.0
Britvic	987.0	-9.5	1068.0	782.5
Coca-Cola HBC AG	2350.0	3.0	3074.0	2244.0
Diageo	3164.5	-13.5	3625.5	2634.0

CHEMICALS

	Price	Chg	High	Low
Croda Internation	4816.0	12.0	5375.0	4564.0
Elementis	148.7	0.1	214.2	129.8
Johnson Matthey	3070.0	-1.0	3454.0	2620.0
Sirius Minerals	2.9	-0.1	24.2	2.7
Synthomer	279.0	-1.6	428.1	274.9
Victrex plc	2196.0	10.0	2720.0	1845.0

CONSTRUCTION & MATERIALS

	Price	Chg	High	Low
Balfour Beatty	225.4	0.4	295.0	194.2
CRH	2816.0	-34.0	2873.0	1971.5
Galliford Try	733.0	-6.0	900.5	512.0
Ibstock	241.8	-3.0	262.0	193.1
Marshalls	711.5	-2.0	740.0	415.2
Polypipe Group	453.0	4.2	466.0	312.8

ELECTRICITY

	Price	Chg	High	Low
Contour Global	210.5	0.0	218.0	150.1
Drax Group	296.8	-5.8	427.2	251.0
SSE	1283.5	3.0	1322.5	1008.0

ELECTRONIC & ELECTRICAL EQ.

	Price	Chg	High	Low
Halma	1873.5	-9.0	2094.0	1282.0
Morgan Advanced M	235.6	-6.4	281.2	232.4
Oxford Instrument	1294.0	-2.0	1424.0	842.0
Renishaw	3788.0	-12.0	4670.0	3232.0
Spectris	2392.0	-43.0	2898.0	1992.5

EQUITY INVESTMENT INSTRUM.

	Price	Chg	High	Low
Aberforth Smaller	1300.0	-6.0	1346.0	1114.0
Alliance Trust	783.0	-8.0	838.0	672.0
Apax Global Alpha	161.5	1.0	165.5	127.0
AVI Global Trust	745.0	-1.0	781.0	660.0
Baillie Gifford J	790.0	2.0	840.0	663.0
Bankers Inv Trust	927.0	-6.0	970.0	766.0
BBGI SICAV S.A. (	161.5	-1.0	168.0	150.5
BlackRock Smaller	1462.0	-14.0	1500.0	1160.0
BMO Global Smalle	133.6	-2.4	140.6	122.0
Caledonia Investm	2985.0	-10.0	3110.0	2740.0
City of London In	415.0	-2.5	431.5	376.0
Edinburgh Inv Tru	600.0	-2.0	654.0	535.0
F&C Investment Tr	703.0	-5.0	731.0	616.0
Fidelity China Sp	208.0	-1.0	250.0	183.4
Fidelity European	249.0	-2.0	257.5	202.0
Fidelity Special	265.5	-1.5	270.0	220.0
Finsbury Growth &	882.0	-4.0	958.0	741.0
Foresight Solar F	117.0	-0.5	126.0	107.5
GCP Infrastructur	128.4	-1.0	131.6	122.4
Genesis Emerging	759.0	-1.0	783.0	618.0
Greencoat UK Wind	145.8	-0.8	148.6	124.4
HarbourVest Globa	1660.0	-8.0	1786.0	1326.0
Herald Investment	1286.0	-10.0	1364.0	1055.0
HGCapital Trust	240.5	0.0	243.0	175.0
HICL Infrastructu	171.2	-2.0	173.4	149.9
International Pub	157.8	-1.2	165.4	146.8
JPMorgan American	458.5	-5.0	494.5	386.5
JPMorgan Emerging	964.0	-1.0	1066.0	783.0
JPMorgan Indian I	744.0	-10.0	790.0	600.0
JPMorgan Japanese	444.0	-0.5	457.0	367.0
Jupiter European	768.0	-7.0	875.0	666.0
Law Debenture Cor	594.0	-8.0	618.0	534.0
Mercantile Invest	223.5	-1.5	230.0	168.0
Monks Inv Trust	888.0	-8.0	964.0	710.0
Murray Internatio	1208.0	-10.0	1221.4	1058.0
NB Global Floatin	89.3	-0.1	91.8	87.6
NextEnergy Solar	120.0	-0.5	124.5	109.5
Pantheon Internat	2260.0	5.0	2330.0	1955.0
Perpetual Income	317.0	-2.0	341.0	284.5
Pershing Square H	1424.0	-8.0	1570.0	990.0
Personal Assets T	41950.0	50.0	43150.0	38900.0
Polar Capital Tec	1416.0	-6.0	1500.0	1066.0
RIT Capital Partn	2125.0	-10.0	2170.0	1892.0
Riverstone Energy	441.5	-3.5	1256.0	441.5
Schroder Asia Pac	432.5	-1.5	469.5	385.0
Schroder Oriental	254.0	-2.0	274.0	228.0
Scottish Inv Trus	807.0	-13.0	843.0	748.0
Scottish Mortgage	505.5	2.0	568.5	441.4
Sequoia Economic	114.0	0.0	117.6	108.5
Smithson Investme	1200.0	-2.0	1280.0	1000.2
Syncona Limited N	225.0	-1.5	294.0	213.5
Temple Bar Inv Tr	1314.0	-18.0	1366.0	1116.0
Templeton Emergin	755.0	-5.0	829.0	666.0
The Renewables In	130.8	-0.2	133.2	109.3
TR Property Inv T	443.5	1.5	450.0	353.5
Vietnam Enterpris	485.0	-4.0	509.0	421.5
VinaCapital Vietn	342.5	-4.5	357.5	323.0
Witan Inv Trust	214.5	-3.0	225.5	189.6
Worldwide Healthc	2615.0	-15.0	2835.0	2325.0

FINANCIAL SERVICES

	Price	Chg	High	Low
3i Group	1128.0	-5.0	1184.5	756.2
3i Infrastructure	286.5	-1.0	306.5	241.7
AJ Bell	370.5	-10.5	477.0	220.0
Allied Minds	51.5	-0.2	84.2	37.3
Amigo Holdings	69.9	-0.9	297.5	67.8
Arrow Global Grou	237.8	0.4	273.0	167.2
ASA International	286.0	6.0	481.0	277.0
Ashmore Group	465.6	-11.2	542.5	341.2
Brewin Dolphin Ho	332.4	-1.8	358.0	287.6
City of London In	425.0	-7.5	445.0	360.0
CMC Markets	130.0	1.2	132.0	77.4
Coats Group	71.3	-2.6	91.3	69.1
Georgia Capital	973.0	-7.0	1260.0	941.0
Hargreaves Lansdo	1772.0	-5.0	2433.0	1633.0
IG Group Holdings	635.4	-5.2	644.5	474.8
IntegraFin Holdin	369.0	-2.5	406.1	270.0
Intermediate Capi	1486.0	-8.0	1507.0	899.0
International Per	133.0	4.4	222.2	87.0
Investec	437.6	-1.0	518.6	395.3
IP Group	56.0	-0.5	122.0	55.7
John Laing Group	365.0	-2.6	402.0	298.2
JTC	361.0	6.0	440.0	287.0
Jupiter Fund Mana	342.6	-3.7	432.0	287.6
Liontrust Asset M	814.0	10.0	820.0	532.0
LMS Capital	59.0	0.0	59.5	44.0
London Finance &	36.5	0.0	41.5	36.5
London Stock Exch	6954.0	-148.0	7514.0	3867.0
Man Group	143.5	-3.6	175.2	126.8
OneSavings Bank	360.0	-4.0	447.4	313.6
Paragon Banking G	503.5	-4.0	510.0	379.2
Plus500 Ltd (DI)	800.0	-28.2	1647.0	495.0
Provident Financi	440.1	-5.0	658.6	356.0
Quilter	136.9	-0.3	156.6	110.6
Rathbone Brothers	2075.0	-55.0	2540.0	2075.0
Real Estate Credi	166.5	0.0	175.5	163.0
Record	39.9	-1.4	41.2	27.3
River and Mercant	247.0	7.0	302.0	212.0
S&U	2110.0	30.0	2440.0	1767.5
Sanne Group	528.0	-21.0	752.0	450.0
Schroders	3095.0	-6.0	3210.0	2334.0
Standard Life Abe	303.5	-2.7	310.4	224.9
TP ICAP	342.9	-1.4	346.9	270.0
Walker Crips Grou	26.5	0.0	35.5	24.0
XPS Pensions Grou	125.0	11.5	171.0	95.0

FIXED LINE TELECOMS

	Price	Chg	High	Low
BT Group	204.7	2.8	264.7	158.9
TalkTalk Telecom	111.6	1.1	132.8	96.6
Telecom Plus	1202.0	10.0	1528.0	1130.0

FOOD & DRUG RETAILERS

	Price	Chg	High	Low
Greggs	1776.0	5.0	2476.0	1161.0
Morrison (Wm) Sup	198.9	-1.8	255.1	176.9
Ocado Group	1329.0	6.5	1435.0	749.8
Sainsbury (J)	203.5	-2.2	324.0	177.1
SSP Group	637.0	9.0	721.0	608.0
Tesco	235.2	-0.5	253.0	189.6
UDG Healthcare Pu	773.0	5.0	821.0	551.0

FOOD PRODUCERS

	Price	Chg	High	Low
Associated Britis	2226.0	-6.0	2638.0	2041.0
Bakkavor Group	118.4	0.2	170.0	93.3
Cranswick	3104.0	-16.0	3408.0	2472.0
Greencore Group	232.4	-1.8	238.6	162.9
Hilton Food Group	1016.0	0.0	1088.0	884.0
Tate & Lyle	673.0	-2.8	800.4	658.4
Unilever	4622.5	-29.5	5324.0	3941.0

FORESTRY & PAPER

	Price	Chg	High	Low
Mondi	1597.5	9.5	1898.0	1510.5

GAS, WATER & MULTIUTILITIES

	Price	Chg	High	Low
Centrica	72.6	0.4	155.6	64.6
National Grid	901.3	-0.6	925.8	748.7
Pennon Group	898.2	7.6	924.0	684.2
Severn Trent	2255.0	8.0	2317.0	1770.0
United Utilities	870.2	9.2	891.4	718.4

GENERAL INDUSTRIALS

	Price	Chg	High	Low
Smith (DS)	357.6	0.1	392.9	292.2
Smiths Group	1613.5	-9.5	1692.0	1315.0
Smurfit Kappa Gro	2572.0	-24.0	2686.0	1934.0
Vesuvius	399.4	-2.0	642.0	341.0

GENERAL RETAILERS

	Price	Chg	High	Low
Auto Trader Group	562.2	-0.2	606.0	409.6
B&M European Valu	370.3	4.1	426.3	278.6
Card Factory	169.4	-2.5	209.0	151.2
Dixons Carphone	131.3	-3.3	178.6	104.9
Dunelm Group	789.5	-54.5	981.0	482.8
Inchcape	645.0	-8.0	678.0	519.5
JD Sports Fashion	768.4	-1.2	781.0	318.5
Just Eat	735.0	-5.4	812.0	533.8
Kingfisher	207.2	1.8	266.2	185.9
Marks & Spencer G	181.5	1.2	299.1	163.9
Next	6582.0	-72.0	6850.0	3991.0
Pets at Home Grou	206.2	2.4	239.4	110.0
Sports Direct Int	309.0	-4.6	340.3	214.0
Vivo Energy	122.0	-1.6	139.5	96.0
WH Smith	2188.0	12.0	2288.0	1697.0

HEALTH CARE EQUIPMETN & S.

	Price	Chg	High	Low
Assura	74.8	0.0	75.9	52.4
Convatec Group	197.2	-5.7	204.4	118.6
Mediclinic Intern	366.0	-5.2	403.2	293.4
NMC Health	2183.0	0.0	3678.0	1801.5
Smith & Nephew	1652.5	-62.5	1990.0	1273.5

HHOLD GDS & HOME CONSTR.

	Price	Chg	High	Low
Barratt Developme	631.2	-6.6	683.0	434.0
Bellway	3160.0	-44.0	3536.0	2419.0
Berkeley Group Ho	4401.0	-64.0	4541.0	3226.0
Bovis Homes Group	1170.0	-18.0	1226.0	828.0
Countryside Prope	353.2	-6.0	368.0	276.8
Crest Nicholson H	388.4	-21.0	435.2	309.4
McCarthy & Stone	146.5	0.9	158.8	123.5
Persimmon	2277.0	-21.0	2471.0	1836.0
Reckitt Benckiser	5964.0	-60.0	6703.0	5593.0
Redrow	602.0	-10.0	674.6	460.8
Taylor Wimpey	165.5	-1.0	192.3	129.3

INDUSTRIAL ENGINEERING

	Price	Chg	High	Low
Bodycote	716.0	-1.0	903.0	652.0
Hill & Smith Hold	1310.0	-10.0	1357.0	990.5
IMI	1003.0	-9.0	1069.5	870.0
Melrose Industrie	213.1	-2.6	218.0	146.3
RHI Magnesita N.V	3478.0	58.0	5000.0	3318.0
Rotork	301.4	-0.9	324.2	235.7
Spirax-Sarco Engi	7925.0	-40.0	9400.0	5900.0
Weir Group	1346.5	-32.0	1814.0	1240.0

INDUSTRIAL METALS & MINING

	Price	Chg	High	Low
Evraz	367.2	-11.6	709.4	366.4
Ferrexpo	126.0	3.0	301.3	119.9

INDUSTRIAL TRANSPORTATION

	Price	Chg	High	Low
BBA Aviation	303.6	2.2	324.8	207.0
Clarkson	2820.0	35.0	2900.0	1878.0
Fisher (James) &	1944.0	-6.0	2260.0	1600.0
Royal Mail	211.6	0.7	367.7	188.4

NON LIFE INSURANCE

	Price	Chg	High	Low
Admiral Group	2022.0	-10.0	2300.0	1958.0
Beazley	586.5	-9.5	628.0	492.6
Direct Line Insur	272.1	-4.4	366.5	272.1
Hastings Group Ho	182.0	-2.4	231.6	174.0
Hiscox Limited (D	1489.0	-2.0	1777.0	1418.0
Lancashire Holdin	711.5	-4.0	746.0	561.5
RSA Insurance Gro	522.2	-1.6	597.0	496.6
Sabre Insurance G	295.0	0.5	306.5	253.5

LIFE INSURANCE

	Price	Chg	High	Low
Aviva	415.2	-1.2	438.8	352.3
Legal & General G	263.7	0.7	291.2	216.7
Phoenix Group Hol	704.2	4.2	724.8	544.0
Prudential	1348.5	-18.0	1790.0	1326.0
St James's Place	1041.0	7.0	1143.0	913.6

MEDIA

	Price	Chg	High	Low
4Imprint Group	2970.0	20.0	3130.0	1800.0
Ascential	349.2	0.2	411.0	337.2
Bloomsbury Publis	250.0	4.0	262.0	190.5
Centaur Media	32.5	1.5	56.5	31.0
Entertainment One	556.5	0.0	589.0	336.4
Euromoney Institu	1412.0	-10.0	1498.0	1132.0
Future	1514.0	154.0	1566.0	435.0
Goco Group	96.8	-0.7	103.8	64.6
Haynes Publishing	366.0	-1.0	370.0	160.0
Huntsworth	90.0	2.0	118.0	81.0
Hyve Group	77.7	1.7	85.3	57.0
Informa	775.0	-5.2	892.0	605.8
ITV	133.8	1.2	158.8	103.6
Moneysupermarket.	343.1	-2.3	417.7	267.0
Pearson	682.2	-5.8	1027.5	674.2
Reach	98.4	-0.3	102.0	54.6
Relx plc	1858.0	-14.5	2011.0	1520.5
Rightmove	598.6	1.6	603.5	420.9
STV Group	392.5	7.5	400.0	318.0
WPP	963.2	-11.0	1038.0	800.4

MAIN CHANGES UK 350

Risers ▲		%
Future	1514.0	11.3
Fresnillo	710.0	2.6
Flutter Entertainm	7958.0	2.4
Ferrexpo	126.0	2.4
International Cons	531.2	2.2
GVC Holdings	890.0	1.8
RHI Magnesita N.V.	3478.0	1.7
Genus	2894.0	1.6
Polymetal Internat	1265.0	1.6
Cairn Energy	177.8	1.5

Fallers ▼		%
Aston Martin Lagon	399.3	-7.0
Dunelm Group	789.5	-6.5
Crest Nicholson Ho	388.4	-5.1
Royal Dutch Shell	2218.0	-4.5
Royal Dutch Shell	2233.0	-4.1
Sanne Group	528.0	-3.8
Smith & Nephew	1652.5	-3.6
Coats Group	71.3	-3.5
Sirius Minerals	2.9	-3.5
Go-Ahead Group	2044.0	-3.5

MINING

	Price	Chg	High	Low
Anglo American	1981.6	-16.4	2266.0	1539.0
Antofagasta	867.2	-14.6	1022.5	738.0
BHP Group	1634.8	-18.2	2049.0	1497.2
Centamin (DI)	116.1	1.0	152.4	79.8
Fresnillo	710.0	18.2	1027.5	601.0
Glencore	232.7	-4.8	340.3	222.2
Hochschild Mining	200.2	1.1	227.0	149.9
Kaz Minerals	469.4	-8.7	738.4	380.3
Polymetal Interna	1265.0	20.0	1274.5	700.2
Rio Tinto	4014.0	-49.0	4976.5	3513.5

MOBILE TELECOMS

	Price	Chg	High	Low
Inmarsat	550.2	-1.8	608.2	362.8
Vodafone Group	157.4	-0.1	168.9	123.3

OIL & GAS PRODUCERS

	Price	Chg	High	Low
BP	489.3	-11.3	582.5	484.9
Cairn Energy	177.8	2.7	213.8	140.0
Energean Oil & Ga	884.0	-12.0	1082.0	568.0
Premier Oil	82.7	-0.7	108.0	55.6
Royal Dutch Shell	2233.0	-96.0	2612.0	2213.0
Royal Dutch Shell	2218.0	-104.5	2622.0	2218.0
Tullow Oil	205.9	-3.7	250.0	165.2

OIL EQUIPMENT & SERVICES

	Price	Chg	High	Low
Hunting	393.0	-11.2	675.0	384.5
Petrofac Ltd.	384.3	-10.4	595.4	381.5
Wood Group (John)	338.3	4.6	714.2	322.5

PERSONAL GOODS

	Price	Chg	High	Low
Burberry Group	2044.0	-8.0	2345.0	1623.5
PZ Cussons	201.5	1.5	244.0	178.6

PHARMACEUTICALS & BIOTECH

	Price	Chg	High	Low
AstraZeneca	7501.0	-79.0	7646.0	5325.0
Dechra Pharmaceut	2630.0	-8.0	3036.0	2014.0
Genus	2894.0	46.0	3062.0	2124.0
GlaxoSmithKline	1768.6	-13.4	1796.4	1418.0
Hikma Pharmaceuti	2010.0	0.0	2200.0	1510.5
PureTech Health	248.0	-2.0	292.0	160.5

REAL ESTATE INVEST. & SERV.

	Price	Chg	High	Low
BMO Commercial Pr	117.4	-1.2	141.8	106.0
Capital & Countie	255.0	-2.7	279.5	184.9
CLS Holdings	253.5	-3.0	266.5	195.4
Daejan Holdings	4860.0	5.0	6160.0	4715.0
Grainger	256.8	-3.2	267.4	205.8
NewRiver REIT	201.0	-2.0	254.0	147.6
Safestore Holding	700.5	-7.0	717.5	506.5
Savills	917.5	-12.0	957.0	678.5
Sirius Real Estat	73.5	-0.3	75.9	55.8
St. Modwen Proper	451.0	-1.0	472.0	370.2
UK Commercial Pro	87.7	-1.1	92.7	79.9

REAL ESTATE INVEST. TRUSTS

	Price	Chg	High	Low
Big Yellow Group	1142.0	7.0	1152.0	858.5
British Land Comp	620.6	-3.6	638.4	468.3
Derwent London	3550.0	-14.0	3638.0	2779.0
GCP Student Livin	175.0	-0.4	175.4	147.0
Great Portland Es	787.6	-2.0	801.8	649.4
Hammerson	290.0	-0.5	446.0	203.9
Land Securities G	940.0	-2.8	963.0	735.4
LondonMetric Prop	231.8	-2.4	235.2	172.7
Primary Health Pr	141.4	-0.4	143.0	108.0
SEGRO	844.2	-6.6	862.9	585.2
Shaftesbury	945.0	-10.0	979.5	739.5
Tritax Big Box Re	150.3	-1.4	159.7	129.0
Unite Group	1125.0	-7.0	1174.0	797.5
Workspace Group	1015.0	-1.0	1031.0	789.5

SOFTWARE & COMPUTER SERV.

	Price	Chg	High	Low
Avast	414.8	1.2	421.6	259.6
Aveva Group	4182.0	0.0	4250.0	2284.0
Computacenter	1369.0	-6.0	1525.0	952.0
FDM Group (Holdin	723.0	-8.0	994.0	647.0
Kainos Group	508.0	6.0	676.0	372.0
Micro Focus Inter	1060.0	-9.6	2491.6	1004.0
Playtech	392.7	-3.5	500.6	360.5
Sage Group	719.8	0.6	820.4	536.2
Softcat	940.5	4.0	1044.0	565.0
Sophos Group	567.8	-1.2	577.0	298.2

SUPPORT SERVICES

	Price	Chg	High	Low
Aggreko	790.8	-1.2	858.4	691.8
Ashtead Group	2348.0	-12.0	2372.0	1586.5
BCA Marketplace	236.0	-0.2	247.0	178.5
Bunzl	2008.0	17.5	2551.0	1943.0
Capita	156.1	-3.3	173.1	99.9
DCC	7236.0	-14.0	7374.0	5555.0
Diploma	1599.0	23.0	1696.0	1150.0
Electrocomponents	680.2	-7.0	692.0	480.0
Equiniti Group	215.2	-2.4	236.2	186.2
Essentra	381.4	-10.6	442.0	325.4
Experian	2428.0	-18.0	2631.0	1763.0
Ferguson	6586.0	0.0	6600.0	4749.0
Finablr	157.2	-2.8	180.0	140.0
G4S	206.8	-0.5	234.3	168.3
Grafton Group Uni	781.0	-1.0	937.0	630.0
Hays	157.1	-0.5	165.3	135.7
Homeserve	1159.0	8.0	1263.0	849.0
Howden Joinery Gr	577.4	-2.0	584.2	416.4
Intertek Group	5352.0	24.0	5962.0	4494.0
Network Internati	541.0	-2.0	628.0	500.0
Pagegroup	445.2	-6.4	539.0	367.8
PayPoint	914.0	1.0	1118.0	748.0
Rentokil Initial	454.5	0.0	467.8	307.1
Robert Walters	530.0	10.0	475.0	814.0
Serco Group	156.0	-0.5	157.6	84.1
SIG	112.6	0.4	153.0	99.4
Travis Perkins	1433.0	-1.5	1490.0	1004.5

TOBACCO

	Price	Chg	High	Low
British American	2702.0	-44.5	3426.0	2375.0
Imperial Brands	1692.4	-58.2	2750.0	1690.8

TRAVEL & LEISURE

	Price	Chg	High	Low
Carnival	3092.0	-45.0	4650.0	3056.0
Cineworld Group	222.7	-1.4	321.0	212.0
Compass Group	2056.0	9.0	2138.0	1515.0
Domino's Pizza Gr	285.9	-4.5	297.2	221.2
EI Group	281.6	-0.2	285.0	166.2
FirstGroup	129.1	-1.6	137.5	79.3
Flutter Entertain	7958.0	188.0	8164.0	5525.0
Go-Ahead Group	2044.0	-74.0	2234.0	1480.0
GVC Holdings	890.0	15.4	950.5	507.5
InterContinental	4660.0	22.0	5738.0	4001.6
International Con	531.2	11.4	667.6	413.5
Marston's	123.3	0.2	131.3	90.6
Merlin Entertainm	454.5	-0.1	457.5	307.1
Millennium & Copt	687.0	0.0	690.0	436.0
Mitchells & Butle	426.0	5.0	432.0	238.0
National Express	446.4	0.2	462.0	361.4
PPHE Hotel Group	1840.0	0.0	1990.0	1540.0
Rank Group	243.5	-3.0	251.2	135.0
Restaurant Group	135.6	0.7	189.3	111.9
Stagecoach Group	137.3	-2.0	177.0	115.5
TUI AG Reg Shs (D	1010.0	8.5	1334.5	698.0
Wetherspoon (J.D.	1463.0	-6.0	1624.0	1066.0
Whitbread	4061.0	50.0	5114.0	3988.0
William Hill	197.6	2.5	221.1	132.3
Wizz Air Holdings	3814.0	7.0	3902.0	2571.0

AIM 50

	Price	Chg	High	Low
Abcam	1164.0	-5.0	1500.0	1017.0
Advanced Medical	244.0	4.0	354.5	225.0
Alliance Pharma	74.0	0.9	80.4	60.0
ASOS	3530.0	18.0	5700.0	2107.0
Blue Prism Group	822.5	-10.5	2002.0	788.0
Brooks Macdonald	1950.0	70.0	2100.0	1367.5
Camellia	9150.0	-100.0	11750.0	9100.0
CareTech Holding	397.0	-1.5	406.0	325.0
Central Asia Meta	210.0	-3.0	266.5	180.0
Ceres Power Holdi	207.0	-3.0	220.0	130.0
Clinigen Group	831.0	6.0	1069.0	721.0
CVS Group	967.5	21.5	1029.0	395.0
Dart Group	1265.0	6.0	1273.0	709.5
Diversified Gas &	107.0	-3.0	134.0	97.0
Draper Esprit	441.0	-4.0	610.0	410.0
Eland Oil & Gas	164.4	-0.2	164.8	101.0
EMIS Group	1076.0	-4.0	1242.0	864.0
Fevertree Drinks	1860.0	-40.0	3199.0	1847.0
First Derivatives	2275.0	20.0	3555.0	2050.0
Frontier Developm	1092.0	0.0	1160.0	740.0
Gamma Communicati	1190.0	-5.0	1202.2	688.0
GB Group	604.0	-9.0	635.0	410.5
Gooch & Housego	1110.0	10.0	1755.0	954.0
Hurricane Energy	42.5	-1.4	60.8	38.7
Impax Asset Manag	262.0	5.0	295.0	184.0
Iomart Group	368.5	-4.5	425.0	308.0
IQE	75.0	1.3	98.0	47.6
James Halstead	506.0	-5.0	532.0	367.0
Johnson Service G	177.8	4.4	183.2	113.6
Keywords Studios	1110.0	5.0	1838.0	900.0
Learning Technolo	107.0	-0.6	130.0	62.2
M. P. Evans Group	665.0	10.0	722.0	612.0
Midwich Group	504.0	-4.0	633.0	474.5
Mortgage Advice B	591.0	1.0	620.0	490.0
Next Fifteen Comm	497.5	5.0	658.0	471.0
Nichols	1500.0	-37.5	1880.0	1340.0
Numis Corporation	230.0	-10.5	301.0	212.0
Pan African Resou	12.1	0.5	14.5	8.0
Polar Capital Hol	504.0	12.0	604.0	448.0
Purplebricks Grou	112.6	-0.8	198.5	90.0
Redde	112.0	0.2	187.0	90.0
Renew Holdings	383.0	-2.0	436.5	333.0
RWS Holdings	600.0	-9.0	652.0	450.0
Scapa Group	223.0	-5.5	445.0	157.0
Secure Income Rei	433.0	0.0	454.0	371.0
Serica Energy	134.0	-4.6	143.4	103.6
Smart Metering Sy	475.0	-4.2	665.0	310.0
Thorpe (F.W.)	267.0	-4.0	340.0	248.0
Watkin Jones	235.0	-5.0	241.5	192.2
Young & Co's Brew	1592.5	5.0	1885.0	1322.5
Young & Co's Brew	1140.0	0.0	1195.0	1030.0

EU SHARES

	Price	Chg	High	Low
AB INBEV	72.04	-0.49	92.71	56.32
ADIDAS N	278.40	1.00	297.95	178.30
AIR LIQUIDE	119.10	1.90	120.00	92.59
AIRBUS BR	128.42	-1.56	133.86	77.50
ALLIANZ	219.50	-0.95	223.60	170.50
AMADEUS IT GRP BR-A	66.34	0.32	74.94	58.06
ASML HLDG	235.00	-2.50	243.85	130.12
AXA	23.69	-0.15	24.39	18.40
BANCO SANTANDER	3.59	-0.12	4.68	3.39
BASF N	68.00	-0.73	74.62	55.72
BAYER N	69.40	2.20	73.06	52.00
BBVA	4.72	-0.01	5.68	4.19
BMW	68.73	-0.41	79.00	58.10
BNP PARIBAS A	46.81	-0.12	49.32	38.14
CRH PLC	32.68	-0.34	34.87	26.53
DAIMLER N	52.30	-0.74	59.90	40.35
DANONE	74.36	-0.46	82.38	59.72
DEUTSCHE BOERSE N	139.20	-1.35	145.55	102.50
DEUTSCHE POST N	31.72	-0.15	32.32	23.43
DEUTSCHE TELEKOM N	15.77	0.07	16.26	13.98
ENEL N	6.94	0.04	6.99	4.32
ENGIE	15.00	0.17	15.24	11.57
ENI N	13.57	-0.13	16.06	12.92
ESSILORLUXOTT	136.80	1.75	137.90	95.50
FRESENIUS	47.18	0.44	58.06	38.50
IBERDROLA	9.21	0.08	9.58	5.95
INDITEX	27.95	-0.11	29.00	21.85
ING GROUP	10.13	-0.01	12.14	8.20
INTESA SANPAOLO N	2.25	-0.00	2.36	1.80
KERING	510.20	-0.70	539.80	369.10
KON AH DEL BR	22.33	-0.17	24.01	19.36
L'OREAL	261.80	-1.30	266.60	193.20
LINDE	177.25	-0.45	184.80	130.75
LVMH	382.50	-1.95	392.65	242.30
MUENCHENER RUECKV N	249.80	-1.10	252.00	184.70
NOKIA	3.29	0.05	5.76	3.17
ORANGE	14.44	0.12	15.25	13.08
ROY.PHILIPS	39.27	0.46	44.60	29.05
SAFRAN	141.85	-0.95	146.05	99.98
SANOFI	82.62	-2.36	86.42	71.74
SAP I	118.64	-0.98	125.00	84.02
SCHNEIDER EL	83.26	-0.66	85.46	57.54
SIEMENS N	103.30	-1.16	108.62	84.72
SOCIETE GENERALE	25.45	-0.23	31.47	20.81
TELEFONICA	6.88	0.01	8.06	5.86
TOTAL	47.14	-0.53	52.02	42.65
UNILEVER	52.95	0.00	57.77	45.60
VINCI	100.60	0.82	101.70	69.98
VIVENDI	24.96	-0.04	26.69	20.80
VOLKSWAGEN VZ I	170.82	-3.68	177.84	134.30

CRYPTO A.M. DAILY POWERED BY BEQUANT

CRYPTOCURRENCIES

Name	Price (USDT)	▲/▼(24h)	
Bitcoin (BTC)	$ 9,238.01	1.33%	▲
Ethereum (ETH)	$ 183.35	0.60%	▲
Ripple (XRP)	$ 0.29	0.50%	▲
Bitcoin Cash (BCH)	$ 282.99	-2.09%	▼
Litecoin (LTC)	$ 58.91	1.73%	▲
EOS.IO (EOS)	$ 3.26	0.39%	▲
Bitcoin SV (BSV)	$ 129.56	-3.07%	▼
TRON (TRON)	$ 0.01	-2.63%	▼
NEO (NEO)	$ 10.55	-0.23%	▼
Cardano (ADA)	$ 0.04	-0.72%	▼
CryptoCompare Large Cap Index		-2.63%	▼
CryptoCompare Small Cap Index		-1.99%	▼

Market	$246,240,212,595	
Bitcoin Volatility	-21.23%	▼
Bitcoin Volume on BEQUANT Exchange (USDT)	479,665,491	

Sources: Bequant.io, CryptoCompare.com
Prices and data are correct as of 15:30, 31.10.2019
Crypto AM features in City AM every Tuesday.
Previous Editions:www.cityam.com/crypto-insider
Read more at: https://bequant.pro/cityam

CRYPTO & COFFEE

Happy birthday is a day for celebration and jolly spirits...and for Bitcoin, the positive sentiment resulted in outperformance against the rest of its peers, albeit modestly so. As a guide, Halloween 2019 marks the release of the white paper release for the first fully decentralized, peer-to-peer electronic cash by anonymous creator(s) Satoshi Nakomoto. However the bullish sentiment looks incredibly fragile and the recent widening in contango delta is yet to translate into the bid tone in the spot market.

Of note, the latest CME Commitment of Traders (COT) report shows further decrease in long positions. In particular for leveraged funds category, it is at its lowest level over the last 12 months. At the same time, the non-reportable category saw yet another increase in short positions and these are at its highest level over the last 12 months.

In terms of news flow, United States Representative Tom Emmer intends to introduce new legislation to provide regulatory certainty for cryptocurrencies. The bill would allow companies that are already compliant with securities laws, or who have already acquired a securities exemption, to distribute their assets without subjecting them to further regulations.

COMMODITIES

Gold	1492.10	5.35
Silver	17.95	0.30
Brent Crude	61.57	-0.45
Krugerrand	1516.70	-12.85
Palladium	1785.00	-15.00
Platinum	921.00	5.00
Tin Cash Official	16725.00	75.00
Lead Cash Official	2265.00	-10.00
Zinc Cash Official	2563.00	-24.00
Copper Cash Official	5879.00	3.00
Aluminium Cash Official	1737.00	10.00
Nickel Cash Official	16680.00	7.00
Aluminium Alloy Cash Official	1350.00	16.00
Cocoa Futures	2468.00	-18.00
Coffee 'C' Futures	102.23	2.88
Feed Wheat Futures	141.75	2.00
Soybeans Futures Continuation Contract	916.00	4.00

CREDIT & RATES

BoE IR Overnight	0.750	0.00
BoE IR 7 days	0.750	0.00
BoE IR 1 month	0.750	0.00
BoE IR 3 months	0.750	0.00
BoE IR 6 months	0.750	0.00
LIBOR Euro - overnight	-0.570	0.00
LIBOR Euro - 12 months	-0.300	0.00
LIBOR USD - overnight	1.804	0.00
LIBOR USD - 12 months	1.980	-0.01
Halifax mortgage rate	3.990	0.00
Euro Base Rate	0.000	0.00
Finance house base rate	1.000	0.00
US Fed funds	2.00	0.00
US long bond yield	2.17	-0.09
Euro Euribor	-0.484	0.00
The vix index	13.22	0.89
The baltic dry index	1782.00	-20.00
Markit iBoxx EUR	247.45	0.80
Markit iBoxx GBP	356.72	2.61
Markit iBoxx USD	261.36	0.59

WORLD INDICES

	Price	Chg	%chg
FTSE 100	7248.38	-82.40	-1.12
FTSE 250	20021.50	-93.60	-0.47
FTSE All-Share	3993.46	-39.34	-0.98
FTSE AIM All-Share	889.54	-0.26	-0.03
S&P 500	3037.56	-9.21	-0.30
Dow Jones I.A.	27046.23	-140.46	-0.52
Nasdaq Composite	8292.36	-11.62	-0.14
Xetra DAX	12866.79	-43.44	-0.34
CAC 40	5729.86	-36.01	-0.62
Swiss Market Index	10219.82	-35.13	-0.34
ISEQ Overall Index	6540.30	-53.88	-0.82
FTSEurofirst 300	1555.35	-8.97	-0.57
Hang Seng	26906.72	239.01	0.90
Shanghai Composite	2929.06	-10.26	-0.35
STI Index	3231.26	25.10	0.78
ASX All Ordinaries	6772.90	-21.80	-0.32

US SHARES

	Price	Chg	High	Low
3M	164.99	-3.38	219.75	150.58
ABBOTT LABORATOR	83.61	-0.40	88.76	65.44
ADOBE	277.93	-0.48	313.11	204.95
ALPHAB RG-C-NV	1260.11	-1.18	1299.31	970.11
ALPHABET-A	1258.80	-1.90	1299.24	977.66
AMAZON.COM	1776.66	-3.33	2035.80	1307.00
AMERICAN EXPRESS	117.28	-0.79	129.34	89.05
AMGEN	213.25	2.37	213.67	166.30
APPLE	248.76	5.50	249.75	142.00
AT&T	38.49	0.29	38.87	26.80
BANK OF AMERICA	31.27	-0.35	32.23	22.66
BERKSHIRE HATH RG-B	212.58	-0.67	223.59	186.10
BOEING CO	339.91	-6.15	446.01	292.47
CATERPILLAR	137.80	-2.54	144.77	111.75
CHEVRON	116.14	-0.22	127.34	100.22
CISCO SYSTEMS	47.51	-0.05	58.26	40.25
CITIGROUP	71.86	-1.11	74.28	48.42
COCA-COLA CO	54.43	0.49	55.92	44.42
COMCAST-A	44.82	0.13	47.27	32.61
COSTCO WHSL	297.11	-2.73	307.34	189.51
DOW	50.49	-0.54	0.00	0.00
EXXON MOBIL	67.57	-0.15	83.75	64.65
FACEBOOK-A	191.65	3.40	208.66	123.02
GOLDMAN SACHS GR	213.38	-2.43	234.06	151.70
HOME DEPOT	234.58	-1.66	238.99	158.09
IBM	133.73	-1.52	152.95	105.94
INTEL	56.53	-0.07	59.59	42.86
JOHNSON&JOHNSON	132.04	-0.80	148.99	121.00
JPMORGAN CHASE	124.92	-0.81	127.42	91.11
MASTERCARD RG-A	276.81	-0.34	293.69	171.89
MCDONALD'S	196.70	-0.19	221.93	169.04
MEDTRONIC	108.90	0.35	112.05	81.66
MERCK	86.66	0.44	87.35	70.12
MICROSOFT	143.37	-1.24	145.67	93.96
NIKE -B-	89.55	-0.64	96.87	66.53
ORACLE	54.49	-0.36	60.50	42.40
PEPSICO	137.17	0.27	140.45	105.03
PFIZER	38.37	-0.11	46.47	33.97
PHILIP MRRS INT	81.44	0.23	92.74	64.67
PROCTER&GAMBLE	124.51	-0.43	125.77	86.74
SALESFORCE.COM	156.49	-1.79	167.56	113.60
TRAVELERS COS	131.06	1.28	155.09	111.08
TWITTER	29.97	0.11	45.86	26.26
UNITEDHEALTH GRO	252.70	-2.10	287.94	208.07
UTD TECHS	143.58	-0.26	144.63	100.48
VERIZON COMM	60.47	-0.35	61.58	52.28
VISA RG-A	178.86	-0.39	187.05	121.60
WALGREENS BOOTS	54.78	-1.08	86.31	49.03
WALMART	117.26	-0.84	120.71	85.78
WALT DISNEY	129.92	0.32	147.15	100.35
WELLS FARGO	51.63	-0.40	55.04	43.02

FORUM

EDITED BY RACHEL CUNLIFFE

For Generation Insecurity, the British dream has turned sour

Tom Bewick

Too many young people are facing the gig economy and the prospect of sofa-surfing

MY 14 year old son is in a band. He loves playing to his classmates and studying GCSE music. Bizarrely (for me), he's quite into Queen and eighties songs, which I joke with him was the same stuff I was listening to when I was his age.

Intergenerational humour apart, it got me thinking about my son's prospects when he leaves school, compared to mine in 1987 – and how, within the space of 30 years, the education, jobs and housing markets have changed, in many ways for the worse.

Like a lot of experts on the subject, I've concluded that my teenager's cohort ("generation Z") and the millennials a few years older than him face a much tougher climb when it comes to securing higher living standards than that attempted by previous generations.

For me – attending a state comprehensive – it was almost the norm to leave school at 16 with few formal qualifications. There was nothing like the cultural pressure to academically succeed that there is now.

I got just one O-level. It meant that I couldn't go straight onto sixth-form, so I extended my Saturday job pushing trollies at Asda into a full-time role.

In those days, further education colleges ran extensive "night school" classes, which meant that you could retake the exams you failed at school while earning a living wage. Lots of adults – sometimes in their forties and fifties – would join these courses, which were free or heavily subsidised by local authorities. As the 1990s opened up, more working-class kids went off to university.

Of course, it is easy to look back at this period through rose-tinted glasses. Youth unemployment (16–18 year olds) was over 20 per cent in 1991. Access courses and higher education became a natural escape route for aspirational types like myself, with the government happy to offer university maintenance grants of £2,500 per annum, instead of handing out the dole.

By 2010, youth unemployment for 17 year olds hit 40 per cent, so the government, under Gordon Brown, took the step of abolishing the problem by extending the school leaving age to 18. That meant fewer unemployed teenagers, but also placed additional emphasis on attaining qualifications.

Over time, the pressure to succeed academically has become relentless. The so-called "British dream" is that if you can make it to university, a good job awaits.

For the 50 per cent of pupils that take A-levels in England, this pathway is well understood, at least at first. A-levels and their equivalents act as a direct entry route to degree courses. So far so good.

But what happens next? What awaits the other 50 per cent who don't go to university – and, in fact, all young people, particularly graduates, once they hit their mid-twenties and are no longer studying?

The brutal fact is that my son's generation, graduates or not, faces a new age of insecurity. The "British dream" has been mis-sold to them.

At a time when apprenticeships for young people have collapsed (despite the best intentions of the apprenticeship levy) and the further education routes open to me have been closed, those who do not excel academically have few options, while even those who follow the "right" path and earn a degree do not get the security they were promised.

High-pressure examinations have led to an epidemic of mental health issues in our schools and colleges. And instead of looking forward to more rewarding work and solid housing tenure, too many young people are facing the gig economy and the prospect of sofa-surfing. In the labour market, nearly 40 per cent of zero-hour contracts are taken up by 18–25 year olds.

For a select few – online influencers and celebrity YouTubers – the gig economy has bought untold riches. And insecurity is less of a worry for those with the Bank of Mum and Dad to fall back on. But for most young people, it has meant no sick pay, no holiday pay, and exploitation in the workplace.

Moreover, the unpredictability of work makes long-term financial planning and access to mortgages is virtually impossible.

In the late 1980s, it took a couple on average earnings around two years to save up for a home deposit; today it can take up to a decade, according to the Council of Mortgage Lenders. In London, a decade more.

For Generation Rent, whether graduates or not, the dream is turning sour. Indebtedness among under-30s has skyrocketed since the financial crash, homeownership has spiralled, and future earning prospects look bleak.

A recent study of graduate earnings has found that people like me, born in 1971, have been fortunate to earn twice as much from holding a degree, compared to those with similar degrees born after 1990.

Universities, meanwhile, continue to offer courses of dubious impact when it comes to providing students with the skills they need to succeed in the modern workplace.

With university courses now offered in "Heavy Metal Studies", I'm left agog and slightly worried about just how my son's musical, educational, and future job prospects might develop.

Tom Bewick is chief executive of the Federation of Awarding Bodies. He is speaking at the session "From Zero Hours to Apprenticeships: young people at work" at the Battle of Ideas festival this weekend at the Barbican.

The moral of the pay gap story is that the future looks bright for women in work

Kate Andrews

THE GENDER pay gap has widened, read the headlines and news tickers this week, after the Office of National Statistics (ONS) released its 2019 data on pay, including the average difference for men and women in work.

As the pay gap debate has highlighted for years now, statistics can be used to tell almost any story you want to tell about women in work.

The gender pay gap reporting measures – which force companies with over 250 employees to publish crude data each year – have produced pay gaps of over 50 per cent for some firms. But if you look at other data, say part-time work figures, you can point to a negative gender pay gap (that is, a pay gap in favour of women). So what should we make of this week's headlines?

In truth, not much.

The pay gap for men and women in full-time work has increased slightly, from 8.6 per cent in 2018 to 8.9 per cent in 2019. In the words of the ONS, this is "not a statistically significant increase", especially when you consider that the full-time pay gap has been on a downward trajectory for decades.

Of course, those in the victimhood industry – desperate to paint the situation to be worse than it is – are trying to big these figures up. But by doing so, they overlook the positive, exciting news stories to emerge from the same set of data, which once again prove that the world of work is getting better for women by the day.

The pay gap between men and women under the age of 40 has essentially closed. The numbers are so small that they are statistically negligible. This is great news for young women in work – and an important story to share with female graduates coming out of school, training or university, who are too often told that they are bound to encounter discrimination and glass ceilings.

This also lines up with what we know about the different working patterns between the genders. When men and women are following the same path, they appear to earn roughly the same.

But women are more likely to take time off work to raise children. This is where we start to see a clear disparity in the averages of pay, due to a combination of time out of the workforce (and lack of career progression because of it) and a move to part-time work.

Cue the other good piece of news. This gap is shrinking fairly rapidly for women in their forties now: "Among 40–49 year olds, the gap (currently 11.4 per cent) has decreased substantially over time (from 24 per cent in 1997)."

This also shouldn't surprise us – as women have become better educated and skilled in high-level work, there is an increasing pull on them to rejoin the workforce, especially as millions have become the breadwinner of their family.

The moral of this week's pay gap story is that not much has changed, but where meaningful change has occurred, it seems to be in a direction that favours women.

No doubt we still have far to go on issues like paternity pay – although private companies are leading the way, as Standard Life Aberdeen took a progressive step this week by offering male and female employees nine months of parental leave at full pay.

But one thing is certain – good change won't come by wasting time on faux outrage over the new pay gap stats.

Kate Andrews is associate director at the Institute of Economic Affairs.

LETTERS
TO THE EDITOR

The audit identity crisis

[Re: Have government efforts so far to reform the audit market failed?]

The fact that every company in the FTSE 100 is audited by one of the Big Four is deeply concerning, particularly after regulators have been encouraging the appointment of smaller firms. It's not hugely surprising, though, and is symptomatic of a much larger issue. Audit is having a major identity crisis, and the string of companies falling foul of required auditing standards is perpetuating it. The fear of irreparable reputational damage, which smaller firms simply can't afford, is driving them away from even competing for big FTSE 100 businesses. It's no wonder the Big Four remain alone at the top. The sector badly needs new ideas and technical innovation to change for the better. Without this, audit is unlikely to be able to bear the weight of complex accounting treatments much longer.

Simon Bittlestone, chief executive, Metapraxis

The market for listed audit is not just concentrated, but that concentration is quite entrenched, so fixing it was always going to take time. Almost everyone agrees that the market needs to be broadened – that's not the issue. Contrary to appearances, few challenger firms are clamouring to enter the market – many are leaving it. This could be for a number of reasons, not least the risk profile of taking on a large audit client, and the fact that non-audit work is more lucrative. But even where firms do want the work, it takes time to scale up to the capacity where they can take on a multinational. Rushing reform would have been worse than no reform at all – the aim must surely be to maintain audit quality while ensuring that there is a stable, resilient and sustainable market. Pace Winston Churchill, the conclusion of the many reviews into audit last year was nowhere near the beginning of the end – but might have been the end of the beginning.

Name withheld

BEST OF TWITTER

With Nicky Morgan standing down. Parliament is to lose up to 17 female MPs. That is the 17 voices across all political parties. Many of these MPs I disagree with. Many I agree with. Views aside, this is an extremely worrying development for equal representation in Parliament.
@OxfordDiplomat

19 female MPs are standing down. 40 male MPs are standing down. So 32% of the MPs standing down are women and 68% of the MPs standing down are men. As of 2019 208 (of 650) MPs were women. So 32% of MPs women & 68% men. MPs are standing down in exactly the proportions we'd expect
@CityWagFlies

Labour's Brexit policy is batsh*t. Corbyn is refusing to tell us which way he'd vote in a future referendum on the biggest issue facing the country. He's going to spend the campaign giving a "no comment" interview. This is the future of the country, not 24 Hours in Police Custody
@mattforde

WE WANT TO HEAR YOUR VIEWS E: theforum@cityam.com **COMMENT AT:** cityam.com/forum : @cityam

Enfranchise the teenager: Votes at 16 is not as mad as you think

Rachel Cunliffe
Comment and features editor at City AM

"VOTES at 16!" opposition MPs demanded in the debate on whether Britain should have an election. They were denied the chance to vote on this by the deputy speaker, so 16–17 year olds will not be voting on 12 December – a relief, given the gargantuan hurdle of registering 1.4m new voters. But the question of lowering the voting age is back on the agenda. And since constitutional reform is a hot topic right now, it's worth considering seriously.

First, let's get some of the weirder objections out of the way. One common argument against is that 16–17 year olds are overwhelmingly left-wing, so would skew the vote unfairly.

This may be true (though the views of the vocal teenagers advocating for this cause may not represent their cohort as a whole), but even if it is, so what? Since when do we disenfranchise demographic groups because they tend to vote a certain way?

Another refrain is that children will be "indoctrinated" by their (presumably anti-Tory) teachers. But if it were that easy, no teacher would ever have to chase late homework. Teenagers don't always do what they're told.

Young people, like everyone else, are influenced by a vast range of sources, from friends to family to what they see online. And the latter is a much bigger concern for all of us. Which is more likely: a 16 year old voting Labour because their teacher told them to, or being won over by click-bait social media posts full of misleading "news"?

If we're really concerned about shady influences in elections, we should be having a much broader conversation about micro-targeted ads and transparency on social media. But that's a completely separate issue.

All this, however, is a sideshow. The real question is this: are 16 year olds really mature enough to help decide how this country is run?

It is easy here to think of the errors you made in your youth or the ineptitude of your own children. Teenagers are not known for their self-control or ability to make rational decisions.

But adulthood is not one single thing bestowed on a person on their eighteenth birthday. The web of inconsistencies in the law reflects that. You must be 18 to drink, smoke, or gamble, but you can join the army or start a family at 16, and the Treasury expects you to pay taxes if you work. If you're obliged to fund the country at 16, and can start training to serve it in uniform or raise a child in it, why not vote?

The messy reality is that, among those 1.4m people, some will be adequately equipped to exercise their democratic rights, and some won't. Some will be interested in doing so, and some won't. But that's true of any age group. We don't force people to take a civics test before handing them a voting card. We don't quiz them to check that they're informed enough to understand what they're voting for.

Early inspiration could set the tone for a lifetime of civic engagement

We may think some people's reasons for how they vote misguided, trivial, or utterly unsound, but democracy means allowing people who disagree with us a say in the conversation too.

What votes at 16 would do is instil early the practice of voting. All parties say that they want to increase electoral turn-out. In 2015, just 43 per cent of 18–24 year olds voted compared to 78 per cent of over-65s. That rose in 2017, but not by a huge amount.

Think what would happen if school pupils could actually see their peers deciding the fate of the country, watching the dry lessons of the politics classroom play out in real life. That early inspiration could set the tone for a lifetime of democratic engagement.

This is probably too radical to happen in one fell swoop across the nation. A pragmatic transition would be votes at 16 in local elections to give young people a say over community-level politics. Scottish teenagers already enjoy this right, as do EU nationals. And since we've had three major referendums in eight years, if the new trend is to vote on changing the democratic landscape for decades to come, it makes sense to include more young people in that future.

One final note on the illogic of adulthood: while I often argue that we let people marry at 16, the rebuttal is yes, but only if their parents agree. I suggest that a natural compromise would be votes at 16 with parental consent.

After all, the stakes of a five-year parliamentary term are a lot lower than a lifetime romantic commitment.

DEBATE

Does the spate of Conservative MP resignations suggest that the party's ideology is narrowing?

YES

BEN KELLY

The Conservative party has been a formidable election-winning machine because of an ability to adapt to its circumstances. This strength comes from its diversity as an alliance of various political factions, united by a core set of principles and a desire for power. Now it is adapting again, as the Brexit populists take over and appeal directly to 2016 Leave voters.

Only this time, there is no accommodations between factions.

At the last count, 25 Tory MPs and six former Tory MPs have announced that they will not stand in the upcoming election. It's an exodus of the party's centre. They leave behind a far more narrowly ideological party, dogmatic about Brexit and far less pragmatic.

Bursting Nigel Farage's bubble may be enough to win this election, but it will come at the expense of the votes of the young, the liberal middle class, and urban cosmopolitans. The Tories are moving away from liberalism and fiscal conservatism to become a party of the populist right. Time will tell if this strategy is future-proof.

Ben Kelly is a commentator for Reaction. He tweets @TheScepticIsle.

NO

ALEX DEANE

MPs step down for all sorts of reasons. A desire to earn more elsewhere. The belief that a seat would be lost at the next election anyway. The wish (no, really) to spend more time with family. T'were ever thus.

The next Tory intake will be more robust on Brexit; given that this is the course our country has decided on, this is a good thing. This isn't "narrowing". Rather (and this may seem a false distinction but it isn't) it demonstrates the continuing instinct in the Conservative party to support the leadership and pull together on an agreed plan of action.

If the referendum had gone the other way, and the leadership's position as a result was to continue Britain's EU membership, the next intake would be smoothly moving in precisely the opposite direction to the one bound to be taken by the Boris boosters we'll get in December.

You may not like it, but it's simply a demonstration of a party machine actually working, rather than anything broader or more sinister.

Alex Deane is a Conservative commentator.

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HOTPROPERTY

ALL YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT THE LONDON PROPERTY MARKET

Edited by **Helen Crane**

LONDON'S BRECESSION BEATING BOROUGHS

New data predicts areas where first-time buyers could dodge a house price crash

So you're a first-time buyer who has finally saved up enough to get on the housing ladder. All that's left now is to decide which corner of the capital you're going to invest your cash in.

That decision is arguably more important now than ever, given that a recession is a very real possibility – particularly in the event of a no-deal Brexit. This would probably result in a fall in house prices, and some areas would be affected more than others.

So where should you buy now to get a first home that will hold its value in the event of a 'Brecession'? Proportunity, a lender which offers first-time buyers loans to help them top up their deposits and access better mortgage rates, has used its data to rank every London borough in terms of its potential resilience.

EASTERN PROMISE

East London comes out strong, with Tower Hamlets – which includes areas such as Bow, Bethnal Green and Poplar which are already popular with first-time buyers – topping the chart and Hackney and Newham in third and fourth place. North London's Camden comes in second, while Haringey, which straddles the border between North and East, was fifth.

From top: central London; the popular high street in Camden Town at the heart of the borough; a stretch of the Regent's Canal in Hackney Wick

To compile the rankings, Proportunity analysed the market for flats – by far the most popular property type for first-time buyers – in a two square kilometre section of each borough at various points between 2006 and 2013, around the time of the UK's last recession, which started in 2008.

The characteristics that put these locations in pole position were all factors that areas which withstood the recession well last time had in common. These included having a below-average percentage of new-builds; a large millennial population; a lower population of retired people and baby boomers; proximity to well-used transport links and higher than average flat prices.

Of the top five, Newham currently has the lowest average house price at £5,090/sq m and Camden, which is widely tipped as one of the best places to buy in London right now, has the highest at £10,064/sq m.

Proportunity also took into account current market dynamics such as the number of housing transactions in a borough; crime rates, average number of rooms in a property and the amount of residential floor space within a borough.

The other local authority areas that made up the top ten were Brent, Islington, Southwark, Hammersmith & Fulham and Westminster.

OUTER LONDON MOST AT RISK

"By analysing the performance of London flats in the last recession, we have been able to pinpoint the factors that feed into a local housing market's resilience and identify potential safe havens going forward," says Vadim Toader, founder and chief executive of Proportunity.

The five locations deemed most vulnerable to a house price crash were all in outer London. Bromley was at the bottom, preceded by Havering, Richmond-upon-Thames, Bexley and Sutton. Wandsworth weathered the 2008 recession best according to the data, but changes in local market dynamics mean it has now slipped in to the bottom half of the table.

BEST LOCATIONS
1. Tower Hamlets
2. Camden
3. Hackney
4. Haringey
5. Newham

WORST LOCATIONS
29. Sutton
30. Bexley
31. Richmond upon Thames
32. Havering
33. Bromley

The bottom five boroughs tended to have larger homes with more bedrooms, lower house prices and a low millennial population. Other low-ranking areas were the City of London, Kingston-upon-Thames, Merton, Barnet and Croydon.

"Buying a property is the single biggest investment decision most of us will ever make, so it is vital to do it in the most informed way possible," Toader says.

"Clearly, big data isn't a crystal ball. But globally, property markets respond in similar ways to fundamental shifts in population, age, crime, accessibility and of course, affordability. Now we have the tools to process these shifts, predict the reaction, and get that information to those who need it."

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OPINION

IT'S A GOOD TIME TO BE RENTING

Richard Donnell
Research and insight director, Zoopla

London's property prices have long been regarded as endemically high, preventing many first-time buyers from purchasing their first home and boosting demand for privately rented properties.

The result has been the emergence of Generation Rent: the demographic prepared to live like students in shared accommodation so that they can afford to be close to all the action of central London. However, the fortunes of the average renter are now starting to look healthier. New data from Zoopla indicates that the affordability of renting in London is improving.

Take the instance of an average single person occupying a one-bed rental home in London. Over the past five years, almost half (49 per cent) of their earnings were spent on rent.

However, this year average earnings have increased at double the rate of average rents – and rents also fell between 2017 and 2018. The effect of this has been that in the past year, the proportion of a single person's earnings absorbed by rents in London has dropped three percentage points, to 46 per cent.

It's not a dramatic decrease, but when you consider that most of London's renters share a property, the affordability ratios improve further. Two earners renting a two-bed property in London will each spend an average of 24 per cent of their earnings each month on rent, which increases only marginally to 28 per cent for two people renting a three-bedroom home. This is more in line with UK average rents, which absorb 33.2 per cent of earnings for a solo renter.

Renters are able to take advantage of their position by moving house to find better value

While affordability is improving at a London-wide level, it is important to recognise that there is no single rental market in the capital, and the demand for rented homes is diverse, with a high proportion of renters on lower incomes. Rents vary widely across London based on available supply and renter demand – which in turn is led by access to transport and services.

The most attractive levels of rental affordability are found outside of zones one to three; in Bexley, Bromley and Sutton, two renters in a two-bed property can expect to spend 19.1 per cent, 19.7 per cent and 20.4 per cent of their average annual earnings on rent respectively.

Renters in London also have growing choice, with up to 30 per cent of homes in new-build developments now bought by corporate landlords. This is additional to so-called build-to-rent developments, where new homes are offered with all-inclusive rents and longer-term tenancies.

Rising supply should keep rental growth in check, but there are also things renters can do to maximise their financial advantage. This can include signing up to a longer-term tenancy on the agreement that rents rise below inflation levels each year; sacrificing a spare bedroom and taking on an additional housemate; moving further out to secure better value without compromising on quality; or assessing the cost of council tax across London's boroughs and offsetting it against rent.

> "The proportion of a single person's earnings absorbed by rent has dropped this year

Ultimately, London's rental market is large and dynamic. It's a landscape of improving opportunity and flexibility, and this offers a genuine range of choices for renters.

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PROPERTY OF THE WEEK

An a-mewsing east London pad

Former stables is now a luxe loft fit for a creative or tech guru

PEARY PLACE, BETHNAL GREEN, £POA

Mews houses are typically associated with quaint, stucco-ed streets in Kensington or Marylebone. But this mews home which has just come on the market at Peary Place, just off the bustling Roman Road in the heart of Tower Hamlets, has a rather different vibe.

Like most mews, Peary Place was built as a stables in the 18th century: in this case to house the horses that once pulled along East London's trams. It is now one of just two historic mews that remain in Tower Hamlets.

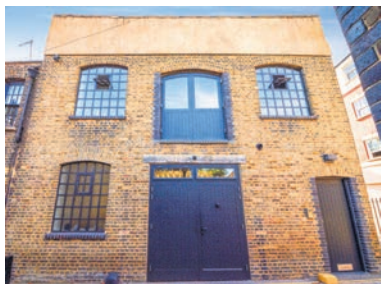
The street was originally called North Passage, but was renamed in 1910 after American explorer Robert Peary. He was believed to be the first man to reach the North Pole in an expedition in 1909, and afterwards visited London where he was presented with a gold medal by the Royal Geographic Society. However, whether or not he actually reached the pole has since been disputed.

The trams were later replaced by trolley buses, and from the 1930s to the 1960s the buildings on Peary Place housed the last remaining working dairy in London; a family furniture-making business; and a picture framer among other enterprises.

But they later later fell into disrepair, until they started being turned into homes in recent years. The property now being sold was acquired by its current owner in 2011 and has been refurbished to create an open-plan, loft-style home which displays their collection of modern art. Peary Place as a whole has been turned into a creative enclave, and there is now an art gallery at the end of the street which fronts on to Roman Road.

The home has a flexible layout and could accommodate two or three bedrooms depending on the configuration. The self-contained ground floor space has its own kitchen and bathroom and could be used as a stand-alone apartment, large garage or artists' studio, while the first floor is taken up by the main living space and has another kitchen and bathroom as well as a patio. The second floor houses the master bedroom suite, which also has its own roof terrace. The home boasts three-metre-high, herringbone beamed ceilings and large windows.The home is being marketed by Knight Frank and the price is available on application.

Simon Boulton, head of Knight Frank's Aldgate office, says it would suit someone working in the creative industries or an entrepreneur. "It's increasingly difficult to buy converted warehouses, and the kind of space this offers is quite unique," he says. "I could see a musician or an actor living there – or perhaps someone working in fintech. That part of London is so close to Liverpool Street, and the ground floor space would be a great place to work from home."



From left: the house's main living space; the frontage on to Peary Place

AREA GUIDE: E2

HOUSE PRICES *Source: Zoopla*			
DETACHED	SEMI	TERRACED	FLATS
£802,590	£733,038	£740,386	£458,264

TRANSPORT *Source: TfL*	
Time to Kings Cross	25 mins
Time to Liverpool Street	11 mins
Nearest tube station	Bethnal Green

FOCUS ON

Willesden allows buyers to spread their wings

Suburb undercuts its more affluent neighbours

FOCUS ON WILLESDEN

One of the universally acknowledged truths of the London housing market is that needing more space often means moving further out. But it need not mean going all the way out into the sticks – and the North West London neighbourhood of Willesden is testament to that.

While it is on the zone two-three border and is sandwiched between affluent West Hampstead, Brondesbury and Kensal Green, property prices in Willesden are more down-to-earth – and in the last few years it has attracted plenty of Londoners drifting outwards from the centre of town.

"When comparing Willesden with neighbouring areas such as West Hampstead and Queens Park there is great value for money to be found," says Neela Patel, manager at Dexters.

Willesden is a large area covering no less than five different postcodes, so there is something for everyone when it comes to homes. The starting price for a one-bed apartment in the area is £250,000, while three-bed houses can be snapped up for as little as £600,000.

"Property style varies massively, from Victorian and Edwardian architecture right up to new developments," Patel says.

There is more value to be found the closer you are to the High Road, where prices average around £361,000 according to Savills, while the pricier properties are in the streets bordering Kensal Rise where you can expect to pay upwards of £1m.

First-time buyers have understandably been drawn to this neck of the woods, although as in many parts of London they might find it difficult to trade up the ladder. Frances Clacy, research analyst at Savills, says a terraced home might cost "more than double" that of a comparable flat, meaning that upsizers might choose to "cast their net a bit further across the wider Brent borough or head a little further north west in search of their next home."

At the top end of the market, Neale Jones of Marsh & Parsons Willesden Green says Willesden benefits from being "one of the first places out of central London where you can buy a large detached house with off-street parking and a decent sized garden for around £2m". However, these kinds of homes don't come to the market often, and as a result bidding can get competitive.

Jones adds that families looking for their "forever homes" usually head to the Mapesbury Conservation Area, a cluster of tree-lined streets filled with Edwardian arts and crafts-style properties. They are attracted to the area by its schools – the wider Brent borough has more than 50 primaries that are good or outstanding – as well as its transport links. Willesden Green tube is six stops from Baker Street on the Jubilee line, while Willesden Junction is on the Overground. In 2026 its connectivity is set to get even better, when the HS2 'super-hub' opens at Old Oak Common.

Historically not one to write home about, the high street is now being reinvented and was voted a 'rising star' in this year's Great British High Street Awards. This is drawing in new arrivals such as upmarket bakery Gail's, which is set to open soon.

All of these improvements mean that, while the area still offers good value at the moment, house prices are on the ascent.

"As people have moved into the area from central London's fringes, house prices have risen and in the last five years Willesden has recorded growth of over 33 per cent against 20 per cent across London as a whole," says Clacy.

If you're in North London and want a bit more space to play with, Willesden could be for you – but don't hang around too long.

Willesden Green underground station is six stops to Baker Street on the Jubilee line, and the Overground is also nearby

PRIVATE VIEW
ON THE MARKET THIS WEEK

BRYAN AVENUE

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A two-bed, ground floor flat in NW10 with a stand-alone kitchen and its own private garden, this is being offered on a long lease.
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ST PAUL'S AVENUE

£800,000

This modern three-bed flat in NW2 has two bedrooms and a reception room and is located on the ground floor.
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AREA GUIDE

HOUSE PRICES *Source: Zoopla*

DETACHED	SEMI	TERRACED	FLATS
£1.53m	£1.07m	£900,000	£443,770

TRANSPORT *Source: TfL*

Time to Canary Wharf	**29 mins**
Time to Liverpool Street	**31 mins**
Nearest rail station	**Willesden Green**

BEST ROADS *Source: Zoopla*

Most expensive	**Alverstone Road**	**£2.19m**
Highest turnover	**Newman Close**	

AVERAGE ASKING RENT *Source: Zoopla*

£1,666 pcm - two-bed flat

Area highlights

Willesden's café culture has really come on in recent years. Gail's Bakery may be on the horizon for the high street, but **Edward's Bakery** is the original, having served up its breads, cakes and pastries to hungry Willesdenites since 1908. **The Marina Café** is an all-day cafe-bar which offers up seasonal, locally sourced dishes that have the unlikely yet delicious inspiration of the 'ancient Mediterranean'; while **Sushi Masa** is a family-run favourite catering to all of your sushi, yakitoro and saké needs. Willesden is also home to one of four branches of the **Beer + Burger store**: a brick-walled, neon-lit posh burger joint and bottle shop where the tap list changes daily. **The Queensbury** gastropub on Walm Lane is a traditional, community boozer with a highly-praised menu and a huge selection of beers, wines and spirits. If you're hungry for a bit of culture after all that food, **The Brent Museum** has more than 10,000 objects in its collection, cataloguing 50 years of the borough's history.

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GOING OUT

EDITED BY STEVE DINNEEN *@steve_dinneen*

MOVIES OUT NOW

DOCTOR SLEEP (15)

DIR. MIKE FLANAGAN

BY STEVE DINNEEN

Stephen King hated Stanley Kubrick's adaptation of The Shining. He didn't like the way Kubrick's film existed purely in the realms of psychological metaphor, and he didn't care for the unsympathetic portrayal of the Torrance family (I suspect Kubrick's brusque treatment of King, refusing to even read his original screenplay, had something to do with it – King has, after all, remained silent on far worse adaptations of his books).

It's hard to say what the author would make of this take on his 2013 follow-up, Doctor Sleep. Because while it fits neatly into the canon of glossy, modern Stephen King adaptations (alongside the likes of It, Pet Sematary, Carrie and Gerald's Game) it's also utterly in thrall to Kubrick's cinematic vision.

It begins with what appears to be an archive clip from The Shining, with young Danny Torrance pedalling his tricycle across that iconic orange carpet (a version of which I have in my front room). But something's off: it's not the *same* footage, but an incredibly faithful recreation – one that sets the mood for a film that doesn't so much pay homage to Kubrick's film, but lifts from it wholesale, pecking at its cadaver for anything it can tear free.

We next see Danny Torrance as a middle-aged man, now a violent drunk, just like his old man. Ewan McGregor steps into the role, exuding his usual charm and charisma, and as Danny begins to fight back against the bottle, it's easy to root for him. After a telepathic young girl makes contact, Danny is drawn into a vicious underworld in which a cadre of fellow 'shiners' murder children for their sweet, sweet essence. For an hour or so, Doctor Sleep is a better-than-average fantasy horror, well acted, expensively produced and full of impressive special effects. It's young adult fiction for 80s kids.

But this is all just a build-up to the inevitable return to the Overlook Hotel. Those carpets. The incongruous Native American decor. The lift doors, ready to vomit their bloody contents. Twins in summer frocks. An art deco ballroom with a congenial barkeep. Every detail is present and correct, right down to the splintered door through which Jack Nicholson once famously leered. Such outright theft may verge on sacrilege, but it feels *good* to be back, and director Mike Flanagan certainly has a keen eye for imitation.

Between King and Flanagan, there's a concerted effort to marry the old with the new, to justify the recycled imagery, although I'm not sure they ever quite succeed. Doctor Sleep isn't an instant classic, or even a slow-burner destined to be a future cult favourite.

Nobody will be making documentaries about it in 20 year's time (nod to Rodney Ascher's excellent Room 237). Internet nuts won't be weave it into their mad conspiracy theories. But it combines the popcorn appeal of a mid-tier Stephen King adaptation with a hit of nostalgia big enough to floor an elephant. I suspect Kubrick would be livid were he around to see it, but that didn't stop me from lapping it up.

SORRY WE MISSED YOU (15)

DIR. KEN LOACH

BY HELEN CRANE

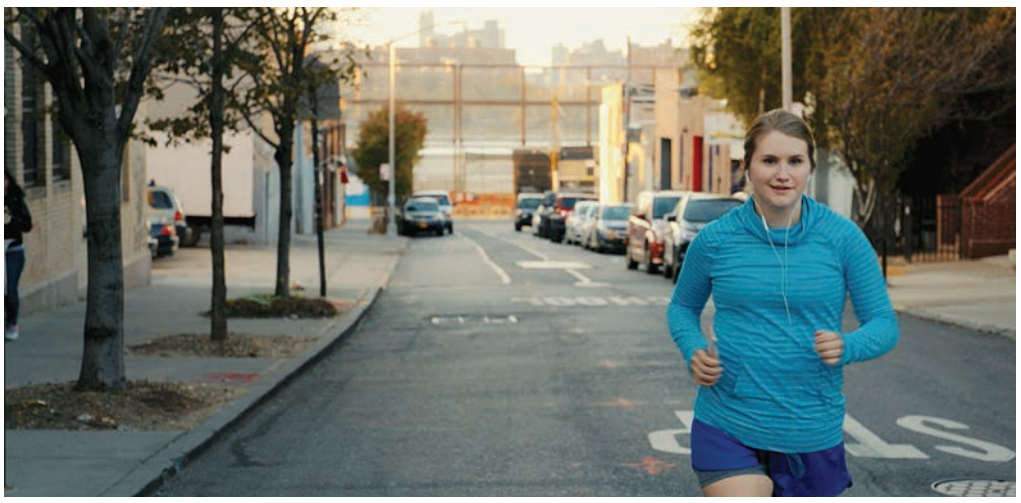
Sorry We Missed You is the latest offering from director-slash-social-critic Ken Loach; a polemic against the false promises of the gig economy and the brutal reality of life on a zero-hours contract.

Its protagonist is Ricky (Kris Hitchen), who gets a new job as a delivery driver because he wants to buy a house for his wife Abbie (Debbie Honeywood) and two kids. Our hearts sink as he's told by the warehouse boss, a Geordie hard man and self-described 'patron saint of nasty bastards' known only as Moloney, this isn't really a 'job' at all, but an opportunity to run his own business. So great is this opportunity that he has to sell his wife's car to buy the delivery van, and pay for someone to cover him if he needs a day off.

That sinking feeling sticks around for the rest of the film, as Ricky's life becomes ruled by the demon device that he uses to check his parcels in and out, which tracks his every move and bleeps if he spends more than two minutes on a delivery. Like all great entrepreneurs he doesn't have time for toilet breaks, so he's given a bottle to keep in the back of his van.

You don't go to a Ken Loach film expecting laughs, and Sorry We Missed You doesn't deliver many. At times it teeters on being unbearably bleak, but it is smattered with little moments of human connection that pull it back from the brink – the genuine companionship between Abby, a carer, and the old ladies she visits, for instance, or Ricky and his daughter ignoring the bleeping for five minutes to share some sandwiches in the back of his van.

This feels like an important film. If nothing else, it might give you a newfound respect for the person who delivers your next Amazon parcel.



From top left: Ewan McGregor as Danny Torrance in The Shining; Gillian Bell in the feel-good comedy Brittany Runs A Marathon; Kris Hitchen in maudlin Ken Loach film Sorry We Missed You

BRITTANY RUNS A MARATHON (15)

DIR. PAUL DOWNS COLAIZZO

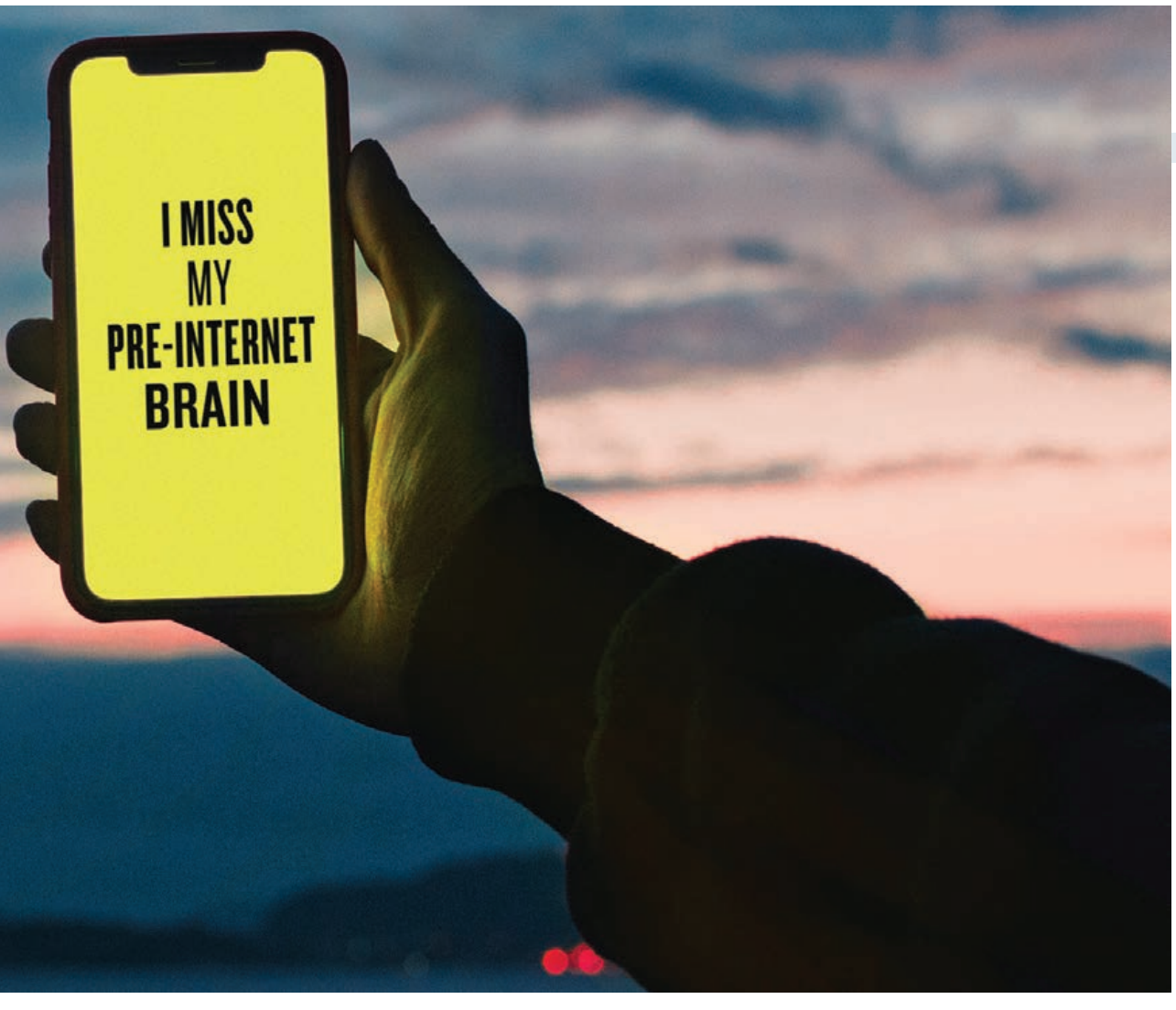
BY STEVE HOGARTY

Brittany Runs A Marathon is a feel-good comedy. That is to say, it's a comedy that makes you feel good. When you watch it, you will empathise with Brittany and her attempt to run a marathon such that, by the time she crosses the finish line – and assuming you're not some kind of a sociopath – you will feel better than you did at the beginning of the whole process.

The debut of writer and director Paul Downs Colaizzo, this body-positive tale of a woman advised by her doctor to curb her lifestyle of excessive drinking, smoking and partying is more nuanced than the premise suggests. Jillian Bell is given an acerbic script to work with, and elevates what could easily have been a clumsily fatphobic movie about fitness and weight loss into something that aims a little higher.

Brittany starts out a self-sabotaging loser forever on the cusp of imploding, but her character development avoids arriving at anything so patronising or hackneyed as simply loving the body you're in, or as fictional as true beauty being on the inside.

Everything besides Brittany is painted in much broader strokes. The plot follows its inevitable path to the big race, and the orbiting cast of neighbours, flatmates and love interests serve as an idle commentary on a grab bag of unrelated aspects of modern life: social media, online dating and such. And so Brittany's journey to self-betterment becomes more cartoonish and saccharine as it goes along, making it an ideal film to watch on a plane over the course of three or four gin and tonics, as your booze-addled inner critic becomes more receptive to bursting into tears at the thought of somebody successfully turning their life around by running 26 miles.



RECOMMENDED

24/7
SOMERSET HOUSE
BY STEVE DINNEEN

For an exhibition about how fragmented and confusing modern life can be, 24/7 at Somerset House has an appropriately short attention span. The flashing, clattering, often overwhelming show bounces from subject to subject, medium to medium, tackling issues as diverse as screen addiction, mass surveillance, light pollution and sleep disturbance.

It tells the story of a world in flux, with us, the inhabitants of this brave new era, barely aware of the digital pressures bearing down upon virtually every aspect of our lives.

As the exhibition title suggests, there's a focus on the shift from a more of less circadian society governed by natural day/night cycles, to an always-on, ever-connected world.

Marcus Coates video Self-Portrait as Time (What Makes One Want to Work?) shows a close-up of the artist's finger manually flicking the second hand of a wristwatch, a feat he kept up for 12 hours straight without missing a beat (usefully, it tells the actual time in the gallery).

It's a wry take on an unsettling truth – that we're on the clock from the moment we wake to the second we fall asleep. And that's *if* we can fall asleep. Between blue light and 24-hour emails and medicated stimulants, our sleep patterns have been disrupted on an unprecedented scale.

A video piece by Roman Signer shows the artist attempting to snooze while a remote control drone buzzes angrily around his head. In another installation visitors are invited to lie on a double bed in a dark room and stare at a hypnotic lightshow – a strange, futuristic solution to a strange, futuristic problem.

There's a healthy dose of technophobia: a video of a Chinese Bitcoin mining mainframe bathed in blood-red light; an installation of twisted, broken flatscreen TVs; a super-cut of Mark Zuckerberg saying the words "more" and "growth" over and over again.

But other pieces are more ambivalent. American artist and programmer Michael Mandiberg finds beauty in the faces of smart watches, while data visualisation studio Tekja creates kaleidoscopic patterns from real-time social media posts.

Even when despairing about the bizzaro world we somehow inhabit, 24/7 is full of energy and humour. It's the doctor who gives you a terminal diagnosis but somehow manages to raise a smile. We're in a right old mess, it says, but still, look at this nice shiny thing, and this one, and this one...

THE BEST NEW THEATRE

AS YOU LIKE IT
BARBICAN
BY LAUREN CRISP

The Royal Shakespeare Company's first offering from its ensemble season at the Barbican takes us on a journey from the royal court, deep into the Forest of Arden.

It's a playful, mad, physical comedy, with a number of laugh-out-loud moments and some strong performances. Speech and tone are casual and the production feels modern, fresh and flirtatious, with a focus on love in its many forms. In the Forest of Arden, identity, sexuality and gender are ever-changing: women dress as men, roles are re-gendered, and the forest becomes a liminal, fluid space, free from societal norms.

Great effort is made to create a distinct relationship between audience and actor, as Shakespeare himself would likely have encouraged, to underscore that this is a play, and everyone a player. For a production set in the forest, there's not a tree in sight. Instead, the stage is an unmade set: costume racks are dotted around; sheets cover detritus in the background; the house band sits in plain view, directed to play music as and when the protagonists please.

Yet at times this breaking down of barriers feels overplayed and affected. The house lights are left on for much of the performance to allow the characters and the crowd to be as one, but this leaves one feeling exposed and uneasy, rather than immersed, and prevents the production from flowing as smoothly as it might. There's a somewhat jumbled approach to costume, characterisation and pace, which, along with the imposed theatricality, has the effect of distracting and detracting from the work itself.

As Rosalind says, as she brings the play to a close, you are free to enjoy as much of the play as you please, or indeed, to take it or leave it as you like it.

BOTTICELLI IN THE FIRE
HAMPSTEAD THEATRE
BY SIMON THOMSON

Botticelli in the Fire is a giddy nihilistic romp. A pyrotechnic period drama that vigorously thrusts its way into a position of contemporary cultural relevance, somewhere between Brexit and RuPaul's Drag Race.

Jordan Tannahill's script is Shakespearean in its regard for historical fact and Brechtian in its regard for the fourth wall, a mish-mash of modern and 15th century Florentine culture, of fact and fiction. It's a queer re-imagining of the painter's seemingly inevitable collision with the austere religiosity of the firebrand preacher Savonarola, and his Bonfire of the Vanities.

Botticelli himself is well-acted (by Dickie Beau) and engaging, but the character is shallow and cliched. He's the dissolute, selfish, self-destructive creative genius we've seen countless times. In an opening address he tells the audience, "I promise you this isn't going to be another tortured fag-artist sob story. Okay maybe it is." This is a play which – appropriately for a tale of bottomless appetite – wants to have its cake and eat it, but as a consequence it's permeated by a sense of indecisiveness (it even has both sad and happy endings).

The play is best when at its most camp and fantastical, with the audience most audibly enthused by a surreal interlude in which the sequin-clad goddess Venus (Sirene Saba) – perched on a giant scallop shell, and surrounded by gyrating dancers in gas-masks and skimpy dungarees – comically addresses the tribulations of being a beautiful woman.

Botticelli in the Fire is a vivid, entertaining exploration of how messy things can become when excess and inequality trigger populist backlash. If you're sitting in the front row, wear a waterproof poncho.

THE ANTIPODES
NATIONAL THEATRE (DORFMAN)
BY STEVE DINNEEN

Writing stories is hard. This seems to be the message behind Annie Baker's new play The Antipodes, an excrutiating, self-indulgent insight into the misery of the creative process.

The entire play takes place in a non-descript conference room, in which a bunch of writers fawn over an aging director reminiscent of George Lucas. His methods are... unconventional, asking each writer to share intimate details of their private lives – first sexual experience, biggest regret – and basking in the aftermath of this awkward intimacy.

And that's kind of it. The atmosphere in the room, where the passing of days and weeks are charted only by the perky receptionist's costume changes, becomes increasingly desperate. All these fragments of stories don't seem to lead anywhere. There are surreal tangents – a foray into the occult, for instance – and tangents so utterly prosaic they take on a surreal quality, but nothing that sticks, and certainly nothing that resembles a traditional narrative arc.

Baker's play occasionally threatens to make a definite point, almost addressing the #metoo movement or the general mistreatment of writers. But these turn out to be more waves lapping at an endless shore, breaking and receding again, merging with all the other molecules of partially told stories.

Like her previous, Pulitzer-prize winning play The Flick, Baker revels in the power of monotony and rejoices in uncomfortable silence. There are times when The Antipodes feels like a reading rather than a full production, as well as times that border on the sublime. Perhaps that's the point – creativity is messy and difficult, full of frustrating dead ends. It's hard work to sit through, though.

From top: The Antipodes at the Dorfman Theatre; The RSC's As You Like It at Barbican; Hampstead Theatre's production of Botticelli in the Fire

OFFICE POLITICS

Startups: Stop soldiering on alone and ask for some help

Entrepreneurs are admitting that they want advice and support more than ever before

Emma Jones

AS A NATION, we're not great at admitting when we need help. We like to soldier on with a stiff upper lip, while often heading for a fall.

It was therefore interesting that in a recent poll among our Enterprise Nation adviser community, we found that more than half of them say that small business founders have an increasing appetite for advice.

What are the reasons for this?

It's not just another looming election and a painfully slow Brexit process that's making entrepreneurs take more advice than ever before. Rather, the upward trend in small business owners, side-hustlers, and self-employed individuals seeking knowledge from experienced advisers is more to do with the UK's world-class startup economy starting to mature.

The growing demand for advice is also due to the fact that, while startup rates remain astonishingly high here in the UK, with over half a million registered with Companies House every year, more of them are failing. Business deaths have increased slightly to 12.2 per cent in 2017, according to the Office for National Statistics.

Research suggests that those who take advice on board do better than those who do not – it's a simple equation

Meanwhile, all research suggests that those who take advice on board do better than those who do not. It's a simple equation, but it's taken 10 years for the penny to drop.

This rise may also be to do with the changing face of advisers. Back in 2009 at the beginning of the tech-enabled startup revolution, taking business advice often meant filling out a lengthy paper application form to receive an appointment four weeks later.

And before you could get near your assigned adviser – often a retired bank manager in a grey suit – you would have to plonk your Companies House registration papers, tax details, and everything else on the table before he could even mutter the words "business plan" and "income tax".

Today's entrepreneurs are looking for bite-sized advice. A third of advisers said that they were being asked more often for one-off advisory sessions, with another third reporting more demand for remote sessions via phone or digital conferencing link.

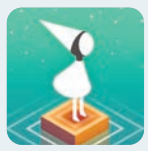
And our advisers are fine with that. Many are young (if not in age, then certainly in attitude), they are tech-enabled, and talk about search engine optimisation and digital transformation. In short, they reflect the modernity of the companies they're advising.

In response to these changes, we have taken a fresh look at the way our online support platform works, and are relaunching it today. We hope that by identifying this rising demand for specific advice, we'll be able to influence the supply of support, cutting through what people think founders want.

Some founders come to us wanting the business basics, but others want a more niche and sophisticated offering, whether that be around appropriate cultural branding to enter a new market, social media tactics to attract the attention of a buyer, or how to raise funds from an angel with Enterprise Investment Scheme tax relief intact.

We want to give everyone access to support from the right expert adviser instantly, as well as serve up essential business tools and resources delivered by the private and public sectors. Making access to trusted support as easy as buying a book should open up the advice market yet further. And we will all gain from that.

Emma Jones is founder of Enterprise Nation.



PEACEFUL PUZZLES

Monument Valley
£2.99

Had a hectic week? Looking for something calming to play on your phone while you unwind this weekend? Then check out 2013 puzzle game Monument Valley. You play as a princess on a journey of forgiveness. Each level is like an M. C. Escher drawing, where impossible paths form as you turn levers and rotate platforms. Its minimalist art style is pleasing to the eye and peaceful to play.

COFFEE BREAK

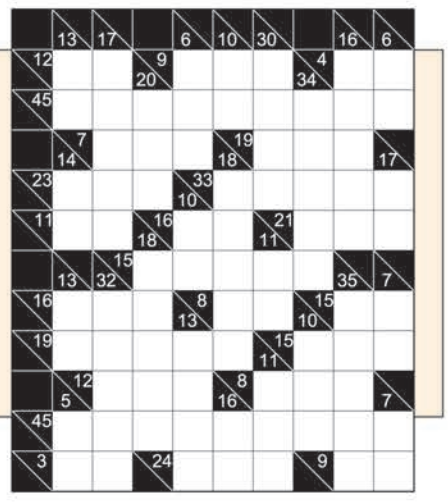
SUDOKU

Place the numbers from 1 to 9 in each empty cell so that each row, each column and each 3x3 block contains all the numbers from 1 to 9 to solve this tricky Sudoku puzzle.

7			4				2	3
						1	4	9
		2			9			
	6	7			4			1
			6	1	5			
1			8			3	6	
			9			8		
2	9	3						
4	7				1			5

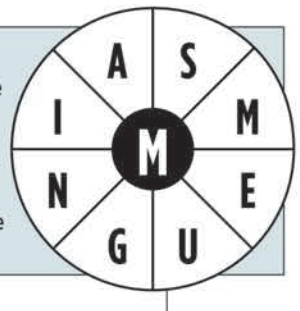
KAKURO

Fill the grid so that each block adds up to the total in the box above or to the left of it.
You can only use the digits 1-9 and you must not use the same digit twice in a block. The same digit may occur more than once in a row or column, but it must be in a separate block.

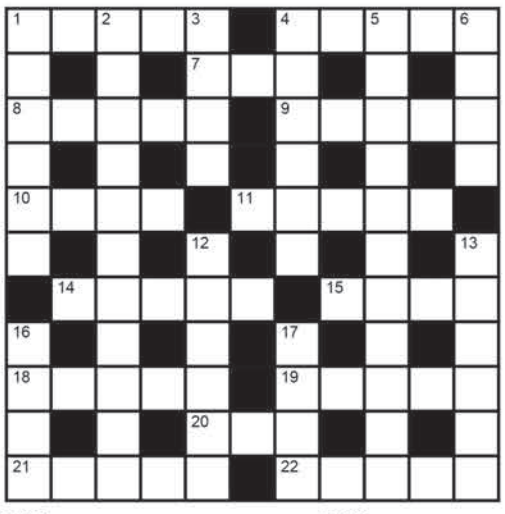


WORDWHEEL

Using only the letters in the Wordwheel, you have ten minutes to find as many words as possible, none of which may be plurals, foreign words or proper nouns. Each word must be of three letters or more, all must contain the central letter and letters can only be used once in every word. There is at least one nine-letter word in the wheel.



QUICK CROSSWORD



ACROSS

1 Green salad vegetable (5)
4 Put into service, practise (5)
7 Outward flow of the tide (3)
8 Astonish (5)
9 Clean with hard rubbing (5)
10 Elegant and stylish (4)
11 Dot on a computer screen (5)
14 Descends by force of gravity (5)
15 Celebrity (4)
18 Control a vehicle (5)
19 Defence plea of being elsewhere (5)
20 Sealed metal storage container (3)
21 Make a thrusting forward movement (5)
22 Arabian spirit (5)

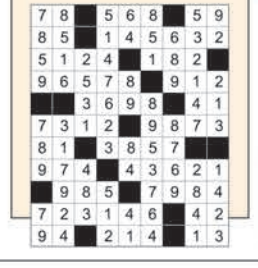
DOWN

1 Accident, fate (6)
2 Formal test of knowledge or proficiency (11)
3 Attempt to find (4)
4 Descend by rope (6)
5 Member of the working class (11)
6 Conical tent of skins used by Mongolian nomads (4)
12 Sheep's coat (6)
13 Give up work (6)
16 Material effigy worshipped as a god (4)
17 Twinge (4)

LAST ISSUE'S SOLUTIONS

QUICK CROSSWORD

KAKURO



SUDOKU

3	6	1	7	9	8	4	5	2
7	9	5	2	4	6	1	8	3
4	8	2	3	5	1	6	7	9
1	5	7	6	2	4	3	9	8
9	4	6	8	7	3	2	1	5
8	2	3	5	1	9	7	4	6
6	1	8	4	3	5	9	2	7
2	3	4	9	8	7	5	6	1
5	7	9	1	6	2	8	3	4

WORDWHEEL

The nine-letter word was **DANGEROUS**

THE PUNTER

RUGBY TRADER

@ThomasWMarriott

Ford and Farrell to steer the chariot home

Tom Marriott previews tomorrow's Rugby World Cup final

EDDIE Jones said from the start of his appointment as England head coach in 2015 to judge him on how his side perform at the 2019 World Cup.

It is fair to say he's been a success, with his team just 80 minutes away from their second Webb Ellis Cup.

The Red Rose have been excellent this tournament, slowly going through the gears as the calibre of opposition has increased, culminating with a masterful display against New Zealand in the semi-finals.

England played at a level rarely seen in world rugby last weekend, completely nullifying the All Blacks and the game seemed closer on the scoreboard by virtue of two disallowed English tries.

An unchanged side sees Jones stick with the double-pivot of George Ford and Owen Farrell that has proved so effective during his tenure, while some of the younger members of the forward pack have come of age in Japan, with Tom Curry, Sam Underhill and Kyle Sinckler all excelling.

However, the pack will face one of the best units on the planet in the final.

Regular readers of this column will recall that South Africa were tipped pre-tournament at 4/1.

The Springboks suffered an early loss to New Zealand, but since then have ground out physical wins against all comers, before dispatching Wales in a tight semi-final.

Rassie Erasmus' side have built their platform off strong forward plays, a maul that has been incredibly dominant, with their hookers combining for four tries and Handre Pollard's unerring accuracy off the boot.

The Springboks have doubled-down on the final being a physical, grinding contest by having a six-two split on the bench and their tight-five has some of the best depth in the tournament, with Malcolm Marx and Steven Kitshoff likely to walk into nearly any other team's starting XV.

Owen Farrell and George Ford both start against South Africa

Of the eight Rugby World Cup finals, only three have been decided by more than 10 points and this has the makings of another close game.

In the 2007 final, neither of these teams scored a try, with all 21 points coming from the kicking tee.

England enter as favourites and considering their display against the All Blacks, you would have to consider that is justified.

If they perform to that level again, South Africa will be hard-pressed to get a hand on them, but finals have a way of levelling the playing field and England will have to grind out the result here if they are to be victorious, which looks the likeliest result.

England to win by 1-12 points is 29/20 with Sporting Index, which looks a fair price based on previous matches between the two.

They frequently start with a bang and in eight World Cup finals, the team that scores the first points have won the game on five occasions.

Jonny May has regularly scored on big occasions for the Red Rose in recent years and the 17/2 about him crossing the whitewash first in Yokohama looks good value.

Only twice has a final had 40 points or more and both involved New Zealand.

On the three occasions either South Africa or England have lifted the cup, the highest winning score has been 20 points and that was after extra-time.

All signs point to this being a low-scoring affair and Sporting Index have priced total points at around 37.

Going off history and the relatively tight affairs both teams experienced in the semi-finals, that looks fairly high and a sell (betting lower) is advised.

Both sides have high-class, very physical defences that don't give up points easily and neither team will give an inch.

While discipline will play a large part, it may not be the try-fest neutrals are hoping for.

In Pollard, South Africa have a kicker who is blessed with both range and uncanny accuracy, and it was no surprise he was given Man of the Match in the semi-final after securing 14 of the Springboks' 19 points.

England's kicking stable is more varied, with Farrell usually handling duties, but with Elliot Daly on hand for a long-range attempt.

With finals usually close affairs, it is vital to keep the scoreboard ticking.

Both sides will kick for goal eagerly if the opportunity presents itself and will often be more successful than not.

Sporting Index prices match kicking metres at 250 and in a final which should be decided by small margins, points from the boot will be vital.

As the penalty count slowly increases, so will the metres, and buying (betting higher) this market looks the best bet.

POINTERS	TOMORROW
England to win by 1-12 points	29/20
Jonny May first tryscorer	17/2
Buy match kicking metres	260
Sell total points	36

SINNING SAINTS

Southampton face relegation scrap yet again after starting season with a flop, writes **Felix Keith**

WHEN Ralph Hasenhuttl joined Southampton as their new manager on 5 December last year his first task was to fight fires. Saints were 18th in the Premier League and floundering, having become a listless identikit team under his predecessor Mark Hughes. They needed to be motivated, coached and saved from relegation.

The Austrian achieved those short-term goals, winning 30 points from 23 league games to avoid the drop and finish in 16th place.

The idea was that this season, after reversing the damage of the Hughes era, Hasenhuttl could lay the groundwork for his own, much happier one. He was brought in with a reputation as an astute, ambitious and visionary manager – one who could improve players and implement his own tactical outlook swiftly.

Talk of a high-pressing, intense playing style excited fans and players alike. After six weeks of pre-season training, the intention was for Southampton to unveil their high-tempo revolution at the start of this season. They would bring back the good times of the Mauricio Pochettino and Ronald Koeman days, upset some of the Big Six teams, and climb back to where they belonged, among the best of the rest in the top half of the table.

That was the dream. The reality is that Saints are back where they started: demoralised, in 18th place and looking over their shoulder once again at the Championship.

While things are not yet as worrying as the final days of Hughes's reign, and the faith of the club's board and the majority of supporters remains with Hasenhuttl, there is a fairly sizeable elephant in the room.

A 9-0 home defeat can't help but send shockwaves through a club. Last week's thrashing by Leicester was, unsurprisingly, the worst in Southampton's 133-year history and the joint-biggest in the Premier League's 24 years.

Hasenhuttl has not seen his side win in the league since 14 September

"After 9-0 there is no more discussion necessary. I think everybody knows in that way we cannot continue," Hasenhuttl said this week.

"These days are new for me but I'm now a better manager than before and this is the good thing from this game. And if the players see it the same they know that they are better players in the future."

LEADERSHIP VOID

If there was any doubt before, that shocking and embarrassing result means any long-term goals of completing a complex systemic change have been put on hold. The time being is all about results and climbing out of the hole Saints have dug.

The leadership in achieving that goal must come from Hasenhuttl – he is the manager and quite frankly there is no-one else around. The departures of vice-chairman Les Reed in November 2018, chairman Ralph Krueger in April and director of football operations Ross Wilson last month has left a void at St Mary's.

Hasenhuttl also lost his assistant manager Danny Rohl to Bayern Munich in August. It is up to him and his players to turn around form which has seen Southampton win just two of their opening 10 league games.

Unfortunately for him that task begins at just about the worst possible venue. Having taken the positives from the 3-1 defeat by Manchester City in the Carabao Cup on Tuesday, Saints are back at the Etihad Stadium to face the defending Premier League champions tomorrow.

Hasenhuttl is not expecting a miracle. Instead he wants his players to be "as nasty as possible" and "a little bit more self-confident". Achieve that, work hard over the November international break and, with a kinder run of fixtures around the corner, Saints might just be able to turn it around.

They face Watford, Norwich and Newcastle in quick succession, who currently sit 20th, 19th and 17th respectively, at the end of the month.

It isn't where they want to be, but Southampton are again in survival mode. Only once disaster has been averted and stability assured elsewhere in the club can Hasenhuttl's worthy tactical goals be fully pursued.

HOPE ON THE HORIZON?

Southampton have taken just eight points from their opening 10 league matches, but face fellow strugglers soon.

2/11: Manchester City (away)
9/11: Everton (home
23/11: Arsenal (away)
30/11: Watford (home)
4/12: Norwich City (home)
8/12: Newcastle United (away)
14/12: West Ham United (home)
21/12: Aston Villa (away)

Why World Cup can end rugby salary cap

Exploding interest in Asia will bring in new money and increase player earnings, writes **Simon Leaf**

WHEN Japan and South Korea hosted football's World Cup in 2002, it precipitated a significant increase in Asian investment in the sport through takeovers of high-profile European clubs and multi-million pound Asia-only sponsorship deals with star players.

With the first Rugby World Cup to be held in Asia about to conclude, this milestone could create a similar bounce in the fortunes of rugby players.

TIME TO CAP THE CAP?

Premiership Rugby and football's Premier League approach financial compensation for the players they regulate in very different ways.

This has undoubtedly contributed to professional footballers earning many multiples more than their rugby playing cousins at every level of the game.

As a result, rugby players are effectively prevented from demanding larger salaries. This has contributed to high-profile internationals moving to overseas leagues without the same financial restrictions in order to maximise their earnings, even when it has meant giving up their places in the national team as a result.

FOOTBALL FINANCIALS: FAIR PLAY?

While top football clubs are subject to Financial Fair Play rules designed to prevent clubs from spending beyond their means, there is no direct cap on what players can earn.

That has unsurprisingly allowed clubs to pay ever-increasing sums of money to their players and agents.

Many clubs have tried to justify this by entering into special image rights arrangements with their players. These deals effectively limit the players from entering into personal endorsement contracts that conflict with the club's main commercial partners.

In rugby, these image rights arrangements are also starting to gain popularity – albeit, with the salary cap, it is much harder for a club to get star players to curtail outside sponsorship work given that this external income is an important source of income for them.

LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

Premiership Rugby's current TV broadcasting deal with BT Sport is said to be worth between £150m and £200m over five years until 2021.

The first Rugby World Cup to be held in Asia has been hailed as a big success

While the next deal is expected to be significantly higher, with Amazon rumoured to be interested in bidding, it seems unlikely that it will reach anywhere close to the £1.6bn per season collectively paid by Sky, BT, and Amazon for the domestic rights to around 200 Premier League games.

Nevertheless, commercial opportunities in rugby are increasing. CVC Capital Partners, the private equity firm best known for its successful investment in Formula One, recently purchased a 27 per cent stake in Premiership Rugby for around £200m.

The company has since also begun the process of buying a share in the commercial arm of the Six Nations and the Pro14 league.

OPPORTUNITIES IN THE EAST

More than 500,000 foreign fans were expected to visit Japan for the Rugby World Cup and nearly all the 1.8m tickets were sold in advance.

It is tipped to be the most widely watched, digitally engaging and socially and economically impactful rugby event ever; one study suggests the tournament will generate total revenue of £2.97bn.

As is often the case with global tournaments, the challenge in Japan will be to turn the short-term boost to the sport into long-term growth, popularity and further commercial opportunities.

Perhaps this has already begun, following World Rugby's launch of its Impact Beyond legacy programme, which has reached 1.8m new rugby participants in Asia.

Given new investment in the game and this World Cup opportunity, it is surely only a matter of time before rugby players use their growing power to apply greater pressure on the authorities to loosen the purse-strings so they can narrow the earnings gap to their footballing cousins.

If they don't, legal challenges to the cap and the rules introduced by national teams on playing abroad appear to be inevitable.

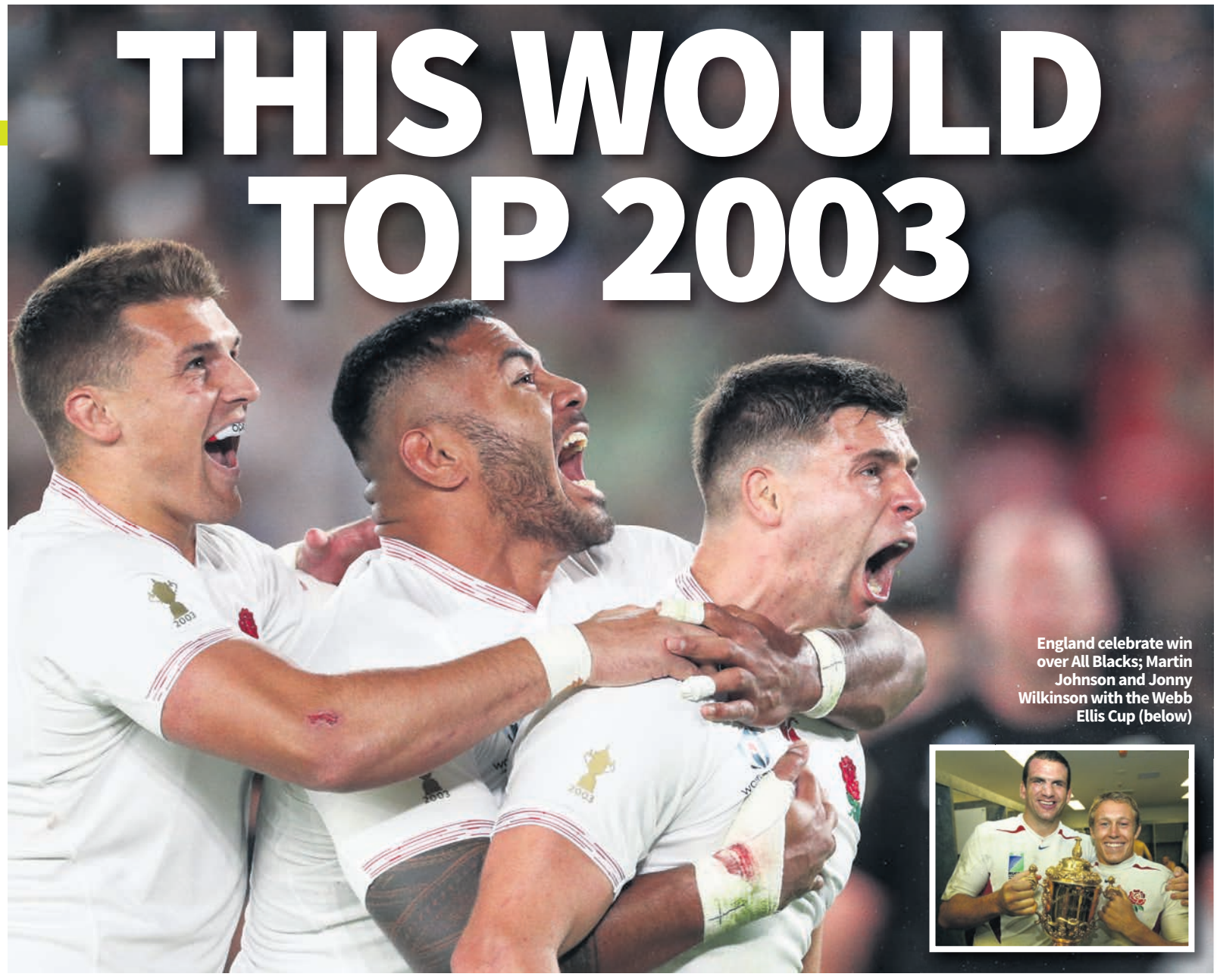
Simon Leaf is a sports lawyer at Mishcon de Reya in London.

SPORT

RUGBY COMMENT

Ollie Phillips

THIS WOULD TOP 2003



England celebrate win over All Blacks; Martin Johnson and Jonny Wilkinson with the Webb Ellis Cup (below)

IT'S Rugby World Cup final eve and I could hardly be more confident. England come into their clash with South Africa on the back of a near-perfect performance in the semi-final, while their opponents did the bare minimum to reach the showpiece in Japan.

England were sensational in beating New Zealand 19-7 last weekend. Keeping the All Blacks scoreless is unheard of and, but for an overthrow by Jamie George at the line-out, that's what they would have done. All facets of their game were on song and they controlled the game completely from start to finish.

A day later, South Africa's narrow win over Wales couldn't have been more of a contrast. The Springboks set out not to lose, to frustrate the other side, to set up blockades and wear down the opposition.

It was an utterly dire spectacle only slightly redeemed by the close finale which saw them scrape through 19-16.

BRAINS V BRAWN

On paper and on form England should leave the Yokohama Stadium tomorrow having won by at least 10 points. Rassie Erasmus' side haven't impressed yet. They ground out wins over Japan and Wales. They haven't had to chase a game, or show much creativity to score points.

The return from injury of Cheslin Kolbe gives them some much-needed spark. The winger has magic in his boots and England will certainly have to be wary of him.

But really England know what they will be faced by. The Springboks have four forwards over 115kg and 2m tall; they will attack the breakdown with force, get in the faces of their opponents and try to slow the game down.

Scrum-half Faf de Klerk will box-kick often and England's back line of Elliot Daly, Anthony Watson and Jonny May will be busy securing high kicks.

England can match South Africa's physical approach, but in some ways it will be brains against brawn, because I don't think the Springboks have faced a side as inventive and multi-faceted as Eddie Jones' team.

I thought Jones might have brought in Henry Slade at centre to combat South Africa's big ball-carriers like Damian de Allende, but they played so well against the All Blacks that no-one, especially George Ford who put in an all-time great performance, deserved to be dropped.

South Africa will have to alter their tactics and go up another level to stand a chance, because England are better than Wales, who were devoid of ideas when it mattered most.

England have a whole arsenal to attack with: their forwards are confident enough to offload or dummy and they're inventive with the ball, as well as having the physicality to match them.

HATS OFF TO JONES

England have peaked at the perfect time and I've got to take my hat off to Jones. Around 18 months ago I doubted the direction, but he was planning for this moment.

Players like Chris Robshaw and James Haskell couldn't play this style we're seeing, so Jones blooded the likes of young flankers Sam Underhill and Tom Curry, who are firing on all cylinders now.

I was also critical of the move to bring in John Mitchell as defence coach, but the turnaround has been remarkable. The grand plan seems to have come together.

Quite simply, if England continue their momentum, be brave, assert their game plan and avoid getting dragged into an arm wrestle then they will win and cap an achievement which out-strips the famous vintage of 2003 in Australia.

Back then England were favourites and wobbled against Wales in the quarter-final.

This time they've done it the hard way, taking on all the southern hemisphere sides and beating the best team in the world. Victory over South Africa would be a fitting end to a memorable tournament.

Ollie Phillips is a former England Sevens captain and now a director within the real estate and construction team at PwC.

> "This time they've done it the hard way, taking on all the southern hemisphere sides

WHEN WE WERE KINGS: 2003

Life was very different when England last won the Rugby World Cup, beating Australia 20-17 with a late Jonny Wilkinson drop-goal in November 2003.
Prime Minister: Tony Blair was in the middle of his term, from 1997 to 2007.
War: Led by Blair and George W Bush, the coalition's invasion of Iraq began.
Transport: Concorde made its final flight and the London congestion charge came into operation for the first time.
Music: The Black Eyed Peas were No1 with 'Where Is The Love?' for six weeks.
Films: 'The Lord of the Rings: The Return of the King' was the highest grossing film.
TV: Channel 4 soap opera Brookside ended after 21 years of being broadcast.
Football: Cristiano Ronaldo signs for Manchester United from Sporting Lisbon.

SPORT DIGEST

ANGER PROMPTED BY SOCIAL MEDIA THREATS, SAYS XHAKA

Arsenal captain Granit Xhaka has apologised to fans and explained his angry reaction after being substituted in the 2-2 draw against Crystal Palace last weekend. Xhaka swore and went straight down the tunnel after fans booed his slow exit from the pitch in the second half. The midfielder said he "reached boiling point" following threats to his family on social media. "I let myself get carried away and reacted in a way which disrespected the group of fans that support our club," he wrote in a statement yesterday. "That has not been my intention and I'm sorry if that's what people thought."

ERASMUS: SPRINGBOKS MUST USE FINAL AS A SPRINGBOARD

Rassie Erasmus says South Africa must use the World Cup final as a springboard no matter what the result is. South Africa have beaten Japan and Wales to reach the final and their head coach believes they have what it takes to win and stay near the top of the world rankings. "We will do our utmost to win it and we think we are in with a good chance and will give it a real go against England, but the big challenge is to be consistent," Erasmus said. "This can be a springboard for us and we must take it forward so that we stay in the top three in the world."

EDMUND LOSES TO DJOKOVIC BUT SET FOR DAVIS CUP PICK

Kyle Edmund was beaten in straight sets by world No1 Novak Djokovic at the Paris Masters yesterday. The former British No1 fought hard and pushed the 16-time Grand Slam champion in the first set, but lost 7-6, 6-1 in the third round clash. Djokovic, who had been struggling with illness, will play Stefanos Tsitsipas today in the quarter-finals. Despite defeat, it's been a positive week for Edmund, who picked up his first two wins since August in Paris to put himself in pole position to be named as Great Britain's last pick for the Davis Cup finals. Britain face Holland and Kazakhstan in the group stage in Madrid on 20 and 21 November.

NEW FORMULA ONE RULES UNVEILED FOR 2021 SEASON

Formula One has revealed new rules which it hopes will make the sport more competitive. New technical, sporting and financial rules will be introduced for the 2021 season to try to make racing closer and better for viewers. "It's to change the foundation of Formula 1 via the cost control, the governance, and bring the teams closer together and provide sustainable competition," said F1 managing director Ross Brawn. However, leading teams Mercedes, Ferrari and Red Bull opposed the changes, which include a $175m (£135m) budget cap, revised aerodynamics aimed at improving overtaking, a limit on car upgrades and a maximum of 25 races per season.

Why Arsenal's summer of change has made Unai Emery more dispensable

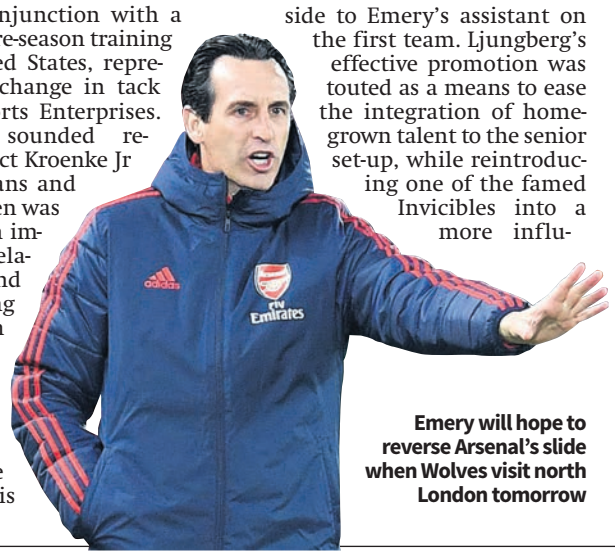
Restructuring has left the club better placed to manage regime change. By **Frank Dalleres**

Hard to watch: Arsenal's recent form, allied to controversies around star players, has left manager Emery (below) vulnerable

HOWEVER bad the team's current malaise may seem for Arsenal supporters, there is one element of the club's recent evolution that offers succour. Where once the Gunners looked rudderless at the very top and, as such, ill equipped to manage change, a series of developments which crystallised over the summer have improved that position. The upshot is that, if under-fire manager Unai Emery proves unable to stem the flood of goals conceded, lift a mood darkened by the Mesut Ozil and Granit Xhaka rows and reverse the team's slide down the table, Arsenal are at least in a better state to act.

Perhaps the most significant movement of the club's close season was Josh Kroenke's emergence as a proactive voice of Arsenal's owners, whose long-time reticence in engaging with supporters had given some the impression of arrogance, apathy or both. Kroenke wrote an open letter on 16 July, addressing concerns raised in a statement issued by an alliance of supporter groups that he and his father, Stan Kroenke, had been guilty of "passive ownership". He followed that up with high-profile interviews in August which, in conjunction with a visit to the club's pre-season training camp in the United States, represented a distinct change in tack from Kroenke Sports Enterprises. The messaging sounded rehearsed, but the fact Kroenke Jr was speaking to fans and making himself seen was at the very least an improved public relations strategy and hinted at something deeper: a hands-on owner taking charge at last.

Another significant development was the reassignment of Freddie Ljungberg from his role as coach of the club's under-23 side to Emery's assistant on the first team. Ljungberg's effective promotion was touted as a means to ease the integration of home-grown talent to the senior set-up, while reintroducing one of the famed Invincibles into a more influential and prominent position. But it also put in place a safety net. Should a new man hastily be required to take the reins from Emery then Ljungberg, who has managerial ambitions of his own, would be ideally placed.



Emery will hope to reverse Arsenal's slide when Wolves visit north London tomorrow

Recruiting another Invincible, in former Arsenal and Brazil midfielder Edu Gaspar, as the club's new technical director was the other notable gambit in a summer of profound change. As well as – like Ljungberg – representing a link to the team's most glorious period in living memory, Edu returned to north London to feed into an overarching strategy and provide a continuity of vision that exists independent of the main man in the dugout. In essence, he is there to provide a link between the board and the coaching staff. In practice, the role also ensures that a club is not reliant on the manager to dictate direction, as they were in the Wenger era.

This isn't the first time Arsenal have tried to modernise their structure. Former chief executive Ivan Gazidis hired transfer guru Raul Sanllehi, super-scout Sven Mislintat and fitness expert Darren Burgess to prepare for Wenger's exit. The shake-up backfired, with Mislintat, Burgess and Gazidis leaving – the latter after anointing Emery.

The hope will be that Emery engineers an upturn in results, starting tomorrow afternoon, when Wolves visit Emirates Stadium hoping to become the latest team to give Arsenal a bloody nose. But amid a growing sense that the Spaniard is on borrowed time, the Gunners' hierarchy does finally look ready and able to manage a change of manager.