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**PARADISE FOUND** DIVE INTO THE SPECTACULAR IN THE MALDIVES **P24–25**

**HEAR IT'S GOING WELL** WHERE NEXT FOR THE PODCAST ADS MARKET? **P14**



MONDAY 2 MARCH 2020 | ISSUE 3,567 CITYAM.COM FREE


# ALL EYES ON THE OPEN

## CITY READIES FOR JITTERY START AFTER CORONA CORRECTION

**HARRY ROBERTSON**

*@harrygrobertson*

TRADERS are this morning braced for another volatile week after coronavirus fears caused UK and US equities to suffer their worst five days since the 2008 financial crisis.

The spread of the virus, which wiped nearly $6 trillion (£4.7 trillion) from global markets last week, showed no sign of slowing over the weekend. In Italy — Europe's worst-affected country — it has claimed at least 34 lives from more than 1,690 cases while 12 new UK cases were reported yesterday, including the first in Scotland.

FTSE 100 stocks lost £200bn across five trading sessions last week. In the US, Wall Street's S&P 500 index has slumped 13 per cent since 19 February.

Some analysts have warned that global stocks could tumble into bear territory — a drop of 20 per cent from recent highs.

"The likelihood (of a bear market) is reasonably high," said Erik Norland, senior economist at CME Group.

"The equity market in the US from its intraday high to intraday low already fell 15 per cent."

Investors are increasingly fearful of the effect containment efforts will have on the global economy. Incoming data has been gloomy, with an index of Chinese factories hitting a record low over the weekend. The port of Los Angeles, the largest US gateway for Chinese imports, is expecting a 25 per cent fall in container volumes in its February data.

There have been over 85,000 cases of the virus and almost 3,000 deaths.

Lori Calvasina, head of US equity strategy at RBC Capital Markets, said more bad news could set up the US S&P 500 index for a "total drop of 14 to 20 per cent".

Russ Mould, investment director at broker AJ Bell, said that in the UK "mathematically we're not a million miles away" from a bear market.

Travel stocks and luxury goods companies have been particularly hard-hit by a slump in demand.


**ITALY RESPONDS: P15**


# Entrepreneur relief change stirs backlash

**HARRY ROBERTSON AND STEFAN BOSCIA**

*@harrygrobertson @Stefan_Boscia*

A ROW broke out yesterday between the government and businesses over reported plans to scrap the entrepreneurs' relief tax scheme, which small firms warned will "destroy retirements".

Separately, a report out today said the use of the scheme is growing more than twice as fast in the north of the country than in London, questioning the new chancellor Rishi Sunak's purported rationale for axing the relief.

Plans have been drawn up for Sunak to scrap entrepreneurs' relief in the 11 March Budget, the Sunday Times reported, in a move that would give the UK's coffers a £2.7bn annual boost and free up cash for spending.

The scheme, launched by then-Prime Minister Gordon Brown in 2008, cuts the amount of capital gains tax paid when business-owners sell their firms from the usual 20 per cent to 10 per cent on up to £10m of lifetime gains.

The Federation of Small Businesses' chief Mike Cherry said getting rid of the relief would "make a mockery" of those who invest in businesses rather than other asset classes.


**CONTINUES ON P3**


**FTSE 100▼ 6,580.61 -215.79 FTSE 250▼ 19,330.92 -452.53 DOW▼ 25,409.36 -357.28 NASDAQ▲ 8,567.37 +0.89 £/$▼ 1.278 -0.010 £/€▼1.182 -0.011 €/$▲ 1.100 +0.002**

CITY A.M.

THE CITY VIEW

# Home Office chaos is looking none too Priti

THE PERPETUAL conflict between Eastasia, Oceania and Eurasia' in Orwell's 1984 is a warning, not a how-to. Yet Number 10 and Boris Johnson's government seem to be creating their own version of permanent war, finding enemies real and imagined right across the ranks of the civil service, the backbenches and Britain's oldest institutions. The latest extraordinary row broke came to a head this weekend, with Sir Philip Rutnam quitting as permanent secretary at the Home Office and suing the government for constructive dismissal after a vicious briefing war and what Rutnam alleges counts as "bullying" behaviour from home secretary Priti Patel, which she denies. Sir Philip is not beyond reproach and, in a sense, it is something of a surprise he was in the top job. He has been within touching distance of all sorts of government clangers, from the West Coast rail franchising debacle to the shocking treatment of the Windrush generation. In the furore around the latter, two senior officials and the then-home secretary Amber Rudd all received the heave-ho; Rutnam sailed on regardless, and then memorably complained in a select committee that it was frightfully rude of MPs not to tell him what they were going to ask in advance. In the private sector, rather than the pleasantly coddled world of the civil service, he'd have been lucky not to be out on his ear. Nonetheless, it is another day of the government having to clean up after a self-inflicted wound. We can add it to the appointment of "weirdo" Andrew Sabisky, briefings that the licence fee was for the chop, the departure of a chancellor, the kite-flying of a mansion tax, being too slow to respond to the coronavirus outbreak and the apparent lack of concern shown to flood victims as examples of the government finding itself in possession of a firearm and pointing it squarely towards its feet. If entrepreneurs' relief is indeed scrapped in addition to the cancellation of the corporation tax cut, a scrap with the business community seems inevitable too. All the while, Britain is attempting to redraw its immigration system, sign a deal with the world's largest (and most inflexible) trading bloc, come to a pact with an unpredictable US President and "level up" the UK economy. It's hard to see how a government that keeps giving itself black eyes will manage it.

> "Self-inflicted wounds do not help a government govern

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**SO LONG, MAYOR PETE** Democratic rival Pete Buttigieg pulls out of 2020 US presidential race after poor performance in primary

PETE Buttigieg, the first openly gay major US presidential candidate and a former small-town mayor in Indiana, dropped out of the race to be the Democratic candidate in the 2020 election late last night. The decision followed a significant loss at a primary in South Carolina over the weekend, at which Buttigieg came in fourth place. He secured a narrow victory in the Iowa caucuses and second place in New Hampshire last month, but failed to appeal to non-white communities to secure a broad voter base.

# Big Four firms dominate FTSE 100 auditor ranking

ANGHARAD CARRICK

@angharadcarrick

THE DOMINANCE of the Big Four serving the FTSE 100 continued in the first quarter despite growing regulatory pressure.

The Big Four were the only auditing firms to serve the FTSE 100 last quarter with PwC retaining the top spot with 27 clients, closely followed by KPMG's 26. Deloitte and EY served 25 and 22 firms respectively, according to Adviser Ranking's latest figures released today.

PwC has retained a clear advantage over the field with 336 overall clients, down from 353 in the last quarter.

However challenger firm BDO added the most clients in the last quarter, increasing its net overall client figures by seven to 281. Taken together with KPMG's losses of 13 clients, BDO have narrowed the gap on second-placed KPMG from 38 to just 18 clients in three months.

The challenger firm was helped by a migration within the FTSE 250. A succession of client wins, including Hyve Group, AJ Bell and Galliford Try, nearly doubled the auditor's index count from the previous quarter to 11.

Meanwhile Numis Securities remained the City's most popular stockbroker despite its first large decline in client numbers for more than a decade.

The stockbroker has lost net six clients since last quarter but retained its top position with 221 clients, according Adviser Rankings.

Despite Numis' popularity, Morgan Stanley has moved into the lead by aggregate client market-cap in the stockbroker rankings. It boasted the highest client market cap of £632.4m among stockbrokers after adding HSBC to its client roster.

Morgan Stanley's rise in overall client market cap came on the back of its dominance in the FTSE 100, in which it has a client market cap of £593.4m. Bank of America, taken on as joint broker to HSBC, moved up to second place in the stockbroker index.

**TOP AUDITOR IN THE CITY**

| NUMBER OF STOCK MARKET CLIENTS | |
|---|---|
| PwC | 336 |
| KPMG | 299 |
| BDO | 281 |
| EY | 236 |
| Deloitte | 220 |

**AND THE BEST BROKER**

| NUMBER OF STOCK MARKET CLIENTS | |
|---|---|
| Numis Securities | 215 |
| JP Morgan Cazenove | 178 |
| Peel Hunt | 144 |
| Investec Bank | 121 |
| Finncap | 109 |

Source: Corporate Advisers Rankings Guide

## WHAT THE OTHER PAPERS SAY THIS MORNING

### FINANCIAL TIMES

**CRITICISM MOUNTS FOR RBS-FUNDED BANK SCHEME**

Senior bankers are pushing the government, MPs and the EU to intervene in a "farcical" government-designed scheme to boost business banking after a series of setbacks, including news that the biggest winner was handing back almost half of its £120m prize. Executives at several banks have criticised Banking Competition Remedies for its secrecy and reluctance to take responsibility for the programme's slow progress.

**UK'S SPACE PROJECT FACES DELAY AMID RISING COSTS**

Britain's plan for a new sovereign satellite navigation system — pushed by the government as a symbol of post-Brexit independence — has been delayed for at least six months amid disagreements about the scope and costs of the multi-billion-pound project.

### THE TIMES

**FIRMS CUT STAFF ABSENCES BY BOOSTING WELLBEING**

Employers are increasingly embracing staff wellbeing, with new data revealing a huge rise in the number of job adverts offering mental health support. Nearly one in 200 jobs advertised in January offered a support — from mental health support to dance classes — as a benefit, according to the jobs site Indeed.co.uk. Five years ago the figure was nearly one in every 5,000.

**TURKEY SHOOTS DOWN TWO ASSAD JETS OVER IDLIB**

Dogfights raged over north-west Syria yesterday, with two Assad regime fighter jets shot down by Turkey and Turkish drones targeted in return.

### THE DAILY TELEGRAPH

**DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH IN ROW WITH DOWNING STREET**

Downing Street and the Department of Health are locked in a row over post-Brexit access to an EU pandemic warning system in the wake of the coronavirus outbreak. Number 10 has pushed back against the department's plans to retain membership of the Early Warning and Response System (EWRS) as part of the EU-UK future relationship.

**FEARS OF FOOD PRICE SURGE AS RAIN RUINS UK CROPS**

Extreme rainfall which has left parts of Britain underwater may push up food prices and pile pressure on farmers' finances as crops are washed out, agriculture experts have warned.

### THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

**AMEX STAFF MISLED SMALL BUSINESS OWNERS**

American Express employees used questionable sales tactics to mislead small business owners in a push to retain cardholders after Costco ended a long-running partnership, the Wall Street Journal can reveal. Salespeople have misrepresented card rewards and fees, and checked credit reports without consent.

**WALMART AND VERIZON IN TALKS TO TEST IN-STORE 5G**

Walmart and Verizon are in discussions to outfit the retailer's stores with antennas and other equipment to create 5G wireless service, a high-profile test of the next-generation networks.

# Salary Finance lays ground for Neyber's rescue

**ANGHARAD CARRICK**

*@angharadcarrick*

THE GOLDMAN Sachs-backed lender Neyber will reportedly sell its assets to rival Salary Finance.

Neyber is expected to appoint administrators this week, according to Sky News. The broadcaster said yesterday that the consumer finance provider will offload its assets including its blue-chip customer contracts to Salary Finance.

Sky News sources said the deal was almost certain to happen in the coming days and would result in Goldman Sachs becoming a small shareholder in the business. The bank's current shareholding is said to be less than five per cent.

Goldman Sachs backed Neyber via one of its private capital funds in 2017. The investment included a small amount of equity and £100m of debt drawn down by the Neyber vehicles that issue loans to consumers.

Neyber has been beset by issues in recent weeks as it sought options to stay afloat.

Last month it was reported that the consumer lender was in talks with accounting firm BDO about a range of options, including a pre-pack sale.

If completed the takeover will create a lender with more than 500 corporate partners, according to Sky News, including Asda, BT, the Co-operative Group, Dixons Carphone and Virgin Active.

It will also create a customer base of nearly 3m people.

Salary Finance offers a raft of "financial wellness" programmes including loans and financial education, while Neyber allows employees to borrow against their salaries.

Salary Finance may end up paying just a six-figure sum for Neyber's assets, according to Sky News sources.

Goldman Sachs, Salary Finance and BDO declined to comment. Neyber could not be reached for comment.

## PLANE AND SIMPLE Metro Bank to revoke private jet access for new chair in switchup

**METRO Bank will not allow its new leadership to take private jet flights. The previous arrangement for founder Vernon Hill to expense private jet flights to the company was "specific to him" and unlikely to be repeated, the Telegraph first reported.**

# BoE gave audio scandal firm the green light on three occasions

**HARRY ROBERTSON**

*@harrygrobertson*

THE BANK of England scrutinised a company three times before it was subsequently found to have provided early access to the Bank's press conferences to paying clients.

Threadneedle Street carried out diligence on Encoded Media three times between 2008 — when it first hired the firm as a technology partner — and 2019.

Encoded's status as a technology supplier was ended by the Bank after the Times revealed that a "third party" had been providing an audio stream of a back-up to the main video feed of press conferences, the Guardian reported yesterday.

An official investigation into the audio scandal is ongoing.

# Business body slams PM plans

CONTINUED FROM FRONT PAGE

Entrepreneurs' relief was set up with the intention of encouraging people to start businesses. But Sunak is set to scrap it on the grounds that it helps richer people in the south of England.

The government is planning an expansionary Budget that it says will address regional inequality and "level up" spending across the UK.

But Cherry said: "Everyday entrepreneurs throughout the country who are about to retire will be left permanently poorer by this change."

A separate report found that use of the scheme is growing much faster in the north than in London.

Law firm Boodle Hatfield said the value of capital gains against which entrepreneurs' relief was claimed rose 23 per cent in the north in 2017/18, increasing to £5.1bn from £4.2bn in 2016/17. The firm said this compared to a seven per cent increase in London over the same period, rising to £4.1bn.

Hayden Bailey, a partner at the firm, said: "Entrepreneurs' relief does not just benefit billionaires as some commentators have recently suggested. The relief is a vital incentive for small business owners to continue to grow their businesses with a view to an exit."

# Government outlines US–UK trade deal objectives as talks set to start this week

**STEFAN BOSCIA**

*@Stefan_Boscia*

THE GOVERNMENT will today publish its objectives for a UK–US trade deal, with negotiators aiming for an "ambitious and comprehensive" agreement.

The Department for International Trade has advised that official talks will begin this week, with new analysis revealing the trade deal is expected to increase transatlantic trade flows by £15.3bn.

Objectives for the talks will include increasing the flow of goods, services and investment; future proofing the deal for technological developments; and facilitating "greater choice and lower prices".

International trade secretary Liz Truss said: "This deal with our biggest single trading partner will cut red tape for our small businesses, cut tariffs for our great products from dairy to cars and increase growth in all four nations."

Priority will also be given to protecting food safety and the NHS.

Commenting on the plans, CBI chief Dame Carolyn Fairbairn said: "The UK is beginning a brand new chapter in its global future, and a good trade deal with the US is vital.

"The US and UK already share the world's largest bilateral investment relationship; now is the time to use it as a springboard for new jobs and investment here at home."

**International trade secretary Liz Truss said the deal would "cut red tape"**

# New John Lewis boss Sharon White to unveil strategic review this week

**JESS CLARK**

*@jclarkjourno*

STRUGGLING department store chain John Lewis is expected to launch a strategic review in a bid to rescue the business as it announces its full-year results later this week.

Former Ofcom boss Sharon White, who took over as chairman of John Lewis and Waitrose last month, and newly appointed strategy and commercial development director Nina Bhatia are preparing to unveil the review on Thursday, according to reports.

In January the partnership said full-year profit will be "substantially down" on last year and indicated that it could scrap its employee bonus. The strategic review is expected to probe the retailer's Never Knowingly Undersold pledge and its store portfolio.

The retailer is set to announce write-downs on the value of its properties on Thursday, according to the Sunday Times.

The newspaper also reported that White is in talks with several consultancies, including McKinsey.

A strategic plan to closer align the John Lewis and Waitrose businesses is already underway after being launched by White's predecessor Sir Charlie Mayfield.

Former Ofcom boss Sharon White took over the reins at John Lewis last month



# Private equity firms race to bid for stake in Asda

**JESS CLARK**

*@jclarkjourno*

PRIVATE equity firms are vying to buy a majority stake in Asda after its US owner Walmart began exploring an offload of the supermarket.

The potential sale follows the competition watchdog's decision to block Asda's merger with Sainsbury's last year.

US buyout firm Lone Star has reportedly made an offer for a stake in the grocer, with private equity firms Apollo and TDR also in the running.

Lone Star is interested in Asda's property portfolio, as the grocer owns 75 per cent of the freeholds to its supermarkets, the Sunday Times reported.

It is unlikely that a sale to a private equity firm would attract a valuation as high as the £7.3bn price tag under the failed Sainsbury's merger.

TDR and Apollo declined to comment. Lone Star did not respond to a request for comment.

Last week Walmart said it was in early-stage talks about selling a controlling stake in the UK supermarket after receiving "inbound interest" from a small number of firms.

A person close to the talks said the interested parties were private equity firms, but last Wednesday said the discussions were "informal".

"Together, we are in discussions with a small number of interested parties who share Walmart and Asda's commitment and passion to growing the business," Walmart and Asda said."No decisions have been made and we will not be commenting further on these discussions."

They said Walmart would maintain a significant minority stake in any deal. Walmart last year said it was weighing up listing Asda on the stock market.

The US retail giant last week said it "firmly believes that an initial public offering (IPO) is an attractive long-term objective for Asda. Asda is a great business with a clear strategy for the future". A sale to a private equity firm would still leave the door open for a public listing of the Asda business at a future date, although as a minority stakeholder, an IPO would no longer be Walmart's decision.

# Debenhams insists lenders back critical debt restructuring plans

**JESS CLARK**

*@jclarkjourno*

DEBENHAMS yesterday denied that the commitment of its lenders to a debt for equity swap is wavering, as the beleaguered retailer responded to reports that securing a debt restructuring is dependent on landlords granting steep rent cuts.

The high street chain could be forced to close further stores if it is unable to negotiate lower rents and rate bills with landlords and local councils.

Any additional closures are not expected to happen until at least 2021 over a two- to three-year period, and numbers are still expected to be in line with the original guidance of 50 stores.

The Sunday Times reported that the department store has warned landlords that its lenders may refuse to back a debt restructuring plan unless rent reductions can be agreed. However the retailer said yesterday that lenders' commitment to the debt for equity swap is "not in question".

# Tech firm Thought Machine rakes in $83m funding led by Draper Esprit

**ANGHARAD CARRICK**

*@angharadcarrick*

TECHNOLOGY company Thought Machine has today raised $83m (£64.74m) in series B funding led by listed fund Draper Esprit.

The venture capital firm, which has invested in a number of fintech businesses, contributed £26.5m to the funding for Thought Machine, a technology company that builds cloud-native technology for banks.

Thought Machine's banking platform Vault counts Lloyds Banking Group, Standard Chartered, SEB and Atom Bank as clients.

All of Thought Machine's existing investors — Lloyds Banking Group, IQ Capital, Backed and Playfair Capital — participated in the round.

IQ Capital contributed £15m from its new scaleup fund.

Max Bautin, founding partner of the firm, said: "We first backed Thought Machine at seed stage in 2016 and have seen it grow from a startup to a 300 person-strong global scaleup with a global customer base and potential to become one of the most valuable European fintech companies."

The technology firm said that the funding will be used to drive its expansion into the Asia Pacific region.

## RAISING A RUCK-US Terrestrial joint bid for Six Nations could be sent to the sin bin

SKY IS said to be closing in on a £300m deal for Six Nations broadcast rights in a move that could wipe the tournament from terrestrial TV. The BBC and ITV will not be allowed to launch another joint bid for the rights, the Rugby Paper reported.



# Activist Elliott in stake bid to oust Twitter founder

**JAMES WARRINGTON**

*@j_a_warrington*

ACTIVIST Elliott Management has built up a stake in Twitter in a bid to oust the social media site's founder Jack Dorsey as chief executive.

The New York-based hedge fund, founded by billionaire Paul Singer, has nominated four directors to Twitter's board, Bloomberg first reported.

Elliott is also said to be plotting the removal of Dorsey, to be replaced by a more dedicated chief executive.

Dorsey has come under scrutiny for his dual role as chief executive of Square, the payments company he co-founded in 2010.

It is not clear exactly how large Elliott's stake is, nor who it has nominated to the board. Twitter declined to comment. Elliott did not respond to a request for comment.

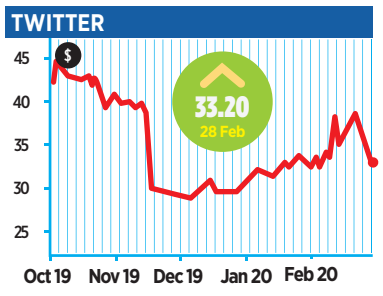
Dorsey, who holds a two per cent stake in Twitter, returned to Twitter in 2015 after boss Dick Costolo stepped down. He is one of the only people to run two public companies at the same time.

Shares in the social media platform slumped by a fifth in the third quarter after it missed expectations for both profit and revenue due to bugs in its advertising technology. But the company last month bounced back, posting more than $1bn (£780m) in quarterly revenue for the first time.

Dorsey raised eyebrows last year when he revealed plans to spend as much as six months in Africa in 2020, as the firm tries to be more global.

Elliott, which has a track record of clashing with some of the world's largest companies, has recently taken a three per cent stake in Softbank.

Twitter shares have fallen almost 21 per cent in the last six months.




# NMC Health hires Moelis bank to advise on its debt restructuring

**ANGHARAD CARRICK**

*@angharadcarrick*

NMC HEALTH has hired investment bank Moelis to advise on a debt restructuring, in the latest turn of events for the embattled healthcare operator.

Three sources familiar with the matter said NMC had hired the bank in relation to its ability to meet debt obligations, Reuters reported.

Last week the Financial Conduct Authority announced it was launching an investigation into NMC just hours after trading in its shares was suspended.

The company's shares have lost more than half of their value since the end of last year when shortseller Muddy Waters questioned its financial statements.

News of the probe came just after the hospital operator fired its chief executive and placed its finance chief on extended sick leave following an ongoing investigation of its finances.

Shares rose 6.6 per cent to 1,000p last Friday.

# UK firms would accept tax rise if rules simplified

HARRY ROBERTSON

@harrygrobertson

TWO-THIRDS of UK businesses would accept a tax rise in exchange for a simpler tax system, a survey from law firm BDO has found.

The survey comes ahead of the 11 March Budget, in which new chancellor Rishi Sunak is expected to increase spending and cut entrepreneurs' tax relief, a tax rise equivalent to £2.7bn a year.

It showed that the UK's businesses want the tax system to be simpler and less cumbersome. A significant majority — 66 per cent — of respondents indicated they would accept a rise in taxes in exchange for a simplification programme, a rise of 18 per cent since the 2018 Budget.

Only 12 per cent of the more than 600 respondents to the survey said they did not find tax cumbersome, BDO said.

Paul Falvey, tax partner at BDO, said: "It is promising that businesses are looking to the future and appear to support our view that tax simplification is needed to help organisations tackle the challenging landscape."

"Now is the time for the government to make business easier by simplifying tax. It requires progressive steps to be taken and an end to back door tax increases engineered by changing the rules for tax reliefs and allowances," he added.

The survey also showed that businesses are divided over how to boost investment, which has suffered during the Brexit impasse.

Almost a third of businesses suggested making equity investment tax deductible for individuals, whilst just over a quarter believed that up-front income tax relief could encourage business investment.

Falvey said: "Businesses are looking for the government to show that it will deliver on its promises to make the economy prosper post-Brexit."

Germany's car industry is facing a slew of global economic challenges

# German car industry in line for tough time amid virus spread

JACK RICHARDSON

@JackRich93

THE GERMAN car industry will face serious challenges over the coming months, according to a new report.

The Ifo Business Climate Survey demand index fell to minus 11.8 for February, down from minus 2.1 in January and export expectations fell from minus 5.2 from minus 15.4 in the same period. The personnel planning index also fell from minus 31.9 to minus 41.8 over the period.

Car production has traditionally been one of Germany's strongest industries but it is now facing challenges including supply chain disruption from coronavirus and the need to avoid tariffs with the UK.

# Private sector fails to recover after election

JACK RICHARDSON

@JackRich93

ACTIVITY in the private sector fell again in the quarter to February, new figures have shown.

Research by the CBI published today demonstrated the 16th consecutive quarter of falling business volumes in the UK. However, it pointed to variation across different sectors and some cause for business optimism.

The report, based on a survey of 631 businesses, showed a fall in private sector activity of seven per cent. This was an improvement on the previous month, however, where it fell by 16 per cent.

Total services went down by nine per cent and consumer services by 17 per cent, against previous falls of 12 and five respectively.

"The decline in private sector activity is slowly easing, but we're not seeing a more substantial bounce. Nonetheless, businesses are hopeful of growth returning over the coming quarter," said CBI lead economist Alpesh Paleja.

The fall in business and professional services was six per cent, compared to a previous drop of 14 per cent.

RANGE ROVER VELAR R-DYNAMIC BLACK

# INCREASED PRESENCE. REDUCED FIGURE.

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## FROM £499 PER MONTH PLUS DEPOSIT AND OPTIONAL FINAL PAYMENT

The limited edition Range Rover Velar R-Dynamic Black* takes the undeniable presence of Velar even further. Available in Santorini Black and Eiger Grey with Ebony Perforated Grained Leather seats, it offers an array of enhanced features as standard, including an Exterior Black Pack and gloss black 21" alloy wheels, for an extra touch of drama. Not to mention Privacy Glass for a layer of seclusion between you and the outside world, and a Fixed Panoramic Roof, which enhances the airy, spacious feeling.

From £499 per month, the Range Rover Velar R-Dynamic Black looks just as good on paper. Contact your local Retailer for more information.

| **Range Rover Velar R-Dynamic Black PCP Representative Example†** | |
|---|---|
| On the Road Price | £56,995.00 |
| Finance Deposit Allowance (FDA) | £2,000.00 |
| Customer Deposit | £13,791.00 |
| Total Amount of Credit | £41,204.00 |
| Purchase Fee (included in final payment) | £10.00 |
| 48 Monthly Payments | £499.00 |
| Optional Final Payment | £23,643.00 |
| Total Amount Payable (inc. FDA) | £63,386.00 |
| Duration of Agreement | 49 Months |
| Representative APR | 4.9% APR |
| Interest Rate (Fixed) | 4.79% |

Official WLTP Fuel Consumption for the Range Rover Velar range in mpg (l/100km): Combined 23.0-42.0 (12.3-6.7). NEDCeq $CO_2$ Emissions 270-152 g/km. The figures provided are as a result of official manufacturer's tests in accordance with EU legislation. For comparison purposes only. Real world figures may differ. $CO_2$ and fuel economy figures may vary according to factors such as driving styles, environmental conditions, load and accessories.

†Representative Example relates to a Range Rover Velar R-Dynamic Black. 4.9% APR Representative available on Range Rover Velar 20MY registered between 1st January 2020 and 31st March 2020 at participating Retailers only. With Land Rover Personal Contract Purchase you have the option at the end of the agreement to: (1) return the vehicle and not pay the Optional Final Payment. If the vehicle has exceeded the maximum agreed mileage a charge per excess mile will apply. In this example if the vehicle has exceeded 40,833 miles, a charge of 16.8p (including VAT at 20%) will apply per excess mile. If the vehicle is in good condition (fair wear and tear accepted) and has not exceeded 40,833 miles you will have nothing further to pay; (2) pay the Optional Final Payment to own the vehicle or (3) part exchange the vehicle subject to settlement of your existing credit agreement; new credit agreements are subject to status. Representative Example is based upon an annual mileage of 10,000 miles. Credit is subject to status and only available to UK residents, aged 18 and over. This credit offer is only available through Black Horse Limited trading as Land Rover Financial Services, St William House, Tresillian Terrace, Cardiff CF10 5BH. We can introduce you to Land Rover Financial Services to provide funding for your vehicle. We may receive commission or other benefits for introducing you to the lender. *Limited edition Range Rover Velar R-Dynamic Black available now. Limited availability whilst stocks last at participating UK Land Rover Retailers. Please contact your local Retailer to confirm vehicle availability.

# UK's consulting market slows its growth in 2019

LIAM ROCHE

GROWTH in the UK consulting market almost halved in the three years between the 2016 EU referendum and 2019, a new report has shown.

Britain's consultancy growth slowed from 7.5 per cent in 2016 to four per cent in 2019, according to a study by Source Global Market Research.

Similar growth rates are expected in 2020 as the industry will benefit from some Brexit changes, but this is likely to come into full effect in 2021, once the UK and the EU have settle a deal.

The largest markets — public sector and financial services — both endured challenging years, with the latter's growth of seven per cent per cent in 2017 falling to 4.1 per cent last year.

"Regulatory-driven work in the UK's financial services sector — for so long a foundation of the UK's consulting market — is on the wane, as clients try to use internal resources to do the work that's needed," the report said.

The volume of public sector consulting work grew by only one per cent in 2019, down from 4.5 per cent in 2018, as uncertainty caused by the Brexit vote caused upheaval and delays to decision making around policies.

However, clarity brought about by Boris Johnson's Brexit stance could foster an environment for investment, allowing the consulting industry to recover, according to Zoe Stump from Source Global Research.

"At face value, the UK consulting market looks set to bounce back from the paralysis that affected some parts of the market in 2019. Hoping that the country will now 'Get Brexit Done', there's a willingness to invest... especially in areas where digital technology can transform productivity."

UK consulting received a boost in the last year from clients' growing interest in sustainability, as businesses increasingly consider sustainability a key principle of how they operate.

## A LUMP OF COAL Norwegian wealth fund could blacklist four major climate culprits


NORWAY's $1 trillion (£781.8bn) wealth fund will exclude four companies for their high carbon emissions, or at least put them on probation to force them to change, the chairman of its ethics watchdog told Reuters. They will be named at a later date.

# Government ramps up backing for British ad sector after Brexit

JAMES WARRINGTON

@j_a_warrington

THE GOVERNMENT has teamed up with industry bodies to launch a new campaign aimed at promoting the UK's advertising industry after Brexit.

The UK Advertising Export Group will seek to boost the profile of the British ad sector and generate more deals in key territories such as China, Japan and North America.

The UK has secured a reputation as one of the top global advertising hubs, with the sector's value expected to top £26bn this year. The latest figures from the Advertising Association showed the industry now exports £6.9bn per year.

However, trade bodies have warned about the potential negative impact of leaving the EU.

# Schroders set to move to five division model

ANGHARAD CARRICK

@angharadcarrick

SCHRODERS is changing how it reports results in a bid to highlight individual parts of its business to analysts, according to reports.

The Sunday Times yesterday reported that the move could result in a revaluation of the fund manager's shares. It currently trades on a price-to-earnings multiple of 17 times, compared to fellow wealth manager St James's Place, which trades on 37 times.

Schroders has split out its performance between retail and institutional fund management but will now list the performance of five divisions separately.

The FTSE 100 company will report wealth management, investment in illiquid or private assets, retail fund management, institutional fund management and risk management separately.

The Sunday Times reported that Schroders will adopt the model in its annual results this Thursday.

At the end of last year Schroders embarked on a restructuring drive which could lead to 200 job cuts globally.

Schroders did not respond to a request for comment.

# Lloyds Banking Group faces fresh police probe following new fraud allegations

ANGHARAD CARRICK

@angharadcarrick

LLOYDS Bank is said to be facing a fresh police investigation over allegations of fraud against small businesses.

The Sunday Telegraph first reported that Avon and Somerset Police are investigating allegations made against the bank by property investor Kashif Shabir. Shabir lost his business after Lloyds foreclosed on his loans and appointed a receiver to sell his assets in 2009.

Lloyds has dismissed claims of misconduct at its unit in Bristol made by Shabir and others over a decade, who have claimed the bank had their businesses revalued downwards, forced into receivership and then sold.

Lloyds reportedly believed it had no alternative but to repossess Shabir's property after he failed to make repayments and that the revaluation reflected the decline of the property market.

A spokesman for Lloyds said that the allegations have been reviewed and have "been found to be completely baseless".

"Concerns in relation to a Bristol unit have been raised by third parties in the past. In each instance these concerns have been thoroughly investigated and we have not found any evidence to support them," they added.

Lloyds boss Antonio Horta-Osorio said he had personally looked into the claims

# CITYPAGES

EDITED BY JESS CLARK @JCLARKJOURNO

## **Steven Levy's** Facebook tome offers unparalleled insight into the social media giant's rise, but fails to hold Zuckerberg to account

TECH

**FACEBOOK: THE INSIDE STORY**

BY STEVEN LEVY


IN THE past four years, Facebook founder Mark Zuckerberg's world has been turned upside down. From a simple social media platform that he created while studying at Harvard university first blossomed a networking supersite, that later became a regulatory and ethical data minefield which holds a terrifying amount of power over the way we communicate and form decisions.

At the centre of this, Zuckerberg maintains a significant amount of influence that has most certainly dictated Facebook's trajectory — owning nearly 60 per cent of the company's voting shares, despite having raised billions of dollars in private and public investment.

Steven Levy's Facebook: The Inside Story aims to chart one man's rise from a coder with a voracious appetite for challenging computer projects to the head of a global empire. Levy, having previously written one of the most definitive books on Google, was given unprecedented levels of access to Zuckerberg and senior company executives over three years to achieve this goal.

We follow Zuckerberg and the team as he almost gets expelled from Harvard for stripping its servers for college student data to create Facebook's earlier brother, Facemash. Later, we see a more human side to Zuckerberg as he gets upset at having to turn down a favoured investor.

But the narrative that runs through the entire work is one of a tech founder's lust for control, having fallen in love with strategy computer games such as Civilisation as a teenager and developed an awe of the (questionable) empire tactics of Roman leader Augustus.

The young entrepreneur regularly shouted "Domination!" at the end of company meetings at Facebook, as the tech firm absorbed smaller rivals such as Instagram and ignored the warning signs of misusing the personal data of billions.

**Zuckerberg's desire for empire led to Facebook**

Facebook: The Inside Story provides unparalleled insight into one of the world's most prominent tech companies, and is required reading for anyone seeking to understand Facebook or its infamous founder.

But the exposure to Facebook's top players given to Levy in the writing of this book has ultimately forged a saccharine view of the social network's transformation into a company for which scandals have become the norm.

Attempts to remind the reader of the consequences of Facebook's power are briefly passed over, in favour of depicting Zuckerberg as a teenager with good intentions who was awarded too much power at an early age with no one to hold him accountable. Be careful not to come away from Levy's writing with a sense of pity for the man for whom it all seemingly accidentally happened to, rather than tech's next calculating megamind.

**EMILY NICOLLE**

## BOOK REVIEWS: WHAT TO READ THIS MONTH

GEOPOLITICS

**GOING DARK: THE SECRET SOCIAL LIVES OF EXTREMISTS**

BY JULIA EBNER

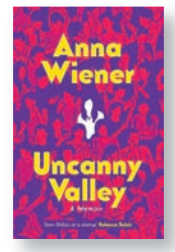

MOST of Going Dark: The Secret Social Lives of Extremists plays out online. Assuming a variety of identities, Julia Ebner reports from the frontline of far right messageboards, jihadi forums and anti-feminist communities, in a thorough and shocking exploration of how the internet has facilitated the spread of extremism. However, the book is the most unsettling when Ebner shows the physical manifestation of online extremism. Ebner, who by day is a senior research fellow at the Institute for Strategic Dialogue, visits a neo Nazi music festival and goes undercover at a far right meeting in a London pub. If those events are unsettling, then more harrowing is when Ebner's research demonstrates how online extremism can transform into real world violence that readers will recognise from recent news headlines. Ebner depicts the vast and rapid spread of online extremism, and the challenge we face in fighting it.

**JESS CLARK**

MEMOIR

**UNCANNY VALLEY**

BY ANNA WIENER




AS A DISILLUSIONED twenty-something, Anna Wiener abandoned her publishing job in New York, swapping silk blouses for hoodies and high-tops as she headed for the rapidly mobilising oasis of Silicon Valley. Wiener managed to land jobs at a string of startups and gently winged her way into a world of coding and customer support. The result is a wry and intelligent reality check for startup culture written from an outsider's perspective. As much a critique of millenial consumerism as the tech world, Wiener paints SIlicon Valley as the male version of smoothies and yoga. With a fine balance of comedy and caution, she prises open a world where sexism is rife — where women are discouraged from asking for a raise and encouraged to "trust karma". Uncanny Valley is a fable for the digital age. Though brilliantly sardonic, it ultimately serves as an interrogation of a world teetering on the edge of illegality — a world whose consequences we are only just starting to feel.

**POPPY WOOD**

# Switzerland files criminal complaint over alleged use of company by CIA

JACK RICHARDSON

@JackRich93

THE SWISS government has filed a criminal complaint over US spies allegedly using a Swiss crypto firm to gain information on foreign governments.

The complaint is against unnamed persons for alleged breaches of the law governing export controls, Reuters reported.

Swiss company Crypto AG was secretly owned by US and German spy agencies and allowed them to use its software.

The attorney general's office confirmed it had received a complaint from the branch of the Economy Ministry which oversees sensitive exports. The latter confirmed the complaint but would not comment further.

Last month's revelations by US, German and Swiss media, claimed the technology, sold to governments under the name Operation Rubicon, had flaws for the spy agencies to exploit.

The Swiss government has appointed a former Supreme Court judge to investigate and his report is due at the end of June, while pressure is building in the Swiss parliament for its own investigation into the matter.

# American Airlines waives fees as US braces disruption

DAVID SHEPARDSON

AMERICAN Airlines said late last night it was waiving change fees on all newly purchased tickets amid declining air travel demand because of the new coronavirus outbreak.

The largest US airline said it would waive change fees up to 14 days before travel for customers who purchase tickets from now until 16 March.

Jet Blue Airways said last week it would suspend change and cancellation fees for new flight bookings between 27 February and 11 March.

American Airlines shares have fallen 37 per cent since 13 February.

United Airlines chief Oscar Munoz told employees the US airline would likely need to cut additional flights in the wake of sagging demand because of the coronavirus outbreak, the airline confirmed yesterday. In an email late on Saturday to employees, Munoz noted the carrier had cut flights to Asia and suspended service to mainland China and Hong Kong through 30 April.

"Based on current trends, it is likely that additional schedule reductions will be necessary," Munoz said.

On Friday, United cancelled its investor day that was set for 5 March, saying it is not "practical to expect that it can have a productive conversation focused on its long-term strategy next week." It will reschedule for September.

Chicago-based United already withdrew its 2020 guidance last week because of uncertainty over the duration and spread of the virus. *Reuters*

# LISTENING IN DEMAND

The City may be on the brink of realising the true value of the British podcast industry, writes **James Warrington**

US podcasts such as the Joe Rogan Experience have capitalised on this nascent market

WITH podcasts steadily shoring up their position as a mainstay of the modern media landscape, canny distributors have been biding their time.

But now Aim-listed podcast platform Audioboom seems ready to cash in on the booming popularity of on-demand listening. Last month the Nicky Candy-backed audio firm, which distributes podcasts including nerdy QI favourite No Such Thing As A Fish and Sue Perkins: An Hour Or So With..., said it had hired Raine Advisers to explore a sale.

Yet for some in the industry, podcasting remains undervalued compared to the more mature US market. Despite successive quarters of sharp revenue growth, Audioboom's shares have suffered turbulent trading. After a spike on takeover talks, the firm is now valued at roughly £30m.

Howard Kosky, chief executive of podcast consultancy 4DC, says this falls short of Audioboom's true value.

"It's a business where revenue was booming and yet its value was not moving where it should do," he says. "They had to do something to realise the value." This value, Kosky suggests, is at least £50m.

Among the media giants mooted for a possible takeover are Talksport owner News UK and Global, which runs stations such as Capital and LBC. But as the majority of Audioboom's revenue comes from the US, Texas-based iHeartMedia or New York-listed Spotify may be a more suitable fit.

Spotify splashed out at least €300m last year on three podcast startups, and recently snapped up sports-based network The Ringer. The incentives are clear. Insatiable demand means there are now an estimated 850,000 podcasts worldwide. In the fourth quarter, Spotify's podcast listening hours rose almost 200 per cent.

But as US media groups pour cash into podcasts, the UK has lagged behind. While the popularity of podcasts is well documented, the ability of producers to monetise this audience is limited.

Currently, podcast advertising is sold on a CPM (cost per mille) basis, meaning a slot is paid for per thousand listeners. As a result, podcasts need to secure hundreds of thousands of listeners to make a significant return.

The main argument against this metric is that podcast listeners are not the same as radio listeners. Podcast fans have a longer dwell time, while almost all listen on their own — meaning they are highly engaged.

"A formula that recognises that impact is different to a 30 second spot in traditional broadcast advertising or digital eyeball cost per transaction is key," says Kosky.

Persuading media buyers to adopt these metrics — and fork out more for podcast ad spots — will be a challenge. Many podcast firms, including Audioboom, are producing more of their own shows in a bid to sidestep this issue.

Jamie McGowan Stuart of Enders Analysis says that despite high CPMs for top shows, monetising the long tail of the market is difficult.

"As downloads dominate podcast measurement, the possibilities for targeting and attribution are limited," he says.

Spotify last month unveiled streaming ad insertion, allowing it to run targeted ads within shows in real time. This technology may go some way to addressing these challenges.

However, the UK market is also skewed by the BBC, which does not run ads on its shows domestically.

"That's a sizeable chunk of podcast listening — 100m plays of podcasts or listen again audio on [BBC's Sounds app] alone last quarter — without ads," says McGowan Stuart.

Despite these barriers, a bumper takeover deal for Audioboom could spark a rethink of the British podcasting industry's valuation, and for major players such as Global — and even the BBC — this can only be a good thing.

Perkins hosts an Audioboom show





# Arm offloads cybersecurity division to Tory donor's private equity firm

**JAMES WARRINGTON**

*@j_a_warrington*

BRITISH chipmaker Arm has sold its cybersecurity division Trustonic to a private equity firm run by Tory party donor Edmund Lazarus.

EMK Capital last week said it has snapped up the cyber firm from Arm and Gemalto, a Dutch cyber company now owned by Thales Group.

Trustonic, which was founded in 2012 as a joint venture between Arm and Gemalto, specialises in security for mobile devices and apps.

Its platform, which provides a secure area to store and process sensitive data, is embedded in more than 2bn devices worldwide.

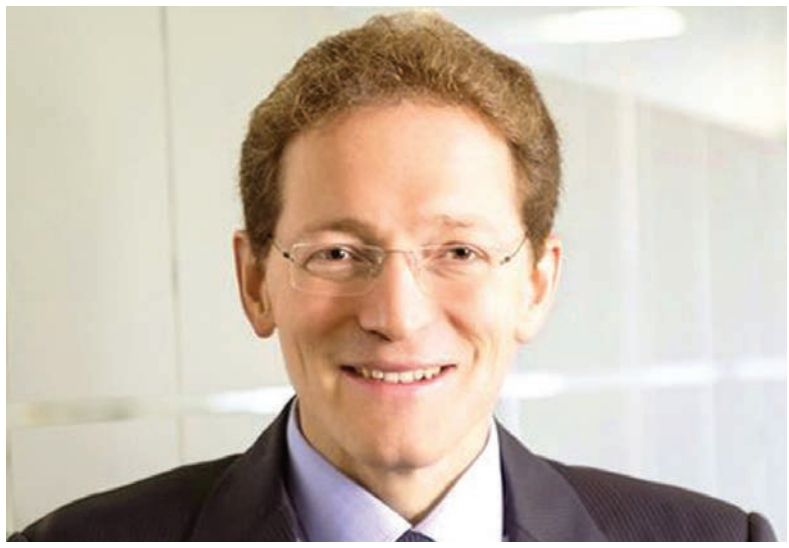
Arm's plans to offload the joint venture, first reported last year by the Sunday Telegraph, comes amid a shakeup by Softbank following its £24bn takeover in 2016.

Softbank founder Masayoshi Son has said he plans to re-list Arm within the next five years, while Arm boss Simon Segars has outlined more ambitious plans for a float in 2023.

Despite its success at winning clients, Trustonic has failed to turn a profit and the firm most recent accounts show an €8.6m (£7.4m) pre-tax loss on revenue of €9.7m in 2018.

EMK Capital was founded in 2017 by Lazarus, who is friends with cabinet minister Michael Gove and a major donor to the Tory party.

In December it bought a majority stake in Williams Advanced Engineering, the tech division of the Williams Formula One team.



Edmund Lazarus became friends with Michael Gove at Oxford University

# Italy prepares a deficit increase to wrestle virus

**GIUSEPPE FONTE**

ITALY will this week introduce measures worth €3.6bn (£3.1bn) to help the economy withstand the largest outbreak of coronavirus in Europe, the country's economy minister Roberto Gualtieri said yesterday.

In an interview with La Repubblica newspaper, Gualtieri said this amounted to 0.2 per cent of GDP and would come on top of an aid-package worth €900m that was unveiled last Friday for the worst-impacted areas.

Gualtieri said the new bill would include tax credits for companies that reported a 25 per cent drop in revenues, tax cuts and additional funds for the health service.

Italy has registered more than 1,100 confirmed cases of coronavirus since the contagion came to light in wealthy northern regions on 20 February and at least 29 people have died.

The economy minister said he was confident the EU would approve the necessary hike in Italy's official deficit target, adding eurogroup ministers would talk mid-week by telephone about the situation.

Italy has the biggest debt pile in the Eurozone after Greece, but Gualtieri said public finances were solid and predicted the 2019 budget deficit would come in at between 1.6 per cent and 1.7 per cent of GDP against an original target of 2.2 per cent.

The official data for 2019 is due to be released today. Italy had forecast a deficit of 2.2 per cent for this year, based on the assumption the economy would grow 0.6 per cent in 2020.

It came as Germany made a similar announcement over the potential effects of the coronavirus over the weekend. Finance minister Olaf Scholz yesterday said Germany would be in a position to enact a fiscal stimulus package should the coronavirus spark a global economic crisis.

In Germany there have been 66 confirmed cases, and a government crisis committee last Friday widened cross-border travel guidelines and cancelled major international events.

"Should it come to major turmoil in the global economy because world markets and production centres become affected, we have all the means to act fast and decisively," Scholz told Welt am Sonntag newspaper. "Our fiscal policy is built on a solid footing so that we can deal with a major economic crisis with full force." *Reuters*

Increasing numbers of migrants have crossed the Aegean from Turkey to the Greek island of Lesbos in recent days

# Migrant crisis deepens after Turkey opens borders

**LIAM ROCHE**

HUNDREDS of migrants have entered Greece as Turkish President Tayyip Erdogan relaxed restrictions on movement between the two nations in an act of defiance against the EU.

At least 600 people arrived by boat on three Greek islands within a few hours yesterday morning, joining upwards of 40,000 already there, living in overcrowded camps.

The Turkish government announced it would no longer prevent hundreds of thousands of asylum seekers within its borders from crossing over to Europe, reneging on a deal reached with the EU in 2016. The declaration resulted in a rush to the border, where the International Organization for Migration estimated 13,000 people have gathered.

Athens is maintaining a firm stance, firing tear gas at migrants seeking entry and sending automated text messages to phones in the northern region warning of maximum security measures.

Greek deputy defence minister Alkivadis Stefanis said Turkey was engaging in a deliberate strategy to assist migrants in crossing .

"Not only are they not stopping them, but they are helping them," Stefanis told Skai.

The deal was agreed between the EU and Turkey in the aftermath of the migrant crisis in 2015, whereby the number of migrants entering Europe would be controlled by Turkey in exchange for funds from the EU and its member states.

Turkey's rebellion could pose Greece's toughest test since the Eurozone crisis and draws attention to the ongoing tensions between the two neighbours.

President Emmanuel Macron has met months of protest over his pension reforms

# France set to push pension reform through by decree to avoid a vote

**LEIGH THOMAS**

THE FRENCH government said over the weekend it would push President Emmanuel Macron's contested pension reform through parliament by decree, avoiding the need for a vote after the opposition filed more than 40,000 amendments to the draft law.

The reform, which is the single greatest overhaul of France's pension system since the Second World War, prompted weeks of public sector strikes and street protests before opponents of the legislation took the battle to parliament.

Macron loyalists, who hold a majority in the National Assembly, branded the mountain of amendments a cynical ploy to stall the pension bill's passage through parliament.

"I have decided to engage the government's responsibility on the bill creating a universal retirement system, not to put an end to debate but to end this period of non-debate," prime minister Edouard Philippe told the lower house of parliament.

Catching politicians off-guard during the latest parliamentary session on the reform, Philippe's announcement was met with howls of protest from members of the far-left France Unbowed party. *Reuters*

# Ex-Barclays bankers are cleared of £4bn Qatari fraud after SFO inquiry

**EDWARD THICKNESSE**

*@edthicknesse*

A JURY last Friday cleared three former Barclays executives of committing financial crisis-era fraud to save the bank from a bailout.

Roger Jenkins, Thomas Kalaris and Richard Boath were all acquitted of charges of conspiracy to commit fraud by false representation in connection with the 2008 Qatar fundraisings. They had all denied the charges, which the Serious Fraud Office (SFO) brought against the bankers in October.

The SFO had alleged that the three used phoney advisory services agreements to hide undeclared payments made to Qatar to induce two investments in the bank.

The Qataris made an investment of £1.9bn into Barclays in June 2008 and a second of £2.05bn in November 2008 as the bank sought to avoid a government bailout.

The prosecution alleged that the trio cooked up the two advisory services agreements (ASAs), which were worth £322m, to funnel the extra fees to Qatar.

Jenkins denied that the ASAs with Qatar were shams, describing them as a "tremendous boost" to the bank.

The decision is a severe blow for the SFO, which has been investigating the financiers for over seven years.

A spokesperson for the SFO said: "Our prosecution decisions are always based on the evidence that is available, and we are determined to bring perpetrators of serious financial crime to justice. Wherever our evidential and public interests tests are met, we will always endeavour to bring this before a court."


Sir Keir Starmer is leading current polling for the Labour leadership contest

# Labour leadership favourite in bullying row with local party

**STEFAN BOSCIA**

*@Stefan_Boscia*

SIR KEIR Starmer has been accused of being complicit in the bullying of local party members.

A complaint has been made by the Holborn and St Pancras Constituency Labour Party (CLP) to party general secretary Jennie Formby, claiming Starmer's allies had subjected left-faction members to "hostility and abuse". The 31 Corbynistas complained Starmer "has not tried to foster unity within our CLP" and had shut out the left-faction members, according to the Sunday Telegraph.

Allies of the shadow Brexit secretary said the letter is an attempt to undermine Starmer and prop up the left's preferred candidate — Corbyn ally Rebecca Long-Bailey.

# Box office: The Invisible Man in lead with $29m

**REBECCA RUBIN**

UNIVERSAL and Blumhouse's The Invisible Man materialised at the top of box office charts after debuting to $29m (£22.6m) in North America and $20m elsewhere over the weekend.

The film is Universal's latest attempt to remake its classic monster properties, an effort that failed spectacularly with 2017's The Mummy starring Tom Cruise.

The Elisabeth Moss-led thriller The Invisible Man cost $7m to make, not including marketing fees, meaning it's already a financial hit for the studio. It also launched overseas, earning $20.2m from 47 international territories, bringing its global opening weekend haul to an impressive $49.2m.

Elsewhere, Paramount's Sonic the Hedgehog slid to the number two spot after two consecutive weeks as box office champ. The family friendly film added $16m to its worldwide total of $265m in sales. *Reuters*



# Car import pricing cartel will face UK class action

**JACK RICHARDSON**

*@JackRich93*

FIVE shipping companies who ran a cartel for importing cars to the UK will face a class action lawsuit.

Leading firms MOL, K Line,NYK, WWL/EUKOR and CSAV are being sued for overcharing UK customers and businesses.

The European Commission ruled in 2018 they had breached competition rules by coordinating rates and capacity.

Brussels imposed a €395m (£336m) fine and the investigation it carried out was one of many from around the world into this practice.

Bringing the case through the Competition Appeals Tribunal means all affected motorists and businesses in the UK are included in the claim automatically.

Consumers must have purchased or leased their vehicle between October 2006 and September 2015 in order to take part in the action.

"When UK consumers and businesses purchased or leased a new car, they paid more for the delivery of that car than they should have done, as a result of a long-running cartel by five of the world's leading maritime shipping companies," said the class action's representative Mark McClaren.

McClaren worked at consumer rights publisher Which for nine years and is supported by an advisory committee comprising a former court of appeal judge and executives from across industry.

The cartel affected several passenger cars and light commercial vehicles from well-known brands including Ford, Volkswagen, Peugeot and Toyota.

Specialist law firm Scott & Scott will act on the case.

"We are pleased to have this opportunity to act on behalf of U consumers — both individuals and businesses — to help them recoup the losses they have suffered as a result of this long running cartel," David Scott, of Scott & Scott said.

The claims have been filed to the UK's Competition Appeal Tribunal under the terms of the Consumer Rights Act 2015.

# US agrees Afghanistan peace agreement with the Taliban to bring end to 18 years of conflict

**MICHAEL SEARLES**

*@michaelsearles_*

**THE US signed an agreement with the Taliban over the weekend in an effort to bring peace to Afghanistan following 18 years of conflict.**

**The agreement will see the US and its Nato allies remove all troops from the country within 14 months if militants uphold the deal. The signing in Doha, Qatar, was attended by Taliban leaders and US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo.**

**Pompeo was in attendance as a witness as US special envoy Zalmay Khalilzad and Taliban chief Mullah Abdul Ghani Baradar signed the agreement.**

**The agreement means the militants are not allowed al-Qaeda or other extremist groups to operate in the areas they control.**

**It will see the withdrawal of around 12,000 US troops still stationed in Afghanistan.**

**However, Afghan President Ashraf Ghani yesterday rejected a Taliban demand for the release of 5,000 prisoners as a condition for talks with Afghanistan's government and civilians.**

**"The government of Afghanistan has made no commitment to free 5,000 Taliban prisoners," Ghani told reporters in Kabul, a day after the deal was signed in Qatar to start a political settlement aimed at ending the US's longest war.**

**The US initially invaded the country in 2001 following the 9/11 terror attacks in New York by al-Qaeda.**

**"The road ahead will not be easy. Achieving lasting peace in Afghanistan will require patience and compromise among all parties," said Pompeo.**

**He said the US would continue to support the Afghan government.**

# Distillers call on UK chancellor to cut spirits duty

**EXCLUSIVE**

**STEFAN BOSCIA**

*@Stefan_Boscia*

A COALITION of British distillers has written to Rishi Sunak to urge him to stick to his party's election manifesto and cut spirits duty in this month's Budget.

The letter — drawn up by the UK Spirits Alliance and signed by 40 of its members — asks the chancellor to "reduce the excise duty burden" to give spirit producers "the stability and confidence we need to plan effectively for the coming years".

It added: "Unlike many other alcohol categories, whose products are largely imported, our products are making greater contributions to the economy than ever before.

"[A reduction in excise duty] would allow us to build on the significant contributions we already make to the UK economy — and deliver further growth, investment and revenues to the Treasury."

Alcohol duty rates in the UK vary from product to product, with spirits producers charged £28.74 per litre of pure alcohol.

Spirits duty has been frozen three times since 2014, leading to tax revenues from these products increasing by £734m — a 23 per cent rise.

However, Boris Johnson's General Election manifesto pledged to cut the rate even further.

Among those calling for a reduction in the current rate of spirits duty is Mason's Yorkshire Gin, which is located in Sunak's Richmond constituency in North Yorkshire.

Mason's founder Karl Mason said: "Mr Sunak recently visited our distillery and was keen to hear how we managed to rebuild our business after a devastating fire destroyed the old distillery last year.

"To allow us to further invest and grow, we urge the new chancellor to cut our excessively high duty rates at the Budget."

Tory backbencher Tim Loughton also urged Sunak to get behind the tax cut.

## CHEERS TO THAT British Honey Company announces firm's intention to float on Nex


**A GIN company backed by MP Sir Hugo Swire and billionaire Wafiq Said will today announce its intention to seek admission to the Nex exchange. The British Honey Company recently bought the assets of the London Distillery Company.**

# Louvre shuts as staff walk out over virus risk

**LEIGH THOMAS**

TOURISTS and art lovers were unable to visit the Louvre in Paris yesterday as workers staged a walkout at the world's most-visited museum after a staff meeting about the coronavirus outbreak.

Long lines of disgruntled tourists snaked outside the museum yesterday morning as management held a staff meeting about the outbreak to reassure workers that the risk was contained.

But the home of Leonardo da Vinci's Mona Lisa and the Venus de Milo sculpture remained closed afterward. Workers refused to return to work after the meeting failed to reassure them, BFM TV said.

"Despite talks with management and the staff doctor, the Louvre Museum was unable to open in the absence of sufficient personnel," a spokeswoman for the museum said after the meeting. She added that there would be another meeting today, but it was unclear when the Louvre would reopen.

Museums are not covered by a ban on large public gatherings with more than 5,000 people announced by the government over the weekend as it tries to contain the virus spread in France. *Reuters*

**GUEST OPINION**

# HUNGARY FOR UK GROWTH

Hungary's main man in London **Kristof Szalay-Bobrovniczky** confirms why, as he leaves his role, he forecasts a bright future for our two countries

LAST Friday, after four years, I stepped down as the ambassador of Hungary to the Court of St. James's. I arrived just days before the Brexit referendum — a referendum that, of course, shaped almost everything I did in the role here.

It became apparent that the two priorities for me would be the representation of Hungarians as EU citizens living in the UK, and to help business run smoothly between our two countries. Indeed, with our shared values, our shared commitment to Nato, and shared cultural heritage as fellow beneficiaries of Western civilisation for millennia, it was also a priority for that trade to prosper.

I'm delighted that — "despite Brexit" — the UK is now the fourth largest investor in my home. BP, BT, Tesco, Glaxosmithkline, Vodafone and others, with whom we founded the UK-Hungarian Business Council, are all reinvesting in their successful operations in our country.

Since 2010, when Hungary's current government came into power, the economy has become one of the fastest growing in Europe. Last year's GDP growth of 4.9 per cent outstripped most of our friends on the continent. Unemployment has fallen from 12 per cent to 3.6 per cent over those years, with around 800,000 new jobs created in a country of 10m.

Hungary has attracted record FDI in recent years, and has joined an exclusive club of nations exporting more than €100bn annually. We now have the most competitive tax system in Europe with a 15 per cent flat personal and nine per cent corporate tax rate — something the rest of Europe could certainly learn from. As for tourism? Budapest and the wonders of the Hungarian countryside are no surprise to the hundreds of thousands of Brits who have visited.

> "We have sought to be a pragmatic partner in the Brexit process

Perhaps because of our trade links, Hungary has sought to be a pragmatic partner in the Brexit process. We have always made it very clear that we regretted the UK leaving, because it is a huge loss for the union. But we will continue to be a reliable and predictable counterpart in the coming turns of this unprecedented and complex process.

And indeed despite those challenges, I believe the UK now stands at the gates of its greatest opportunity for generations. With its economic, security, intelligence, scientific and cultural power and influence on world affairs, the UK can now enter in a truly global phase of her development.

And the British government, businesses and people will surely appreciate like-minded countries and their businesses to be partners in this with them. Hungary has now grown to a point where many Hungarian businesses can enter the global stage and where better do it than in London, the centre of world business.

London will always attract the best minds, sitting at the centre of time zones with the world's most spoken language as its own. The experience of living and working in London is second to none. Despite coming to the end of my time as ambassador, I will be keeping a base in London as a private citizen and travelling extensively to Hungary and other places to forge business opportunities which will arise from the cooperation of a truly global and independent Britain and the growing and ever more confident central European region.

A wise person once said that a marriage is not held together by a single chain, but by a thousand silken threads; and that is our partnership with the UK.

*Szalay-Bobrovniczky was Hungarian ambassador to the UK from 2016 to 2020*

# CITY DASHBOARD YOUR ONE-STOP SHOP FOR BROKER VIEWS AND MARKET REPORTS

## LONDON REPORT

# London shares dented by fears of virus impact

LONDON's FTSE 100 dropped to its lowest level since June 2016 last Friday as investor fears that the coronavirus outbreak could spark a global recession intensified.

The blue-chip FTSE 100 fell 3.4 per cent, while the mid-cap index shed 2.1 per cent. Both marked their worst week since the 2008 financial crisis.

British Airways-owner **IAG** fell nine per cent to a four-month low after it said it would cut flights to Italy, Singapore and South Korea, reflecting a drop in passenger numbers.

The fall pushed the stock to the bottom of the FTSE 100 and led the wider travel and leisure index down 3.3 per cent to its lowest level since 2016.

World stocks were hammered across the board last week, with the MSCI world index losing about $6 trillion (£4.68 trillion) in value, as widespread disruptions to the supply chain prompted analysts to cut their forecasts for economic growth and corporate earnings in 2020.

On Friday, Citigroup predicted the corporate sector would see no earnings growth at all this year, while ratings agency Moody's said a pandemic would trigger a global recession in the first half of the year.

"It really does look like we have further tough times ahead of us, growth wise," said Chris Beauchamp, chief market analyst at IG.

Bank of England governor Mark Carney said that it was likely the economy would take a hit. Traders are counting on the US Federal Reserve to cut interest rates next month to prop up growth.

London's main index has lost about 13 per cent from a peak hit on 12 February, as the coronavirus continues to spread outside China, the epicentre of the outbreak.

**Rolls-Royce climbed after posting a strong 2020 forecast**

British aerospace engineer **Rolls-Royce HLG** was among a handful of stocks in the black on the main index, rising more than three per cent as its chief executive said the company was looking forward to 2020 with some degree of conviction and confidence.

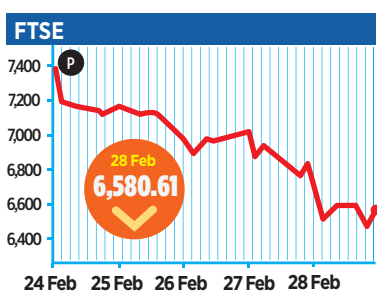
Biotechnology firm **Novacyt** soared 30 per cent after signing its first major distribution agreement to supply its coronavirus test.

### TOP RISERS

1. **Rolls-Royce HLG** Up 3.23 per cent
2. **Kingfisher** Up 1.77 per cent
3. **Carnival** Up 1.59 per cent

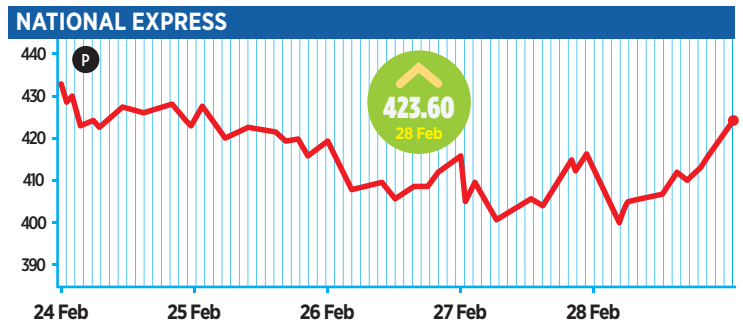
### TOP FALLERS

1. **Tui** Down 8.51 per cent
2. **IAG** Down 8.42 per cent
3. **Polymetal Int** Down 7.76 per cent

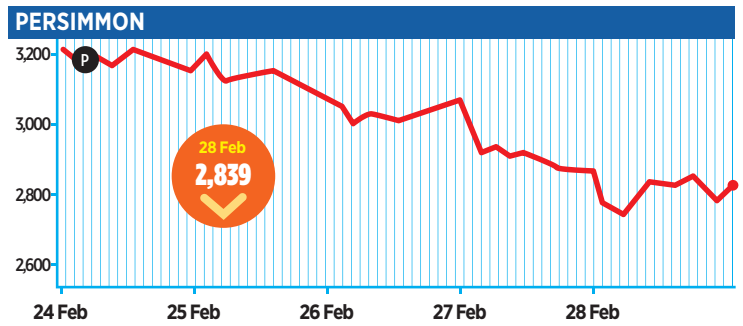



## BEST OF THE BROKERS

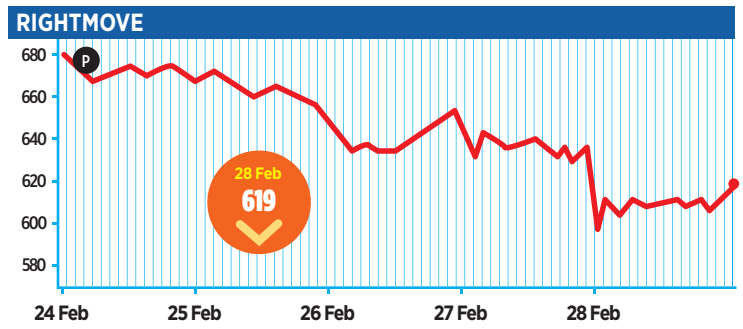
**To appear in Best of the Brokers, email your research to notes@cityam.com**




Coach and bus operator National Express last week reported results in line with "the usual pattern of steady underlying growth, topped up by acquisitions and contract wins", including the purchase of We Drive U in the US. The company also announced plans to drive forwards with "bold" targets to cut emissions in its UK bus division to zero by 2030, and in its UK coaches business by 2035. As part of the proposals the group has committed to not buy another conventional diesel bus. Liberum issued a "buy" recommendation and a target price of 480p.




Persimmon delivered a strong set of results last week, underpinned by its well invested land bank that has been built up over a number of years, which analysts said "supports sector leading margins and returns for the foreseeable future". The housebuilder also made the shock announcement that chief executive Dave Jenkinson will step down after just 15 months, with Canaccord Genuity analysts saying he has "done a very good job of steering the emphasis to cutomer care and product quality". The broker issued a "buy" rating and a 3,460p price target.




Online property platform Rightmove has suffered a decline in membership numbers, falling by a further 400 users in the second half of last year with additional losses expected in the first six months of 2020. However, average revenue per advertiser (Arpa) was up and is expected to continue to grow following investment in new digital tools. Peel Hunt analysts said Rightmove is a "fabulous brand with a commanding position in the industry it serves" and issued a "reduce" recommendation with a 570p target price.

## NEW YORK REPORT

# S&P suffers its worst weekly dip since 2008

THE S&P 500 fell for the seventh straight day last Friday and the benchmark index suffered its biggest weekly drop since the 2008 global financial crisis on growing fears the fast-spreading coronavirus could push the economy into recession.

The Dow and the Nasdaq also registered their deepest weekly percentage losses since October 2008.

The Nasdaq managed to eke out a 0.01 per cent gain after plunging as much as 3.5 per cent during the session. After falling as much as 4.2 per cent — more than 1,000 points — the Dow ended the day down 1.4 per cent.

Equities found some support after US Federal Reserve chair Jerome Powell said the fundamentals of the American economy remained strong and that the central bank would act as appropriate to provide support.

But investors had spent most of the day dumping equities for the safety of US Treasuries, pushing 10-year yields to their fourth record low last week.

The virus spread further on Friday, with cases reported for the first time in at least six countries across four continents, battering markets and leading the World Health Organization to raise its impact risk alert to "very high".

Some investors voiced concerns about heading into a weekend where they could not trade on new reports about the virus.

"To get an all-clear sign, the market needs evidence it's under control, no flaring up in new countries and that we don't get a significant outbreak in the United States," said Jack Janasiewicz, chief portfolio strategist for Natixis Investment Managers.

Janasiewicz saw the spread of the virus as a prompt to reduce exposure to riskier assets, and said the next milestone for further risk cuts would be a US outbreak.

The Dow Jones Industrial Average fell 357.28 points, or 1.39 per cent, to 25,409.36; the S&P 500 lost 24.54 points, or 0.82 per cent, to 2,954.22; and the Nasdaq Composite added 0.89 point, or 0.01 per cent, to 8,567.37.

## CITY MOVES WHO'S SWITCHING JOBS

**PUBLICIS GROUPE UK**

Publicis Groupe UK has announced that David Hackworthy, Saatchi & Saatchi's global chief strategy officer, has been promoted to the newly created role of chief strategy officer of Publicis Groupe UK, in addition to his existing remit. He started his career client-side and has since worked in senior strategy roles for TBWA Chiat/Day, DDB, Fallon, Saatchi & Saatchi and also founded The Red Brick Road in London. Annette King, Publicis Groupe UK chief, commented: "David is one of the leading strategists in our industry. He has been instrumental in some of our recent Power of One pitches and I know his experience will be invaluable in helping further grow our client's businesses."

**ONTHEMARKET**

Property firm Onthemarket has announced the appointment of Rupert Sebag-Montefiore to its board of directors as independent non-executive director. Rupert is currently a non-executive director at Clarion Housing Association — the UK's largest housing association) — and Pigeon Land Limited. Prior to this he was on the Savills main board for 21 years. Executive chairman Chris Bell said: "I am delighted that Rupert has agreed to join the board of Onthemarket. Rupert has extensive executive and non-executive experience in and beyond the UK property sector."

**CTS**

Cloud Technology Solutions (CTS) has appointed Tom Ray as chief operating officer. Tom joins CTS from cloud computing consultancy Cloudreach, where he worked for nine years and held roles including global head of operations, head of Cloudreach USA and general manager of Microsoft Azure. James Doggart, chief executive at CTS, said: "Tom has a unique depth and breadth of experience and has proven that he knows how to grow a business."

**To appear in CITYMOVES please email your career updates and pictures to citymoves@cityam.com**

| FTSE 100 | FTSE 250 | FTSE ALL SHARE | DOW JONES | NASDAQ | S&P 500 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 6580.61 | 19330.92 | 3673.61 | 25409.36 | 8567.37 | 2954.22 |
| 215.79 ↓ | 452.53 ↓ | 114.36 ↓ | 357.28 ↓ | 0.89 ↑ | 24.54 ↓ |

| £ | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| /€ | 1.1618 | ↓ 0.0112 | | €/$ | 1.0996 | ↑ 0.0017 |
| /$ | 1.2775 | ↓ 0.0104 | | €/£ | 0.8606 | ↑ 0.0082 |
| /¥ | 138.42 | ↓ 3.4190 | | €/¥ | 119.13 | ↓ 1.7810 |

### GILTS

| | Price | Chg | High | Low |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Tsy 4.750 20 | 100.10 | 0.00 | 104.0 | 100.1 |
| Tsy 8.000 21 | 109.58 | -0.02 | 116.3 | 109.5 |
| Tsy 2.500 24 | 361.99 | -0.84 | 377.9 | 358.8 |
| Tsy 5.000 25 | 123.33 | 0.07 | 126.0 | 122.1 |
| Tsy 4.250 27 | 130.19 | 0.15 | 132.8 | 125.7 |
| Tsy 6.000 28 | 148.81 | 0.18 | 152.1 | 143.5 |
| Tsy 4.125 30 | 383.99 | -1.71 | 404.2 | 367.0 |
| Tsy 4.250 32 | 143.88 | 0.28 | 146.4 | 133.2 |
| Tsy 4.250 36 | 153.10 | 0.26 | 155.7 | 138.7 |
| Tsy 4.750 38 | 168.87 | 0.20 | 171.8 | 151.5 |
| Tsy 4.250 46 | 178.58 | 0.15 | 181.0 | 1.0 |

### AEROSPACE & DEFENCE

| | Price | Chg | High | Low |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| BAE Systems | 608.4 | -23.4 | 669.0 | 443.9 |
| Meggitt | 542.0 | -13.6 | 697.4 | 489.9 |
| QinetiQ | 344.0 | -17.6 | 387.8 | 267.0 |
| Rolls-Royce | 620.0 | 19.4 | 941.2 | 600.6 |
| Senior | 141.2 | -1.3 | 235.0 | 141.2 |
| Ultra Electronics | 1945.0 | -17.0 | 2292.0 | 1279.0 |

### AUTOMOBILES & PARTS

| | Price | Chg | High | Low |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Aston Martin | 338.0 | -17.8 | 1181.0 | 338.0 |
| TI Fluid Systems | 201.5 | -3.5 | 273.0 | 155.2 |

### BANKS

| | Price | Chg | High | Low |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Bank of Georgia | 1513.0 | 0.0 | 1755.0 | 1252.0 |
| Barclays | 148.7 | -5.7 | 192.5 | 136.2 |
| BGEO Group | 1692.0 | 1.0 | 1818.0 | 1252.0 |
| HSBC Hldgs | 523.9 | -5.4 | 680.6 | 523.9 |
| Lloyds Banking | 50.2 | -0.1 | 67.2 | 48.6 |
| Royal Bank of Scot | 178.7 | -4.8 | 270.4 | 177.7 |
| Standard Chartered | 562.6 | -8.0 | 738.6 | 562.6 |
| TBC Bank Group | 1294.0 | 0.0 | 1706.0 | 1150.0 |
| Virgin Money UK | 151.8 | -4.3 | 220.1 | 104.4 |

### BEVERAGES

| | Price | Chg | High | Low |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Barr (AG) | 535.0 | -7.0 | 975.0 | 526.0 |
| Britvic | 852.5 | -22.0 | 1068.0 | 850.0 |
| Coca-Cola HBC AG | 2474.0 | -132.0 | 3074.0 | 2299.0 |
| Diageo | 2765.5 | -54.5 | 3625.5 | 2765.5 |

### CHEMICALS

| | Price | Chg | High | Low |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Croda International | 4554.0 | -66.0 | 5375.0 | 4554.0 |
| Elementis | 101.4 | -5.7 | 184.5 | 101.4 |
| Johnson Matt | 2511.0 | 30.0 | 3454.0 | 2481.0 |
| Synthomer | 281.6 | -10.2 | 420.8 | 279.0 |
| Victrex | 2096.0 | -28.0 | 2540.0 | 1845.0 |

### CONSTRUCTION & MATERIALS

| | Price | Chg | High | Low |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Balfour Beatty | 246.2 | -7.6 | 295.0 | 194.2 |
| CRH | 2639.0 | -56.0 | 3100.0 | 2279.0 |
| Galliford Try | 154.6 | -2.2 | 190.4 | 102.4 |
| Grafton Group | 862.0 | -12.5 | 990.0 | 645.5 |
| Ibstock | 273.8 | -14.0 | 322.2 | 208.6 |
| Marshalls | 727.0 | -22.5 | 876.0 | 542.5 |
| Polypipe Group | 534.5 | -14.0 | 619.0 | 372.8 |

### DIVERSIFIED INDUSTRIALS

| | Price | Chg | High | Low |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Smith (DS) | 314.2 | -21.2 | 394.8 | 307.9 |
| Smiths Gp | 1533.0 | -59.0 | 1769.5 | 1378.0 |
| Smurfit Kappa Gp | 2598.0 | -56.0 | 3010.0 | 2096.0 |
| Vesuvius | 422.6 | -0.8 | 642.0 | 341.0 |

### ELECTRICITY

| | Price | Chg | High | Low |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Contour Global | 175.0 | -4.0 | 222.5 | 163.0 |
| Drax Gp | 270.0 | 7.6 | 386.8 | 251.0 |
| SSE | 1529.0 | -41.5 | 1686.5 | 1008.0 |

### ELECTRONIC & ELECTRICAL EQUIPMENT

| | Price | Chg | High | Low |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Halma | 1929.0 | -93.0 | 2244.0 | 1585.0 |
| Morgan Advanced | 278.0 | -10.6 | 324.8 | 232.4 |
| Oxford Instruments | 1390.0 | -10.0 | 1654.0 | 963.0 |
| Renishaw | 3494.0 | -36.0 | 4638.0 | 3232.0 |
| Spectris | 2716.0 | -129.0 | 3005.0 | 2234.0 |

### EQUITY INVESTMENT INSTRUMENTS

| | Price | Chg | High | Low |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 3i Infrastructure | 296.5 | 1.0 | 317.5 | 270.4 |
| Aberforth Smlr Cos | 1226.0 | -80.0 | 1546.0 | 1114.0 |
| Alliance Trust | 749.0 | -32.0 | 876.0 | 730.0 |
| AVI Global Trust | 695.0 | -18.0 | 802.0 | 695.0 |
| Baillie Gifford Japan | 675.0 | -24.0 | 848.0 | 675.0 |
| Bankers InvTst | 903.0 | -36.0 | 1032.0 | 851.0 |
| BlackRock Smaller | 1484.0 | -88.0 | 1794.0 | 1298.0 |
| BMO Global Smaller | 126.0 | -4.3 | 150.0 | 126.0 |
| Caledonia Inv | 2875.0 | -65.0 | 3180.0 | 2875.0 |
| City of London IT | 382.0 | -15.5 | 448.5 | 382.0 |
| Edin Inv Trust | 528.0 | -18.0 | 652.0 | 528.0 |
| European Opp | 774.0 | -33.0 | 926.0 | 708.0 |
| F&C Investment | 672.0 | -33.0 | 786.0 | 672.0 |
| Fidelity China SPE | 224.0 | -4.0 | 253.0 | 205.5 |
| Fidelity Euro Values | 240.0 | -8.0 | 272.0 | 218.0 |
| Fidelity Spec Val | 230.0 | -9.0 | 280.5 | 230.0 |
| Finsbury G&I Tst | 795.0 | -33.0 | 958.0 | 795.0 |
| GCP Infra Inv | 117.6 | 0.6 | 134.0 | 117.0 |
| Genesis Emerging | 718.0 | -10.0 | 818.0 | 686.0 |
| Greencoat UK | 140.2 | 0.8 | 152.8 | 133.8 |
| Harbourvest Glb | 1612.0 | -78.0 | 1868.0 | 1406.0 |
| Herald Inv Trust | 1354.0 | -64.0 | 1530.0 | 1205.0 |
| HICL Infr | 172.0 | 0.2 | 183.0 | 156.6 |
| JPM American | 444.5 | -18.0 | 524.0 | 421.0 |
| JPM Emerg Mkt | 936.0 | -26.0 | 1088.0 | 878.0 |
| JPM Indian IT | 628.0 | -29.0 | 790.0 | 628.0 |
| JPM Japan IT | 383.0 | -13.0 | 477.5 | 383.0 |
| Jupiter Fund Mngt | 300.0 | -26.3 | 432.0 | 300.0 |
| Law Debenture | 566.0 | -6.0 | 654.0 | 552.0 |
| Mercantile IT | 237.0 | -7.0 | 278.5 | 188.0 |
| Monks Inv Tst | 896.0 | -31.0 | 1026.0 | 809.0 |
| Murray Intl Tst | 1056.0 | -24.0 | 1286.0 | 1056.0 |
| Next Energy Solar | 117.5 | 1.0 | 126.5 | 114.0 |
| Pantheon Intl Partn | 2160.0 | -80.0 | 2620.0 | 2020.0 |
| Perpetual Inc & Grth | 282.5 | -11.0 | 342.0 | 282.5 |
| Pershing Square | 1340.0 | -28.0 | 1578.0 | 1224.0 |
| Personal Assets Tst | 41200.0 | -1250.0 | 44050.0 | 39850.0 |
| Polar Cap Tech Tst | 1478.0 | -52.0 | 1746.0 | 1220.0 |
| Pollen Street | 866.0 | -6.0 | 884.0 | 802.0 |
| Renewables Infra Gp | 134.0 | 1.8 | 139.2 | 115.4 |
| RIT Cap Partners | 1886.0 | -76.0 | 2180.0 | 1886.0 |
| Schroder Asia | 427.5 | -11.0 | 485.5 | 424.5 |
| Scottish Inv Tst | 715.0 | -21.0 | 843.0 | 715.0 |
| Scottish Mortgage | 561.0 | -23.5 | 659.0 | 472.0 |
| Sequoia Econ Infra | 113.4 | 3.2 | 118.6 | 110.0 |
| Smithson Inv | 1140.0 | -100.0 | 1388.0 | 1105.0 |
| Syncona | 245.0 | 1.0 | 294.0 | 203.0 |
| Temple Bar IT | 1192.0 | -40.0 | 1486.0 | 1162.0 |
| Templeton Em Mkts | 747.0 | -29.0 | 876.0 | 731.0 |
| Vietnam Enterprise | 404.0 | -8.0 | 509.0 | 404.0 |
| VinaCapital Vietna | 270.5 | -12.5 | 357.5 | 270.5 |
| Witan Invest | 196.0 | -9.5 | 235.0 | 196.0 |
| Wwide Healthcare | 2905.0 | -150.0 | 3330.0 | 2495.0 |

### FIXED LINE TELECOMMUNICATIONS

| | Price | Chg | High | Low |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| BT Gp | 141.6 | 2.1 | 230.7 | 139.5 |
| Talktalk Telecom | 109.9 | -0.3 | 126.5 | 99.0 |
| Telecom Plus | 1334.0 | -60.0 | 1552.0 | 1130.0 |

### FOOD & DRUG RETAILERS

| | Price | Chg | High | Low |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Greggs | 2090.0 | -40.0 | 2476.0 | 1730.0 |
| Morrison (WM) | 171.2 | 1.2 | 230.0 | 170.1 |
| Ocado Gp | 1064.0 | -16.5 | 1435.0 | 1046.0 |
| Sainsbury(J) | 195.8 | 1.7 | 240.6 | 177.1 |
| SSP Group | 507.0 | -28.0 | 721.0 | 507.0 |
| Tesco | 228.5 | -2.5 | 258.9 | 212.6 |

### FOOD PRODUCERS

| | Price | Chg | High | Low |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Assoc British Foods | 2255.0 | -79.0 | 2708.0 | 2106.0 |
| Bakkavor | 110.2 | -1.8 | 149.6 | 93.3 |
| Cranswick | 3330.0 | -156.0 | 3852.0 | 2488.0 |
| Greencore Gp | 209.3 | -6.3 | 281.8 | 193.4 |
| Hilton Food Gp | 1032.0 | 24.0 | 1118.0 | 905.0 |
| Tate & Lyle | 705.6 | -24.0 | 801.4 | 663.8 |
| Unilever | 4170.0 | -151.0 | 5324.0 | 3999.5 |

### FORESTRY & PAPER

| | Price | Chg | High | Low |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Mondi | 1562.0 | -57.5 | 1846.0 | 1510.5 |

### GENERAL FINANCIAL

| | Price | Chg | High | Low |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 3i Group | 1008.0 | -36.5 | 1184.5 | 942.2 |
| Ashmore Gp | 462.2 | -26.0 | 570.0 | 397.8 |
| Brewin Dolphin | 304.6 | -14.6 | 375.2 | 287.6 |
| Close Brothers | 1283.0 | -26.0 | 1663.0 | 1227.0 |
| Coats Group | 59.4 | -3.1 | 87.5 | 59.4 |
| Finablr | 61.1 | 3.9 | 215.0 | 57.2 |
| Hargreaves Lans | 1536.5 | -22.5 | 2433.0 | 1536.5 |
| IG Gp | 673.6 | 9.4 | 708.0 | 474.8 |
| Integrafin Holdings | 479.0 | -2.0 | 529.0 | 337.0 |
| Intermediate Capital | 1592.0 | -80.0 | 1877.0 | 999.0 |
| Intl Public Prtnshps | 161.2 | 0.4 | 171.2 | 146.8 |
| Investec | 392.1 | -29.3 | 518.6 | 392.1 |
| IP Group | 66.6 | -7.2 | 100.4 | 55.7 |
| John Laing Gp | 336.4 | 8.0 | 402.0 | 328.4 |
| London Stock Exch | 7576.0 | -234.0 | 8542.0 | 4538.0 |
| Man Group | 146.6 | 0.6 | 175.2 | 130.5 |
| Onesavings | 401.6 | -2.4 | 452.0 | 313.6 |
| Paragon | 455.0 | -14.6 | 553.5 | 388.0 |
| Plus500 | 949.6 | 77.2 | 949.6 | 495.0 |
| Provident Fin | 401.8 | -32.9 | 599.8 | 356.0 |
| Quilter | 146.0 | -7.7 | 174.7 | 124.2 |
| Rathbone Brothers | 1660.0 | -54.0 | 2540.0 | 1660.0 |
| Schroders | 2854.0 | -122.0 | 3443.0 | 2541.0 |
| TP ICAP | 364.2 | -7.6 | 417.5 | 270.0 |

### GENERAL RETAILERS

| | Price | Chg | High | Low |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| B&M | 333.1 | 4.0 | 420.9 | 315.0 |
| Dixons Carphone | 121.7 | -3.3 | 152.4 | 104.9 |
| Dunelm Gp | 1088.0 | -35.0 | 1404.0 | 730.5 |
| Frasers Group | 383.8 | -17.4 | 518.0 | 214.0 |
| Howden Joinery Gp | 636.0 | -24.8 | 732.6 | 478.8 |
| Inchcape | 577.0 | 14.5 | 720.0 | 545.5 |
| JD Sports Fashion | 737.0 | -4.8 | 881.4 | 464.5 |
| Kingfisher | 189.3 | 3.3 | 266.2 | 185.9 |
| Marks & Spencer | 158.4 | -0.7 | 290.1 | 158.4 |
| Next | 6082.0 | -134.0 | 7340.0 | 5086.0 |
| Pets at Home Gp | 257.4 | -10.8 | 314.6 | 140.0 |
| Vivo Energy | 100.0 | -0.4 | 139.0 | 100.0 |
| Watches of Switz | 329.6 | -5.4 | 392.8 | 270.0 |
| WH Smith | 1927.0 | -75.0 | 2654.0 | 1896.0 |

### HEALTH CARE EQUIPMENT & SERVICES

| | Price | Chg | High | Low |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Convatec | 205.0 | -1.1 | 220.4 | 132.6 |
| Mediclinic Intl | 339.0 | -16.7 | 415.3 | 293.4 |
| NMC Health | 1000.0 | 61.6 | 3000.0 | 700.0 |
| Smith & Neph | 1739.0 | -89.0 | 1990.0 | 1444.5 |
| UDG Hlthcare | 701.5 | -3.0 | 832.5 | 551.0 |

### HOUSEHOLD GOODS

| | Price | Chg | High | Low |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Barratt Devel | 757.2 | -11.6 | 878.4 | 552.8 |
| Bellway | 3723.0 | -98.0 | 4310.0 | 2698.0 |
| Berkeley Grp Hldgs | 4754.0 | -96.0 | 5474.0 | 3437.0 |
| Countryside Prop | 470.2 | -4.8 | 540.5 | 277.6 |
| Crest Nicholson | 452.0 | -1.0 | 519.0 | 332.0 |
| McCarthy & Stone | 134.0 | -3.9 | 158.8 | 123.5 |
| Persimmon | 2839.0 | -44.0 | 3298.0 | 1836.0 |
| Reckitt Benckiser | 5721.0 | -120.0 | 6688.0 | 5721.0 |
| Redrow | 746.0 | -10.0 | 848.0 | 533.0 |
| Taylor Wimpey | 202.2 | -3.1 | 236.2 | 142.9 |
| Vistry Group | 1279.0 | -17.0 | 1478.0 | 975.0 |

### INDUSTRIAL ENGINEERING

| | Price | Chg | High | Low |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Bodycote | 764.0 | -17.0 | 971.0 | 652.0 |
| Hill & Smith | 1337.0 | -31.0 | 1510.0 | 1049.0 |
| IMI | 1006.0 | 13.0 | 1206.0 | 906.0 |
| Melrose Ind | 209.4 | -7.4 | 248.5 | 160.7 |
| RHI Magnesita | 2990.0 | -62.0 | 5000.0 | 2984.0 |
| Rotork | 281.6 | -10.4 | 341.2 | 269.8 |
| Spirax-Sarco | 8395.0 | -310.0 | 9415.0 | 6825.0 |
| Weir Gp | 1305.5 | -59.5 | 1814.0 | 1250.5 |

### INDUSTRIAL METALS

| | Price | Chg | High | Low |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Evraz | 326.3 | -10.7 | 709.4 | 326.3 |
| Ferrexpo | 129.2 | -5.0 | 301.3 | 123.0 |

### INDUSTRIAL TRANSPORTATION

| | Price | Chg | High | Low |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Clarkson | 2490.0 | -55.0 | 3110.0 | 2200.0 |
| Fisher (James) | 1840.0 | 160.0 | 2260.0 | 1680.0 |
| Royal Mail | 162.4 | -2.1 | 278.3 | 162.4 |
| Signature Avi | 291.2 | 0.0 | 406.0 | 291.2 |

### LEISURE GOODS

| | Price | Chg | High | Low |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Games Workshp | 6300.0 | -80.0 | 7350.0 | 2800.0 |

### LIFE INSURANCE

| | Price | Chg | High | Low |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Aviva | 350.8 | -13.9 | 438.8 | 350.8 |
| Legal & General | 260.0 | -9.1 | 318.4 | 216.7 |
| Phoenix Gp | 691.2 | -24.9 | 803.0 | 634.2 |
| Prudential | 1267.0 | -60.5 | 1790.0 | 1267.0 |
| St James Place | 1015.5 | -29.5 | 1199.5 | 913.6 |
| Std Life Aberdeen | 276.4 | -8.5 | 336.9 | 238.1 |

### MEDIA

| | Price | Chg | High | Low |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 4imprint | 2770.0 | -70.0 | 3500.0 | 2040.0 |
| Ascential | 341.8 | -2.4 | 421.2 | 319.0 |
| Auto Trader Gp | 519.6 | -4.4 | 607.6 | 469.1 |
| Euromny Inst Inv | 1080.0 | 44.0 | 1498.0 | 1036.0 |
| Future | 1156.0 | -36.0 | 1572.0 | 736.0 |
| Informa | 682.4 | -7.6 | 892.0 | 682.4 |
| ITV | 116.5 | -2.5 | 156.5 | 103.6 |
| Moneysupermkt.com | 310.5 | 0.7 | 417.7 | 309.5 |
| Pearson | 557.6 | -11.8 | 927.0 | 556.4 |
| RELX | 1867.5 | -78.5 | 2099.0 | 1606.0 |
| Rightmove Group | 619.0 | -16.0 | 701.2 | 495.0 |
| WPP | 752.8 | -8.8 | 1077.5 | 752.8 |

### MINING

| | Price | Chg | High | Low |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Anglo American | 1791.8 | -59.0 | 2266.0 | 1666.6 |
| Antofagasta | 752.0 | -34.0 | 1022.5 | 752.0 |
| BHP Group | 1418.4 | -71.4 | 2049.0 | 1418.4 |
| Centamin | 128.9 | -12.6 | 153.2 | 79.8 |
| Fresnillo | 603.8 | -81.4 | 921.2 | 539.6 |
| Glencore | 193.3 | -5.9 | 340.3 | 193.3 |
| Hochschild Mining | 159.7 | -21.9 | 227.0 | 152.0 |
| Kaz Minerals | 409.9 | -10.8 | 738.4 | 380.3 |
| Polymet Int | 1194.0 | -100.5 | 1345.0 | 772.6 |
| Rio Tinto | 3608.0 | -71.0 | 4976.5 | 3608.0 |

### MOBILE TELECOMMUNICATIONS

| | Price | Chg | High | Low |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Vodafone Gp | 134.4 | -6.7 | 165.2 | 123.3 |

### NONLIFE INSURANCE

| | Price | Chg | High | Low |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Admiral Gp | 2112.0 | -71.0 | 2330.0 | 2014.0 |
| Beazley | 534.5 | 2.5 | 628.0 | 504.5 |
| Direct Line Ins | 307.0 | -6.0 | 366.5 | 270.5 |
| Hastings Gp Hldgs | 163.0 | -3.2 | 231.6 | 163.0 |
| Hiscox | 1226.0 | -32.0 | 1777.0 | 1213.0 |
| Lancashire Hldgs | 724.5 | -15.5 | 807.0 | 640.5 |
| RSA Ins Gp | 518.8 | -16.2 | 597.0 | 501.6 |

### OIL & GAS PRODUCERS

| | Price | Chg | High | Low |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| BP | 396.1 | -18.0 | 582.5 | 396.1 |
| Cairn Energy | 139.1 | -1.7 | 213.8 | 139.1 |
| Energean Oil & Gas | 654.0 | -36.0 | 1082.0 | 654.0 |
| Premier Oil | 77.6 | -7.1 | 118.7 | 65.1 |
| Royal Dutch Shell A | 1661.4 | -70.2 | 2612.0 | 1661.4 |
| Royal Dutch Shell B | 1663.6 | -68.8 | 2622.0 | 1663.6 |
| Tullow Oil | 33.7 | 0.8 | 250.0 | 32.9 |

### OIL EQUIPMENT & SERVICES

| | Price | Chg | High | Low |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Hunting | 318.0 | -13.0 | 657.0 | 290.8 |
| Petrofac | 318.3 | -12.7 | 527.2 | 318.3 |
| Wood Gp(J) | 366.2 | -8.7 | 598.6 | 319.6 |

### PERSONAL GOODS

| | Price | Chg | High | Low |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Burberry Gp | 1649.0 | -26.5 | 2345.0 | 1649.0 |
| PZ Cussons | 181.0 | -0.6 | 227.0 | 178.8 |

### PHARMACEUTICALS & BIOTECHNOLOGY

| | Price | Chg | High | Low |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| AstraZeneca | 6794.0 | -348.0 | 7878.0 | 5644.0 |
| Dechra Pharma | 2646.0 | -24.0 | 3068.0 | 2348.0 |
| Genus | 3158.0 | 0.0 | 3294.0 | 2178.0 |
| GlaxoSmithKline | 1562.2 | -67.6 | 1846.0 | 1501.6 |
| Hikma Pharma | 1788.0 | -122.0 | 2200.0 | 1556.5 |

### REAL ESTATE

| | Price | Chg | High | Low |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Assura | 73.7 | -0.3 | 83.5 | 56.7 |
| Big Yellow Gp | 1066.0 | -47.0 | 1240.0 | 955.5 |
| BMO Comm Prop | 97.4 | -2.8 | 124.2 | 97.4 |
| British Land | 501.0 | -4.6 | 638.8 | 468.3 |
| Captl & Count Prop | 198.0 | -8.7 | 270.5 | 184.8 |
| CLS Hldgs | 246.0 | -1.5 | 312.5 | 212.0 |
| Daejan Hldgs | 7980.0 | -40.0 | 8020.0 | 4715.0 |
| Derwent London | 3920.0 | -94.0 | 4282.0 | 2884.0 |
| Grainger | 296.4 | -15.2 | 338.0 | 217.4 |
| Grt Portland Est | 842.6 | -41.6 | 966.0 | 649.4 |
| Hammerson | 208.6 | 0.7 | 385.0 | 203.9 |
| Land Securities | 834.6 | -29.0 | 1001.5 | 735.4 |
| LondonMetric Prop | 207.2 | -5.4 | 241.2 | 191.4 |
| NewRiver Retail | 155.6 | -8.4 | 246.0 | 147.6 |
| Primary Hlth Prop | 144.8 | -3.8 | 162.8 | 123.0 |
| Safestore Hldgs | 791.5 | -25.5 | 867.0 | 586.0 |
| Savills | 1082.0 | -27.0 | 1258.0 | 822.0 |
| SEGRO | 821.2 | -35.8 | 935.0 | 653.8 |
| Shaftesbury | 797.5 | -21.0 | 979.5 | 739.5 |
| St Modwen Props | 479.5 | 7.5 | 530.0 | 373.0 |
| TR Property IT | 433.0 | -14.0 | 497.5 | 377.0 |
| Tritax Big Box | 130.0 | -2.8 | 159.7 | 130.0 |
| UK Commercial Prop | 79.6 | -2.0 | 92.7 | 79.6 |
| Unite Group | 1133.0 | -67.0 | 1339.0 | 896.5 |
| Workspace Gp | 1132.0 | -37.0 | 1307.0 | 806.0 |

### SOFTWARE & COMPUTER SERVICES

| | Price | Chg | High | Low |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Avast | 393.8 | 4.8 | 551.0 | 282.0 |
| Aveva Gp | 4388.0 | -54.0 | 5315.0 | 2962.0 |
| Computacenter | 1653.0 | -12.0 | 1920.0 | 1049.0 |
| FDM Group | 861.0 | -33.0 | 1100.0 | 647.0 |
| Kainos Gp | 746.0 | -26.0 | 880.0 | 430.0 |
| Micro Focus Intl | 740.7 | 20.7 | 2160.0 | 720.0 |
| Playtech | 250.0 | -22.7 | 457.7 | 250.0 |
| Sage Group | 681.8 | -41.4 | 820.4 | 655.0 |
| Softcat | 1056.0 | -1.0 | 1260.0 | 746.0 |
| Sophos | 580.4 | 5.4 | 580.4 | 298.2 |

### SUPPORT SERVICES

| | Price | Chg | High | Low |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Aggreko | 677.2 | -8.4 | 869.2 | 677.2 |
| Ashtead Gp | 2389.0 | -78.0 | 2774.0 | 1805.5 |
| Babcock Intl Grp | 443.5 | -11.9 | 646.6 | 416.7 |
| Bunzl | 1870.0 | -112.0 | 2551.0 | 1870.0 |
| Capita | 129.3 | -5.8 | 183.0 | 99.9 |
| DCC | 5532.0 | -62.0 | 7496.0 | 5532.0 |
| Diploma | 1880.0 | -41.0 | 2134.0 | 1342.0 |
| Electrocomp | 606.2 | -1.6 | 729.8 | 540.8 |
| Equiniti | 200.8 | 0.4 | 236.2 | 186.2 |
| Essentra | 358.6 | 10.6 | 449.0 | 348.0 |
| Experian | 2591.0 | -78.0 | 2898.0 | 1999.0 |
| Ferguson | 6740.0 | -320.0 | 7602.0 | 4800.0 |
| G4S | 171.2 | 6.5 | 234.3 | 164.6 |
| Hays | 138.3 | -2.6 | 183.5 | 138.0 |
| Homeserve | 1183.0 | -19.0 | 1340.0 | 966.5 |
| Intertek Gp | 5270.0 | -98.0 | 6170.0 | 4643.0 |
| IWG | 351.7 | -32.3 | 469.0 | 231.6 |
| Network Int | 537.0 | -9.0 | 650.0 | 513.0 |
| Pagegroup | 406.4 | 5.0 | 539.0 | 367.8 |
| Paypoint | 830.0 | -37.0 | 1118.0 | 830.0 |
| Rentokil Initial | 484.0 | -20.0 | 508.4 | 345.2 |
| Sanne Group | 570.0 | -34.0 | 752.0 | 498.0 |
| Serco | 152.6 | 0.6 | 167.7 | 120.3 |
| SIG | 63.1 | 1.8 | 153.0 | 61.4 |
| Travis Perkins | 1461.0 | -54.5 | 1720.0 | 1166.0 |

### TECHNOLOGY HARDWARE & EQUIPMENT

| | Price | Chg | High | Low |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Spirent Comms | 210.0 | -8.0 | 256.0 | 140.4 |

### TOBACCO

| | Price | Chg | High | Low |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Br Am Tob | 3062.5 | -100.0 | 3507.0 | 2648.0 |
| Imperial Brands | 1554.8 | -91.4 | 2648.5 | 1554.8 |

### TRAVEL & LEISURE

| | Price | Chg | High | Low |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Carnival | 2435.0 | 38.0 | 4246.0 | 2397.0 |
| Cineworld Group | 155.2 | 4.5 | 321.0 | 150.7 |
| Compass Gp | 1710.5 | -63.0 | 2138.0 | 1682.5 |
| Dominos Pizza | 296.0 | -1.4 | 326.4 | 221.2 |
| easyJet | 1100.5 | -9.5 | 1552.0 | 854.8 |
| EI Group | 284.6 | 0.0 | 285.0 | 194.0 |
| FirstGroup | 117.8 | -1.7 | 137.5 | 89.6 |
| Flutter Ent | 8266.0 | 40.0 | 9456.0 | 5525.0 |
| Go-Ahead Gp | 1949.0 | -8.0 | 2278.0 | 1783.0 |
| GVC Hldgs | 789.6 | -23.2 | 939.0 | 507.5 |
| Intercontl Htls | 4302.0 | -120.5 | 5738.0 | 4302.0 |
| Intl Cons Airl | 472.0 | -43.4 | 671.0 | 413.5 |
| Just Eat Takeaway.com | 6815.0 | -15.0 | 8255.0 | 6815.0 |
| Marstons | 90.0 | -2.5 | 131.4 | 90.0 |
| Mitchells & Butlers | 335.0 | -3.0 | 470.5 | 238.0 |
| National Express | 423.6 | 7.6 | 476.0 | 387.4 |
| PPHE Hotel Gp | 1740.0 | -10.0 | 2140.0 | 1630.0 |
| Rank Gp | 264.0 | -17.0 | 326.0 | 144.0 |
| Restaurant Grp | 106.0 | 0.0 | 166.4 | 106.0 |
| Stagecoach Gp | 130.1 | -3.9 | 167.0 | 115.5 |
| Wetherspoon (JD) | 1344.0 | -25.0 | 1734.0 | 1269.0 |
| Whitbread | 3894.0 | -180.0 | 5152.0 | 3894.0 |
| William Hill | 148.8 | -8.7 | 205.2 | 132.3 |
| Wizz Air Holdings | 3415.0 | -79.0 | 4496.0 | 2880.0 |

### AIM 50

| | Price | Chg | High | Low |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Abcam | 1156.0 | -4.0 | 1500.0 | 1066.0 |
| Advanced Medical | 254.0 | 3.5 | 354.5 | 225.0 |
| Alliance Pharma | 75.6 | -6.4 | 87.5 | 63.0 |
| ASOS | 2997.0 | -66.0 | 4066.0 | 2107.0 |
| Blue Prism | 1446.0 | -43.0 | 1841.0 | 788.0 |
| Camellia | 8325.0 | 25.0 | 11350.0 | 8300.0 |
| Caretech Holdings | 447.0 | -20.0 | 502.0 | 325.0 |
| Central Asia Metals | 185.0 | 1.0 | 266.5 | 180.0 |
| Clinigen Group | 718.0 | 0.0 | 1069.0 | 718.0 |
| CVS Group | 1066.0 | -24.0 | 1250.0 | 490.6 |
| Dart Group | 1229.0 | 0.0 | 1943.0 | 709.5 |
| Diversified Gas & Oil | 79.6 | -5.8 | 116.5 | 79.6 |
| Draper Esprit | 526.0 | -52.0 | 602.0 | 410.0 |
| EMIS Group | 1136.0 | -16.0 | 1242.0 | 942.0 |
| Fevertree Drinks | 1262.0 | -52.5 | 2475.0 | 1262.0 |
| First Derivatives | 2765.0 | -60.0 | 3555.0 | 2100.0 |
| Frontier Devs | 1136.0 | -34.0 | 1444.0 | 866.0 |
| Gamma Comms | 1210.0 | 15.0 | 1460.0 | 830.0 |
| GB Group | 645.0 | -7.0 | 800.0 | 464.0 |
| Gooch & Housego | 1190.0 | -50.0 | 1527.5 | 954.0 |
| Hurricane Energy | 14.8 | 0.2 | 53.6 | 14.6 |
| Impax Asset Mgmt | 346.5 | -18.5 | 405.0 | 211.0 |
| Iomart Group | 348.0 | -11.5 | 405.0 | 316.5 |
| IQE | 48.0 | 0.0 | 98.0 | 41.8 |
| James Halstead | 486.0 | -44.0 | 570.0 | 440.0 |
| Johnson Service Gp | 183.0 | -12.4 | 223.0 | 128.0 |
| Keywords Studios | 1533.0 | -38.0 | 1838.0 | 1052.0 |
| Learning Tech Gp | 137.6 | -6.8 | 172.2 | 63.7 |
| M&C Saatchi | 86.8 | 6.2 | 394.0 | 73.4 |
| M.P. Evans | 660.0 | -38.0 | 750.0 | 612.0 |
| Majestic Wine | 208.0 | -4.0 | 318.0 | 208.0 |
| Midwich Group | 553.0 | -5.0 | 633.0 | 474.5 |
| Mortgage Advice B | 721.0 | -21.0 | 800.0 | 546.0 |
| Next Fifteen Comm | 478.0 | -5.0 | 658.0 | 465.0 |
| Nichols | 1297.5 | -12.5 | 1880.0 | 1297.5 |
| Numis Corporation | 252.0 | -11.0 | 306.0 | 212.0 |
| Polar Capital Hdgs | 494.0 | -6.0 | 604.0 | 490.0 |
| Purplebricks Gp | 89.5 | -3.4 | 132.0 | 89.5 |
| Renew Holdings | 494.0 | -18.0 | 568.0 | 360.0 |
| RWS Holdings | 525.0 | -36.0 | 670.0 | 473.5 |
| Scapa Group | 168.6 | -6.4 | 403.0 | 157.0 |
| Secure Income REIT | 424.0 | -15.0 | 473.0 | 394.0 |
| Serica Energy | 97.9 | -0.1 | 143.4 | 97.9 |
| Smart Metering Sys | 481.8 | -6.4 | 630.0 | 310.0 |
| Telford Homes | 349.5 | 0.0 | 358.0 | 267.0 |
| Thorpe (F.W.) | 294.0 | -17.0 | 359.0 | 267.0 |
| Watkin Jones | 255.0 | -8.5 | 286.0 | 199.6 |
| Young's Brew NV | 1190.0 | -35.0 | 1310.0 | 1030.0 |
| Young's Brew-A | 1600.0 | -20.0 | 1885.0 | 1530.0 |

## MAIN CHANGES UK 350

| Risers ↑ | | % | Fallers ↓ | | % |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Fisher (James) | 1840.00 | 9.5 | Hochschild Mining | 159.70 | -12.1 |
| Plus500 | 949.60 | 8.8 | Fresnillo | 603.80 | -11.9 |
| Finablr | 61.10 | 6.8 | IP Group | 66.60 | -9.8 |
| NMC Health | 1000.00 | 6.6 | Centamin | 128.95 | -8.9 |
| Euromny Inst Inv | 1080.00 | 4.2 | Premier Oil | 77.64 | -8.4 |
| G4S | 171.15 | 4.0 | Intl Cons Airl | 472.00 | -8.4 |
| Rolls-Royce | 620.00 | 3.2 | IWG | 351.70 | -8.4 |
| Essentra | 358.60 | 3.0 | Playtech | 250.00 | -8.3 |
| Cineworld Group | 155.15 | 3.0 | Smithson Inv | 1140.00 | -8.1 |
| Sequoia Econ Infra | 113.40 | 2.9 | Jupiter Fund Mngt | 300.00 | -8.1 |

## EU SHARES

| | Price | Chg | High | Low |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| ADIDAS | 250.50 | -7.40 | 316.05 | 204.80 |
| AIR LIQUIDE | 122.90 | -4.90 | 140.30 | 109.90 |
| ALLIANZ AG | 195.34 | -10.46 | 232.20 | 195.88 |
| AMADEUS IT GROUP | 63.50 | 2.02 | 78.60 | 42.30 |
| ANHEUSER BUSCH INBEV | 50.73 | -4.37 | 92.71 | 55.10 |
| ASML HOLDING NV | 248.10 | -7.75 | 292.95 | 158.30 |
| AXA | 20.95 | -0.90 | 25.50 | 20.78 |
| BANCO SANTANDER | 3.33 | -0.09 | 4.10 | 3.40 |
| BASF | 53.40 | -2.93 | 74.49 | 56.20 |
| BAYER AG | 65.48 | -1.93 | 78.06 | 52.53 |
| BBVA | 4.33 | -0.21 | 5.69 | 4.21 |
| BMW | 58.85 | -1.10 | 77.75 | 58.70 |
| BNP PARIBAS | 43.78 | -1.60 | 54.18 | 39.32 |
| CRH | 30.47 | -1.09 | 36.50 | 26.70 |
| DAIMLER | 37.38 | -1.67 | 59.31 | 39.05 |
| DANONE | 63.72 | -1.68 | 82.00 | 65.40 |
| DEUTSCHE POST AG | 27.17 | -1.58 | 34.91 | 26.38 |
| DEUTSCHE TELEKOM | 14.74 | -0.66 | 16.61 | 14.45 |
| ENEL | 7.58 | -0.34 | 8.57 | 5.30 |
| ENGIE | 15.03 | -0.97 | 16.64 | 12.45 |
| ENI | 11.16 | -0.60 | 15.94 | 11.76 |
| ESSILORLUXOTTICA | 128.75 | 0.00 | 128.75 | 128.75 |
| FRESENIUS MEDICAL CARE | 69.26 | -1.58 | 77.66 | 57.92 |
| IBERDROLA | 10.32 | -0.45 | 11.22 | 6.02 |
| INDITEX | 28.13 | 0.03 | 32.37 | 2.55 |
| ING GROEP NV | 8.61 | -0.22 | 12.05 | 8.34 |
| INTESA SANPAOLO | 2.20 | -0.09 | 2.60 | 1.83 |
| KERING | 505.80 | -5.90 | 610.20 | 425.05 |
| KON KPN NV | 2.20 | -0.10 | 2.96 | 2.30 |
| L'OREAL | 241.00 | -5.60 | 275.30 | 223.20 |
| LVMH MOET HENNESSY | 370.85 | 1.00 | 439.05 | 305.80 |
| MUENCHENER RUECKVE | 230.50 | -16.80 | 282.50 | 207.50 |
| NOKIA | 21.88 | 0.00 | 21.88 | 21.88 |
| ORANGE | 12.19 | -0.54 | 15.01 | 12.61 |
| ROYAL PHILIPS | 38.72 | -0.59 | 45.61 | 34.90 |
| SAFRAN | 124.10 | -5.55 | 150.25 | 116.90 |
| SANOFI | 83.93 | -4.51 | 94.00 | 72.24 |
| SAP SE | 110.50 | -5.30 | 129.36 | 94.68 |
| SCHNEIDER ELECTRIC | 90.50 | -3.24 | 102.90 | 67.60 |
| SIEMENS AG | 93.20 | -3.99 | 119.90 | 85.00 |
| SOCIETE GENERALE | 25.59 | -1.13 | 31.93 | 21.13 |
| TELEFONICA SA | 5.36 | -0.34 | 9.18 | 5.70 |
| TOTAL | 38.38 | -1.30 | 52.27 | 39.68 |
| UNILEVER NV | 47.62 | -2.25 | 57.56 | 47.09 |
| VINCI | 90.98 | -4.56 | 106.75 | 83.52 |
| VIVENDI | 23.02 | -1.11 | 26.42 | 23.40 |
| VOLKSWAGEN AG | 148.98 | -0.28 | 185.52 | 138.16 |

## CRYPTO A.M. DAILY

POWERED BY BEQUANT

### CRYPTOCURRENCIES

| Name | Price (USDT) | ↑/↓(24h) |
|---|---|---|
| Bitcoin (BTC) | $ 8,651.93 | -0.34% ↓ |
| Ethereum (ETH) | $ 223.68 | -1.48% ↓ |
| Ripple (XRP) | $ 0.23 | -0.86% ↓ |
| Bitcoin Cash (BCH) | $ 312.27 | -0.20% ↓ |
| Litecoin (LTC) | $ 59.04 | -1.61% ↓ |
| EOS.IO (EOS) | $ 3.55 | 0.60% ↑ |
| Bitcoin SV (BSV) | $ 212.17 | -1.67% ↓ |
| TRON (TRON) | $ 0.02 | -1.93% ↓ |
| NEO (NEO) | $ 11.36 | 1.07% ↑ |
| Cardano (ADA) | $ 0.05 | -1.79% ↓ |
| CryptoCompare Large Cap Index | | 0.30% ↑ |
| CryptoCompare Small Cap Index | | 0.57% ↑ |

| | |
|---|---|
| Market | $246,829,078,598 |
| Bitcoin Volatility | -3.50% ↓ |
| Bitcoin Volume on BEQUANT Exchange (USDT) | 312,560,769 |

*Sources: Bequant.io, CryptoCompare.com*
*Prices and data are correct as of 11:00, 01.03.2020*
*Crypto AM features in City AM every Tuesday.*
*Previous Editions:www.cityam.com/crypto-insider*
*Read more at: https://bequant.pro/cityam*

### CRYPTO & COFFEE

After a week of carnage, Bitcoin attempted to stabilise over the weekend, albeit still below the key 200DMA line and around mid-January 2020 support zone. The bulls will be keen to point out that despite some market commentators suggesting possible supply chain related delays for crypto miners, the actual evolution of the hashrate has yet to confirm this. In fact, even though the most recent mining difficulty adjustment was to the downside, the current expectation for the next adjustment stands at +0.53%.

Also, last week it was reported that Beijing-based mining giant Bitmain launched its latest AntMiner S19 and S19 Pro models, boasting computing power as high as 110 terahashes per second (TH/s). The two models would currently be the most profitable bitcoin mining devices. This, together with the fact that the hotly publicised block reward halving is quickly looming suggests that retail and long-only will be keen to make the most of the recent sell-off to re-establish longs.

Elsewhere, the most recent CME Commitment of Traders (COT) report shows longs in the other-reportable category (potentially sell-side in making markets) rising to an all-time high, while during the rally in Q2 2019, this category was net short.

## US SHARES

| | Price | Chg | High | Low |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 3M | 149.24 | -0.92 | 219.50 | 146.85 |
| ABBOTT LABORATORIES | 77.03 | -2.16 | 91.86 | 72.88 |
| ADOBE INC | 345.12 | 7.60 | 383.28 | 254.74 |
| ALPHABET NON VTG-C | 1339.33 | 21.24 | 1526.69 | 1036.23 |
| ALPHABET-A | 1339.25 | 24.30 | 1524.87 | 1116.79 |
| AMAZON.COM | 1883.75 | -0.55 | 2170.22 | 1620.80 |
| AMERICAN EXPRESS | 109.93 | -2.88 | 136.93 | 107.86 |
| APPLE INC | 273.36 | -0.16 | 327.20 | 172.50 |
| AT&T | 35.22 | -0.51 | 39.63 | 29.81 |
| BANK OF AMERICA | 28.50 | -0.63 | 35.64 | 26.25 |
| BERKSHIRE HATHAWAY | 206.34 | -1.33 | 230.20 | 195.81 |
| BOEING CO | 275.11 | -12.65 | 432.69 | 287.76 |
| CATERPILLAR INC | 124.24 | 0.97 | 150.53 | 113.38 |
| CHEVRON | 93.34 | -0.79 | 126.54 | 94.13 |
| CISCO SYSTEMS | 39.93 | -0.11 | 58.05 | 40.04 |
| CITIGROUP | 63.46 | -0.99 | 81.91 | 60.33 |
| COCA-COLA CO | 53.49 | -1.44 | 60.13 | 44.84 |
| COMCAST | 40.43 | -0.62 | 47.50 | 38.19 |
| DOW | 40.41 | 0.86 | 66.65 | 39.55 |
| EBAY INC | 34.64 | -0.40 | 41.57 | 33.56 |
| EXXON MOBIL | 51.44 | 1.62 | 83.38 | 49.82 |
| FACEBOOK | 192.47 | 2.72 | 223.23 | 174.60 |
| GOLDMAN SACHS GROUP | 200.77 | -4.92 | 249.72 | 182.49 |
| HOME DEPOT INC | 217.84 | -6.89 | 247.02 | 181.14 |
| HONEYWELL INTERNATIONAL | 162.17 | 2.62 | 183.23 | 151.59 |
| IBM | 130.15 | -2.96 | 156.76 | 126.99 |
| INTEL | 55.52 | -0.31 | 68.47 | 43.46 |
| JOHNSON & JOHNSON | 134.48 | -4.64 | 153.99 | 126.95 |
| JPMORGAN CHASE & CO | 116.11 | -5.26 | 141.09 | 98.93 |
| MASTERCARD INC | 290.25 | 4.43 | 344.56 | 221.87 |
| MCDONALD'S | 194.17 | -6.83 | 221.15 | 179.50 |
| MEDTRONIC | 100.67 | -0.31 | 121.30 | 84.15 |
| MERCK & CO | 76.56 | -1.52 | 92.04 | 73.19 |
| MICROSOFT | 162.01 | 3.83 | 188.70 | 110.39 |
| NETFLIX | 369.03 | -2.68 | 387.78 | 254.59 |
| NIKE INC | 89.38 | 0.83 | 104.58 | 77.14 |
| ORACLE | 49.46 | -1.32 | 60.15 | 50.24 |
| PAYPAL HOLDINGS | 107.99 | 0.15 | 123.91 | 96.64 |
| PEPSICO | 132.03 | -4.34 | 146.99 | 118.61 |
| PFIZER INC | 33.42 | -0.68 | 44.40 | 33.93 |
| PROCTER & GAMBLE | 113.23 | -0.27 | 127.14 | 98.41 |
| TRAVELERS COMPANIES | 119.81 | -4.27 | 154.83 | 124.08 |
| TWITTER | 33.20 | 0.19 | 45.42 | 28.89 |
| UNITED HEALTH GROUP | 254.96 | 1.04 | 305.31 | 215.26 |
| UNITED TECHNOLOGIES | 130.59 | -1.59 | 156.83 | 122.94 |
| VERIZON COMMUNICATIONS | 54.16 | -0.90 | 62.07 | 54.35 |
| VISA | 181.76 | 1.75 | 213.31 | 168.86 |
| WALGREENS BOOTS ALLIANCE | 45.76 | -0.48 | 76.05 | 46.24 |
| WALMART | 107.68 | -2.72 | 121.28 | 96.94 |
| WALT DISNEY CO | 117.65 | -0.39 | 151.64 | 107.79 |
| WELLS FARGO & CO | 40.85 | -1.62 | 54.46 | 42.47 |

## COMMODITIES

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Gold | 1615.80 | -37.05 |
| Silver (Pence) | 1805.00 | -2.50 |
| Silver (Cents) | 1403.00 | +6.00 |
| Krugerrand | 1643.64 | -26.03 |
| Brent Crude | 52.18 | -1.25 |
| Platinum | 917.00 | -2.00 |
| British Sovereign | 383.33 | -5.95 |
| Lead Cash Official | 1869.00 | -0.75 |
| Copper Cash Official | 5617.75 | +4.00 |
| Aluminium Cash Official | 1670.75 | -5.50 |
| Nickel Cash Official | 12277.50 | -7.50 |
| Aluminium Alloy Cash Official | 1365.00 | +10.00 |
| Natural Gas | 21.18 | -1.88 |
| Tin Cash Official | 16347.50 | -217.50 |
| Zinc Cash Official | 1998.50 | -15.00 |
| White Sugar | 398.70 | -7.10 |

## TOURIST RATES

| | |
|---|---|
| Canada | 1.6468 |
| Croatia | 7.8842 |
| Czech Republic | 27.30 |
| Denmark | 8.3143 |
| Hong Kong | 9.5143 |
| Iceland | 144.19 |
| India | 81.63 |
| Israel | 4.0222 |
| New Zealand | 1.9174 |
| Norway | 11.62 |
| Poland | 4.4574 |
| Singapore | 1.6753 |
| Sweden | 11.92 |
| Switzerland | 1.1854 |
| Turkey | 7.6122 |
| United States | 1.2279 |

## WORLD INDICIES

| | Price | Chg | %Chg |
|---|---|---|---|
| FTSE 100 | 6580.61 | -215.79 | -3.18 |
| FTSE 250 | 19330.92 | -452.53 | -2.29 |
| FTSE All-Share | 3673.61 | -114.36 | -3.02 |
| FTSE AIM All-Share | 856.64 | -30.32 | -3.42 |
| S&P 500 | 2954.22 | -24.54 | -0.82 |
| Dow Jones I.A | 25409.36 | -357.28 | -1.39 |
| Nasdaq Composite | 8567.37 | +0.89 | +0.01 |
| Xetra DAX | 11890.35 | -477.11 | -3.86 |
| CAC 40 | 5309.90 | -185.70 | -3.38 |
| Swiss Market Index | 9831.03 | -374.43 | -3.67 |
| ISEQ Overall Index | 6397.37 | -172.23 | -2.62 |
| FTSEurofirst 300 | 1464.48 | -55.28 | -3.64 |
| Hang Seng | 26129.93 | -648.69 | -2.42 |
| Nikkei | 21142.96 | -805.27 | -3.67 |
| STI Index | 3011.08 | -100.62 | -3.23 |
| ASX All Ordinaries | 6511.50 | -225.90 | -3.35 |

# FORUM

EDITED BY RACHEL CUNLIFFE

# Will France soon find a German dance partner for EU reform?


SPARE a thought for the President of France, the supremely confident Emmanuel Macron, in his uphill attempt to reform a floundering Europe.

Following the great recession of 2008, the lion's share of European leaders failed to fix the economic roof while the sun shone, eschewing the difficulties of structural economic reform in favour of the easier prospect of muddling through.

Not so Macron, who has seen that Europe stands precariously on the edge of economic calamity and geopolitical irrelevance.

Aware that French fiscal profligacy has been the perennial excuse for German avoidance of European-wide reform, Macron bravely set about altering this prejudice by changing the facts on the ground. A reformist champion could lead such an effort; a reformist failure could not.

Remarkably and uniquely in the history of the French Fifth Republic, he succeeded in passing serious labour market reforms and then weathering the all-too-predictable abuse of the Parisian street.

But, shorn of their excuse, the Germans did nothing. The diarchy leading the country — led by long-serving time-waster Chancellor Angela Merkel with the support of her colourless minion and heir presumptive Annegret Kramp-Karrenbauer (known universally as AKK) — embarrassedly looked at their shoes.

Instead, the German government passive-aggressively refused to follow through. It wouldn't even consider the changes that just might make the EU fit for purpose in our new era: establishing a genuine finance ministry, having some form of mutualised common debt, and working for the continent to move more in tandem geo-strategically.

It seemed that, as long as the do-nothing Merkel government remained in power, Macron was bound to remain frustrated — and Europe's dying hopes for reform would remain quashed.

That is, until the shock of October's elections in the German state of Thuringia.

The outcome of this obscure local contest saw an increasingly embattled and over-matched AKK lose control of the local Christian Democratic Party (CDU), of which she was the national head. Ignoring her flaccid entreaties, the local CDU chose to vote alongside the heretofore anathema far-right Alternative fur Deutschland (AfD), favouring a third candidate for the Thuringia state leadership.

> "At long last, there is a glimmer of hope for Macron and his ambitious agenda

Merkel was forced to condemn both the local Thuringian CDU party for casting in its lot with the AfD, as well as her ineffectual acolyte AKK for not preventing the mess in the first place. This scolding proved to be the final nail in AKK's coffin. She dramatically resigned the national leadership of the party, and with it, scuppered Merkel's plans for a stable succession.

Two very different candidates have since sprung up, contesting the party leadership contest, which will be held on 25 April.

Armin Laschet, regional leader of the populous state of North Rhine Westphalia, has emerged as the compromise candidate, tacitly blessed by both Merkel and the party establishment. A victory for Laschet would signal more of the same, with the CDU hewing to a centrist course domestically, and little hope for German support for European reform.

However, the favourite (and long-time Merkel nemesis) Friedrich Merz is a man cut from an entirely different cloth. Long the standard-bearer of the right wing of the CDU, Merz would amount to a repudiation of Merkellism. Not only would he take the party back to its rightwards home (hopefully hoovering up AfD voters, much as Boris Johnson amalgamated Nigel Farage's support), but he would be open to a hard-headed deal over Europe with Macron.

At long last, then, there is a glimmer (and that's all it is) of hope for Macron's ambitious and necessary European reform agenda.

It is true that, before the Elysee pops the champagne corks, a number of caveats are necessary. In moving to the right, Merz would have to be mindful of betraying the concerns of some of his new eurosceptic constituents.

Even more importantly, German governments are habitually coalitions. Who the CDU enters into coalition with will largely determine its European policy. A deal with the surging centre-left Greens is the best-case scenario, but there are a bewildering array of other possible coalition outcomes, almost all of which lead to further deadlocks over European reform.

However, even with these necessary caveats, one thing is surely clear. The long-slumbering German giant is at last awakening. What comes next will determine whether Macron's dream of European reform — the continent's last opportunity to avoid absolute decline — has a fighting chance.

*Dr John C. Hulsman is a senior columnist at City A.M., a life member of the Council on Foreign Relations, and president of John C. Hulsman Enterprises. He can be reached for corporate speaking and private briefings at www.chartwellspeakers.com. Brunello Rosa is chief executive at Rosa & Roubini Associates, a visiting professor at Bocconi University, a visiting lecturer at City University, and a research associate at the Systemic Risk Centre of the LSE.*

# If Britain is to hit net-zero, we need the City to step up its green finance ambitions


THE UNVEILING of the COP26 Private Finance Agenda at Guildhall last week was a landmark moment for our climate change efforts as a nation. The annual UN conference, this year taking place in Glasgow, will convene global leaders to discuss the world's most pressing issue.

And as policymakers gear up for the pivotal event, it is welcome that our own government has put finance at the heart of the conference for the first time.

But even with the weight of Westminster behind our climate efforts, more must be done. The private sector will be crucial to mobilising the monumental amount of capital needed to achieve an orderly transition to a net-zero future.

Some $90 trillion is needed by 2030 to realise our international climate ambitions, and we are currently only generating billions. The clock is ticking.

Fortunately, the City has form in adapting to overcome the biggest challenges. A new chapter that is distinctly green needs to be added to our long history of innovation.

Green finance places climate concerns at the heart of financial decision-making. It allows us to mitigate risks and capture the abundant opportunities that a green future presents.

And there is evidence of that already. The London Stock Exchange is home to 218 sustainable bonds which have raised over £40bn. Last year, London came top in the Z/Yen green finance global rankings.

Conversations on green finance are happening here that simply are not taking place elsewhere. London's talent, depth of capital markets, and scale of innovation mean that we are ahead of the game in critical products like transition bonds.

We are on the way there with our efforts. But private sector capital is a big piece of the puzzle that needs to be found for our transition to net-zero. London is already leading the way, but investors must do more.

And with finance as its cornerstone, the COP26 agenda takes heed of this. The agenda recognises the major financial opportunity green finance presents, focusing minds on the potential returns: making profit and mobilising capital.

All parts of the City must play their part — whether that is through structuring transition bonds, developing new forms of insurance in an increasingly uninsurable world, or building climate-friendly investment portfolios.

Last week's COP26 launch highlighted the need for a colossal undertaking of both the public and private sectors. But we know that City firms are highly engaged and ambitious for September's event. That is why the City Corporation and Green Finance Institute are working tirelessly across government and industry to advance the role of finance in it.

The stark truth is that unprecedented climate events are happening with alarming regularity. Long gone are the days when climate change was merely a scientific assessment. Today, it is an increasingly evident reality.

The stakes have never been higher, but the City's mission is clear: to mobilise capital with pace and at scale, financing the domestic and global transition to a net-zero future.

*Catherine McGuinness is policy chair at the City of London Corporation.*

# LETTERS
TO THE EDITOR

## A load of junk

**[Re: The TfL junk food ad ban was clearly a recipe for failure.]**

It's a shame that Saqib Qureshi didn't do some fact-checking before writing his article last week, because it carries some major errors. Among them, far from costing the taxpayer £13m, Transport for London has confirmed that its advertising revenue has increased by £1m over the last year.

Further, Qureshi criticises the mayor of London for conducting no meaningful consultation. But in fact, extensive public consultation took place in 2018, including polling, online surveys, discussion forums and focus groups, which found that 82 per cent of Londoners support the policy to ban adverts for junk food. And an independently funded team has been appointed to review and measure the scheme.

I am a good food advocate and member of the London Food Board, but most importantly, a parent. As a result of this policy, businesses are replacing adverts for fatty, sugar-filled products with healthier food and drinks, without losing revenue for the transport network.

This supports parents in promoting healthier food choices, rather than making food a constant battleground. It's a win-win for everybody.

Let's not forget, London has one of the highest rates of childhood obesity in Europe. Our mayor and our city are taking a range of bold steps to turn the tide on junk food and sugary drinks. Let's all put children's health first.

**Kath Dalmeny, chief executive, Sustain**

## BEST OF TWITTER

38% of Americans wouldn't buy Corona beer "under any circumstances" because of the coronavirus, according to a recent survey. Just to be abundantly clear: There is no link between the virus and the beer.
***@cnni***

It's less surprising that 38% of Americans said they won't buy Corona beer because of the coronavirus when you remember that 30% of Republican voters once said they'd approve of bombing Agrabah, the fictional city in Aladdin.
***@OhNoSheTwitnt***

The survey, it turns, out, does not say this! What it says:
-38% of beer drinkers say they wouldn't buy Corona (for any reason at all, including, presumably... they prefer other beer)
-4% of people who usually drink Corona say they would stop
***@aedwardslevy***

Crazy. As every homeopath knows, even a tiny sip of Corona beer would be enough to protect you from the #coronavirus.
***@julianHjessop***

Corona beer company reports £132m loss following virus outbreak
***@Independent***

Well this is what happens when you branch out from making beer into killing people on a global scale
***@JimMFelton***

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

# First Homes is a flawed solution to three very different problems

**Ben Ramanauskas**

WHAT do you do when a government has all the right intentions for solving the country's biggest challenges, but is going about it in entirely the wrong way? That's a question we should all be asking, particularly when considering the recently announced housing plan.

Optimistically entitled "First Homes", the proposal is to offer a 30 per cent discount on some new homes to local buyers. Part of its aim is to help so-called "key workers" such as teachers, nurses, and prison officers find housing, as well as ensuring that veterans do not find themselves homeless when they leave the armed forces.

These are important issues. The UK's housing crisis is causing misery for millions — especially younger people. Public services are stretched due to issues around recruiting and retaining staff, especially in urban areas where living costs are high. And we can all agree that it is shameful that people are living on the streets in the UK, especially those who have so bravely served our country.

But is the government's First Homes policy really the best way to address these various challenges?

The main reason we have a housing crisis is because supply has failed to keep up with demand. The country has an incredibly restrictive planning system which limits what can be built and where. Stamp duty land tax also gums up the market, making people reluctant to sell even when their homes are no longer suitable for them. Like anything in life, when there is a lot of demand for a good that's in short supply, the cost goes up.

The solution is simple: increase supply. The government can do this by liberalising the planning system.

For example, much of the green belt around our cities is of little agricultural or environmental benefit, so there should be an audit of this land to find the most suitable places in which to build homes while also protecting areas of natural beauty.

Stamp duty should also be scrapped and replaced with a land value tax to increase the rate of house moving.

What about helping "key workers"? While it is true that housing costs are an issue, this is a symptom of the problem, not the cause. The main reason we struggle to attract enough people into jobs such as teaching, nursing, or prison work is low pay. Most people don't go into these jobs for the money, but they still need enough to live and enjoy a good quality of life.

> "The government needs to focus on the basic economic principle of supply and demand

The government should put an end to salary caps and centralised pay bargaining, and give individual organisations more flexibility. If schools in the north east, for example, are struggling to attract maths teachers, then they should have more funds available to increase wages.

We could also tackle the retention issue by introducing performance-related pay so that the highest quality individuals are incentivised to stay in their professions. Liberalising immigration would further increase the supply of workers in these fields.

As for veterans, rather than making it slightly easier for them to buy a home, it is surely more important to ensure that they receive the help they need. Many leave the forces traumatised by what they have experienced.

As such, the government should start by guaranteeing that they have counselling and support as soon as they need it and for as long as they need it. There should also be more of a focus on helping former armed services personnel to readjust to the realities of civilian life, and encouraging businesses to recruit them. Our veterans deserve real help and support, not empty gimmicks.

There is a housing crisis in this country, public services are stretched, and many veterans find themselves homeless. Rather than trying to fix all that with some tinkering in the housing market, the government needs to focus on the basic economic principle of supply and demand.

Back to basics, please.

*Ben Ramanauskas is a research economist at Oxford University.*

# DEBATE

## Is there a solid case for the proposed boost to the UK's defence spending?

### YES

**CHRIS ROSS**

It's time to face up to the reality that we live in an increasingly dangerous world, with cybercrime, global tensions, and sophisticated terrorist attacks placing a huge burden on the security services.

In the last few years, hackers have launched highly disruptive and dangerous assaults on the National Health Service, breached the security of leading businesses, and bombarded critical national infrastructure with countless attacks. A recent FBI report indicated that cyber criminals made profits of at least £2.7bn last year, a figure which will only serve to encourage more attempts to blackmail businesses and governments through ransomware and email phishing attacks.

An increase in defence spending is crucial in order to prepare our armed forces for the inevitable threats posed by the rise of digital warfare, as well as maintaining our traditional security capabilities. Key to this is increasing training so that cyber skills can be harnessed to tackle new threats, without leaving us vulnerable on land, at sea, or in the digital realm.

*Chris Ross is senior vice president at Barracuda Networks.*

### NO

**LAURIE MACFARLANE**

With a population of just 66m, it is a fantasy to believe that the UK can ever compete militarily with Russia, the US, India and China. Britannia no longer rules the waves — and spending more on defence would be little more than an expensive PR exercise.

This does not mean retreating from the international stage. Today, the biggest threat to our survival is not hostile neighbours, but climate breakdown. The UK gave birth to the first industrial revolution, and an economic system based on the burning of fossil fuels. Rather than wasting money on imperial delusions, Britain could demonstrate genuine leadership by leading a global green industrial revolution.

Cutting wasteful defence expenditure and reallocating funds towards the zero-carbon transition, at home and abroad, would be a good place to start.

Our grandchildren will thank us for it. Will they thank us for buying more bombs to impress Donald Trump?

*Laurie Macfarlane is economics editor of Open Democracy.*

CITY A.M.
Fountain House,
3rd Floor, 130 Fenchurch Street,
London, EC3M 5DJ
Tel: 020 3201 8900
Email: news@cityam.com

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# ENTREPRENEURS

# FROM RUSSIA WITH KEFIR

**Luke Graham** finds out how Biotiful Dairy managed to sell a totally new food category to the great British public

HOW DO you convince the British public to try a whole new food category, especially when it doesn't sound very appealing at first glance?

That was the challenge facing the Russian-born entrepreneur Natasha Bowes when she decided to try to start selling kefir in the UK.

Kefir is a type of fermented milk drink made from grains. It has a tart, slightly sour flavour. Nutritionists do recommend it for its probiotic health properties — it contains more than 40 types of beneficial gut-friendly bacteria, as well as being packed with protein, vitamins and calcium — but it is certainly an acquired taste.

While very popular in eastern Europe and Russia, kefir is barely known in the UK. Or at least, it wasn't before 2012, when Bowes launched her Biotiful Dairy brand and started introducing kefir to the Brits.

Eight years on, Biotiful Dairy is the leading brand in the kefir space, with a 70 per cent market share of a category predicted to be worth £62m in retail sales value by the end of 2020. The brand kindly sent a box of its products to the *City A.M.* office, which were quickly snapped up and proved popular with our journalists.

## MILKING IT

Prior to setting up the company, Bowes had a long career in finance, first at KPMG in Moscow, then moving to Dublin and later London. After a spot of investment banking with Barclays and running a financial business, she decided to do something different.

"I had an opportunity after my daughter was born just under 10 years ago to really think about what I wanted to do, and where I could make a positive difference," she recalls.

"I thought about what I was passionate about. I grew up in Moscow on kefir, a fermented, natural dairy product, and I've missed it here — I left Moscow over 20 years ago now."

> "I grew up in Moscow on kefir, a fermented, natural dairy product, and I've missed it here

Switching from the high-powered world of finance to effectively selling milk might seem like an extreme change, but Bowes disagrees.

"It's not that unusual, I've found. Particularly in the post-financial crisis years, there were people in finance with various interests who have gone in very different directions."

Bowes started this new journey by focusing on learning how to make the product, ordering Russian textbooks and taking courses. She worked with a consultant with 25 years of experience in the dairy industry and set up production in Sussex. Biotiful Dairy sources its milk from British dairies focused on animal welfare, and imports the fermented kefir culture from Russia where its producers have been making it for centuries.

"The pilot stage was when I was making, selling and marketing the product all by myself," she recalls. "I'm a bit of a do-er — and it's really taken off."


Above: Natasha Bowes launched Biotiful Dairy in 2012 to bring kefir to the UK
Left: A bottle of the brand's flagship fermented probiotic dairy product

## CREAM OF THE CROP

Soon after launching, Bowes was able to get her drink sold in high-end stockists, including Selfridges, Harrods, and Fortnum & Mason. Fast-forward to today, and it now transcends social class and is available in retailers such as Sainsbury's, Tesco and Asda.

The product range has also expanded, with various drink flavours as well as yoghurt-style snacks and products aimed at kids. It's fairly priced: a 500ml bottle of Biotiful Dairy kefir costs £1.75 from Sainsbury's, while the brand's tub of kefir with blackberry compote will set you back £1.

Bowes describes kefir as a new food category, sitting between milk and yoghurt. But how do you market something new to the UK consumer, effectively telling them that they've been drinking milk wrong for centuries?

"It takes time — unless you have multi-million pound budgets to invest in marketing. You lead with the product, you talk to people — word of mouth is significant, as well as social — offering lots and lots of tastings, and participating in the right trade and consumer events," she says, adding that it takes "a lot of tenacity". And finally, "after a long time, the big retailers start to listen to you and trial the products."

Another factor is that consumers in the UK are often quite willing to try new things. Living in a globalised, multicultural society, the British public are more than keen to adopt and assimilate products from different cultures — as long as they're tasty.

The obvious evidence is the plethora of Indian and Chinese takeaways on the average high street, but more recent examples include our national obsession with the avocado (a rare sight on supermarket shelves a few decades ago), and even the fermented-tea drink kombucha (a product I, personally, cannot stand) which originally came from Asia.

## THE WHITE STUFF

The UK dairy industry is massive, with 13,000 farmers producing over 14bn litres of milk each year, worth around £8.8bn at wholesale level. As such, there's clearly room for growth within this massive category for alternative brands.

On the other hand, there are hurdles. Concerns about climate change and animal welfare, as well as the growing veganism movement, mean that dairy alternatives like soya, almond, and coconut milk are increasingly popular. These headwinds risk souring kefir's place on the supermarket shelf.

And yet Bowes has no intention of standing still. Her plans for the future include expanding the product range, possibly including a cheese range and a frozen dessert.

"We're expanding beyond liquid kefir, and innovating with flavours. Our consumers are saying that they want more occasions and more formats to be met by our gut-friendly, healthy products."

## HEALTHY BONES

If globalisation has encouraged people to try new things from around the world, the ongoing health trend has pushed consumers towards becoming more conscious about what they put into their bodies, and how it's made.

I ask if Biotiful Dairy has benefited from this healthier eating trend?

"Yes and no, because I believe natural health is more than a trend within food, it's just that's the way food is moving overall," Bowes argues.

"As far as the gut health is concerned — which is the biggest trend within the health movement in dairy — we started way before anybody was talking about it, and were kind of running ahead of the curve. We never really follow trends, we're trying to create them."

# MARKETING

# WORKING WITH DINOSAURS?

**Alex Daniel** asks whether the Big Six ad agencies are facing extinction

NAVEL-gazing about the future is becoming increasingly fashionable in adland. The last few years have been tricky for the industry, as profits have faltered and clients have demanded more and more of the major players.

It has led to concerns that the Big Six, the marketing giants which have dominated the sector for the last few decades, are losing their grip.

These concerns were reignited last week, when British ad giant WPP reported a 1.6 per cent fall in revenue for 2019. Shares crashed, losing more than one sixth in value to hit their lowest price in eight years. After initiating a turnaround plan following his appointment nearly 18 months ago, "2020 was supposed to be the year when chief executive Mark Read really started to deliver," says AJ Bell analyst Russ Mould. "But the market's patience appears to have snapped."

It is a situation playing out across the globe, as the Big Six struggle to navigate an increasingly fluid marketing landscape. Four of them — Japan's Dentsu, France's Publicis and Havas, as well as WPP — suffered declining revenue last year. Only US giants Omnicom and Interpublic bucked the trend.

This change in scenery has been driven in part from adverts seeping across the ever-growing profusion of digital media, with clients subsequently demanding work of unprecedented breadth and complexity from agencies.

New disciplines such as programmatic advertising — which automates the process of buying and selling online ad space — have disrupted traditional campaign models to the extent that, in some cases, clients have thrown in the towel and pulled their marketing operations in-house. Netflix, Kellogg's, and Unilever are just a few of them.

"Most big agencies have maintained their traditional methods without evolving them, nor investing in people," says Job Plas, director of industry relations at adblocking software company Eyeo. "As a result, advertising has become too systematic and lost its focus on the consumer."

It is hardly surprising that the holding companies have struggled to adapt; for 20 years, their stranglehold was such that, until recently, it was unthinkable that new kids on the block could disrupt the status quo. But new challengers are coming from unexpected directions. Firms like Accenture and the consultancy arms of PwC, IBM, and Deloitte have muscled in, using their data analytics capabilities to solve business problems which traditional advertising cannot. With combined revenue stretching well into the tens of billions, the companies have also extended their offerings to include creative services and content marketing — setting up an almighty turf war between them and the agencies.

> "The marketing landscape has never been more dynamic and complex

Moreover, the Big Six are getting a reputation of being oversized for what they are able to offer.

In some cases, the smaller scale and platform-specific expertise of boutique agencies has allowed challengers to experiment with new ways of running campaigns. "Many are able to serve clients flexibly," says Christian Polman, chief strategy officer of agency Ebiquity, "which is giving rise to hybrid models where brands own some elements of marketing in-house while agencies refocus on the pieces they can do well."

Polman does admit that there is still significant merit to the holding company model. "Boutique agencies cannot as easily scale their operations in the same way the network agencies can, nor do they offer the same range of capabilities."

This is a view shared by Fergus Hay, chief executive of agency Leagas Delaney, who adds: "If the big networks can re-align their interests to that of their clients and keep on innovating, then they have incredible horsepower at their fingertips."

This cache which the Big Six hold onto is also evident in the fact that, despite the buzz, consultancies are not poaching their biggest clients — yet. Thomas Singlehurst, an analyst at Citi, says that so far, Accenture and co have had "a pronounced lack of success" in winning large accounts held by ad agencies.

Nevertheless consultancy revenue "appears to be growing fast while the agencies' growth has struggled", he adds. The challenge is palpable enough that WPP's Read admitted last week that the industry "has never been more dynamic and complex." However, clients need advertising expertise "more than ever," he maintained. That may be so — but whether that expertise will continue to come from the traditional ad agencies is another matter entirely.

# Boiling over: How Yorkshire Tea contained a crisis

YORKSHIRE Tea unwittingly found itself in the middle of a Twitter storm last week, when the new chancellor Rishi Sunak published a seemingly innocuous image of himself "making tea for the team". The photo featured the brand like a poorly orchestrated influencer marketing campaign.

Soon after, the company was facing a torrent of abuse as the chancellor's unplanned endorsement threatened to boil over.

A number of trolls took to social media to level their abuse at Yorkshire Tea, under the false impression that Sunak's tweet was sponsored content. Where other brands may have reasonably chosen to bury their heads in the sand, Yorkshire Tea took a calculated risk and responded to the criticism.

"On Friday, the chancellor shared a photo of our tea," it tweeted. "Politicians do that sometimes (Jeremy Corbyn did it in 2017). We weren't asked or involved — and we said so the same day. Lots of people got angry with us all the same."

Its social media response walked a precarious political tightrope, carefully steering clear of falling onto one side or the other. The company found this balance by highlighting Corbyn's past self-affiliation with the brand under similar circumstances.

Crucially, the tone of its communications and its management of a tricky situation rang true with the company's ethos, and aligned well with the brand's family business image and consumer-facing identity.

Its reaction resulted in widespread positive media coverage. Although probably unplanned, this was a great example of a company making the best of a bad situation, driven by the brand simply being human about it.

Shortly after, it followed up: "For anyone about to vent their rage online, even to a company — please remember there's a human on the other end of it, and try to be kind."

This subsequent message was a likely reference to the mental health campaign #BeKind, which became widely publicised following the suicide of Caroline Flack last month, and served as a timely reminder that even corporate Twitter accounts are manned by people with thoughts and feelings.

Of course, while well-intended, this may not have gone down well with everyone. Some might feel that the reference came too soon after Flack's death. Brands have often been accused of adopting a more corporate or human profile online when it suits them most — and Yorkshire Tea's response may have seemed opportunistic to some.

In addition, these tactics may not have been received as warmly had they come from a business with a more corporate profile than Yorkshire Tea.

Overall, however, reaction was largely positive. The tweets drew on a deep knowledge of the brand's identity and audience, and were executed considerately.

Obviously, the ultimate measure of success in any crisis depends on how the brand's long-term image and bottom line are affected — something which remains to be seen for Yorkshire Tea.

But while the response may not have won back all of the keyboard warriors, Yorkshire Tea has almost certainly earned itself some new fans — regardless of their political allegiance.

*Neil McLeod is director of strategic communications at the PHA Group.*

# TRAVEL

# MANTA MAN

**Josh Martin** grabs his snorkel and heads out in search of the stars of the Maldivian seas

Any island resort staffer can say "welcome to paradise", but when it comes from a seaplane pilot with no shoes on it feels more like a religious ritual than a tired cliche. It's contagious, as the staff at Maldivian island resort Vakkaru can vouch for, guests – certainly me – ditch the formality and stress along with their footwear in the first hours of their stay.

But there is something more engrossing *outside* the window than assessing the pilot's laissez-faire approach to uniforms as we glide above the Baa Atoll. From the sea-plane, we see the contrast of the inky blue Indian Ocean and the electric turquoise rings of coral which pockmark its surface. The ever-present overwater villas – the unofficial logo of the Maldives – spread like tentacles from the islands below, each one stretching further out into the ocean than its neighbouring rival.

Our own version of the Maldivian cliche is jaw-dropping: perched at the end of the pier, with its interiors designed by Danish firm O.T Design, it's Scandi-meets-sandy with a colour palette of oatmeal, white and mustard. It boasts all mod-cons at the touch of an iPad or a call to our butler, Buddy. Despite the high-tech interior I'm always drawn outside, be it by the outdoor shower, the lapping lagoon, or the balcony that houses daybeds to sprawl on, and two net hammocks jutting out over the coral.

Most overwater villas have their own pools, for those times when you just can't be bothered descending the dozen steps to the ocean below. With all these options for slothfulness, the only stressful thing was figuring out precisely what order to relax in.

Newly opened Vakkaru has 59 overwater villas, with the remainder of its 113 suites ringing the island's beach, but with 2,000 palms dotting the small island (it used to be a coconut farm) it never felt busy. Crucially, the relative isolation of Vakkaru's island means that the views from your seat, whether perched at one of its restaurants or your own balcony, is never obstructed by a rival resort.

It's this far-flung and understated luxury that recently lured Madonna and her troupe of children to spend a week enjoying Vakkaru, following in my footsteps (as always). And while Madge chartered a yacht to explore the surroundings, my low-key yet enduring memory will be watching the late afternoon light change from my hammock over the Indian Ocean.

> "We dive down below, only to be met by the creature swooping up towards the surface, her mouth ajar

There are more than a few payoffs for those that can prise themselves up from the hammock-encrusted balcony though, as newbie Vakkaru has had to reach a high standard of service at its spas and specialty dining to compete in this island nation of luxury accommodation. Vakkaru is one of 130 resorts now established in the Maldives, and nearly all of them have their own islands – but think of them as tropical fiefdoms, where your experience can sink or swim based on the facilities, food and friendly staff.

Choosing one may be the exemplary first-world-problem but it's one worth a bit of research beforehand since, once you set foot ashore, you're a captive audience. Thankfully Vakkaru's five restaurants keep things interesting. A traditional private Maldivian feast on the beach, dubbed 'destination dining', brought tears to my eyes – in large part because I insisted I could handle the spice levels powered by the native Maldivian chilli loved by the locals. I could not.

You could visit the Maldives and remain completely unexposed to the island nation's cuisine, instead drowning in western buffets and pan-Asian menus. But not at Vakkaru.

Instead we nibbled huni roshi (bread, similar to roti), mas huni (shredded smoked tuna, grated coconut, lemon and onions), devoured lobster curries, thick with coconut and sinus-clearing spice and fish from the reef wrapped in banana leaves.

Meanwhile, there's a wine cellar-turned bar and the cocktail list at the overwater (have you guessed the theme yet?) Lagoon Bar draws on local flavours, such as pandan, lime, coconut and sappan wood.

And while the view overwater – whether from 12,000 feet, through the glass floor while a masseuse attempts to undo a year's worth of knots, or from your hammock – is inimitable, it's what's lurking underwater that brought us to this corner of the island state.

Maldives' Hanifaru Bay in the Unesco Biosphere Reserve of the Baa Atoll area is world famous for its visiting manta rays who feed there, and the temperamental weather that welcomed us (perfection exists only on Instagram) has hopefully whipped up a buffet of microscopic crackling plankton.

Manta expert Tatiana welcomes us aboard for our speedboat trip to nearby Hanifaru. It's the end of the season (roughly July-November) but she's hopeful the remaining mantas will be lurking, lured not only by a plankton feast, but a couple of "cleaning stations" set up in the white sands below. We're not the only ones being treated in the Maldives. "They are like spas for the mantas, and there are little fish which come in and buffer their skin and eat their parasites."

Mere minutes after we gracefully flop into the bay and Tatiana is proven correct, a black diamond disc circles below in the slightly murky water (gin-clear seas, we're told, would mean a lack of plankton – so the slight murkiness makes for great manta-spotting, although bad for photographic proof). We dive down below, only to be met by the creature swooping up towards the surface. Her mouth is ajar, accentuating the fact she's as wide as a car from fin-to-fin, gulping another mouthful of this microscopic buffet. It gracefully backflips, well clear of its impressed audience.

We are in awe, transfixed by the rhythmic undulating fins as she glides past. Tatiana tells us

that in peak season hundreds can gather in the shallow waters of Hanifaru for feasts of plankton, but even spotting two of these gentle giants dancing, swooping and gliding below has us on a high.

Vakkaru delivers on another lofty promise – and we've only been ashore for 48 hours.

## NEED TO KNOW

**Exsus Travel** offers a 7-night stay at Vakkaru in a Beach Villa from £2,980pp based on two adults travelling in May 2020 on a bed & breakfast basis. Price includes return economy flights with Emirates and return seaplane transfers. Complimentary upgrade to half board when you book before 31 March 2020. Visit *exsus.com* or call *0207 563 1303*

# Frederika Whitehead discovers a gentler side to this stag city


## CARLO IV
PRAGUE

### THE WEEKEND:

Tell your friends that you are going to Prague and their reaction is likely to be determined by their age. In my 20s Prague was the go-to destination for friends on boozy stag dos. With my drinking days long since past, a four-year-old in tow, and a massive pregnancy bump I was pleased to discover that Prague is every bit as much fun stone cold sober. And it's easy to fill a weekend strolling along its picturesque medieval lanes, shopping, eating and visiting the sites with out a beer bike or a man in drag handcuffed to an inflatable doll in sight.

Prague truly is a destination that fits every age and budget: it still has plenty of cheap options for debauched beer-swilling twenty-somethings, but it also has a great selection of top-notch hotels, shops and restaurants for more discerning visitors. If you want to give your wallet a workout there is a long strip of high-end fashion outlets on Pařížská, just off the Old Town Square, where you can snap up the latest offerings from Gucci, Jimmy Choo, Dior, Louis Vuitton and Hublot among others.

### THE HOTEL:

We stayed at Carlo IV, a luxurious choice that's bang in the city centre and has a lovely 20m pool with sauna, steam room and multiple jacuzzis on the side.

The colossal neoclassical structure has richly decorated high ceilings, alabaster columns and polished marble hallways. It was originally a bank, and then the headquarters of the Czech postal service, before it was converted into the luxurious space it is today.

The rooms are spacious, with marble bathrooms. The roster of previous guests is not too shoddy either: the Dalai Lama stayed in our room before we did.

It's also a regular sight on the silver screen. Matt Damon sprinted down it's checkered hotel corridors before leaping through the glass atrium roof in the first Bourne Identity film. It featured in The Zookeeper's Wife alongside Jessica Chastain in 2017. And it was more recently on show again in Spider-man: Far From Home.

### ASK ABOUT:

When the building was converted from Post Office to hotel, the architects decided to keep the huge steel vaults, and convert them into a bar, where you can taste some of the world's rarest cognacs. There is a 70cl bottle of Martell Premier Voyage on the menu – one of only 300 produced, which can be yours for a mere £138,000. A single shot of Henessy Paradis's Special Cognac costs £30. Or you can take a wee dram of 18 year-old single malt for around £20.

I couldn't imbibe due to the big fat pregnancy bump, so I opted for a facial in the spa instead.

### THE FOOD:

On the castle side of the Charles bridge, on the right hand side you will find a great pub called Lokal which serves really good Czech food: lots of braised or roasted meats, goulashes and schnitzel's, and an okay, if limited, selection of vegetarian options.

It's a great place to learn the local beer customs. I must have looked surprised when I saw a four-year-old girl being handed a pint, but her dad quickly reassured me "It's alcohol free. We make really good alcohol-free beer here." You can also order a pint of mliko or 'milk' which is a glass with just one inch of beer filled to the top with foam. And if you are ready to hit the road, but wouldn't mind just a little more, you can order a šnyt (pronounced shnit) – a splash of beer which is just enough to see you on your journey.

Back at the hotel the food in the Inn Ox Lounge & Bar is every bit as good as you would expect in a hotel of its calibre. Another high-end option outside the hotel is the Oblaca restaurant at the top of the 216m high Zizkov television tower, which serves what it describes as 'European' food at around £10-20 per course.

### AND AFTER THAT:

For an alternative walking tour, visit some of the Czech capital's slightly bonkers public sculptures. At the time I visited Boris Johnson and Donald Trump were having their love-in in New York, and this gave David Cerny's sculpture Piss a special resonance. Cerny's artwork features two larger than life men pissing on to a map of the Czech Republic. When it was first installed in 2004, for the price of a text message, the two mechanical men would turn and piss on a destination of your choosing.

Denis Defrancesco's giant shiny blue monkey reclining, (proper title King Kong Balls) in Milos Forman Square is another popular stop, with long queues of teenagers wanting a photo of themselves doing something unmentionable to the monkey's over-sized and very shiny brass balls.

### TOP TIP:

For a chance of seeing the Charles Bridge without 3,000 other tourists get up as early as you can and go before breakfast.

## NEED TO KNOW

**The Dedica Anthology** offers rooms at **Carlo IV** from €109/£97 per night based on two people sharing a double room with breakfast. Visit *dahotels.com* or call *+800 8099 8099*. **British Airways** offers return flights to Prague from Heathrow from £78 per person.

# OFFICE POLITICS

# You want to breastfeed where, exactly?

## It's time to end the culture of silence when it comes to 'women's issues' in the office

Nicki Sprinz

IN JANUARY, House of Commons speaker Sir Lindsay Hoyle finally overturned a 20-year-old ban on breastfeeding in the chamber, saying: "If it happens, it happens. I won't be upset by it."

It's about time. I have just returned to work after having my second child, who I am still breastfeeding. As an employer myself, I find it staggering that, in 2020, breastfeeding at work is still an issue anywhere.

But if it's still controversial in the centre of government, how can we hope for it to be normalised in workplaces across the country?

It is well-documented that breastfeeding-positive workplace policies reduce staff turnover, meaning less money spent hiring and training new employees, and boost job satisfaction and employee morale in general.

It's good for new mothers, for businesses, and for the economy. According to the World Health Organisation, even a moderate increase in breastfeeding across the UK (where breastfeeding rates are among the world's lowest) could save the NHS £50m each year, as it would cut the incidence of common childhood illnesses such as ear, chest and gut infections.

So why are so many employers dragging their heels? Why do new mothers still face major hurdles at work, with no provision of private rooms for expressing milk or fridges to safely store breastmilk in? Why is there still a lack of support from bosses and colleagues?

The answer, sadly, is the lack of support for women at work, full stop — whether they're new mums, or women over 50.

### SILENT SISTERS

In fact, the menopause is as much a taboo topic in the workplace as breastfeeding. There are no laws to support menopausal women in UK workplaces — and no policies covering House of Commons staff.

There are currently 4.9m women over 50 in work — the fastest growing sector of the British workforce. But according to research released last year, they're not comfortable disclosing menopause difficulties to their managers, particularly if those managers are younger than them or are male. Over half had not disclosed their symptoms to their manager, and 59 per cent said their work was being negatively impacted as a result.

This kind of silence is so often the case when it comes to what are still dismissed as "women's issues" — and it needs to end.

**Why do new mothers still face major hurdles at work? Why is there still such a lack of support?**

### WILL THIS DO?

I know first-hand the difference that well-considered female-centric policies can make. Where I work now, I express milk in a WeWork-style booth usually used for hangouts, which is booked for me to use twice a day. My company has always had a supportive culture for women, offering flexible working, return-to-work coaches, and free sanitary products in the loos.

But in my old job, after I'd first given birth, if I needed to express, I had to hide in a corner next to the stationery cupboard because the only other option was the unisex loo. This kind of "will this do?" attitude is still far too prevalent.

In the UK, 57 per cent of mums say that they would be happy to breastfeed at work, but just three per cent said they were provided with the resources they needed. Similarly, most menopausal women don't feel supported in the workplace, and many consider leaving their jobs as a result.

The question we all need to be asking ourselves is this: how much great female talent is being lost because of out-of-date office policies?

Embracing breastfeeding at work is a no-brainer — as is implementing other female-friendly strategies such as a menopause policy or flexible working. It won't just boost women, it will boost your business too — whether that business is running the country or not.

*Nicki Sprinz is managing director of digital creative agency ustwo.*

**HUSHABYE**

**White Noise Baby**
*£0.99*

Wish your baby would shut up and let you get some sleep? Try White Noise Baby. The app features a range of ambient tracks — think water fountains, car rides, and waves against the rocks — to help your little one snooze. It also has a rattle mode, with fun sounds to distract your bawling babe when out and about.

# COFFEE BREAK



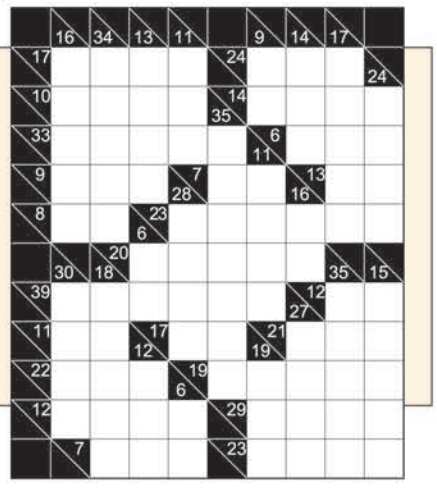
## SUDOKU

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

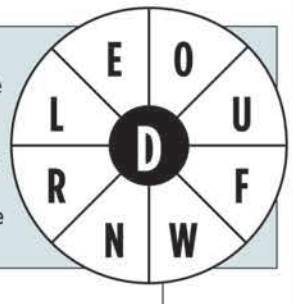
## KAKURO

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.

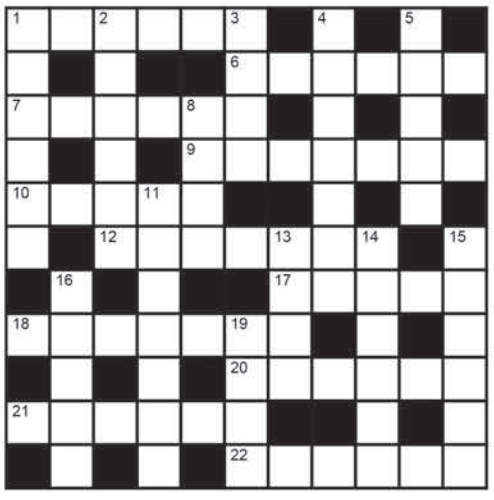


## WORDWHEEL

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 Exhilarate (6)
6 Connected to the Internet (6)
7 Gaseous element (6)
9 Rouse, stir up (7)
10 Tree with rot-resistant wood (5)
12 One who trains or exhibits animals (7)
17 Accepted practice (5)
18 Home of the legendary King Arthur (7)
20 Of small stature (6)
21 Lottery in which the prizes are goods (6)
22 Nuts or fruit pieces in a sugar paste (6)

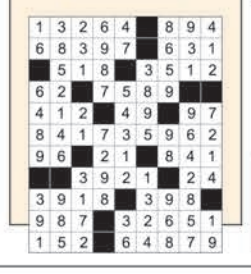
**DOWN**

1 Welsh poet, Dylan ___ (1914–53) (6)
2 Capital of Saudi Arabia (6)
3 Of great extent (4)
4 Apparel (7)
5 Links together, as with needles and wool (5)
8 Deserve by one's efforts (4)
11 Let up (4,3)
13 Musical instrument (4)
14 Rushing (6)
15 Smallest in number (6)
16 Dish of lettuce, tomatoes, cucumber, etc (5)
19 Exposed (4)

## LAST ISSUE'S SOLUTIONS

### QUICK CROSSWORD

### KAKURO



### SUDOKU

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

### WORDWHEEL

The nine-letter word was **INDULGENT**

# STAYING ON TRACK

McLaren face a battle to stand still after year of progress, boss Zak Brown tells **Michael Searles**

LAST year's fourth-placed finish in the Formula One constructors' championship saw McLaren end one of the most turbulent decades in the team's history on a high.

While it was a huge step forward – climbing from ninth and sixth in the previous two seasons – maintaining that trajectory this year looks all but inconceivable. Mercedes, Red Bull and Ferrari are expected to continue their domination and, as a result, the Woking-based outfit already have one eye on 2021 when the sport's new regulations are set to take effect, according to chief executive Zak Brown.

"I'm very happy with last season, I think fourth was all we could have hoped for. Now we need to do it again," Brown tells *City A.M.*

"Closing the gap to the top three is going to be difficult, we aren't going to take the same step forward again. We are balancing trying to do the best we can in 2020 while trying to be very prepared for 2021."

The majority of next year's regulation changes are aimed at creating more competitive racing, particularly the implementation of a $175m per year cost cap, which is designed to help teams with smaller budgets compete against the current frontrunners and the sport's big spenders.

But Brown, who is targeting McLaren's return to the front of the grid in the new era, is sceptical about when the cap will really start to bite.

"I would have liked it to be lower and sooner, but at least we have one," he says. "We want to take another big step forward, but I don't want to bet all the chips on 2021. The cost cap, which I think will really start to level the playing field, won't start having an impact until 2022-23, because people are spending now for 2021."

## CALENDAR EXPANSION

Improving the competitiveness of a sport that has seen the same team – Lewis Hamilton's Mercedes – win for seven successive years is just one way F1 owner Liberty Media is trying to broaden its appeal.

Liberty is also intent on expanding the race calendar to new markets and the new regulations will allow for up to 25 races in the calendar, four more than the current agreement. An exception was made for this season, which is due to start in Australia next week, to increase it to 22 races, although some of those are under threat from the coronavirus outbreak.

For Brown, racing 25 weekends of the year is "too much for the people in the current system".

"I personally would be a fan of alternating races. If a country wants to have a grand prix, that's good for racing, but should you go to 24/25 or should you stay at 21/22 and rotate markets? That would keep demand up," he argues.

"The Olympics is every four years, so if you have a grand prix every two years in some key markets, I think that works. It gives us calendar expansion without breaking the work demands that go into 24/25 races. But ultimately we will support whatever direction it goes in."

Integral to McLaren's hopes of moving up the grid in 2021 will be how well the new senior team gels.

Team principal Andreas Seidl and technical director James Key joined last year and racing director Andrea Stella and production director Piers Thynne were promoted from within by Seidl to complete a three-pronged management structure underneath him.

While this will be their first season working together, there is continuity in the drivers' line-up in Carlos Sainz Jr and Lando Norris, who, following successful debut campaigns, were hailed by Brown as "a risk that paid off".

## INCREMENTAL GAINS

"It was the first time we haven't had a world champion in our car for as long as I can remember, the first time we've had two new drivers that I can remember," the 48-year-old says. "I give Carlos and Lando a lot of credit for the uplift in our performance, not just on the track, but team morale off it too."

Sainz claimed McLaren's first podium finish in five years, but despite making "quite a few changes" to this year's car, McLaren are only looking to make "incremental gains" and stay ahead of the chasing pack, with Brown citing pit-stops and reliability as key areas for improvement.

"We're just getting started," Brown says. "I've got the resources we need, but it's going to take time for the team to work together. It's one of the reasons Mercedes are so strong. They are not only great individuals but they operate really well as a team. That takes time."

The success of last year has put a limit on how much improvement McLaren can make this season, but it will be crucial not to let momentum slip ahead of a new era in which the British manufacturer is eyeing a return to the front.

# Portsmouth bask in their return to spotlight for right reasons

Resurgent Pompey set to host Arsenal in FA Cup tie, writes **Michael Searles**

WHEN Portsmouth welcome Arsenal to Fratton Park tonight there will be a release of emotions from the almost 20,000 Pompey fans present, many of whom are responsible for the club's revival.

The fifth-round tie is the furthest the club have progressed in the FA Cup since the 2010 final and the match is symbolic of Portsmouth's upturn, which is in large part down to the relentless work of supporters who have brought the club back from the brink. It is fitting, then, that this match is in the tournament where they experienced their biggest recent high – and against the competition's most successful side.

Harry Redknapp led Portsmouth to a first major trophy in 58 years when they lifted the FA Cup in 2008. But despite returning to Wembley two years later, off-the-field financial issues and chronic mismanagement had already set in.

The club was forced into administration twice in as many years and relegated three times in four seasons thanks to a string of disastrous regimes that saw the south coast side's debts to reach £135m.

## HIGH COURT BATTLE

Facing liquidation, the club was ultimately saved by its fans. An acquisition scheme was set up to allow supporters to invest in the club and underwrite the ongoing costs, and in April 2013, the Portsmouth Supporters' Trust, chaired by Ashley Brown, won the right to take control of the club – but only after a High Court battle with previous owners to retain Fratton Park.

It was just the beginning of the rebuilding process. Pompey were initially forced to use a blend of academy and non-league players and train at the local university, and spent four years in League Two before being promoted as champions in 2017.

But under chief executive Mark Catlin the books had finally been balanced and the community-owned club were debt free and on the rise.

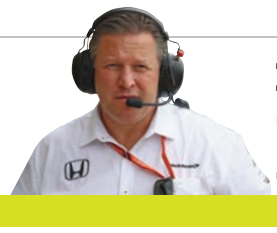
Recognising the need for further investment, in swooped former Walt Disney chief executive Michael Eisner.

Pompey fans could have been forgiven for any scepticism about foreign owners, but Eisner's vision of a self-sustaining club was shared by the supporters, whom he convinced of his desire to become part of the community with a charm offensive that included visiting local pubs.

Under manager Kenny Jackett, Portsmouth are now third in League One and on course to return to the play-offs following last year's semi-final defeat. They are also set to face Salford in the EFL Trophy final, having won the competition last year.

Tonight's FA Cup tie with Arsenal is the latest indication of the club's revival, then, and an opportunity for the fans, who have worked tirelessly to get the club back to this point, to bask in their achievements.

# SPORT



**MASTERMINDING MCLAREN**
Chief exec Zak Brown on the struggle to build on 2019 PAGE 27

# A PERFECT WEEK

## Foden stars as City follow Madrid win with third Carabao Cup in a row, writes **Frank Dalleres**

**CARABAO CUP**

| VILLA | MAN CITY |
|---|---|
| 1 | 2 |
| Samatta 41 | Aguero 20, Rodri 30 |

LATELY has not been the happiest of times for Manchester City. The title they have held dear for two years is being wrenched away by Liverpool, the title they covet most looks like being out of reach until 2022, and the knock-on effect of that has been to raise doubts about the futures of the men who have taken them to new heights.

But the last few days have brought cheer. A comeback win at Real Madrid to seize control of their Champions League last-16 tie, a long-awaited and unexpected Premier League defeat for Liverpool and, yesterday in the Carabao Cup final at Wembley, a victory over Aston Villa and a first trophy of the campaign. After everything, not far off a perfect week.

This was not plain sailing, even if it looked it after half an hour. With Phil Foden to the fore, Sergio Aguero put City ahead and Rodri swiftly doubled the lead. Mbwana Samatta's flying header before half-time kept the contest alive and the holders needed a fine save by Claudio Bravo to win the competition for a third time in a row.

### SERIAL TROPHY HUNTERS

City have made the EFL Cup their own in recent years; this win not only completed a hat-trick but also made it four in five seasons.

Previously it has been a mere taster of juicier achievements to come – in 2018, a record league points tally; in 2019, a domestic treble – and Pep Guardiola's team still harbour hopes of adding two more trophies before the current campaign is out.

Whatever happens between now and June, this was a reminder of the obsessive relentlessness with which Guardiola hunts down silverware.

"Three times in a row is a big success. It's the consistency," he said afterwards. "We've won a lot. Every game we play we try to win it, every competition we try to win it, and three times in a row, being here and winning is great."

### GREALISH SHACKLED

Villa may wonder what might have been had referee Lee Mason not wrongly awarded City a corner from which Rodri nodded their decisive second goal, and had Bravo not displayed razor-sharp reflexes to tip a Bjorn Engels header onto the post two minutes from time.

City's 70 per cent possession did not allow much room for Jack Grealish's obvious gifts to flourish and Villa's most dangerous moments came from crosses by Ahmed Elmohamady or Anwar El Ghazi – the latter's centre was despatched emphatically by Samatta. Still, they clung on as City racked up 22 shots. With a relegation battle in front of them, Dean Smith's side will need similar fighting spirit.

### FODEN TO THE FORE

While Grealish only flickered, another young English playmaker burned bright in City colours.

With Bernardo Silva and Kevin De Bruyne on the bench, Foden, 19, was handed only his 10th start this season on the right of a front three but proved his team's most effective outlet, running Villa utterly ragged in a superb first half. He stole in at the far post to head Rodri's ball back across goal for Aguero to bury the opener and, in one piece of virtuoso skill after half-time, controlled a long pass and set off on a dribble while juggling the ball. He rightly took the man-of-the-match award.

### ROCKY STONES

John Stones, too, was given a rare chance to impress having fallen down the pecking order this term, but did little to silence his critics.

Samatta's goal came after the £47.5m centre-back inexplicably fell over when trying to deal with a hopeful ball forward. It was not the assured display with which to demand he adds to his 10 league starts and may also give England manager Gareth Southgate pause for thought as he mulls his Euro 2020 selection.

## SPORT DIGEST

### SCIVER FIRES ENGLAND INTO T20 WORLD CUP SEMI-FINALS

England eased past West Indies by 46 runs in their final group game to reach the semi-finals of cricket's Women's T20 World Cup yesterday in Sydney. Natalie Sciver hit 57 off 56 balls as England made 143-5 before Sophie Ecclestone (3-7) became the youngest woman to reach 50 international T20 wickets as West Indies were bowled out with 17 balls remaining. Heather Knight's side join South Africa in the last four, where they will meet either India, Australia or New Zealand. The draw will be finalised after today's fixtures.

### MEXICO WIN LIFTS WATSON BACK INTO WORLD TOP 50

Britain's Heather Watson will return to the top 50 of the women's tennis rankings today after she won her first title since 2016. Watson overcame 17-year Canadian Leylah Fernandez 6-4, 6-7 (8-10), 6-1 in the final of the Mexican Open in Acapulco yesterday. The 27-year-old from Guernsey said: "It's been a few years, so I'm just really, really happy that I came through that match."

### WOLVES ROAR BACK TO PILE MORE MISERY ON TOTTENHAM

Wolves twice came from behind to win 3-2 at Tottenham and overtake them into sixth place in the Premier League yesterday. Steven Bergwijn and Serge Aurier put Spurs in front at half-time either side of Matt Doherty's equaliser, but Diogo Jota levelled and then set up strike partner Raul Jimenez to complete the comeback. Wolves are just goal difference behind Manchester United and three points off fourth-placed Chelsea. Spurs, who have now lost three consecutive games in all competitions, lie seventh.

### ANCELOTTI SEES RED AFTER EVERTON GOAL RULED OUT

Everton manager Carlo Ancelotti was sent off after the final whistle of his side's 1-1 draw with Manchester United yesterday for protesting the decision to disallow a late goal. The Toffees thought they had snatched victory when Dominic Calvert-Lewin's shot deflected in off Harry Maguire, but Gylfi Sigurdsson was offside and ruled to be interfering. Everton, who took the lead through Calvert-Lewin in the third minute, remain 11th in the Premier League. United, for whom Bruno Fernandes scored again, stay fifth.

### FIVE-TRY WASPS BEAT EXILES AND CLIMB INTO TOP HALF

Wasps ran in five tries as they came from 14-3 down to beat London Irish and climb to sixth in the Premiership yesterday. Props Biyi Alo and Ben Harris, full-back Marcus Watson, scrum-half Dan Robson and fly-half Jacob Umaga all crossed for the visitors. Bristol went third as they defeated West Country rivals Bath 19-13. Tries from back-row Christopher Vui, wing Alapati Leiua and replacement Harry Randall earned Bristol their first win at The Rec for 14 years, despite Bath hitting back through replacement Will Chudley.

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