

NEWS KIDS CAN **TRUST**

NEWSPAPER OF THE YEAR*



First News

2.6M
READERS*

Issue 1,000 £2.95 15 – 21 August 2025



First News
CELEBRATES **1000** EDITIONS!

NEWS SPORTS ENTERTAINMENT
INTERVIEWS PUZZLES COMPETITIONS

THE PRIME MINISTER, CELEBRITIES
AND READERS CONGRATULATE
FIRST NEWS ON 1,000 EDITIONS!



WE HEAR FROM
**JAMIE OLIVER,
TOM HOLLAND,
CRESSIDA COWELL,
STEVE BACKSHALL,
UNICEF, WWF
AND MANY MORE**

by Prime Minister Keir Starmer

TO everyone at *First News*, a huge congratulations on reaching the impressive milestone of 1,000 editions.

From the launch in 11 Downing Street almost two decades ago, *First News* has been engaging and informing young people, and building a future where the next generation feel confident in their opinions and part of the world around them.

This government believes that young people are a vital part of our society. They deserve to have a voice and a platform. And we need to listen to their hopes for their future and support them as they shape their ideas and understanding. That is one of the reasons we are lowering the voting age to 16.

To young readers of *First News* – whoever you are, and wherever you are growing up, Britain needs your talent, your hard work and your creativity. Our future depends on you. Keep being curious about the world around you. Keep learning everything you can. Keep questioning how and why things work – and asking how they could be better. Then go out and make it happen. I have no doubt I will see many *First News* readers achieving great things in the years ahead.

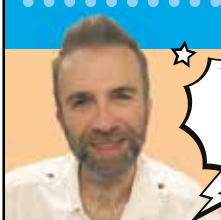
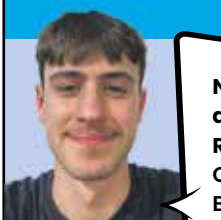


WE ARE
1000

**PULL-OUT
INSIDE!**



First News readers and FYI viewers interviewed Prime Minister Keir Starmer earlier this year

**MEET
THE
TEAM****Editor
in Chief**
Nicky
Cox**Editorial
Manager**
Hannah
Timson**Sub**
Steve
Smith**News
Editor**
Ian Eddy**Senior
Reporter**
Chris
Towers**Newspaper
and Digital
Reporter**
Charlie
Baker**Creative
Director**
Richard
Robson**...AND YOU!**

Get in touch by asking a
trusted adult to email us at
yournews@firstnews.co.uk

**HAVE
YOU
HEARD?**
Snappy stories to get
you talking!**80TH ANNIVERSARY OF VJ DAY**

This year marks the 80th anniversary of VJ Day (Victory over Japan Day) on 15 August. This is an opportunity for the nation to come together to honour those who took part and lived through the Second World War. Lots of events and activities are taking place, including a national two-minute silence, a Service of Remembrance at the National Memorial Arboretum and a flypast featuring the Red Arrows plus Spitfire and Hurricane fighter planes. King Charles has recorded a special message, too.

"VJ Day was the final victory in a war that changed the world, and we honour those who served in the Far East with enduring gratitude" – **Defence Secretary John Healey**

**1000
THEY SAID
THAT!**

AS you'll have seen on the front cover of this issue, some seriously big names have been kindly paying tribute to *First News* for our 1,000th issue. Here are three more familiar faces – look out for lots of other tributes from fantastic figures and organisations dotted throughout this special issue!

**Jamie Oliver**
Celebrity chef
and author

"A massive congratulations to you all on reaching your incredible 1,000th edition! That's a huge milestone and here's to many, many more. Keep up the fantastic work you do, inspiring and connecting kids to the world. Big love, Jamie."

**Miriam Margolyes**
Legendary Harry
Potter actor

"I'm thrilled that something that's about words is continuing to reach children. I think there is nothing more important, as you grow up, than to read and go on reading until you pop your clogs!"

**Steve Backshall**
Explorer and
animal expert

"One of the most important tools we can give our young people is the ability to know what's true, to tell the difference between fact and fiction. Having *First News* as their first trusted news source is more invaluable now than ever. We love you guys!"



INFLUENCERS JOIN FORCES FOR WATER CAMPAIGN

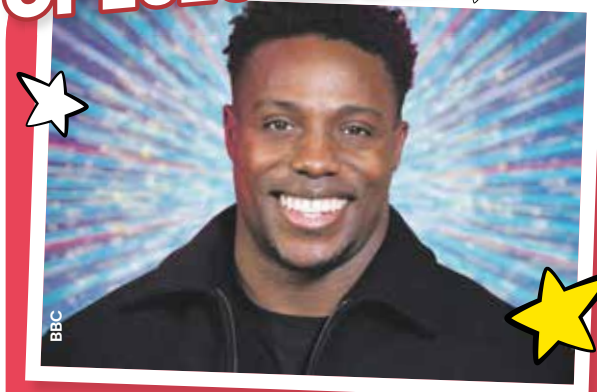
YouTube stars MrBeast and Mark Rober have teamed up with WaterAid to launch the #TeamWater campaign, which aims to bring clean water to two million people across the world. Content creators from more than 84 countries are on board, and the campaign aims to raise \$40m (£30m) by 31 August. See teamwater.org.



THE HERDS COMPLETES EPIC 20,000KM JOURNEY

Public artwork *The Herds* has come to the end of its impressive 20,000km (12,430-mile) journey, ending up in Nordkapp in the far north of Norway. The life-sized puppet animals have taken part in 56 public events across 11 countries and been seen by more than 95,000 people. The artwork aimed to highlight the climate crisis and encourage people to take action.

STRICTLY CLASS OF-2025 REVEALED



The star cast for *Strictly Come Dancing 2025* has been revealed! *Gladiators* star Nitro (Harry Aikines-Aryeetey) was announced as the first person set to take to the dancefloor as the big reveal kicked off. You can check out the full line-up over on our app. The series is due to return this autumn. Will you be watching?



WORDS MATTER

A new study in the *British Medical Journal* has found that childhood verbal abuse is on the rise and can be just as harmful to mental health as physical abuse. A study of more than 20,000 adults in England and Wales found that those who were abused verbally as children had a 64% higher chance of experiencing low mental wellbeing. "Too many adults are turning to harsh words without realising the lasting damage to children," said Jessica Bondy, founder of the charity Words Matter. *First News* has teamed up with the charity to launch a special poetry competition about this subject. Find out more at first.news/comps.

RUN FOR THEIR FUTURE

A family fun run will be held this autumn to raise money for Great Ormond Street Hospital (GOSH). The Race For The Kids event will take place in Hyde Park, London, on 11 October, with families invited to run, walk, wheel or scoot either 2km or 5km. Now in its 16th year, the race will raise funds for GOSH Charity's 'Build It. Beat It.' campaign, which is helping to build a new children's cancer centre at the hospital. To take part, visit race.gosh.org.

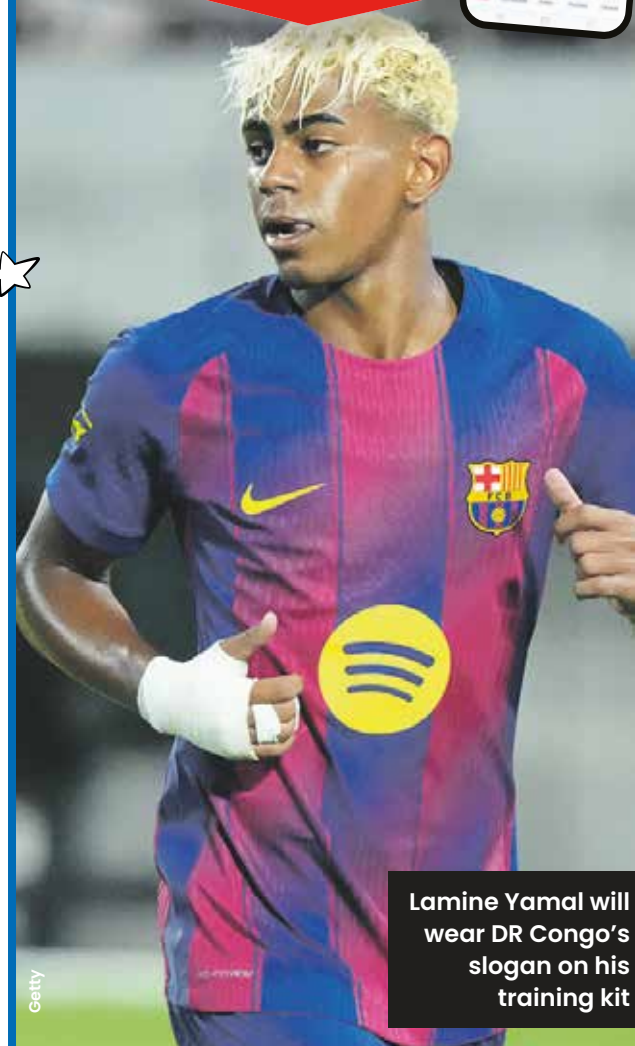


LIGHTSABER UP FOR SALE

Darth Vader's lightsaber from the *Star Wars* films *The Empire Strikes Back* and *Return of the Jedi* is expected to fetch more than £2.2 million when it's sold at auction next month. Until then, it is being showcased at a private exhibition at London's Dorchester Hotel. It's part of a huge auction of more than 1,000 film props and costumes that are estimated to be worth £7.5 million. Other items include Tobey Maguire's 2002 *Spider-Man* suit and a Platform 9¾ sign from the *Harry Potter* movies.



We post daily news throughout the week on the **First News app**. Here's one from the past few days...



Lamine Yamal will wear DR Congo's slogan on his training kit

BARÇA SHIRT DEAL CAUSES CONTROVERSY

FOOTBALL giants Barcelona have signed a kit deal with the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DR Congo or just DRC).

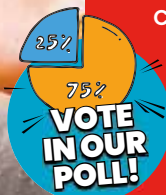
The African country is thought to have paid Barça £38 million to print "DRC: Heart of Africa" on their training kits for four years. On top of this, the club's Nou Camp stadium will stage an exhibition showcasing Congolese sport and culture.

DR Congo's sports minister, Didier Budimbu, told the BBC that the partnership between Barça and his country will also see 50 young Congolese players and ten coaches travel to Spain for a training camp.

DR Congo also has deals with Italian soccer team AC Milan and French side Monaco. It's hoped that buddying up with some of football's most famous clubs will raise the international profile of DR Congo and boost tourism to the country.

However, not all of its citizens agree. Some say that the country's own football league is in need of help, and that the cash would be better spent at home.

The DRC has also been at war with rebels who have taken control of large parts of the east. A ceasefire between the army and the rebels came into effect last month, but there have also been attacks on civilians by the ADF, a group that's associated with Islamic State terrorists.



Chips? Mash?
Roasties?
What's your
favourite
way to eat
potatoes?

Vote at
first.news/polls

ARE SPUDS OUR BUDS?

ONE potato, two potato, three potato... stop! Medics reckon that eating three portions of chips per week may increase our risk of diabetes by a fifth (20%).

The warning comes as part of a study published in the *British Medical Journal* that reveals which ways of eating potatoes are best for our health.

Spuds contain fibre, magnesium and vitamin C, but the starch inside them is linked to diabetes, a condition where sugar levels in the blood get too high, causing someone to feel thirsty and tired.

If, instead of three helpings of chips, we eat the same amount of boiled, baked or mashed potatoes, the risk of

diabetes only increases by 4%.

To reach their findings, researchers studied the potato-eating habits of people in three major US studies carried out between 1984 and 2021. They decided that spuds aren't all bad, as growing them has a fairly low impact on the environment and eating them baked, boiled or mashed can be part of a healthy diet.

Dr Emily Leeming, a dietician at King's College London, told *The Times*: "We're a potato-loving nation! They've been unfairly [criticised] for far too long." She said that the way we prepare them and what we eat with them can reduce the rate that they release sugar into our blood.

Lynx Africa? More like Lynx Britain!

ASK the average Brit about lynx and they'll probably picture the can of deodorant they got for Christmas, but that could change in a big way in the years ahead.

The Eurasian lynx is a species of cat that vanished from Britain 800 years ago, and there's a real possibility that it could be reintroduced into the wild.

Researchers at the Missing Lynx Project, led by the Liffscape Project charity, are trying to figure out how this could work. They say that in England and Wales, Northumberland's forests would make the best habitat for wild lynx, and that if 20 were released in the coming years, they could grow into a healthy population of 50 in Northumberland, Cumbria and southern Scotland.

Lynx pose no danger to humans, and nearly three-quarters of people in Northumberland support their reintroduction. One worry is that the cats could prey on farmers' sheep, but the researchers say this could be prevented with the use of electric fences, guard dogs, and putting people on watch.

Andrea Calvesbert, from the National Sheep Association, told the BBC that researchers have failed to "fully grasp" the negative impact that lynx could have on farmers and animals.

However, Mike Pratt of the Northumberland Wildlife Trust likes the idea. He said that wild lynx could help to manage woodland ecosystems, control deer numbers and boost tourism.

Some European countries have already reintroduced the lynx

Sudanese children are "skin and bones"

UNICEF has pleaded for urgent help for the children of Sudan, who have been "reduced to skin and bones" due to famine.

Famine is a widespread lack of food. Sudan's famine is thought to be the world's largest humanitarian crisis, caused by an ongoing civil war between rival sections of the country's army.

Sheldon Yett, UNICEF's Sudan representative, was in the country last week and said: "Many of the children are reduced to just skin and bones... the scale of need

is just staggering, and, along with our partners, we are being stretched to the limit."

UNICEF is supporting the delivery of aid, but the war makes it difficult to reach some communities. Yett said: "Children are dying from hunger, disease and direct violence. They are being cut off from the very services that could save their lives."

He said that the situation would improve if the world treated it with greater urgency, and repeated UNICEF's call for peace in Sudan.

**1000
THEY SAID
THAT!**

"Huge congratulations to everyone at *First News* on the incredible milestone of your 1,000th edition!

At UNICEF UK, we know how vital it is that children can learn and be inspired – and *First News* does exactly that. Thank you for always championing child-led journalism and creating a space where young people can find their voices. It's been a pleasure working together, raising awareness of children's rights all around the world. Here's to the next thousand!"

– Philip Goodwin,
Chief Executive, UNICEF UK

EDITOR'S COMMENT

THIS week we celebrate a huge milestone – the 1,000th edition of *First News*!

When we launched in 2006, our mission was to bring you trusted, balanced news every week, explaining the world's biggest events and celebrating stories that inspire. In those 1,000 editions, we've covered more than 100,000 stories – from space exploration and environmental action to the amazing achievements of young people like you.

It wouldn't have been possible without you, your families, schools and our supporters. Thank you for being part of our journey. Let's go for the next 1,000!



Nicky Cox MBE



Go on, my sun!

Sunflowers

A GARDENER in Indiana, USA, has seen his sunflower grow to become the tallest ever recorded in the country. Alex Babich's towering plant moved past 26ft 8in (8.13m) last week, and now it's creeping ever closer to the Guinness World Record, set by a 30ft 1in (9.17m) whopper in Germany.



A paw excuse!



Leroy Carter

NO teacher falls for the old "my dog ate my homework" excuse, but something like that truly did happen to New Zealand rugby player Leroy Carter! Just as he was ready to fly to Argentina for an All Blacks rugby tour, his dog scooped his passport. Luckily, he got an emergency replacement in time.

CHECK OUT OUR NEW WEEKLY QUIZ!

Test yourself on this week's news with our new quiz, included with every subscription. Play with your family, friends or by yourself. Read this week's issue to get all the answers right!

Ask a grown-up/bill-payer for your **WEB ID** to use the app.





BANK-ROBBING TEEN COMES CLEAN...

...**50** years after their crime!

A 1975 newspaper report of the robbery

Lögreglan police station



The theft took place here, in Kópavogur

Fyrsta bankarín á Íslandi?

Stærsta banki Íslands átti í gær sína fyrsta bankarín. Þetta var fyrsta bankarín sem átti sér stað á Íslandi. Bankinn var stjolið um 20-30 þúsund krónur. Þetta var fyrsta bankarín sem átti sér stað á Íslandi. Bankinn var stjolið um 20-30 þúsund krónur. Þetta var fyrsta bankarín sem átti sér stað á Íslandi. Bankinn var stjolið um 20-30 þúsund krónur.

A MAN who took part in what is believed to be the first ever bank robbery in Iceland has confessed to police, nearly 50 years after committing the crime!

This summer, the mystery thief decided to confess his sins and own up, admitting he robbed the Útvegsbankinn bank (the Fisheries Bank) in Kópavogur as a teenager back in 1975, with a group of friends.

The teens stole around 20–30 thousand krónur in the incident, which would be worth over £1,000 today. It was said to be the first robbery of its kind in the country.

They entered through a hole in the wall of the bank, which was being rebuilt at the time. The man said that he and his friends used the stolen cash to enjoy themselves, mainly buying food and drink.

"What prompted the man to confess after 50 years remains unknown, but perhaps it simply feels good to ease one's conscience," the police wrote on their Facebook page. They said they can't charge the man with the crime now because too much time has passed.



A boy leaps into the water in Marseille, France

Getty

EXTREME HEAT HITS MILLIONS

IT'S been another sizzling week of summer here in the UK – and we're not alone.

Globally, this July brought record heat to Japan and Turkey, wildfires in Europe (see page 12) and North America, and extreme temperatures in places from Scandinavia to North Africa and Asia. In Iraq and Iran, the heat climbed above 50°C, disrupting power and water supplies.

The World Meteorological Organization (WMO) says that dangerously high temperatures in the day and night are affecting the health of millions of people around the world. It's released a new report showing that nearly half a million (489,000) people died each year between 2000 and 2019 because of the heat, with ill people and the elderly most at risk.

Thankfully, the WMO's Ko Barrett says that, thanks to modern science, data and tech, "every single death from extreme heat is preventable". The WMO is working to strengthen early warning systems, so that at-risk communities get help and advice to prepare for, and survive, the heat.

Hundreds arrested in Palestine protests

Genocide is the mass killing of a particular group. Israel denies that it is committing genocide in Gaza



MORE than 530 people were arrested in London at the weekend for demonstrating in support of a banned protest group.

The protest saw hundreds of people gather in Parliament Square at 1pm on Saturday 9 August to hold up placards reading: "I oppose genocide. I support Palestine Action." The government classified Palestine Action as a terrorist group in June, making it illegal to be a member of it or to show support for it.

It's the most arrests that the Metropolitan Police have made in one day for ten years. The average age of those arrested was 54, and 147 protesters were in their 60s.

Home Secretary Yvette Cooper thanked the police for their swift response. She said that some of the protesters don't realise the "full nature" of Palestine Action, and that the group has committed "violent attacks" and "major criminal damage against national security infrastructure".

What is Palestine Action?

An action group founded in 2020 that seeks to disrupt companies and factories that build weapons for Israel. Police say their actions have caused millions of pounds of criminal damage – like in June, when they broke into an RAF base, sprayed red paint into the turbines of two military planes and damaged them with crowbars. The government banned the group days later and classified it as a terrorist group.

However, Sacha Deshmukh from human rights group Amnesty said the mass arrests were "deeply concerning".

For more on the conflict between Israel and Gaza, visit first.news/israelgaza, and you can read updates on our app.

Homelessness minister quits

HOMELESSNESS Minister Rushanara Ali has quit her job, after a row over rent.

Rent is money that people pay to owners, usually monthly, to live in their property. Ms Ali caused upset over the way she treated the people living in a house she owns in east London. The MP decided to end their contract and make them leave because she wanted to sell the house – but within six months, she re-advertised it for rent at a higher price.

This is something Ms Ali is trying to stop other homeowners from doing under the Renters' Rights Bill, a set of new laws designed

to protect tenants (renters).

The former tenants said that, when the house became available again, the rent had been increased by £700 a month. Lots of homelessness charities complained about Ms Ali's actions, along with many MPs from the other parties.

Ms Ali later handed in her resignation to Prime Minister Keir Starmer, saying: "I believe I took my responsibilities and duties seriously, and the facts demonstrate this. However... continuing in my role will be a distraction from the ambitious work of the government."



Rushanara Ali



iStock



A DRIVER was caught speeding at more than 320km/h (199mph) on Germany's Autobahn (motorway).

The police revealed that this was a record high, at more than 200km/h (124mph) above the speed limit. The driver was slapped with a €900 (£785) fine, got two points on his driver's licence and was given a three-month driving ban.

Some German motorways don't have any speed limits at all!



Beijing, China



A ROBOT band plays at the opening of the four-storey Robot Mall, which sells and services all kinds of robots, from those that can serve drinks or cook food to ones that can play board games. Inset: a robot takes orders for food that will be cooked and served by robots!

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THEY SAID
THAT!

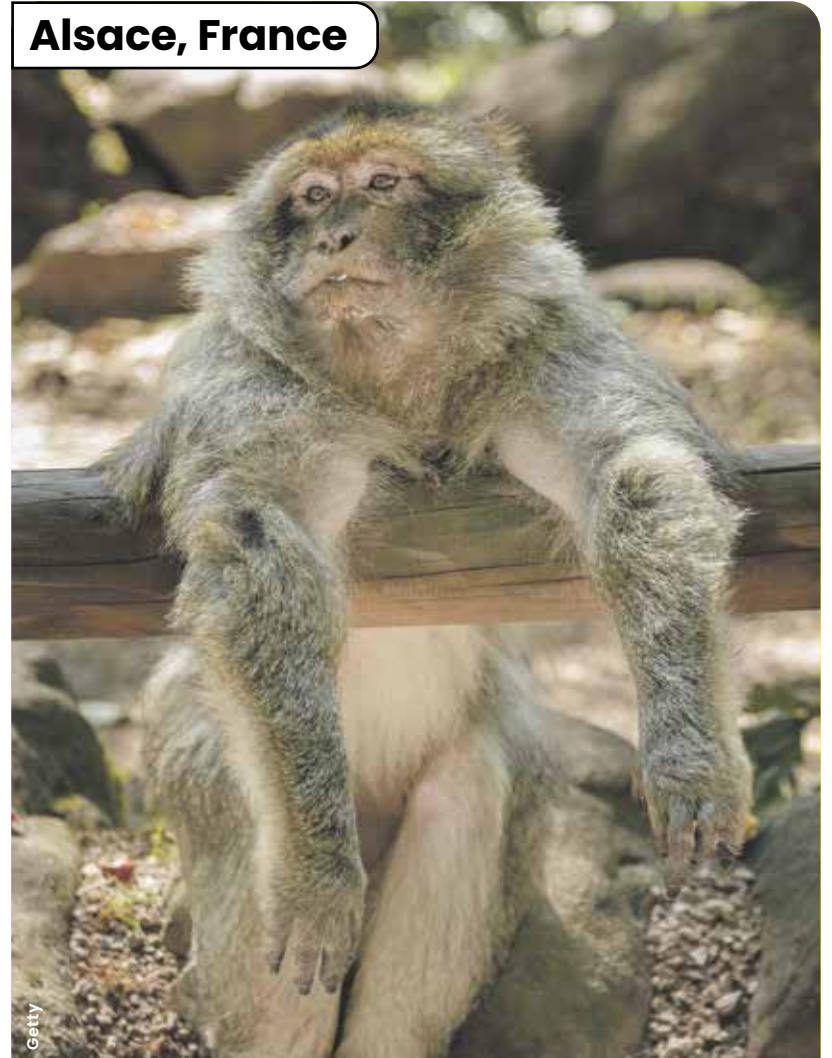
"For two decades, over a whopping 1,000 editions, *First News* has pioneered journalism for children, equipping the next generation with the tools and knowledge to fulfil their potential. Save the Children has been proud to partner with *First News* on a number of initiatives and stories over this time and, on this important milestone, we want to extend our congratulations and thanks for everything you do for children. Here's to the next 1,000!" – **Save the Children**

Nevşehir, Turkey



JUST one of the many colourful hot-air balloons that brightened up the skies over the Cappadocia region for a cultural festival. The area is very scenic and lots of tourists enjoy taking trips in balloons there.

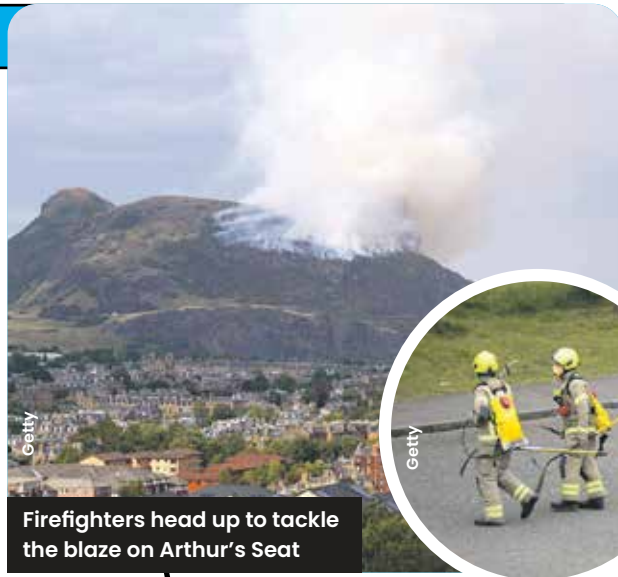
Alsace, France



A BARBARY macaque does some very human-like slobbering around at La Montagne des Singes (Monkey Mountain), a 24-hectare open-air park where 200 macaques roam among the visitors.

**EDINBURGH****Firefighters tackle huge blaze**

A fire that broke out on one of Scotland's most famous landmarks was likely caused by humans. Arthur's Seat is an extinct volcano that last erupted around 340 million years ago. It's now the main peak of a group of hills that overlook Edinburgh. However, the popular hiking spot was a no-go zone last weekend as a large fire started. Firefighters were called and worked through the night to put it out, and no-one was reported hurt. Neil MacLennan, a Scottish Fire and Rescue Service commander, told BBC Radio's *Good Morning Scotland* that human behaviour was a likely cause. He said: "It's very rare for any natural wildfires to start in this country." Scotland has experienced a very warm and dry summer so far.



Firefighters head up to tackle the blaze on Arthur's Seat

YORKSHIRE DALES**Extinct cow found in cave**

Archaeologists exploring caves near Ingleborough, in the Yorkshire Dales, have discovered traces of an extinct species. Aurochs were the large ancestors of modern-day cattle, and were found across Europe, Asia and North Africa, before dying out in the 1600s due to habitat loss and hunting. The cave researchers also found evidence of a human burial site from the Neolithic Period (10,000–2,220 BCE). These discoveries came from the Ingleborough Cave Archaeology Project, which is part of a £3 million mission to explore historic upland landscapes such as the Yorkshire Dales, Lake District and Dartmoor.



The remains of a wild boar skull excavated from one of the cave sites

WILTSHIRE**College farm's poo power!**

Wiltshire College's farm, Home Farm, has spent £275,000 on a machine that turns cow poo into electricity and heat. It processes five tonnes of waste daily from around 100 cows and provides half the energy needed for the farm's dairy milking system, cutting costs and carbon emissions. Farm manager Philip Steans says the system copies a cow's stomach and will pay for itself in four to eight years thanks to the money it saves. The system reduces smells, too. The high-tech farm also has a robot sweeper that travels across the barn floor to keep it clean!



Let's get moooving!

BERKSHIRE**One of the UK's earliest hospices revealed**

An eighth-century monastery in Cookham may have been one of the UK's earliest hospices. Experts believe the monastery, led by Queen Cynethryth more than 1,200 years ago, was used as a care centre where surgeries, herbal remedies and other support was offered to people who were sick and dying. The royal site has been excavated by University of Reading staff and students every summer since 2021. More research is needed now to confirm the findings.



The site of the monastery

BRISTOL**Balloons take over the sky for Fiesta!**

The annual Bristol International Balloon Fiesta dazzled people last weekend, as more than 100 hot air balloons took to the skies. The colourful fiesta is the biggest ballooning event in Europe, with this year's highlights including special themed balloons and an immersive attraction called In The Clouds that let people walk inside a cold-inflated air balloon while listening to the sounds that a pilot would hear. We particularly enjoyed seeing Sonic the Hedgehog!



A dragon balloon takes off





OUT OF THIS WORLD!



Main: the winning design, Chrysalis.
Left: some concept designs for the inside of Chrysalis.
Below: WFP Extreme.
Which one would you prefer to go to outer space in?

1000
THEY SAID
THAT!

"Congratulations from everyone at the Science Museum Group for publishing the 1,000th edition of *First News*. We love reading *First News* and it's a privilege to share fascinating stories from our exhibitions, galleries and the collection with *First News* readers each week through our weekly column."
— Science Museum Group

THE winners of the Project Hyperion spaceship design competition have been announced. Could humans travel to outer space in something like this in future?

The contest was run by the Initiative for Interstellar Studies (i4is), and entrants had to create a 'generation ship' that could survive a centuries-long journey to a far-off solar system. Generation ships appear in sci-fi a lot, and the idea is that the initial crew will have families on board the ship, and their children will join the crew as they get older.

These ships will need to have systems to grow enough food for everyone, recycle water and oxygen, have doctors and dentists, artificial gravity, and everything else that a population needs to survive for hundreds of years.

The winner was Chrysalis (main pic), a 2.4-million-tonne beast that would be 58km (36 miles) long. Some of the walls would be huge screens to show natural Earth environments so people don't feel trapped in an enclosed space.



The runner-up was WFP Extreme (above), which judges praised for the strong focus on cultural and social requirements. The team even created designs for the clothing that crew could wear (inset, above left)!

Each team had to include at least one architectural designer, one engineer and one social scientist.



All eyes on snails

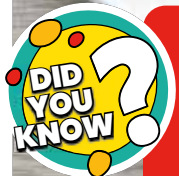
IN a bid to learn if healing or regenerating the human eye is possible, scientists are looking for inspiration in a slightly unusual place – snails.

The golden apple snail is originally from South America, but has invaded many places around the world now. And, although you wouldn't think humans and snails have much in common, this species has the same type of eyes as we do.

However, if a human loses an eye, there's no hope of growing a new one, but these snails can do it in about a month. We don't know yet if the snail can see just as well with the new eye, but experts say that all of the right parts are there, so there's no reason why it wouldn't be able to.

Scientists hope that by studying how the snail does it, we might be able to learn how to do the same for humans although, even if that's possible, it'll be a long time in the future.

Main: the golden apple snail is a popular food in Thailand. Inset: the snails lay lots of bright pink eggs



THE golden apple snail has been an incredibly successful invasive species in many countries, because they're tough, breed quickly and have lots of babies. These traits also mean that they're much easier to raise in a lab than other snails.

This report is from the Science Museum Group

SCIENCE
MUSEUM
GROUP

HOW do you test the quality of a pea? Like Goldilocks, it's important to make sure that they aren't too hard or too soft.

However, just pressing a pea between your fingers is a very rough measurement. This machine is a tenderometer and it turns this into an accurate and repeatable test.

It measures the amount of force required to press a standard-sized sample of peas through a specific-sized grid. It was first introduced in the late 1930s, and this machine was used by Birds Eye in the UK, a company known for its frozen food.

Today, the tenderometer is a digital machine, but it still works on the same basic principle and remains an important part of pea harvesting.



A 1930s tenderometer



FRANCE



Firefighters tackle largest wildfire in decades

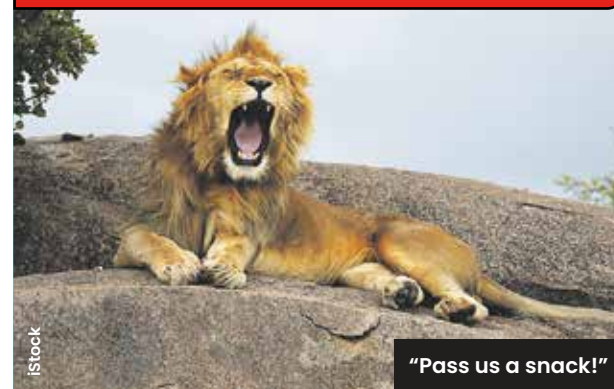
Firefighters have been battling the largest wildfire in the country in 75 years. More than 2,000 emergency workers were called to deal with the blaze, which broke out in the village of Ribaute in southern France and burned through more than 17,000 hectares (42,000 acres) – an area bigger than Paris. One woman died and more than a dozen people were injured, with many homes being destroyed or damaged. Residents and tourists had to be evacuated and roads were closed off, as the area became too dangerous. It is the largest wildfire in France since 1949, with French Prime Minister François Bayrou blaming climate change and drought.

1000
THEY SAID THAT!

"Congratulations from the Disasters Emergency Committee (DEC)! *First News* has helped us reach millions of young people in the UK to inform them about the importance of humanitarian aid and explain how vital their support is when disasters and crises happen around the world. Here's to the next 1,000 editions!" – **the DEC**



DENMARK



"Pass us a snack!"

Zoo wants pets for predators

Last week, we brought you a story of the zoo that fed its own baboons to its predators. This week, a zoo is asking for people's pets! Aalborg Zoo has asked pet owners to donate unwanted healthy pets to feed to their predators. Animals including chickens, rabbits, guinea pigs and even horses will be used as food for the zoo's carnivores. Animals can be donated on weekdays and up to four

animals can be given at a time. They must be free of recent illness and meet specific health criteria, with horses needing a passport to be donated. The scheme is designed to copy the natural food chain for predators like lions, tigers and lynx. This ensures the carnivores have a natural diet of meat, bones and fur, like they would experience in the wild.



ITALY



The site of the future Strait of Messina Bridge

World's longest suspension bridge approved

Italy's government has approved the building of the world's longest suspension bridge. The Strait of Messina Bridge is designed to connect mainland Italy to the island of Sicily, which people can only reach by ferry at the moment. The aim is to create more jobs and bring in more money to southern Italy, despite concerns about earthquake risks and environmental damage. The huge bridge is expected to cost around €13.5bn (£11.7bn). It will have a total length of 3.67km (2.3 miles), with the suspended section reaching 3.3km (2.05 miles). It will feature two huge towers, too. Building could begin next year, with the bridge set to be completed by 2032.



NIGERIA

Thousands of birds seized

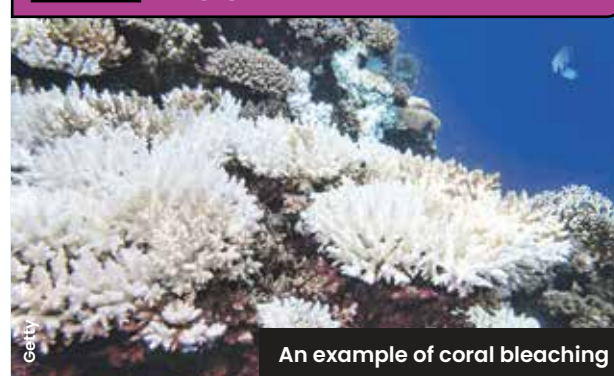
Nigeria's customs agency has seized more than 1,600 birds heading for Kuwait, in one of the country's largest wildlife trafficking busts. Staff at Murtala Muhammed International Airport found the ring-necked parrots and canaries during routine checks. Some exotic birds such as parrots can cost more than £750 in the illegal wildlife trade. The illegal trade in birds and animals makes \$7–\$23 billion (£5–£17 billion) around the world every year, says BirdLife International. The birds will be rehabilitated and cared for by the National Park Service before being released back into the wild.



Parrots can be worth a lot of money



AUSTRALIA



An example of coral bleaching

Tough times for the Barrier Reef

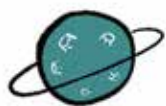
Coral in the northern and southern areas of the Great Barrier Reef have suffered the worst bleaching in nearly 40 years, says the Australian Institute of Marine Science. Bleaching happens at high temperatures when coral lose the algae that provide their food and their colour, turning the coral white. Climate change, cyclones and invasive crown-of-thorns starfish have all been listed as causes. Repeated bleaching has also hit Ningaloo, Australia's second largest reef. Coral reefs are critical to marine life, supporting around 25% of all marine species.

BREAKING NEWS

ALAN TAKES OVER FIRST NEWS



Power-hungry cat Alan has taken over this newspaper!
Can you search the pages for his 3 escaped clones?



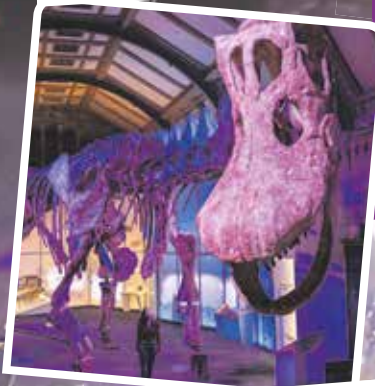
New graphic novel out now!





AMAZING THINGS

...THAT HAVE
HAPPENED IN
1,000
**First
News**
ISSUES!



1

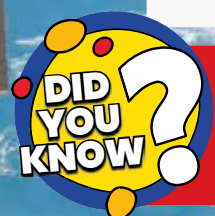
First News editor



Nicky then...
and Nicky now!



OUR editor Nicky has been in charge of every page since the very first issue of *First News*, which hit the news stands on 5 May 2006. She says: "A thousand thanks to everyone who has been part of *First News* over 1,000 editions. That's all our incredible team over the years, including some who, like me, have been here from the beginning – like Eddy and Rich. Thanks to every prime minister who has taken time to speak to our readers since we launched, to the King who has written for us, to your schools and families, and to many, many organisations and charities who have helped us bring balanced and trusted news to you, our readers, who I thank the most of all."



ON the day that *First News* launched, Gnarls Barkley were top of both the singles and albums charts. The single, *Crazy*, spent nine weeks at No 1! The No 2 tune was Rihanna's mighty SOS, from her second album.

TURN OVER FOR **999** OTHER AMAZING THINGS FROM THE WORLDS
OF **POLITICS, SPORT, SCIENCE, MUSIC, MOVIES AND MORE!**

3

new countries

Since the birth of *First News* in 2006, three countries have also been established! Just four weeks after issue one, **Montenegro** held a referendum (vote), and its citizens voted to split from Serbia. **Kosovo** announced independence from Serbia in 2008 – this is recognised by the UK, but not all countries. **South Sudan** split from Sudan in 2011.



Ukraine is hoping to join and make it 28...

All pics: Getty

27

countries in the European Union (EU)

Why is this 'amazing'? Because it's two more than when *First News* began in May 2006. Three countries have joined, but one has left.

One of the biggest stories we've reported on over the years is Brexit – the decision of the UK to leave the EU. Some argued that it would give the UK greater independence and make it easier for us to make our own decisions. Those who disagreed warned that it would cost too much, make it harder to trade with our neighbours and lead to a rise in the price of living.

A referendum (vote) was held in June 2016. People of voting age got the chance to have their say, and 52% said they'd prefer to leave the EU. The Conservative government chose to act on the result, and the split was made official in 2020.

The EU now has 27 members – Romania and Bulgaria joined in 2007, then Croatia in 2013.

All of the nations work together on things like security, foreign policy, justice and human rights. They also can move freely around the EU.

1

last abolition

Mauritania became the last country in the world to abolish (end) slavery by making it illegal in 2007. Unfortunately, 50 million people around the world are still trapped in slavery, and a quarter of those are children.



4

presidents of the USA

The USA is the most powerful country on the planet, so when it names a new leader, the world takes notice. These are the men who have held the presidency since *First News* launched. Perhaps, in one of our next 1,000 issues, we'll be able to report on the USA electing its first female president...



George W Bush
2001–2009



Barack Obama
2009–2017



Donald Trump
2017–2021, 2025–present



Joe Biden
2021–2025

17

sustainable development goals

In 2015, the United Nations (UN) set its Sustainable Development Goals, a series of 17 actions to bring about a better and fairer world. They include a bid to end poverty and hunger, protect the planet, achieve gender equality, improve education and bring peace to all people by the year 2030. The mission continues, but big global conflicts and money pressures stand in the way.



35

countries legalising same-sex marriage

At the time of our first issue, same-sex marriage was legal in just three countries – the Netherlands, Belgium and Spain. Since then, 35 countries have followed them. Same-sex marriage became legal in England and Wales in 2014, later that year in Scotland, and in Northern Ireland in 2020. It's still banned in 103 regions, including more than half of Africa and Asia.



55

stations on a landmark subway

In 2009, Dubai opened the first subway system on the Arabian peninsula. Until recently, the **Dubai Metro** was the world's longest driverless metro network, with 55 stations linked by 75 kilometres (47 miles) of track. It's been overtaken by the Riyadh Metro in Saudi Arabia since then.





29 days of glorious London Games

In 2012, athletes and sporting fans from around the globe arrived in London as the city hosted the Olympic and Paralympic Games for the first time in 64 years. It was a glorious sporting summer for the UK!

20 more medals for fabulous Phelps

When the first issue of *First News* came out, the USA's swimming superstar Michael Phelps had eight Olympic medals to his name. By the time he retired in 2016, he'd won another 20! His incredible haul makes him the most successful Olympian of all time.



Hannah Cockroft
and Karé Adenegan

91 GB golds in one special summer

Team GB's best overall performance at an Olympic and Paralympic Games since *First News* began came in Brazil in 2016. Our heroes bagged 214 medals in total, 91 of them gold – 27 in the Olympics and 64 in the Paralympics!

11 Olympic medals for Simone Biles

Simone Biles became one of the most decorated gymnasts in history. She won 11 medals across three Olympic Games – Rio 2016, Tokyo 2020 and Paris 2024 – including seven golds. Several gymnastics moves are named after her.

4 mad minutes for Sam Ruthe

Remember the name Sam Ruthe? In March this year, the New Zealander became the youngest person ever to run a mile inside four minutes. He was aged 15 at the time, and he did it with a second and a half to spare!



1 star is born!

ACTUALLY, there have been countless sporting stars born during *First News*' lifetime, but this one is pretty special!

Top football talent Lamine Yamal was born on 13 July 2007 – not long after *First News* had its first birthday. The Spanish star has already smashed dozens of records on his way to winning

two La Liga titles and Euro 2024.

Last summer, an amazing photo went viral of Lionel Messi cradling a baby Yamal as part of a photoshoot for an old UNICEF calendar. Now 18, Yamal wears Messi's old No 10 shirt for Barcelona and looks on course to matching him one day in being named the greatest men's player on Earth.



7

very big buys

British football's transfer record has been broken seven times since our first issue. It was last set in 2023, when Chelsea splashed £107 million on Enzo Fernández (above). Liverpool could pay £116 million on their summer signing Florian Wirtz, but that's in stages. The £107 million Fernández deal is the biggest spend in one go.

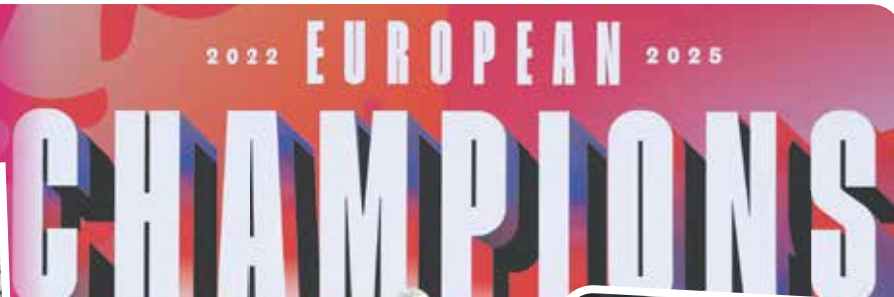
32 hero Lionesses



The 2022 squad

England's squad of 23 Lionesses roaring to glory at UEFA Women's Euro 2022 was a massive moment that inspired the nation. This summer, nine new faces joined the ranks, including the 19-year old sensation Michelle Agyemang – and together, they did it again!

More celebrations this summer



+1

Dutch legend

Shout-out to the Lionesses' head coach, Sarina Wiegman!

7 world titles for Sir Lewis Hamilton!

Trust us, you can do a lot in 19 years! We chose to write and publish 1,000 issues but, back in 2006, a 21-year-old named Lewis Hamilton decided he'd spend the time making his F1 debut, utterly taking the sport by storm, winning 105 races, and claiming seven championship titles. His reward? Legendary status, a knighthood and an army of adoring racing fans. He's still going at the age of 40, too...

Hamilton celebrates his sixth title in 2019



DID YOU KNOW?

HAMILTON was the youngest-ever F1 champion, aged 23 years and 300 days, when he won his first title in 2008. He was overtaken by Sebastian Vettel, who was 167 days younger when he won in 2010.



The UK sizzled in the summer of 2022

40 record-breaking, roasting degrees

On 19 July 2022, the UK had its **hottest day** on record, 40.3°C, in Coningsby, Lincolnshire. The Met Office said it would have been "virtually impossible" without human-made climate change.

10 beastly and bitterly cold days

On the flip-side, those of you old enough to remember the spring of 2018 might recall it was incredibly cold. From 22 February until 3 March, the '**Beast from the East**' blanketed Britain in snow and made temperatures plunge, schools shut and transport impossible. Faversham in Kent dropped to -14.2°C!

13 total solar eclipses

The Earth has experienced 13 total solar eclipses since *First News* has existed. This is when the moon passes directly between the sun and the Earth, leaving part of the world in total shadow. This last happened in the USA in April 2024.

6 minutes of darkness

Sticking with eclipses, the **longest solar eclipse** of the century so far happened on 22 July 2009. People in Southeast Asia stood in the shadow of the moon for well over six spooky minutes. Lots of people travelled to China to experience the event in person.

4 sneaky seconds

You'll have heard of leap years... but what about leap seconds? On some days, the Earth spins a tiny fraction of a second slower than others. To keep things in balance, a second is added to our clocks. This has happened **four times** since *First News* began in 2006, though it hasn't happened since 2017.

8 prime ministers

Here are the eight prime ministers that *First News* has reported on. Some lasted a long time... others, well, not so much!



Tony Blair
1997-2007



Gordon Brown
2007-2010



David Cameron
2010-2016



The King and Queen on the Buckingham Palace balcony

1 coronation

ON 6 May 2023, something happened in Britain that hadn't happened since 1953 – the country crowned a new monarch.

The nation stopped to see King Charles III receive the crown at a grand ceremony at Westminster Abbey in London. He was then escorted through the streets to the royal

balcony of Buckingham Palace to greet the thousands who had gathered to celebrate.

It came following the death of his mother, Queen Elizabeth II (right), who had passed away the previous year, on 8 September 2022. Her 70 years on the throne had made her the longest-reigning monarch in British history.



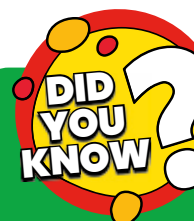
11 Taylor Swift albums

Tay-Tay's probably the biggest musician there's been in 1,000 issues of *First News*. She was just a sweet 16-year-old working on her first album when the paper started. Now, she's 35, become a global phenomenon and released 11 studio albums – with number 12 on the way!



A 15 year feud!

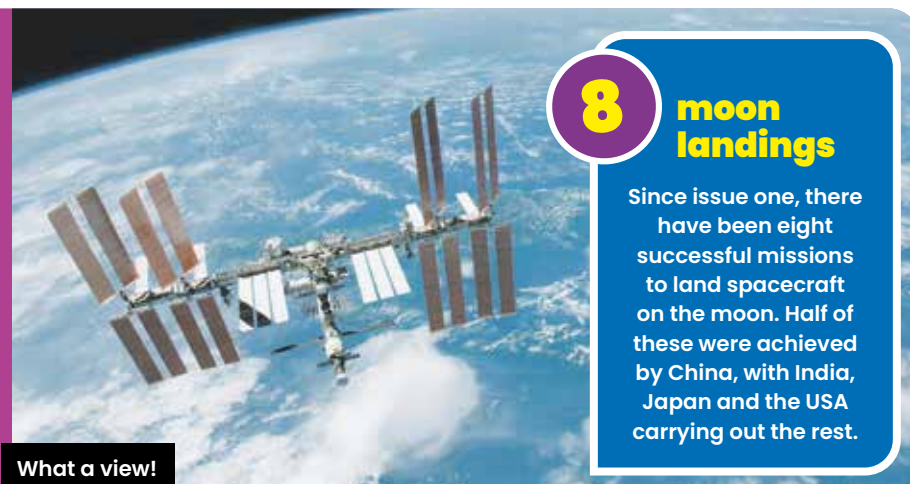
Oasis split up in 2009, but fans rejoiced last summer when brothers Liam and Noel Gallagher announced that they'd settled their 15-year feud. The legendary band are now back, playing sell-out gigs in arenas, stadiums and parks all around the world.



WE won't count it towards the 1,000, but there have been more than 500 UK number one singles in the 19 years since our first issue hit the shelves in 2006!

24 New nations board the ISS

The International Space Station (ISS) is a craft that orbits the Earth, allowing astronauts to conduct research in space. When *First News* began, it had been in operation for six years, and only American and Russian astronauts had stepped on board – and just two women. Now, 26 nationalities and dozens of women have gazed back at planet Earth from the ISS.



What a view!

8 moon landings

Since issue one, there have been eight successful missions to land spacecraft on the moon. Half of these were achieved by China, with India, Japan and the USA carrying out the rest.

1000

AMAZING THINGS

Issue 1,000 **FirstNews**
15 – 21 August 2025



Theresa May
2016–2019



Boris Johnson
2019–2022



Liz Truss
2022



Rishi Sunak
2022–2024



Keir Starmer
2024 to now

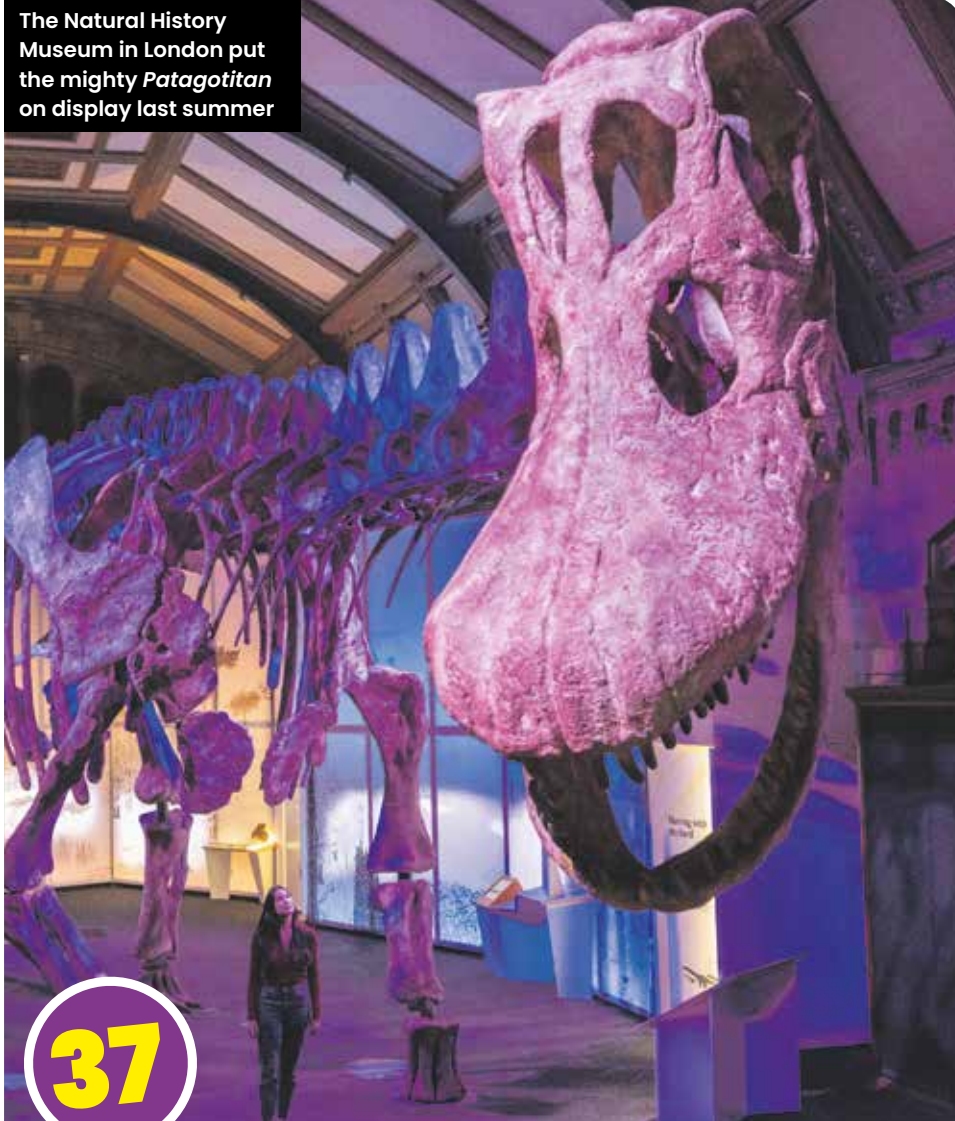


5

major consoles launched by Nintendo

We've had the Wii, the Wii U, the 3DS, the Switch (above) and the Switch 2!

The Natural History Museum in London put the mighty *Patagotitan* on display last summer



37

massive metres

The discovery of this handsome devil, *Patagotitan*, was announced in 2014. The plant-eating dinosaur had an estimated length of 37 metres and estimated weight of 69 tonnes, taking the title for largest known land animal ever.

London's fireworks have become famous the world over!



17

New Year parties on the London Eye

There was a two-year break for the Covid-19 outbreak in 2021 and 2022 but, that aside, the UK's most famous New Year fireworks display has grown bigger and better every year since *First News* started. The display for 2025 involved 12,000 fireworks!

31

iPhone models



The first iPhone launched in June 2007, shortly after *First News* celebrated its first birthday, and Apple has been updating and upgrading them ever since!

19

years of Google owning YouTube

One of the first big bits of tech news we reported on was Google buying YouTube for £884 million in October 2006. It was a smart move, as it's just become the most popular TV platform for kids and is now worth over £400 billion!

350



MILLION SALES!

Minecraft was born in 2011 and is the best-selling videogame of all time.



18

years of Wembley magic!

From cup finals to concerts and lots in between, England's updated national stadium with its famous arch opened its doors in March 2007.



37

MCU movies

The Marvel Cinematic Universe (MCU) kicked off with the release of *Iron Man* (left) in May 2008, and really hit its peak of popularity when *Avengers: Endgame* arrived in 2019. They're still going, though! We've just seen *The Fantastic Four: First Steps* hit the big screen, and it won't be long until Spider-Man is swinging his way back into our Entertainment section!

So many 'marvellous' movies!

...AND THAT'S

1,000!

Now turn over to celebrate some of our most memorable front pages of all time...

COVER STARS!

FROM our first ever issue all the way back in 2006, we've gone through them all to pick out some of our favourite front pages through the ages.

And here's where it all began! Issue 1 of *First News* from 5 May 2006, likely before any of you were born. We had a message from England captain David Beckham and a story about bird flu, which is even more of a worry now than it was back then.



A *First News* survey led issue 127 in October 2008, showing how our readers wanted more environmental education.



This early indication that cyberbullying was becoming a huge problem is from issue 183 in November 2009.



Issue 356 in April 2013 was like the film *Up*, as Matt Silver-Vallance raised money for a children's hospital by floating over the Atlantic for an hour attached to giant balloons!



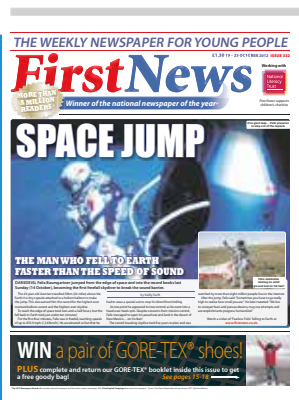
For issue 359 in May 2013 we focused on this terrifying school run in China where kids have to climb ladders up and down a steep cliff every day.



Issue 403 in March 2014 saw Russia invade the Crimea region of Ukraine, which was the first step towards the war happening right now.



Issue 148, March 2009. One of our many covers showing dogs doing cool stuff! This pooch was collecting plastic bottles.



Daredevil Felix Baumgartner was the cover star of issue 332 in October 2012, for the highest ever skydive. His leap from the edge of space was the first to break the sound barrier!



Issue 358, April 2013. We asked all the schools in the UK to vote on whether the voting age should be lowered from 18 to 16.



Readers helped us to celebrate our 400th issue on Valentine's Day 2014 by forming giant hearts. Awww, you guys!



Our national campaign to Stamp Out Bullying was kicking off in issue 429 back in September 2014.



The story of Arthur the stray dog melted hearts in issue 441 in November 2014. He followed an extreme sports team through the jungle after they gave him some meatballs.



For issue 525 in July 2016, we interviewed Tim Peake, the first British astronaut on the ISS... and asked him if he'd used his space nappy during lift-off!



**LEGO nerds (that includes us!)
got a whole load of brick action
in April 2018 thanks to issue 619.**



Covid didn't stop kids from taking part in school strikes for the planet, as shown here on issue 745 in September 2020.



Ukraine was on the cover again for issue 830 in May 2022, this time because a mine-sniffing dog called Patron had been given an award for saving lives.



On Boxing Day 2014, we devoted the whole of issue 445 to the plan to send humans to the planet Mars!



Another epic school run in issue 536, September 2016, as kids in the Philippines had to wade and swim 2km just to get to their school.



Hopefully JK Rowling didn't mind us stealing the title of her story for this cover about a whale poop expedition in issue 650 from November 2018.



The pandemic meant that 2020 was a pretty grim year, so we tried to lighten the mood in December by devoting all of issue 756 to happy news!



The launch of ChatGPT sent the world into a spin, so we got AI to write the cover of issue 866 in January 2023 to see if you could tell the difference.



The horrific terror attacks in Paris were the big news in issue 492 in November 2015.



A worldwide craze for clowns scaring people was taking off in October 2016, so issue 539 asked our readers if they wanted to chuckle or cower.



Our Christmas issue for 2019, No 705, was also quite heavily poo-based, so apologies if it put anyone off their Christmas dinner!



For issue 760 in January 2021 we had a great science story about a futuristic train... powered by poo.



The UK got its first new monarch since 1952, so the new King and Queen graced the cover of issue 882 in May 2023.



It's a party! Prime Minister at the time David Cameron and the Duchess of Cambridge wishing us a happy tenth birthday in issue 516, May 2016.



Another doggy legend in issue 589, September 2017. Mexican pup Frida saved lots of people trapped after an earthquake.



The Covid-19 pandemic was the biggest news story in decades, and issue 716 in March 2020 saw us try to separate the fact from fiction.



Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine was the focus of the eye-catching issue 820 in March 2022.



It took a long time coming, but votes at 16 was worth shouting about on the cover of issue 997, just last month!

FirstNews Quiz

THE answers to all these questions can be found in our 1,000 issues celebration pull-out. Why not set yourself, or your friends and family, a time challenge to see who can get the highest score in the quickest time? See how well you did by checking the answers at the bottom.

1 Which England football captain featured on the cover of Issue 1 of *First News*?

2 When did London last host the Olympic and Paralympic Games?



3 In 2008, the Marvel Cinematic Universe (MCU) kicked off with what film?



4 How many men have been president of the USA since *First News* launched?

5 How many studio albums has Taylor Swift released?



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First News is published by First Group Enterprises Ltd, 10 London Mews, London, W2 1HY. Printed by Reach Printing Services, St Albans Rd, Watford WD24 7RG. Distributed by Marketforce (UK) Ltd, 3rd floor, 161 Marsh Wall, London, E14 9AP. Tel: 0330 390 6555.

We are extremely passionate about the environment and we are always looking at ways to reduce waste throughout the company and across all of our products. We print on recycled paper. We package *First News* in a mixture of compostable wrapper, paper wrapper, cardboard wraps and boxes, depending on the order size. See www.firstnews.co.uk/about-first-news for more information about our environmental commitments.

Answers: 1) David Beckham 2) 2012 3) *Iron Man* 4) Four 5) 11

CELEBRATING 85 YEARS OF PUFFIN BOOKS

Dive into imaginative stories and meet iconic characters in this special book collection celebrating 85 years of Puffin Books!



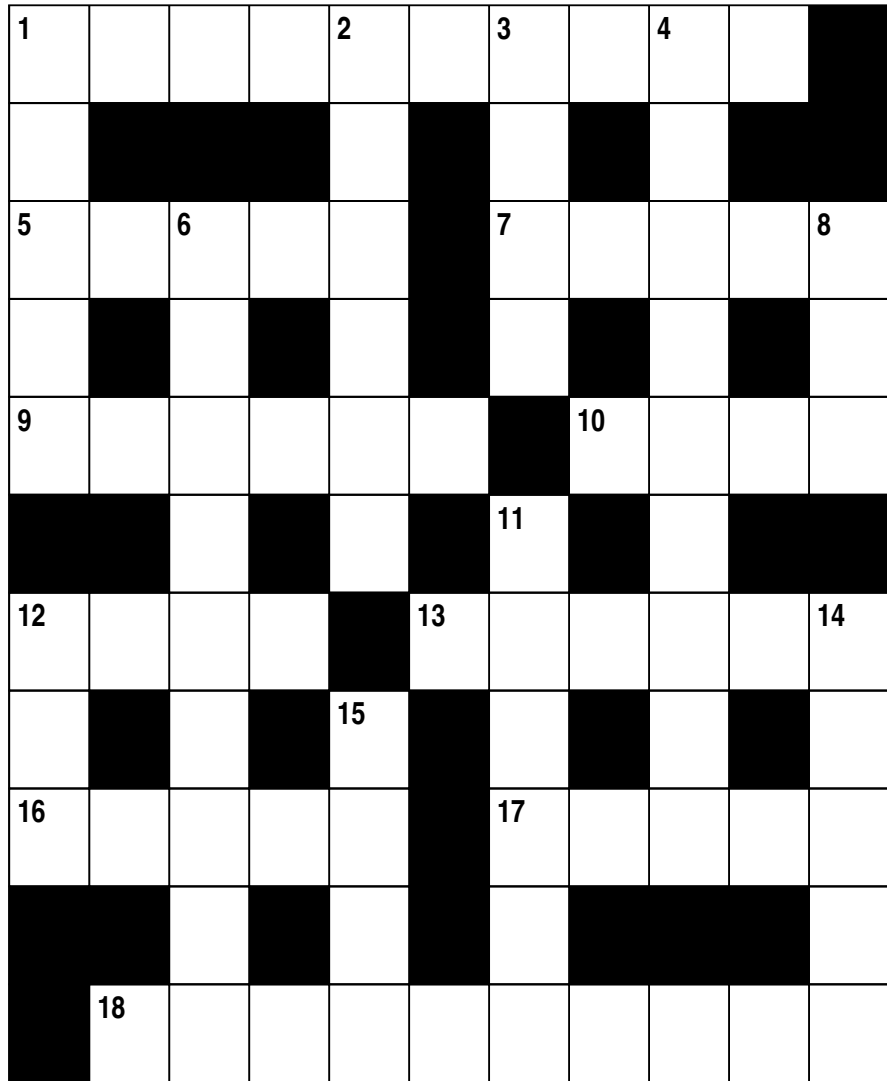
This QR code should be scanned by a responsible adult.





CROSSWORD

CAN you solve our crossword puzzle using the clues below?



ACROSS

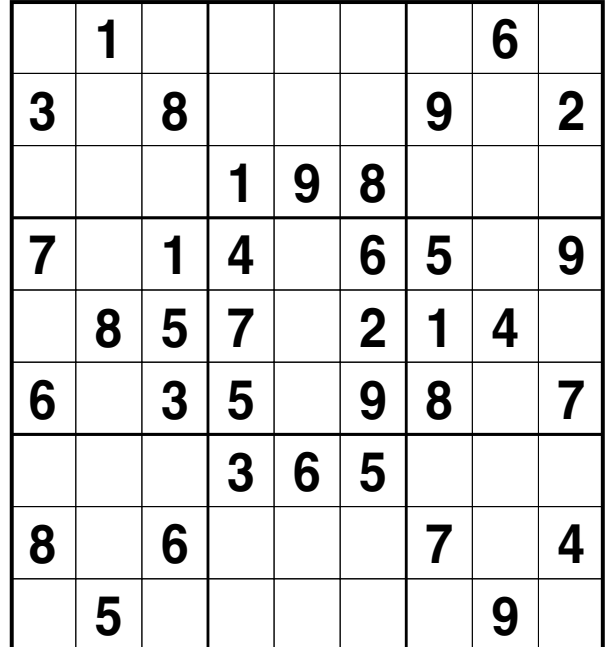
- 1) Later (10)
- 5) A loud noise to wake you up (5)
- 7) More secure (5)
- 9) Capital of Ireland (6)
- 10) Walk awkwardly (4)
- 12) Solely; merely (4)
- 13) Time that has not yet happened (6)
- 16) The last match in a tournament (5)
- 17) Memos (5)
- 18) Individually or not together (10)

DOWN

- 1) Prize or trophy (5)
- 2) Stay (6)
- 3) Additionally (4)
- 4) Hard (9)
- 6) Emergency vehicle (9)
- 8) Tear (3)
- 11) _____ pig: pet animal (6)
- 12) Not on (3)
- 14) Piece of writing on a particular subject (5)
- 15) Tiny insect (4)

Sudoku

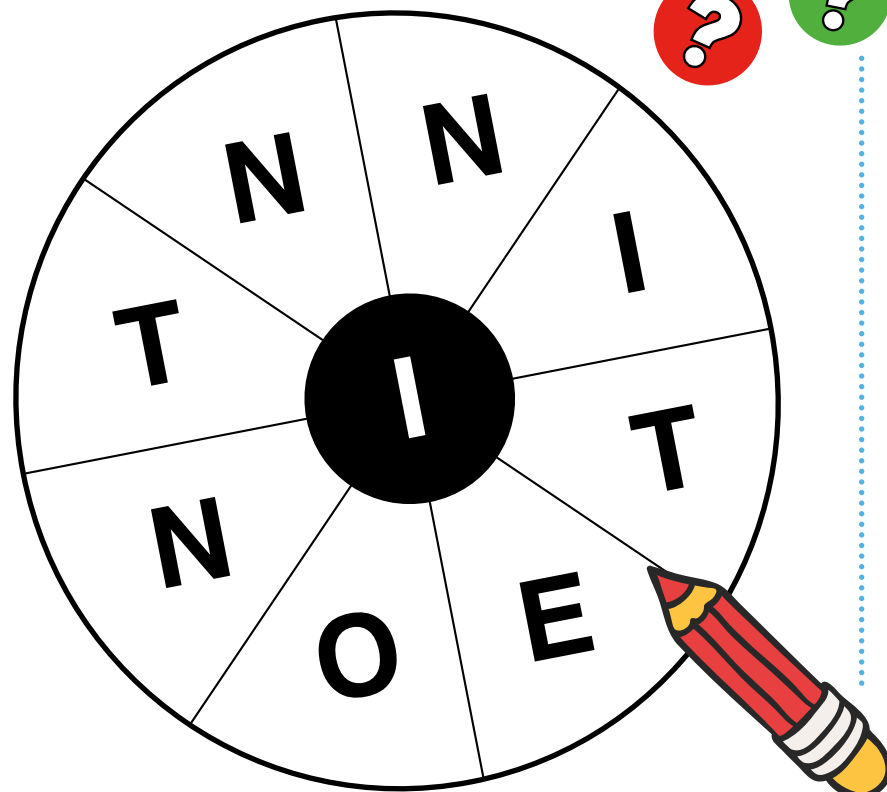
CAN you complete our sudoku puzzle, filling in the numbers one to nine?



COMPETITIONS: To enter, email us at win@firstnews.co.uk putting 'competition name' (e.g. Holiday), in the subject box or visit first.news/comps. *First News* competitions are only open to those aged 15 and under and residents of the UK & Republic of Ireland, except employees of *First News*, First Group Enterprises Ltd, Reach plc and any associated companies and their families. Winners will be selected at random from all those with the correct answer. No purchase necessary. *First News* will not enter into any correspondence. All winners will be notified accordingly. If you are a winner, your details will be securely passed on to the person who is providing the prize so they can post it out to you. If you are contacted but don't reply within 28 days, we may offer the prize to another entrant. No cash alternative for any prizes will be offered. The winner may be required to partake in media activity relating to the competition. Your personal data will be held for a maximum of 12 months after the competition and then destroyed. It will not be used for any other purpose unless you have given us permission. If you would like your data deleted before this, please do get in touch with us. You have the right to complain to the ICO if you believe there is a problem with the way your data has been handled.

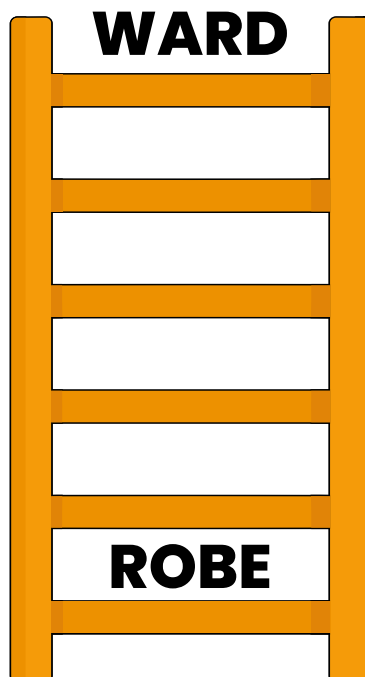
Word wheel

SEE how many words of three or more letters you can make, using the middle letter in each one. And can you find the word that uses all the letters?



Word ladder

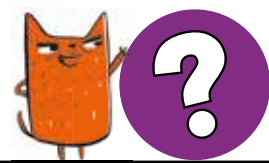
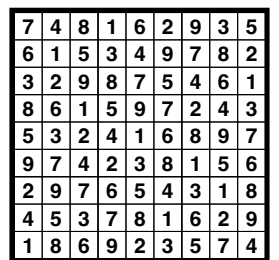
SEE if you can get from the top of the ladder to the bottom by changing one letter at a time to make a new word.



ISSUE 999 ANSWERS:

Word wheel: entertain.

Word ladder: care, bare, bars, bags, bugs, hugs.



Enjoying the puzzles?
See the *First News* app for more fun, quizzes and games!
This QR code should be scanned by a responsible adult.



PROTECT THE POLLINATORS!

Getty



● **POLLINATORS** are vital for the survival of plants that so much wildlife relies on. They are also to thank for every third mouthful of food we eat because they pollinate our crops.

● **YOU** can help pollinating insects by planting wildflowers in your garden or encouraging your parents to mow the lawn less – it saves them a job! If you don't have a garden, you could build a bee hotel for your school, or ask your local council to let part of your local area grow wild.

A RECENT study by the University of Sheffield has shown that pollinating insects are being pushed out by urbanisation (the growth and spread of towns and cities).

The study was conducted in three major cities across England – Sheffield, Leeds and Leicester. It found that in built-up areas, there were up to 43% (nearly half) fewer pollinating insects compared to

rural areas (the countryside).

While bees get a lot of the attention (and rightly so, because they are great pollinators!), we can't forget about other pollinators such as moths and hoverflies that are also crucial for keeping our ecosystems healthy.

The study highlights how these lesser-known pollinators are being affected, and why we need to do more to protect them.



"Wow – 1,000 editions of *First News*! Congratulations from WWF on an incredible milestone. You and your young reporters have done a brilliant job of telling stories about nature and the environment to the

people who will shape the world we live in in the decades to come. We look forward to many more such stories in your next 1,000!"

– Tanya Steele

Chief Executive, WWF-UK



Wildlife Conservation Society

All the black dots you can see in this drone shot are turtles!

Drones count turtles

A COOL study by the Wildlife Conservation Society and University of Florida has confirmed the largest group of freshwater turtles ever recorded – more than 41,000 giant South American river turtles!

What's even more exciting is that the turtles were counted using drones. Instead of the slow, tricky and often inaccurate method of counting them on the ground, the team flew drones overhead to capture a series of detailed photos. They then studied the images to estimate the number of turtles.

"This is a major leap forward in how we monitor wildlife," said Dr Camila Ferrara, a turtle specialist.

Researchers think that other animals, like birds and marine animals, could now be tracked this way, too.



One of the lion cubs with its mother

Petr David Jozek/AP

Zoo's rare lion cubs

A ZOO in the Czech Republic has welcomed four adorable lion cubs! And these aren't just any lions – they are Barbary lions that are completely extinct in the wild.

Barbary lions once roamed across northern Africa, but sadly, they disappeared from the wild in the 1960s. Now, only those in captivity remain.

The new arrivals – three females and one male – have been seen enjoying their outdoor closure at Dvůr Králové Safari Park, along with their parents, Khalila and Bart.

Although the cubs will stay in the zoo for now, their birth is an exciting step towards one day hopefully reintroducing Barbary lions back into the wild.



"Congratulations for your 1,000th issue. I love being part of the incredible work that you are doing to inform people of all ages about what is happening around the world. And along the way we also learn lots of weird and wacky facts! I am looking forward to seeing *First News* flourish and shine all over the world. Lots of love!" – Aneeshwar



OKAPI

HABITAT:

● Dense tropical rainforests of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Africa.

FUN FACTS:

● Okapis are relatives to giraffes, despite looking part zebra and part deer. They have stripes down their legs that allow them to blend into their forest home.

● Okapis are one of the few animals that can lick their own ears. They do this with their long purple tongue. Eugh!

SPECIAL SUPERPOWER:

● The okapi has a long prehensile tongue (capable of grasping and holding things). It wraps this around branches and strips the leaves clean off, just like a giraffe.

CONSERVATION STATUS:

● Okapis are endangered, says the International Union for Conservation of Nature.



Aneeshwar's okapi

MAKING MASTERPIECES FROM A GARAGE!

MEET Alfie and his grandad Roy, the team behind Wally Boys Workshop. They've turned a garage workshop into a luxury woodworking business making high-end wooden chopping boards! FYI's Hughie headed down to check it out.



FYI's Hughie chats with Alfie in the workshop



Alfie makes a chopping board

● **Thanks for having me in your workshop, guys! First up, let's chat to you, Alfie. What made you want to start woodworking?**

Football wasn't really my thing, and then I started this, probably around two or three when I made that bench there [points to bench in the workshop].

● **How did this company begin?**

I just asked my grampy, do you want to make a business? Then he said yes!

● **How do you feel when you work here?**

Happy, and it's where I feel most comfortable.

● **Do you think you'll follow a career in woodwork?**

Yes! It makes me feel close to nature.

● **If you could make anything in the world out of wood, what would you make and why?**

A house. I'd build my own hot tub, my own sauna, my own steam room. I'd make like a mini waterpark, like a few slides and a pool.

● **What's the best thing about working with your grandad?**

Spending time with him. He is funny, generous and thoughtful.

● **Do you think he inspires you and vice versa?**

Yes!

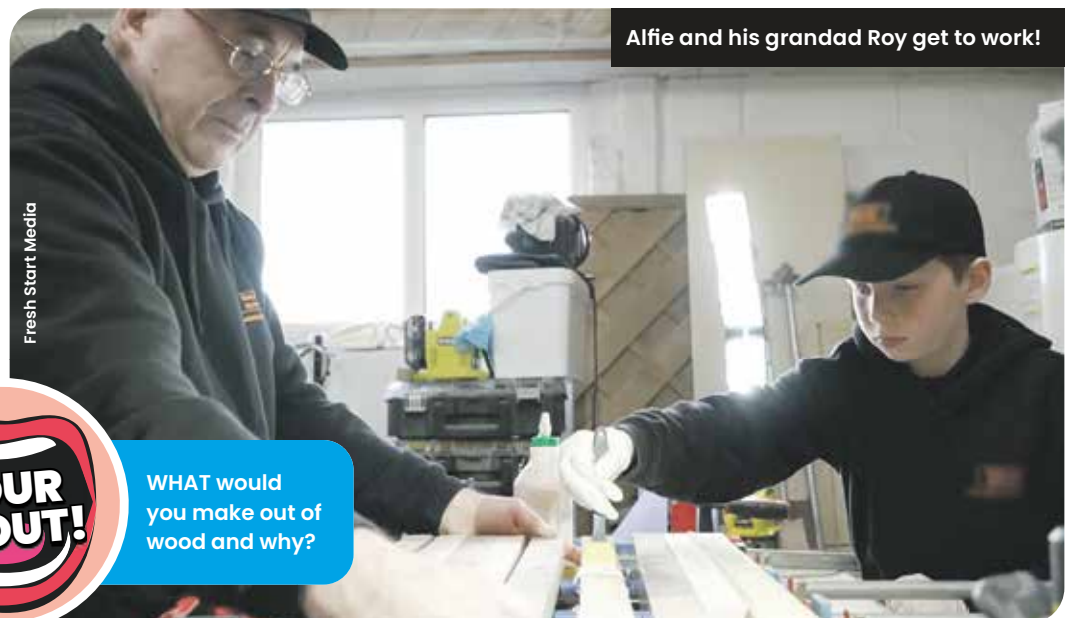
● **Hello grampy and mum, it's your turn now! Grampy, what's one thing about Alfie that keeps impressing you?**

He's learning all the time. He learns straight away too. I only teach him once and he is off. It's brilliant because I'm teaching him something that he will remember for years and years and years.

● **And mum, where do you think Alfie gets his passion for woodwork from?**

He's always loved DIY. He used to follow his dad around the house, even from probably about two years old. Any job he was doing, Alfie would be following him, just taking an interest, asking questions. He just learned by watching, so from a really young age he would just start following his dad. Then he moved on to his grampy and started coming round and just spending time in here [the workshop] with him.

For Alfie, this isn't just about business either – he has a much bigger goal. He's saving his profits to one day build clean water sources in Africa for people who need it most. Nice work, don't you reckon?



Alfie and his grandad Roy get to work!

FYI

sky kids

WATCH THE SHOW

You can learn more about Wally Boys Workshop by asking an adult to scan this QR code. You can also watch previous episodes of FYI on our site or app.



"A huge congratulations to First News on the milestone 1,000th issue of your brilliant children's newspaper, which not only inspires thousands of young readers but also gives them a voice and a platform as news writers. We are so proud to work alongside you to inspire a love for reading and writing in the next generation, and to empower young people with the skills they need to navigate the world with confidence."

– Jonathan Douglas, **director of the National Literacy Trust**

1000
THEY SAID
THAT!

FYI is a weekly news show from Sky Kids that helps you stay up to date with what's going on in the world. You can watch loads of cool videos from them by heading to first.news/fyi or on the First News app.



YOUR SHOUT!

WHAT would you make out of wood and why?



"MY BABY BROTHER'S A SUPERHERO!"

SUPER Charlie, based on the bestselling children's book series, is coming to the big screen for the summer holidays and it looks epic!

What's the movie about?

This action-packed family adventure follows ten-year-old Wille, who has always dreamed of becoming a superhero and fighting crime alongside his police-hero dad. But, his dream is shattered when his new baby brother Charlie is born with actual real-life superpowers!

Tell me more...

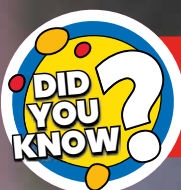
When a supervillain and a deranged scientist hatch an evil plan, Wille and his baby brother Charlie need to put their differences aside and work as a team. But can the unique duo save the city?



A blockbuster hit!

The movie has been co-written by the Swedish author of the books, Camilla Läckberg, so you can expect lots of exciting twists and turns! Camilla is also a very well-known crime writer, so prepare to have your detective skills tested.

All pics: Kaleidoscope Entertainment



THE first *Super Charlie* book was published in 2011!



Super Charlie is in cinemas now. Check out the trailer on our app!



Princess Mononoke comes to IMAX cinemas!

For the 40th anniversary of Studio Ghibli, its hit movie *Princess Mononoke* has been given an exclusive IMAX release in the UK and Ireland! The epic fantasy animation will be shown in a brand-new 4K restoration across IMAX cinemas from 15 August.



● **New Totoro artwork released!**
Brand-new artwork for the award-winning stage adaptation of *My Neighbour Totoro* has been released, and it reveals Totoro for the first time! The production is running at the Gillian Lynne Theatre in the West End until March 2026.

1000
THEY SAID THAT!

First News has famous readers too! Spider-Man star Tom Holland told us that his family were subscribers!



ANEESHWAR GETS CRAFTY!

HELLO, it's me, Aneeshwar! I love going on adventures outdoors and discovering amazing things in nature, and today I've got something really fun for you to try. We're going to make nature bracelets!

You will need:

- A piece of tape. Masking tape or sticky tape is perfect.
- A safe outdoor space like a park, garden or woodland.

Step-by-step guide:

1. Make your bracelet

Wrap a piece of tape loosely around your wrist, sticky side facing out. It should be like a bracelet – not too tight!

2. Time for a nature walk!

Now go for a short walk and look around carefully. Can you see tiny leaves, flower petals, bits of grass, feathers, seeds or little fallen pine cones?



3. Stick things on!

Gently press your nature finds onto your bracelet. Try only to pick things that have already fallen on the ground; that way, we can stay kind to nature.

4. Make it colourful

Look for lots of colours and shapes – green leaves, yellow petals, maybe even a fluffy seed! If it's light and dry, it'll stick!

5. Show it off!

You've made a wild masterpiece! Why not show your friends or take a photo to keep in a summer scrapbook?



Stream Aneeshwar's Outdoor Adventures on Channel 5 now.



IS IT FAKE OR FACT?

CAN you tell if a story is the real deal or made up? Every week, we'll be challenging you to see if you can sniff out the news from the nonsense! See what you think of this story, then turn the page upside down to see if you were right.



EXOTIC BUTTERFLY SPOTTED IN THE UK!

A MEDITERRANEAN butterfly has been spotted in the UK for the first time! Sightings of the southern small white were recorded in Suffolk and County Durham. The news comes after the UK recorded its warmest and sunniest-ever spring. Until recently, this species of butterfly was confined to just southern and southeastern Europe.

Check out more on spotting fake news at:

• first.news/fakeorfact • first.news/spotfakenews

Or get yourself a free copy of our updated 28-page special edition, all about making sense of the news, how to spot bias, fake news and much more! Go to first.news/fake-news



This story is FACT. The southern small white has officially been recorded in the UK. Experts say this year's record-breaking weather has led to lots of unusual butterfly activity and sightings.

IN NEXT WEEK'S ISSUE!



WOMEN'S RUGBY WORLD CUP



COMIC CON



GREEK GODS

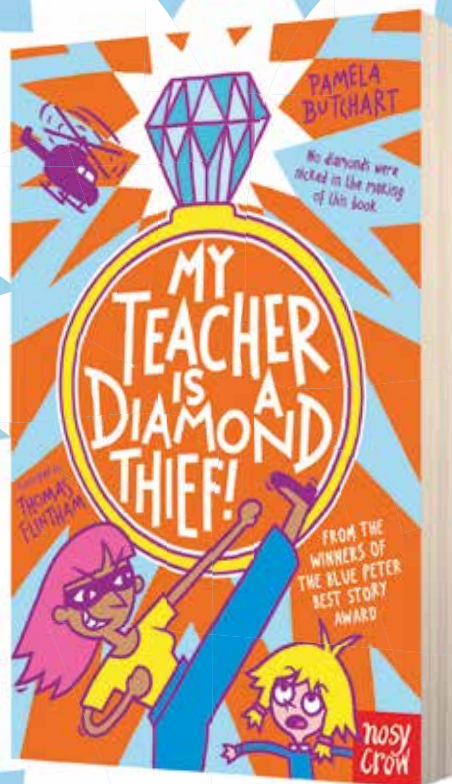
DON'T MISS IT!

STOLEN DIAMONDS...?

THERE CAN ONLY BE ONE SUSPECT!

Expect mystery and mayhem in this hilarious new adventure from

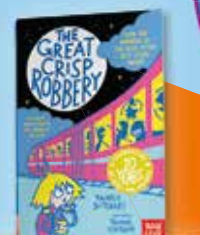
PAMELA BUTCHART
and
THOMAS FLINTHAM



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on the Izzy series

READ THEM ALL!



nosy crow



HELLO! I'm Charlie, the leader of the *First News Your News* pages.

I hope you're enjoying your summer holidays, and have been able to get out into the sunshine.

Arietta certainly has been having fun, as she put her ideas into a public installation full of weird and wonderful things!

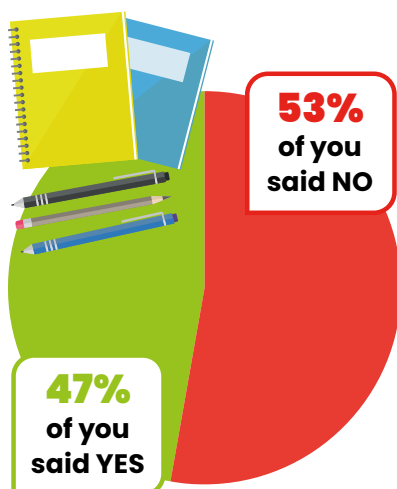
Also on Your News this week, William tells us about upgrades to his local train station, and Vienna shares what she learned from a safe swimming session.

If you want to write for *First News*, get in touch by asking a trusted adult to email us at yournews@firstnews.co.uk.

THIS WEEK'S POLL!

We asked 3,181 of you:

Would you go to school if you didn't have to?



MAKE YOUR VOICE HEARD!

Cast your vote in our polls at

firstnews.co.uk/polls

DREAM BIG

Arietta takes in the surroundings



JUNIOR JOURNALIST

ARIETTA was one of 112 kids who helped to create DreamState, a multi-sensory experience designed to immerse visitors in a world of imagination. Here's what they came up with.

by Arietta

As a young writer for east London charity Ministry of Stories, I worked on DreamState.

It was filled with all the weird and brilliant stuff that emerges when you give 112 kids totally free rein to create whatever they want! The eight rooms in Shoreditch Town Hall varied from a Relaxation Zone located within the clouds, to a Botanists' Workshop – it looked like the perfect place to accidentally produce a man-eating Venus flytrap while trying to grow roses!

A personal favourite of mine was the shelf full of mysteriously scented bottles in the Feast Room, although I was very bad at figuring out what any of them were.

Despite being directly involved with its creation, I still found new and unexpected concepts in every room. This really speaks to the creativity and individuality of each person who wrote something for it. I probably could've spent a full hour in one room and still not discovered everything there was to see.

DreamState made our audiences see the world from a different perspective, at least for a little while.

On the right track



TRAIN enthusiast William is excited by changes being made to his local train station. He tells us all about them.

by William Morse, aged ten

Milton Keynes Central has received big upgrades for Station Square lately. The actions of the council are kicking in to make this place feel more welcoming to those commuting to London and other work sites.

Next to the green spaces are massive mature trees that have been placed in an oval, creating shade for people to sit down on the grass. Also, many people that use a bike to commute to the station are concerned about temporary bike racks, but there is no need to worry as permanent racks will be placed there soon.

There's more exciting news for train operator London Northwestern Railway. Their new trains are pulling in at the platforms of Milton Keynes train station for services from as far as London to Birmingham New Street station.

If you are lucky, you will be able to ride in the new and clean flashy interiors that will get you to your destination with speed, comfort and style.

SCARLETT TALKS POLITICS

HELLO! I am a junior journalist and A level student, studying politics, English and psychology. You can also see me in some FYI films at firstnews.co.uk/fyi. I write a fortnightly column for Your News about major politics issues in the UK, with a focus on stories that affect young people.



Scarlett

IS the water in our rivers, lakes and the sea safe and clean? Pollution has been a big problem. Sewage spills, water shortages and dirty rivers have been making the headlines.

Recently, the government finally responded with an announcement of a plan to fix the system by replacing the current water regulator, Ofwat (Water Services Regulation Authority), with a new, more powerful one. This new regulator will have one job, and that is to protect the environment, clean up our water and make sure companies stop polluting without punishment.

Often, water companies haven't got into much trouble for spilling sewage into rivers – and some monitor themselves. Under the new rules this will change. Sewage overflows will have to be reported as they happen and a new water ombudsman (an independent official) will help people complain when things do go wrong. The timeline for this is that 50% (half) monitoring will be in place by March 2030 and 100% by April 2035.

This matters a lot for young people. Polluted water means it's less safe to swim and explore rivers, and it's bad for animals and nature. When the summer is dry, like this year, water shortages can even lead to hosepipe bans or wildfires.

Change is happening at last and that's great news. Campaigners, scientists and everyday people both young and old spoke up and the government listened. These new laws and rules are already being put in place.

So what can you do? Keep learning about your local rivers and seas. Ask questions at school. Use water wisely. If you do see something wrong, don't stay silent because the future of clean, safe water doesn't just belong to adults, it belongs to all of us.





Splashing safely



Vienna learns about safe swimming

ON World Drowning Prevention Day (25 July), Vienna took part in an RNLI session to learn vital water safety survival skills. She tells us how she got on.

by Vienna Charles-Robb, aged eight

At the start of my holidays, my mum took me to a Swim Safe lesson at the iconic Royal Docks in London.

I was a little bit scared not to be swimming in a pool, but it was so fun! We learned about how to be safe in open waters such as rivers, lakes or the sea, and to stay with our parents or a trusted guardian. We also got to play games, which gave me lots of information about keeping safe in the sea, like how to 'Float to Live', and how to call for help in the ocean.

Practising these lifesaving skills is more important than ever. I now feel confident to be in open water and to call for help if I'm in danger.

WIN! A SET OF BUILD YOUR OWN ECO-FRIENDLY MINI BUILDS!



LOOKING for a fun, educational and eco-friendly activity to enjoy with your family this holiday? Enter now for a chance to win four exciting plastic-free Build Your Own Mini Kits!

Made from 100% sustainable cardboard and paper, these mess-free kits require no glue and no plastic – they just slot together! Each model is designed for quick 20-minute builds, making them perfect for family bonding time and hands-on STEM learning.

The prize set includes:

- **Honey Bee** – Flap its wings and learn about the importance of pollinators!
- **Ladybird** – Rotate its wings and discover how these tiny helpers benefit agriculture.
- **Stag beetle** – Snap its mighty pincers and explore this incredible (and threatened) species.
- **Dragonfly** – Flap its impressive wingspan and see how it inspires modern engineering!

We're giving ten lucky readers the chance to win a set of Build Your Own Mini Kits.

All you have to do is answer this question:

What sweet food do bees make? a) Jam b) Honey c) Toffee



ENTER NOW! MARK YOUR ENTRY BUILD

first.news/comps or see page 19. The closing date is 29 August.



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HIDDEN LONDON



Hot-dog highway!



Shrewsbury Volunteer Fire Company

The clean-up crew had a lot of bun that day...

THINGS got pretty chaotic in Pennsylvania in the US, when a truck carrying thousands of hot dogs crashed and spilled its entire load over a busy highway.

The crash happened because a delivery truck had a mechanical fault and scraped along a concrete divider in the road. The truck was filled with hot dogs that rolled out, blocking the way for other traffic.

The road had to be closed while crews on the scene helped to clear up the mess. They used a front-end loader

(a giant machine with a scoop) to pick up the hot dogs and drop them into a giant dumper truck.

Shrewsbury Volunteer Fire Company Chief Brad Dauberman said that the sausages were pretty tricky to clear up. "I can tell you personally, hot dogs are very slippery," he said. "I did not know that."

Four people needed medical attention after the incident, but thankfully, nobody suffered life-threatening injuries in the crash.

It must-ard taken ages to clear up the mess...

SpongeBob square stamps



FROM a pineapple under the sea to letters all over the US, SpongeBob is now starring on a brand-new set of American stamps!

The much-loved cartoon character, who first hit screens in 1999, is being celebrated with a fun collection of stamps made for the US Postal Service.

There are four stamps in the collection that feature SpongeBob and some of his favourite Bikini Bottom buddies, including Patrick Star, Sandy Cheeks, Squidward Tentacles, Mr Krabs, Plankton and Gary the Snail.

Epic sand sculptures



Getty

Mbaw's sand sculpture of a horse

A 27-YEAR-OLD amateur artist has been turning the sandy shores of Dakar in Senegal, West Africa, into incredible sand sculpture galleries.

Omar Mbaw creates detailed sand sculptures using just his hands, a few simple tools and lots of patience, with each masterpiece taking up to four hours to complete! They're all made for the public to enjoy right on the beach.

When he's not sculpting, Omar works as a tailor (clothes fitter), but every Sunday, he heads to the beach to work on his art.

One of his latest creations is an amazing sculpture of a horse (pictured). What do you think?



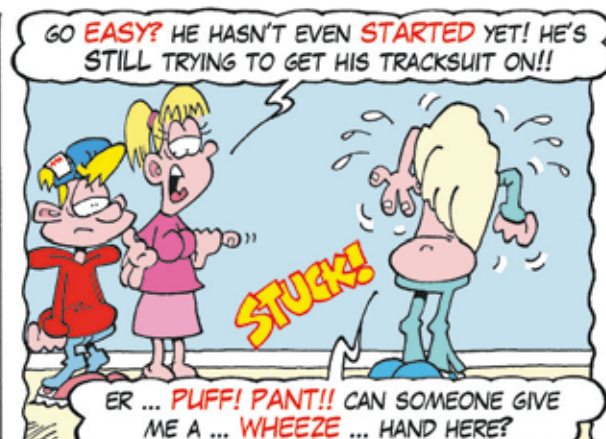
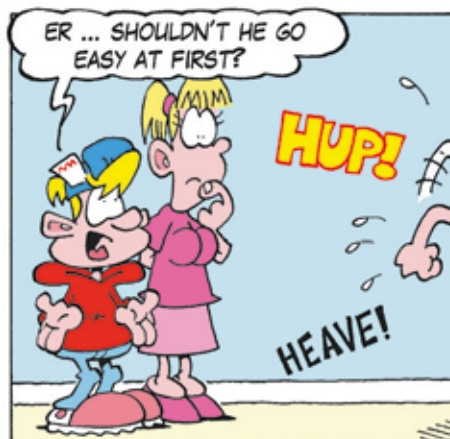
JOKE OF THE WEEK

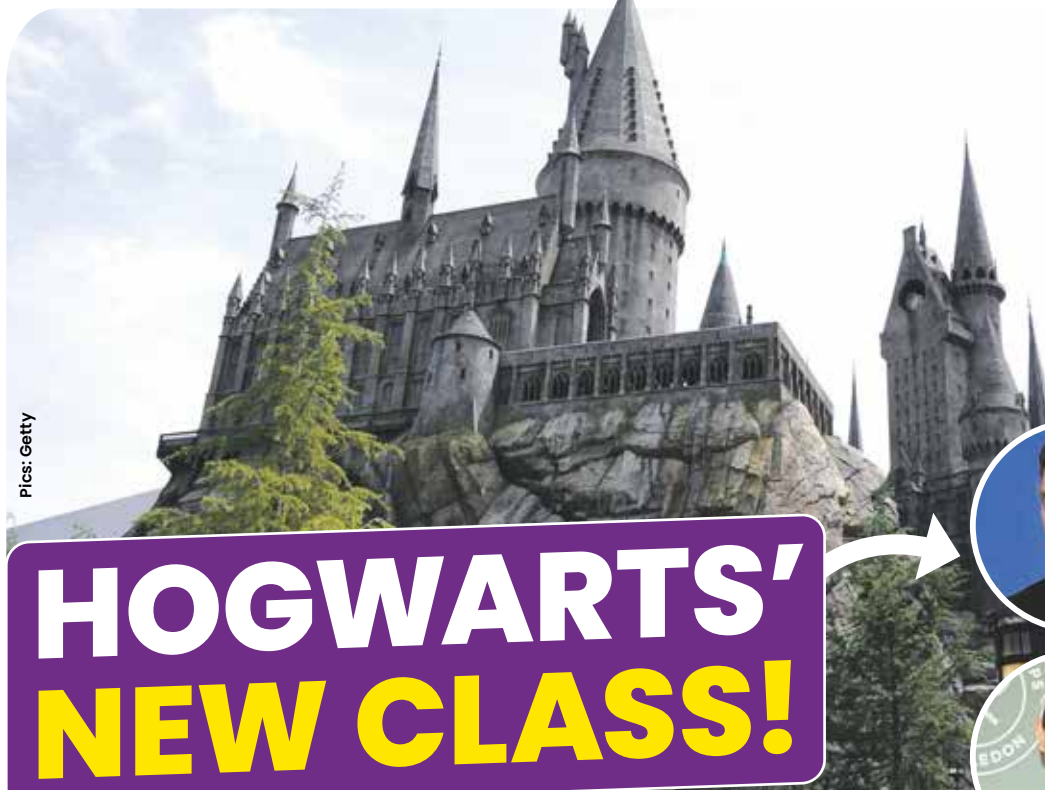
Why are hot dogs slower than burgers?
They can never ketch-up!

haha
ha



Written and illustrated by Paul Palmer





Pics: Getty

HOGWARTS' NEW CLASS!

WHILE shops and supermarkets are full of back-to-school posters, book fans young and old are gearing up to go back to Hogwarts!

The upcoming HBO TV series got a lot of attention this summer, after revealing the main cast. Filming has started, but it won't hit our screens until 2027. If that's too far away to get your fresh wizard fix, we've got some news that's sweeter than a box of chocolate frogs.

A brand-new series of audiobooks for all seven stories is coming to Audible, featuring a star cast of over 200 voice actors. Just like in the HBO series, Arabella Stanton will play Hermione, but there's a new Harry and Ron – Frankie Treadaway

and Max Lester. That is, until book four, *Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire*, when older children will step into the roles!

There are big names involved too, like famous actor Hugh Laurie, who's voiced characters in *Monsters vs Aliens* and *Arthur Christmas* in the past. He'll play the Hogwarts headmaster Albus Dumbledore.

It's the first time the books have been re-recorded for audio since the original audiobook series, read by the legendary Stephen Fry from 1999 onwards.

The first audiobook, *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone*, will arrive on the Amazon-owned platform on 4 November. It's available to pre-order now, and the remaining books will be released monthly.

Listen up, first years – a new series of Harry Potter audiobooks is on its way!

The cast



Hugh Laurie
is Albus Dumbledore



Riz Ahmed
is Professor Snape



Michelle Gomez
is Professor McGonagall



Matthew Macfadyen
is Lord Voldemort

Puffin out the candles



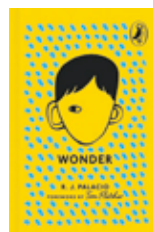
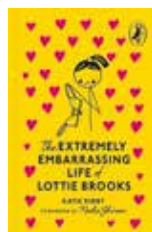
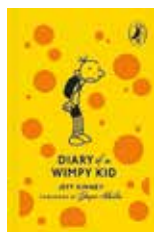
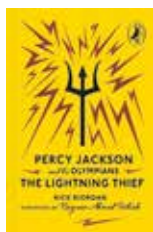
Getty

PUFFIN, the children's books publisher, has celebrated turning 85 by releasing eight special cloth-bound editions of its favourite stories.

Puffin is an offshoot of Penguin books, and it launched in England in 1940, slap bang in the middle of World War Two.

Penguin publisher Allen Lane and Noel Carrington, a publisher of natural history books, wanted to produce a line of high-quality books for children. Their idea was a major success, and today, Puffin is the world's largest children's publisher and a household name thanks to the works of Roald Dahl and series like Tracy Beaker, Percy Jackson and *Diary of a Wimpy Kid*.

Those four all feature among the 85th anniversary hardbacks. Check out the full range below! Any of your favourites among them...?



Recommended reads

in partnership with Peters



1,000 issues' time

AS we celebrate the 1,000th issue of *First News*, it's got us wondering what the world will look like in another 1,000 issues' time! We've picked out a selection of strange books set in surreal and distant futures.



***I am Wolf* by Alastair Chisholm**

Coll belongs to Wolf – a giant Construct that roams and fights in a savage world. But when he's left stranded, can he survive?



***The Starlight Rebel* by Lisette Auton**

In the year 3897, an artificial shell covers the world's sky, and no-one remembers the stars. Until neurodivergent Astrifer discovers that everyone is in grave danger...

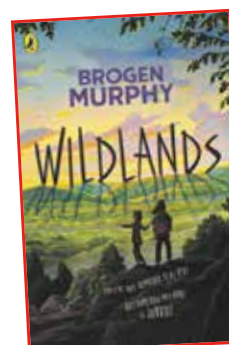


***After* by Pádraig Kenny**

In an empty world with no technology, Jen and Father, a secret human-appearing AI, must make tough decisions to survive.

***The Cloud Thief* by James Nicol**

Mara's village desperately needs rain. But in a world where clouds are bought and sold by greedy traders, she will need to steal one.



***Wildlands* by Brogen Murphy**

Two sisters must travel across Britain's astonishing and dangerous Wildlands, where wolves, lynx and bison roam free, to find their way back home.



**1000
THEY SAID
THAT!**

Heather Chuter 2025



"Congratulations, *First News*, on your 1,000th issue! Children are the most intelligent people in the world, and it's wonderful that there's a newspaper like *First News* that gives the most up-to-date news and fun. Xcellent Dreamtroos (best wishes in Dragonese)."

– Cressida Cowell, creator of *How To Train Your Dragon*



INNES IN THE MEDALS

Innes FitzGerald (centre) celebrates winning the 5,000m

THERE seem to be a lot of up-and-coming young stars making a name for themselves right now, so here's another name to remember: Innes FitzGerald.

The 19-year-old British runner won double gold at the European U20 Championships in Tampere, Finland, last week. First she bagged the 5,000m title, then romped to first place in the 3,000m, beating her rivals by more than 22 seconds. Her phenomenal pace meant that she smashed the championship record that had stood for 32 years!

"It was a big ask to do the double, but I knew it was in me," she said. "To get the championship record was the icing on the cake."

THREE other British athletes won golds at the event: Charlotte Henrich in the 400m, Lyla Belshaw in the 1,500m, and Rafferty Mirfin in the 800m. Their efforts put Team GB second in the medal table (below).



The final medal table

				TOTAL
1 Italy	6	3	5	14
2 GB & NI	5	7	1	13
3 Spain	5	3	6	14

All pics: Getty



Zola Budd was famous for running barefoot!

IT was only last month that Innes FitzGerald destroyed the long-standing European U20 5,000m record. Zola Budd's record had stood since 1985, but FitzGerald knocked more than eight seconds off it!



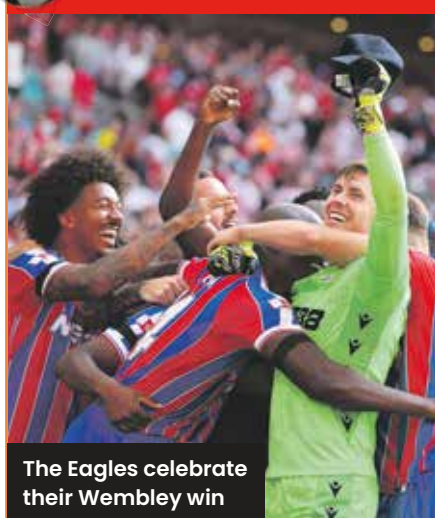
AMAZINGLY, the two golds that FitzGerald won this week were her first international track titles. She first caught everyone's attention by winning the U20 race at the European Cross Country Championships (above) for the last two years.

GYMNASTICS



Megan Kealy has become Team GB's first ever World Games champion in tumbling, after picking up the gold medal in Chengdu, China. The event includes a load of sports that don't feature in the Olympics, including squash, billiards, American football, disc golf, rollerskating and tug of war (above). The Games are due to finish on 17 August.

FOOTBALL



The Eagles celebrate their Wembley win

Premier League champions Liverpool didn't have quite the start to the season that they hoped, after losing the Community Shield match to FA Cup winners Crystal Palace. The game finished 2-2, with Reds newbie Florian Wirtz providing an assist for fellow new boy Hugo Ekitike, but Palace won the shoot-out 3-2. The week wasn't all good for Palace, though, as they lost their appeal against UEFA's decision to kick them out of the Europa League, due to UEFA's multi-club ownership rules. It means that Palace will play in the Conference League instead.



ATHLETICS



Legendary triple-jumper Jonathan Edwards has said that it's not "a good sign for athletics" that his world record has stood for 30 years. His epic hop, step and jump at the World Championships on 7 August 1995 was a massive 18.29m. That leap was 13cm better than the record he'd just set earlier that day, and 31cm better than his record from three weeks before that!



JEN Pawol has made history in the US, by becoming the first female umpire in the history of Major League Baseball. "It was pretty amazing when we took the field," she said. "It seemed like quite a few people started clapping and saying my name, so that was pretty intense and very emotional."

Issue 1,000 | £2.95



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