

NEWS KIDS CAN TRUST

NEWSPAPER OF THE YEAR*



First News

Issue 1,037 £2.95 1 - 7 May 2026

2.6M READERS*



P14



FIRST NEWS IS 20 YEARS OLD THIS WEEK!

NEWS SPORTS ENTERTAINMENT
INTERVIEWS PUZZLES COMPETITIONS

EIGHT-ARMED KILLING MACHINE

ANCIENT OCTOPUS THE SIZE OF A BUS WAS A TOP OCEAN HUNTER



Yohei Utsuki, Department of Earth and Planetary Sciences, Hokkaido University

P16

P10



TAKE THE HEDGEHOG PLEDGE

P4



BIG WEEK OF UK ELECTIONS

P4



ALL CHANGE FOR HISTORY LESSONS?

*Newspaper Awards 2025 and 2023, Niche market Newspaper of the Year. First News readership is 2,626,625. Source: Opinion Matters 2020. First News is the widest-read of all children's publications audited in the UK. First News supports children's charities.



MEET THE TEAM

(as they looked 20 years ago when *First News* launched!)



Acting Editor
Ian Eddy



Editorial Manager
Hannah Timson



Senior Reporter
Chris Towers



Newspaper and Digital Reporter
Charlie Baker



Sub Editor
Steve Smith



Creative Director
Richard Robson



Founding Editor
Nicky Cox





HAVE YOU HEARD?

Snappy stories to get you talking!

HELPFUL HOUSES

Scientists say that their design for a simple two-storey house can protect children in Africa from diseases such as malaria. Researchers paid a construction company just \$8,818 (£6,530) per house, then selected 110 families with children under the age of 13 to live in them. After three years, they found that these kids had lower rates of malaria, diarrhoea, coughs and sore throats. The Star Homes in Tanzania have net screens to allow air in but keep mosquitoes out, ventilation for cooking fumes, solar panels, rainwater collection and a fly-proof outdoor loo.

THEY SAID THAT!

"If all children were to reside [live] in better housing, the positive impact would likely be even greater."

The scientists' report in *Nature Medicine*



The upper floor of the house cools down quickly at night and has nets over the beds to protect people from mosquitoes



BILLIONAIRES ON THE RISE

The number of billionaires across the world could reach nearly 4,000 in the next five years. There are currently 3,110 billionaires, says research by the estate agent Knight Frank. They predict this number could rise by 25% by 3031, taking the total to 3,915. Liam Bailey from Knight Frank says wealthy people's fortunes have been "supercharged by tech and AI." The number of billionaires is expected to grow the fastest in Saudi Arabia.

PROJECT UNCOVERS 1,100 SPECIES



A sand lizard

More than 1,100 species of animal, plant and fungus have been recorded in the New Forest, as part of a huge two-year nature project. Among the species were pine martens, sand lizards, water shrews, adders and the rare candelabra coral fungus. Almost 100 different types of bird and more than 300 plants were identified through surveys. Experts helped to improve 321 hectares of land – the same as around 450 football pitches – to help species in the New Forest.

KING AWARDED GREEN BLUE PETER BADGE



King Charles has been awarded a Green Blue Peter Badge to celebrate his commitment to protecting nature and promoting a more sustainable future. The monarch was given the badge by *Blue Peter* presenter Joel Mawhinney at Dumfries House in Ayrshire on Earth Day. You can watch the special presentation on *Blue Peter* on CBBC on Friday 1 May at 5pm and on BBC iPlayer.

TURN TOYS INTO BOOKS

Schools are set to benefit from free books as a result of the launch of a new Recycle to Read scheme across 167 Tesco stores. It allows people to drop off broken toys made from hard plastic, earning Planet Care Points for their school. The 200 schools that score most points by 8 July will get book vouchers, and there'll also be some bonus prize draws. The idea for the project came from Wastebuster and Products of Change, and is supported by major toy companies such as Mattel, as well as children's publishers. The scheme is only for broken toys that can't be reused or rehomed, and will help the environment because there are currently very few options to recycle hard plastic. See recycleto.read.org for more.



KIDS MISSING LIVE MUSIC

Two in five primary school children haven't seen live music in the past year, new research shows. A study by Playground Proms suggests cost and distance are key barriers, with more than two in five saying tickets are too expensive and over three in ten saying events are too far away. Access also varies by region, with more children in Greater London seeing live music than in Northeast England. The charity plans to reach 63,000 children this year by bringing performances into schools.

NSPCC CALLS FOR YOUNG CHANGEMAKERS

The NSPCC is looking for 20 young people aged 12 to 15 to join its Voice of Online Youth group. Members will get to meet key decision makers, help tackle online safety issues and learn new life skills. No previous experience is required, you just need to have a passion for making the online world safer for children and young people. You can find out more at tinyurl.com/voiceofonline.



BAN 'FOREVER CHEMICALS' IN SCHOOL UNIFORMS

A group of MPs is calling for a ban on 'forever chemicals' being used in school uniforms. Chemicals called PFAS are often used to make your school clothing stain and water resistant, but they're dangerous for the environment as they don't easily break down. PFAS are used in lots of everyday items, including non-stick frying pans, food packaging and raincoats. MPs on the Environmental Audit Committee want to see a complete ban, unless the product manufacturer can provide a very strong reason for their use.



BRITS CONFESS THEIR FOOD HABITS

One in five Brits admit they have served food that has fallen on the floor, new research reveals. HelloFresh and Scrub Daddy found a fifth also double-dip spoons while cooking for others.

Many have relaxed habits outside the kitchen too, with a third of people admitting to eating in bed. Cleaning expert Nicola Lewis said: "Our kitchens are full of personality... these habits can sometimes feel chaotic, but they're also highly relatable."



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



A boat crossing from last year

UK AND FRANCE TO TACKLE BOAT CROSSINGS

THE UK and France have agreed a new deal to try to stop people crossing the English Channel in small boats.

Tens of thousands of people travel from France to the UK every year in small boats, which can be very dangerous.

Under the three-year plan, France will send more police officers to its coast to stop boats leaving. The UK will give up to €766 million (£664m) to support this, although some of the money depends on whether the plan works.

Last year, 41,472 people reached the UK illegally in small boats.

Some charities warn the plan could make journeys even more dangerous.

Steve Valdez-Symonds from human rights charity Amnesty said: "Yet again, millions are being poured into diverting journeys rather than addressing why people are forced to make them. People cross the Channel to escape conflict, persecution [cruel treatment] and extreme hardship. They turn to smugglers and dangerous routes because safe alternatives are denied to them."

"If the UK government is serious about reducing unauthorised crossings, it must provide safe routes and work with others to do the same."

Anyone with a home or school subscription can access the **First News app**. Just use your **Web ID** or **First News Education ID** and you're away!



CHILDREN'S BOOKER PRIZE



The Children's Booker Prize 2027 has officially launched – and you could be on the judging panel! The search is on to find three UK-based child judges aged 8 to 12 to help with the judging process and win exclusive prizes from *Beano!*

You'd be joining the UK's Children's Laureate Frank Cottrell-Boyce, actor Lolly Adefope and children's bookseller Sanchita Basu De Sarkar. The prize celebrates the best modern fiction for children aged 8 to 12. See tinyurl.com/bookerchildjudge.



● BANK HOLIDAY MONDAY 4 MAY

It's a public holiday across the UK, giving lots of people a lovely long weekend! What are you doing?



IT'S ELECTION WEEK!



Keir Starmer will be watching closely!



SCOTLAND, Wales and Northern Ireland have DEVOLVED powers. This means that instead of the UK government in Westminster, their national governments control lots of things that affect daily life in their own country. These include NHS services and education in schools.

IT'S a big week in politics as Britain heads to the polls to vote in national and local elections on Thursday 7 May.

It's the biggest set of elections since the 2024 general election, which saw Labour return to government.

This week's elections won't affect who sits in the House of Commons, but they could see big changes in Scotland and Wales. Voters there will be choosing who sits in the Scottish Parliament and Senedd (Welsh Parliament) and governs each country for the next five years. The leader of each government is known as the First Minister.

In Scotland, the Scottish National Party has been in power since 2007, and is hoping to win a fourth election with its latest leader John Swinney. In Wales, Welsh Labour is in power, and the First Minister is Eluned Morgan.

Local issues

In England, this week is about choosing who will sit on

local councils and run things such as roads, transport, bins and libraries. There are nearly 5,000 seats up for grabs in 136 of the 317 local councils around the country.

There are also seven contests for mayor, in Croydon, Hackney, Lewisham, Newham, Tower Hamlets and Watford, which are all in or near London.

These elections across England, Scotland and Wales are also important because they can reflect how voters are feeling about each party, and suggest how they might vote in the next general election. This means a bad day for Labour could put pressure on Prime Minister Keir Starmer.

Should history be reformed?



Reform UK thinks pupils should be more proud to be British and celebrate figures like Winston Churchill

POLITICAL party Reform UK says that schools should put up Union Jacks and pictures of King Charles III, and change the way they teach history.

Nigel Farage's party claims that history lessons are too "progressive" at the moment, and pupils are taught to feel "shame" in Britain. It says that schools should be teaching "patriotic" lessons to restore "national pride".

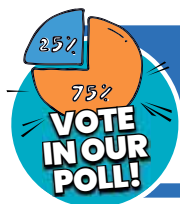
It adds that if it won a general election and came to power, then within 100 days, 60% of history lessons would focus on Britain, covering topics like Magna Carta, the Wars of the Roses and the Victorians. It would step in if any schools didn't follow the rules.

Its education leader, Suella Braverman, said that this would "rekindle national pride and ensure that every child leaves school with an understanding of what a privilege it is to be British."

The latest curriculum, drawn up in 2013, teaches secondary pupils "how Britain has influenced and been influenced by the wider world".

Jonny Walker, an author and teacher in East London, told *First News*: "British history has proud and shameful events, and pretending otherwise is dishonest and disrespectful to the intelligent minds of young students. Good education should be opening complex conversations, not closing them down."

Each of the four nations sets their own curriculum, so a general election win would only allow Reform to change England's curriculum.



Should schools teach both the good and bad of British history?

Vote at first.news/polls

Falling pupil numbers worry schools

SCHOOLS have asked for help from the Department for Education (DfE), as pupil numbers continue to fall.

Unfilled primary school places in England rose from 10% to 14% between 2018/19 and 2024/25. One reason is because the birth rate is falling, and another is that more parents are choosing to homeschool their children; in 2024, more than 111,000 children in England learned from home.

However, most school funding is based on pupil numbers, so the trend could give some schools money problems and impact education.

The National Audit Office (NAO), which checks how public money is spent, reports that by 2027, there could be 56,300 fewer primary pupils, leading to £288 million less in funding.

The DfE says it is starting to look at ways to manage the change, including reusing empty classrooms and encouraging schools to open nurseries.

The NAO has urged the government to do more to support schools to plan ahead and make the best use of spare space, so that all pupils continue to get a good education even as numbers fall.

First News says...



Ian Eddy, acting editor

WHEN our founding editor Nicky Cox started *First News* 20 years ago, I thought it was a fantastic idea but wasn't sure that it would last very long.

I'm pleased that I was spectacularly wrong and that we're still here two decades later, helping you all to understand what's going on in the world.

Whether you're here for the politics and world affairs, the science and nature, the sport and films, or just whichever stories about wee and poo that made us howl, we appreciate all of you picking up the paper every week.

And although I'll be retired in 20 years' time and you'll be too old for *First News*, hopefully one of my younger colleagues will still be here helping your children to make sense of the news.



The loan is seen as vital to support Ukraine in its war against Russia



Ukraine

UKRAINE will receive a new €90 billion (£78 billion) loan from the European Union (EU). The loan had been agreed in December, but Hungary's Prime Minister Viktor Orbán had delayed it in a row with Ukraine over oil supplies. Mr Orbán will be replaced by Péter Magyar this month, and the new PM is much more keen to work with the EU.



Cucurella's boss Liam Rosenior was sacked after the defeat



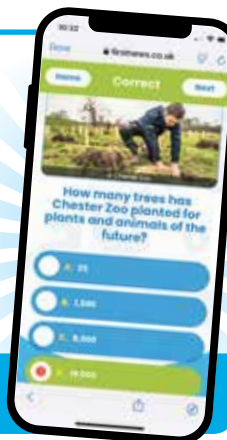
Cucurella's barber

THE barber of footballer Marc Cucurella (above) leaked Chelsea's top-secret team news ahead of their 3-0 defeat to Brighton last week. He posted a pic of himself cutting Cucurella's hair on X and wrote: "Palmer and João Pedro both injured tonight. There's your exclusive." He later deleted it.

CHECK OUT OUR WEEKLY QUIZ!

Test yourself on this week's news with the *First News* quiz, included with every subscription. Play it 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.





UN'S IRAN WAR HUNGER ALERT

UNITED Nations (UN) officials are urgently working to protect global farming from the war in the Middle East.

After the US and Israel attacked Iran on 28 February, Iran blocked the Strait of Hormuz, a shipping passage that is essential for global trade. As well as oil and gas tankers, the strait is also used by ships to transport one third of the world's fertiliser, meaning that farmers worldwide are facing major shortages and high prices.

Jorge Moreira da Silva, the executive director of the UN Office for Project Services, said: "The planting season has already started... if we don't get some solution immediately, the crisis will be very significant and severe – particularly for the poorest countries and for the poorest citizens."

Moreira da Silva is leading a UN plan to get fertiliser ships moving again; a temporary system to monitor, check and guide ships safely through the Strait, working with all sides to avoid conflict. He says this can be set up in seven days, as soon as UN member countries agree to set it up.

US and Iran talks break down

Last weekend, peace talks between US and Iranian officials in Pakistan were cancelled at the last minute. Iran said that the US is demanding too much. In response, Donald Trump (right) said: "If they want to talk, all they have to do is call."

The blocking of the Strait of Hormuz risks pushing

5
Usually, over 100 ships might pass through the Strait of Hormuz each day. Last Friday (24 April), just five did.



Sudan, Somalia, Mozambique, Kenya and Sri Lanka are at high risk

45 million more people into hunger and starvation, World Food Programme figures say. The World Meteorological Organization says extreme heat is also piling pressure on food systems, damaging crops and making it hard for farmers and livestock to cope.



Gunman at Trump dinner

Last weekend, a gunman was arrested at a **journalists' dinner** attended by **Donald Trump**. It's alleged that Cole Tomas Allen was seeking to attack Mr Trump and other senior officials. Mr Trump also faced two assassination attempts in 2024. Check our app for the latest updates.



JEWISH PEOPLE UNDER ATTACK

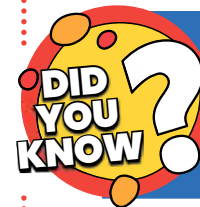
JEWISH people in the UK are moving overseas because of rising threats to their safety.

Government figures show that the number of British Jews who migrated to Israel in the past 12 months has doubled since 2023.

Reports of anti-Semitic attacks (attacks against Jewish people) in the UK have shot to record levels since the war in Gaza between Israel and Hamas broke out in October 2023.

Israel is a homeland for Jewish people, and some people are unfairly blaming Jewish people for the actions of Israel's government.

In a BBC investigation, Jewish people reported being spat at, threatened and called nasty names. One woman, Amanda, told the BBC she's now worried about wearing jewellery of the Star of David, a Jewish symbol, in public.



AS many as 80,000 Jews fled to the UK to avoid capture by the Nazis between 1933 and 1945. Today, there are around 300,000 Jewish people in the UK.

Last week, four people were in court charged with setting fire to four Jewish ambulances, and a 17-year-old boy pleaded guilty to an arson (fire) attack on a synagogue in northwest London.

A Tube driver is also being investigated after he said that Jewish people weren't safe on the London Underground while he's driving.

Rabbi Daniel Walker, from the synagogue in Manchester that was attacked last October, told the BBC: "There are lots of good people in this country, in our society, and I choose to believe... that society will become a better place."

High temperatures put Europe at risk



Europe is the fastest-warming continent on Earth

WILDFIRES burned the largest area of Europe's land ever recorded in 2025, as global warming hit the continent hard.

The *European State of the Climate 2025* report, by the European Centre for Medium-Range Weather Forecasts (ECMWF), says that rapid warming is shrinking the continent's snow and ice cover. In addition, its sea surface temperature was the highest on record, and in 11 out of 12 months, its river flows were below average.

This puts Europeans at risk, as well as the continent's animals and plantlife.

Samantha Burgess, from the ECMWF, said that the report paints a "stark picture" for Europe. She says efforts to protect our biodiversity should match the speed at which we are switching to clean energy.

At one point last Wednesday (22 April), just 2% of the UK's electricity supply came from fossil fuels, as the country continues to generate more from solar and wind power.

Record-breaking Robin!

A PLUCKY pair of pals have claimed a Guinness World Record after taking a three-wheeled car on the road trip of a lifetime!

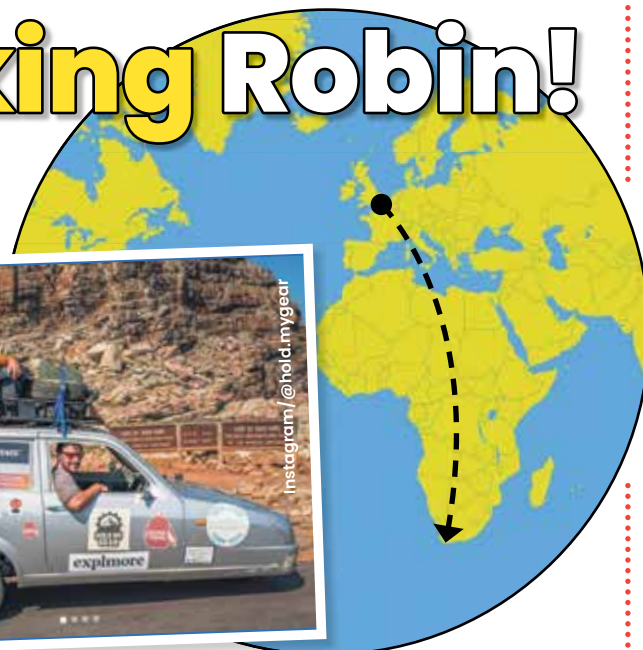
Ollie Jenks, from England, and Seth Scott, from Canada, drove an old silver Robin Reliant, nicknamed Sheila, from London to the Cape of Good Hope, at the bottom of the African continent. On their 120-day adventure, they crossed 22 countries, facing tropical jungles, hair-raising mountain roads and vast deserts, tracking their progress on an Instagram page with the tagline: "14,000 miles, 3 wheels, 0 common sense."

Robin Reliants were designed in Britain in the 1970s, and Sheila was one of the last built. Jenks said: "No power steering, no air con, and it doesn't do well up hills or down them. It is the most unsuitable car for probably any journey!"

Sheila overcame a broken gearbox, clutch trouble and a blown-up engine to roll into South Africa and complete the longest trip in a three-wheeled vehicle.



instagram/@hold.mygear



Buzz over to page 12 for another crazy bee story...

SOME bees change colour in humid (moist) weather, research has found.

Scientists at Queen Mary University in London and the University of California studied sweat bees (above) and found that their shiny bodies shift from deep blue to copper green when the air gets moist.

The team say the change is caused by tiny structures on the bees' bodies that reflect light. When there's more moisture in the air, these structures swell, altering the colour we see. Scientists say the effect may happen in lots of bee species, but more work is needed to understand how it works.


London, UK


CYCLISTS Cat Ferguson (Movistar Team, in the blue top) and Flora Perkins (Fenix – Premier Tech, red top) pose with young athletes outside Buckingham Palace. It's been announced that London will host the first ever team time trial in the Tour de France Femmes avec Zwift, with the world's best riders racing against the clock past iconic landmarks. The event takes place in 2027.

London, UK


THOUSANDS of people take to the streets for the TCS London Marathon. One of those taking part was Jordan Adams (inset) who ran with a 25kg fridge attached to his back. Jordan, who was running to raise money for dementia charities, dedicated his run to his mum. Spectators also saw Daddy Pig running with PE coach Joe Wicks, *Wicked* star Cynthia Erivo and cyclist Dame Laura Kenny.



Le Castellet, France



Getty

THE GEN4 Formula E race car takes to the track for the first time. Set to make its debut in the 2026/27 season, the powerful machine can reach speeds of 335km/h (208mph), and 0-100km/h in approximately 1.8 seconds. Its first run was at the iconic Circuit Paul Ricard in the south of France.

Edinburgh, UK



RZSS

PENGUIN chick season has officially begun at Edinburgh Zoo! Alison MacLean, animal team leader, said: "This is my favourite time of year. The chicks are so tiny at this stage, weighing the same as a small kiwi fruit." The chicks are now being weighed and monitored daily.



Getty

THAT'S one way to catch a ball! Los Angeles Dodgers stars Teoscar Hernández (left) and Alex Call collide, but Call held onto the ball!

San Francisco, USA

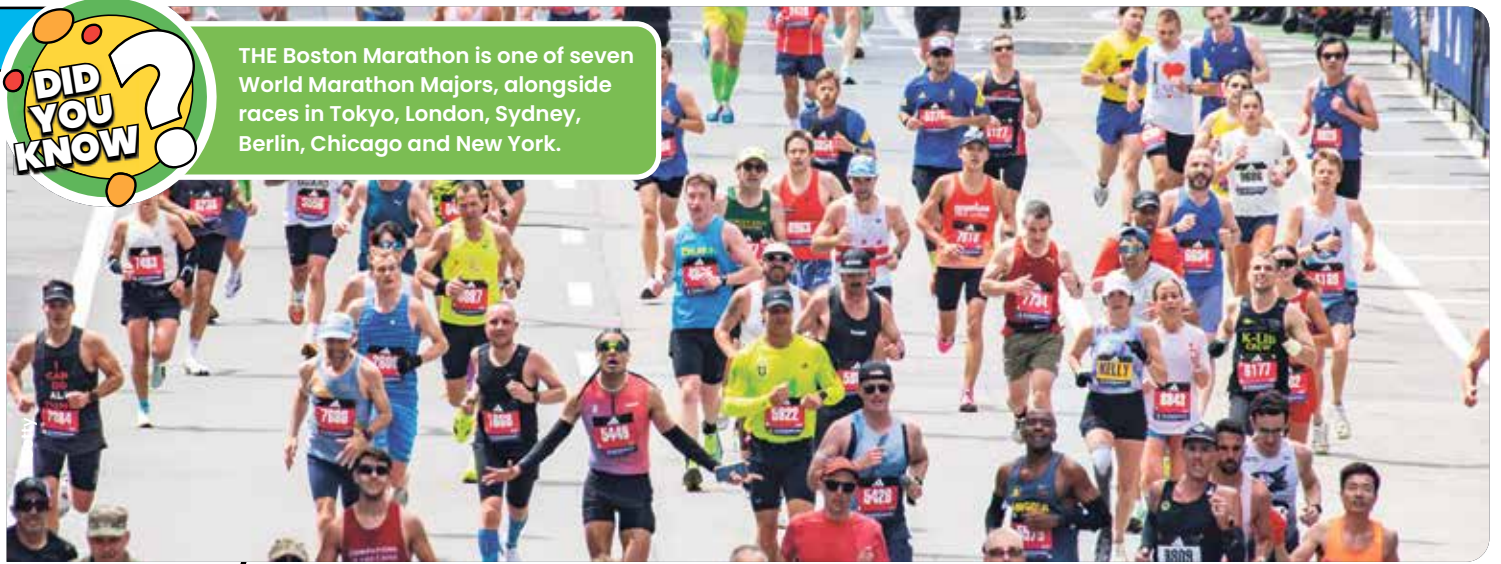


**BANGOR****We're all in this together!**

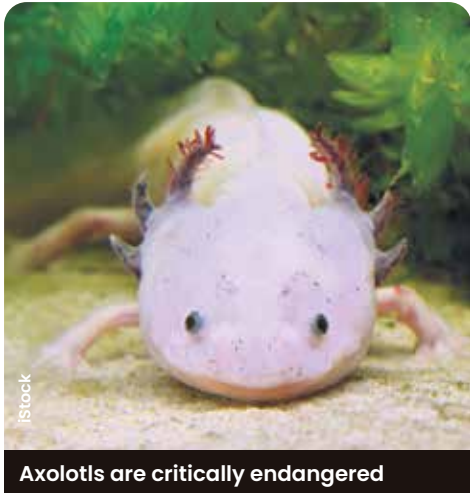
A runner from Northern Ireland stopped near the finish to help a struggling competitor at the Boston Marathon. Aaron Beggs, from Bangor, saw Ajay Haridasse fall close to the end of the race and went to help. Another runner, Robson De Oliveira, joined him, even though he was on track for a personal best time. Together, they supported Haridasse across the finish line. Beggs told the BBC that running a marathon is "a journey together," where people "help each other along". He added: "It's nice to be nice." The moment was filmed and quickly went viral online, with many praising the runners' kindness.



THE Boston Marathon is one of seven World Marathon Majors, alongside races in Tokyo, London, Sydney, Berlin, Chicago and New York.

**BRIDGEND****Girl spots rare axolotl**

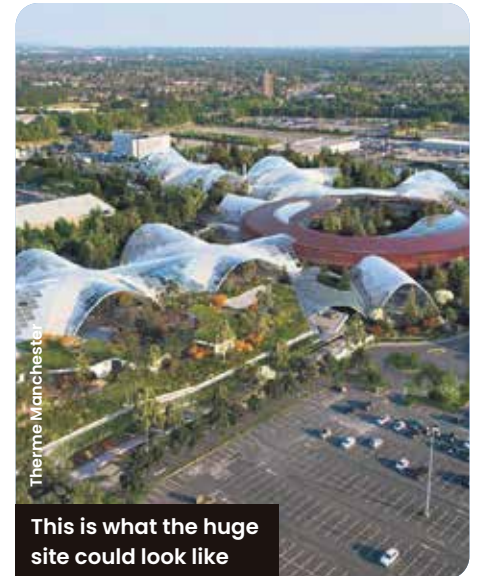
A ten-year-old girl found an endangered amphibian while playing in a river. Evie Hill discovered an axolotl in the River Ogmore in Bridgend – believed to be the first recorded sighting of one in the wild in the UK. Experts say there may be only 50 to 1,000 left in the wild in Mexico. Axolotls have become popular as pets after appearing in games like *Minecraft* and *Roblox*. Evie's mum, Melanie, told the BBC she was in "shock, surprise and disbelief". The family named the animal Dippy and took it home after expert advice that they could keep it. "I think it's a really nice change to the family," Evie said about having Dippy.



Axolotls are critically endangered

MANCHESTER**£500m water park plan**

A huge indoor water park is being built near the Trafford Centre in Greater Manchester. The £500 million Therme Manchester will include pools, water slides, gardens and spa areas. It will be about the size of 28 football pitches and kept at a toasty 33°C thanks to geothermal energy (pumping hot water from underground). Developers say it will offer spaces for families as well as adults-only areas. It is expected to open in 2028, and the owners claim it will create around 600 jobs and bring billions of pounds to the UK.



This is what the huge site could look like

CORNWALL**Bug adventure at Eden**

The Eden Project will host a minibeast-themed experience this May half-term. From 23–31 May, families can explore the world of Aardman's *Lloyd of the Flies* through a new interactive trail, including augmented reality challenges and paper-based activities across the gardens. There will also be crafts, character sculptures and hands-on sessions where visitors can meet real creatures, from giant snails to snakes and cockroaches. Visitors can also try a giant marble run, with more than 100 metres of tracks winding through the gardens.



Fun in the biomes



Quentin Blake Centre for Illustration

Quentin Blake (inset) has illustrated books like *Matilda* and *The BFG*

**LONDON****New centre for illustration**

A new centre devoted to illustration will open this summer, named after famous illustrator Quentin Blake. It will be the world's largest space focused on illustration, with exhibitions, gardens and free creative areas. Opening shows include *Quentin Blake: Performance*, featuring more than 100 original and rarely seen drawings. The centre's look includes colourful bird designs inspired by Blake's drawings. He said: "I have liked birds – to look at and to draw – ever since I was a child; and more recently I have found that if you need an extra note of colour, a small parrot or cockatoo is very useful." The Quentin Blake Centre for Illustration will open on 5 June.



A statue of Queen Elizabeth II will take pride of place in St James's Park

HONOURING QUEEN ELIZABETH II

All pics: Queen Elizabeth Memorial Committee

QUEEN Elizabeth II would have been 100 years old this year. To celebrate the life of the UK's longest-reigning monarch, big plans are in the works, with three exciting new projects set to be unveiled. The projects aim to make sure that the Queen's kindness and dedication to helping others are never forgotten.

What are the three big projects?

A new memorial garden in London:

Part of St James's Park will become a beautiful memorial with a new bridge, gardens and sculptures. The bridge is inspired by the sparkly tiara that the Queen wore on her wedding day in 1947.

● **The Queen Elizabeth Trust:** A new charity will help support and improve buildings and parks where people come together all over the UK. The government is giving £40 million to get it started, so that kids have great places to play and hang out.

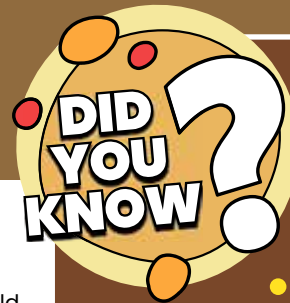


The bridge is designed to look like a jewel



The digital memorial:

A special website will act as a digital scrapbook where people from all over the world can share photos and stories of the Queen to keep her memory alive.



● The team is being very careful to protect wildlife in the park. They are moving eight trees out of harm's way and planting new wildflower meadows so that birds and bees have a happy home!

● One sculpture will be decorated with 56 national flowers and plants that represent the Commonwealth nations.

● Queen Elizabeth II was the Queen of the United Kingdom for 70 years – longer than any other king or queen in British history.

● She became Queen in 1952, when she was just 25 years old, and spent her whole life working hard to help people across the country and around the world.

● She met millions of people, visited more than 100 countries, and supported hundreds of charities. Her charities helped raise over £1.4 billion for the organisations she supported.



HOW TO GET INVOLVED

The memorial in St James's Park will be a place for families to relax and learn. You can also talk to your parents and grandparents and help them share a memorial on the digital memorial website.

Why not ask your parents and grandparents if they remember watching the Queen on television, or if she ever visited your town?

To keep up to date on the progress, you can search queenelizabethiimemorial.co.uk to see when you can visit.



A compass sculpture will be part of the memorial

ALEX HOLMES OBE, QUEEN'S YOUNG LEADER, SAID:

"Queen Elizabeth II spent her life showing the power of service, kindness and helping others. When I was a teenager, my work to tackle bullying was recognised by the Queen, and that is something I will never forget. She made her own promise at just 21 to dedicate her life to others, and she showed young people everywhere that you are never too young to make a difference."




HAPPY HEDGEHOG AWARENESS WEEK!

FROM 3-9 May, it's Hedgehog Awareness Week and you're invited to take the Hedgehog Pledge!

The annual campaign is run by The British Hedgehog Preservation Society (BHPS) and highlights all the threats hedgehogs face, as well as what we can do to help protect them.

Fay Vass from the BHPS said: "Hedgehogs are an important

indicator species – they don't need an awful lot to survive, so if they aren't coping well, it means the habitat is deficient [lacking] and that should ring alarm bells for other species, including humans."

The BHPS has now created a Hedgehog Pledge with seven practical steps that you can choose from to help our prickly pals. Or try them all!

THE HEDGEHOG PLEDGE

- Add more hedgehog highways (gaps in fences to allow safe access to habitats)
- Create, improve or protect a wild space with log piles and wild edges
- Always ask adults to check for hedgehogs before strimming, mowing or hedge cutting in the garden
- Go totally organic in your garden or allotment – pesticides and chemicals can be harmful to wildlife and destroy the food chain
- Be net savvy – make sure sports nets are put away!
- Provide water for wildlife all year round
- Become a National Hedgehog Monitoring Programme volunteer spotter! Visit nhmp.co.uk




MULTI-WORLD RECORD HOLDER!

ANEESHWAR'S WILDLIFE DIARY

ANEESHWAR Kunchala is an 11-year-old wildlife campaigner and officially the world's youngest newspaper columnist. He shot to fame as a finalist on *Britain's Got Talent* and is now a young documentary presenter. Check out Aneeshwar's column to discover all about his exciting wildlife stories!

HIDDEN WONDERS OF A CITY WALK



Aneeswar's snake art

I was having a walk in Washington, DC with my mum and dad. I love walking in nature, because there is always something interesting going on, and this day was no exception. I was slowly meandering on the path, trying to spot any unusual wildlife. Then I saw it – a scarlet bird, the size of a robin. It had a crest of thin feathers. I knew it was a cardinal, a beautiful bird that is common in North America. I was staring at that tiny, fluttering figure while I walked away. It was then that I noticed a twig on the ground, only it had large blinking eyes! It was actually a snake! Unlike some, I am fascinated by snakes and other reptiles. I did not realise immediately, but it was a beautiful garter snake, which was black with a yellow underside. Its black scales shone a shimmering blue in the afternoon light. Common garter snakes are mildly venomous but pose no real threat to humans.

Monkeys self-medicate



GIBRALTAR'S famous macaques have learnt to eat soil to prevent upset stomachs, scientists have claimed.

A new study led by the University of Cambridge says that the monkeys eat the soil on purpose because it helps them to feel better after eating too many sweet and salty snacks offered to them by tourists. The practice is known as geophagy.

Scientists believe that the chocolate, crisps and ice cream offered to or stolen by the monkeys is upsetting the natural range of bacteria in their stomachs. Eating soil may help to provide the bacteria and minerals that the animals need to prevent irritation in their bellies.



Pine hoverfly celebration



A WHOPPING 30,000 pine hoverflies have now been released into the Cairngorms National Park, the biggest national park in the UK.

The pine hoverfly is one of Britain's rarest insects and is classed as critically endangered in Scotland. It used to live in woodland habitats across the UK but is now restricted to a few sites within the Cairngorms.

Georgina Lindsay from the Royal Zoological Society of Scotland (RZSS) said: "The scale of our achievement really only struck me when we found out that 18,000 people live in the Cairngorms and we've now released almost twice as many flies!"

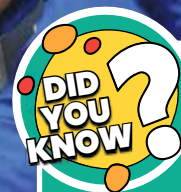
This project is part of the pine hoverfly conservation breeding programme.

20 YEARS AGO...

AUSTRALIAN zookeeper and TV presenter Steve Irwin, aka 'the Crocodile Hunter', was killed by a stingray while filming in the Great Barrier Reef.



ANOTHER ARTEMIS RECORD



TIANGONG is Chinese for 'heavenly palace' and the station's main section was sent into space five years ago. It now has three sections but will have six when it's finished.

AMONG all of the many cool things about NASA's Artemis II mission, there was one great fact that didn't get as much attention.

It was widely reported that the mission included the first woman, first person of colour and first non-American to visit the moon. The mission also saw humans travel further away from Earth than ever before, but did you know that it also set a record for the furthest distance ever between humans?

At the time of the Apollo space programme in the 1960s and '70s, there were no space stations in orbit around Earth, so the furthest humans from the spaceships were on our planet. For Artemis II, space

scientist Jonathan McDowell calculated that the people furthest from the crew were the astronauts on board the Tiangong space station, when it was on the opposite side of Earth.

McDowell calculated that they were separated by 419,643km (260,754 miles), which was a little bit further than the maximum distance between the Artemis crew and the International Space Station.

Talking to space.com, McDowell said the statistic is important because "it's the beginning of a shift from 'How far from Earth are our most distant people' to 'How spread out is human civilisation?' There may come a day when it's Mercury to the moons of Saturn."

The Artemis II crew, L-R: Jeremy Hansen, Reid Wiseman, Victor Glover and Christina Koch. They're holding Rise, the mission's zero-gravity indicator, which is used to show when a spaceship has escaped Earth's pull. Inside Rise was an SD card with the names of millions of people on it, so they could say they took part in the mission too!

Don't fear the fruit!

SOME people were a bit confused recently by a story in the news saying that eating fruit and vegetables could be causing lung cancer in young people.

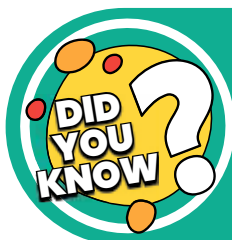
The news got people questioning whether they needed to change their diets. However, it's a classic case of how one science study doesn't always give the whole picture, and how not all studies are equally useful.

These results were presented at a conference, and involved just 187 people, which is quite small for this kind of study. The scientists said that pesticides could be to blame.

However, other scientists have criticised the results for lots of reasons. Cancer expert Professor Peter Shields says that the "well-known benefits for eating fruits and vegetables far outweigh" anything from this study, while Professor Justin Stebbing says the small number of people involved makes odd statistical flukes more likely. He says that we'd be better off carrying on eating as wide a variety of fruit and veg as possible, but to always wash it first.



Eating a variety of colours of fruit and veg gives you a broad range of nutrients



PESTICIDES are any substances used to kill pests, such as insects, weeds or fungi. They're not a new invention, as there's evidence that people in Mesopotamia (modern-day Iraq) were using sulphur to control insects around 4,000 years ago!



IN the week that the first issue of *First News* hit the shelves, the European Space Agency's Venus Express spacecraft reached its final orbit around the planet Venus. It carried on orbiting and investigating the planet's atmosphere for more than eight years, before it finally ran out of fuel and started to spiral to its doom in December 2014. Venus is sometimes called Earth's 'evil twin' because it's the hottest planet in the solar system and has clouds of sulphuric acid!

This report is from the Science Museum in London



THIS great watch was made for the Great Exhibition...

For centuries, London had been a global watchmaking capital, producing timepieces famous for their beauty and precision. It was only right that the industry took the spotlight in the Great Exhibition of 1851, a celebration of inventors and engineers backed by Queen Victoria and Prince Albert, which opened 175 years ago today.

Watchmaker Alexander Watkins rose to the challenge, creating this stunning engraved timepiece specially for the exhibition. Fittingly, this wasn't just any watch – as well as telling the time, it could also show the date, a rare feature at that time!

You can see this watch and discover more about the history of horology (the science of measuring time and making watches and clocks) in the Clockmakers' Museum at the Science Museum.



The watch made by Alexander Watkins for the Great Exhibition

Science Museum Group



 **USA**



Millions of bees were found under East Lawn Cemetery in Ithaca

An un-bee-lievable discovery!

A new study has revealed that a staggering 5.6 million regular mining bees were found living beneath a cemetery in Ithaca in 2023. That's one of the largest groups of bees ever recorded! The finding was part of new research that suggests some sites might hold far more ground-nesting bees than expected. Scientist Bryan Danforth says ground-nesting bees need far more protection as they are important pollinators and could be destroyed if we don't look after their nest sites, such as cemeteries. The study was published in the journal *Apidologie*.



 **SLOVENIA**



The contest takes place on 16 May

Slovenia joins Eurovision boycott

Slovenia's national broadcaster, RTV, has announced that it plans to air films about Palestine instead of the 2026 Eurovision Song Contest. Slovenia is one of several countries unhappy about Israel competing, due to the war in Gaza. Iceland, Spain, Ireland and the Netherlands have also withdrawn from the competition, although Dutch and Icelandic TV will still broadcast it.

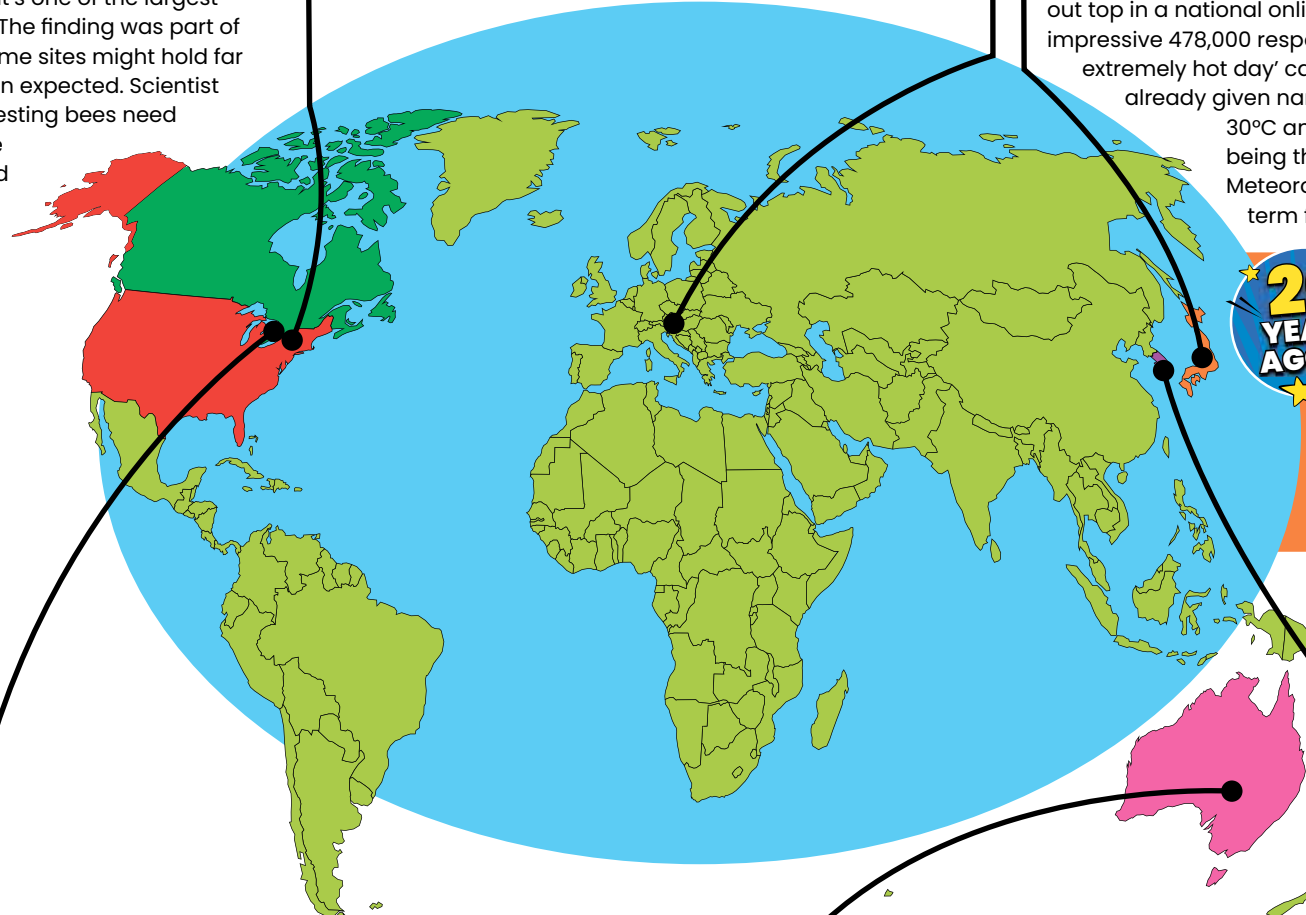
 **JAPAN**



New name coined for super-hot days

Japan has come up with a new name for hot days that reach 40°C or above: 'kokushobi'. The term means 'cruelly hot', 'brutally hot' or 'severely hot', and came out top in a national online survey, which attracted an impressive 478,000 responses from residents. 'Super extremely hot day' came in second place. Japan has already given names to days that reach 25°C, 30°C and 35°C, but with last summer being the hottest on record, the Japan Meteorological Agency needed a new term for extreme heat.

20 YEARS AGO... EUROPE experienced an exceptionally hot heatwave in the summer of 2006, with the Netherlands, Belgium, Germany, Ireland and the UK experiencing their warmest July since records began.



 **CANADA**



Drake's 25ft (7.6m) installation

Drake's giant ice sculpture melted

A giant ice sculpture paid for by rapper Drake to promote his new album has been melted down in Toronto. Firefighters were asked to start removing the installation after hundreds of fans started dangerously trying to break into it to find out the album's official release date, which was hidden in the middle. It's since been revealed that the album is called *Iceman*.



 **AUSTRALIA**



A typical 'pit toilet' in the Australian outback

Woman trapped for hours in poo

A woman got trapped in a pit full of poo for three hours after the floor of an outback toilet collapsed beneath her. She had been travelling from Darwin, in the north of Australia, back home to the capital city, Canberra, with her husband and two children. An eyewitness told NT News that the hole was filled with wee, poo and nappies. Eventually, a passing tradesperson was able to lower a rope down to the woman to pull her free. She was taken to hospital but suffered no serious injuries.

 **SOUTH KOREA**



Two F-15K fighter jets like these came into contact

Jets collided as pilots took photos

Motorists are told not to use their phone while driving, and that's probably good advice for fighter pilots, too. A report has found that in 2021, two F-15K fighter jets crashed into each other because the pilots were taking photos, selfies and videos. Thankfully, the pilots weren't hurt in the incident but the planes cost a huge 880 million won (£440,500) for the military to repair. One of the pilots was made to pay a fine for his behaviour and the air force was told to put rules in place for pilots using personal cameras.



Marco Pilloni is the head chef of The Grove Primary School

SCHOOL DINNER UPGRADE?

Matt Round Photography

THE government wants to change the rules about what food schools serve, so the adults around you need to hear what you think. Here's everything you need to know.

■ The lowdown

If you've ever looked down at your lunch tray and thought: "This could be so much better", it's good to know that something important is happening right now.

The UK government has launched an official consultation on new school food standards in England, which are the rules that decide what schools have to serve at mealtimes. Parents, teachers and school governors are being asked to respond, and what they say will shape what ends up on your plate.

School food standards haven't had a proper update in over a decade, and a lot has changed since then. Scientists and nutrition experts now know much more about what children's bodies

and brains need to learn well, stay healthy and have energy throughout the day.

■ What would change?

The proposed new standards aim to make sure that every child gets a nutritious, balanced meal, no matter which school they go to. The plans include clearer rules about how much fruit, veg, protein and whole grains should be on offer, and aim to cut down on food that is high in sugar and salt.

But here's the catch: many schools are working with very tight budgets. That's why the consultation matters; it's a chance for schools to explain what they need, and for everyone to help shape a plan that works in the real world.

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

You can't fill in the consultation yourself, as it's designed for adults and institutions. But your voice still matters. Talk to your parents, your teachers, or your school council. Tell them what you actually want from your school lunch.

- What's missing?
- What would make you more likely to eat it?
- What would you swap?

The adults around you are the ones who can respond, but you're the ones who eat the food every day. Make sure they know what you think, because when it comes to school food, every opinion on the lunch menu counts.

ONE SCHOOL SHOWING IT CAN BE DONE

THE Grove Primary School in Totnes, Devon, is ready to adopt the new standards – and the results might surprise you.

Their head chef is Marco Pilloni, a former Michelin-starred chef who once cooked for the Queen. Working with food charity Chefs in Schools, Marco has made nutritious food feel completely normal, and sometimes that's meant getting creative in unexpected ways.

Take chips. When Marco



Hilary (second right) is the head teacher of The Grove

tried making oven chips the traditional way, they came out terribly. So instead of faking it, he invented something better:

steam the potatoes first, then roast them at high heat so they go properly crispy. The result? Something pupils actually prefer to chips. That's the approach he brings to everything: not restriction, but reinvention.

Puddings have changed too. Instead of cakes and biscuits, pupils now get fresh fruit like watermelon and berries. And rather than feeling like a downgrade, it's become the new normal.



"The kids are a blank canvas," says Marco. "Because we had already established a culture of real food, they didn't see these changes as a restriction. It just became the new normal."

20 YEARS OF FirstNews



IT'S a very big week for us at *First News*, as we're celebrating our 20th birthday!

Just imagine, 20 years. That's 240 months... 1,043 weeks... 7,306 news-filled days.

We launched our first issue (pictured) on Friday 5 May 2006, when the world was a very different place.

On the right, we look at what was happening on our planet then and compare it to today, but we shouldn't forget the incredible events that have taken place in between. Below is just a snapshot of five major events that we've covered over the years.

And yes, 20 years is a long time. Even your fully-grown parents and teachers could be among our ex-readers. But now, we're in your hands! But hey, try this quickly – turn a few pages over. Go on, try! Did you hear them creak? No, you did not.

Your weekly *First News* is as crisp and fresh as ever, presenting you with must-know stories from around the world, helping to give you the knowledge and power to make a difference, whether that's today or another 20 years ahead!



2012

Olympic Games

London welcomed the world for a glorious summer of sport as it hosted the 30th Olympic Games



2016

Brexit referendum

The public voted on whether they wanted the UK to stay in the European Union or leave. Leave won by a whisker!



2018

Thai cave rescue

Twelve boys and their football coach were rescued after getting trapped in a flooded cave for 17 days



2022

Death of the Queen

Queen Elizabeth II passed away after a record 70 years on the throne and was succeeded by her son, King Charles III



2020

Covid-19 pandemic

The world was struck by a global pandemic that killed millions and forced us to stay at home to stop the spread

Look how part of the London skyline has changed!



2006
When our first issue hit the shelves, David Cameron was in his tenth year as prime minister. Donald Trump (left) was the millionaire

6.0

In 2006, Pluto lost its status as a planet, Serbia and Montenegro and, like today, there was conflict in the Middle East. In the summer of 2006, there was a war in Lebanon – one against fighters from Gaza, and one in Lebanon



In the US, a 16-year-old Taylor Swift released her debut album. In the UK, Coldplay won the best album award. The film *The Meltdown* spent the most

When you talk about May 2006, you're talking about a world before Facebook. The social media platform called Twitter was preparing to launch in July. The PlayStation 2 was the top console, although in November, Sony released the PlayStation 3

Chelsea, powered by players like Frank Lampard (right), won a Premier League title. Other clubs included Bolton, Wigan and Charlton (who all finished above Manchester City). In Italy, women claimed a league and cup double, and Italy won the World Cup

The global temperature was around 0.65°C higher than in 1980. In 2006, the World Meteorological Organization remarked that it was the sixth warmest year since records began. In 2006, scientist David Parker called it an "extraordinary year"



20'S PLENTY!
Like *First News*, these stars were also born in 2006 and turn 20 this year...



All pics: Getty and iStock

2006

...s, Labour's Tony Blair had just entered
Across the Atlantic, a certain Donald
host of the TV show *The Apprentice*.



WORLD LEADERS

Mr Trump has leapt from the TV screen to the world stage and is mid-way through his second term as president. In the UK, the Conservatives held power for 14 years between 2009 and 2024, but now Labour are back under Prime Minister Keir Starmer (right).



2026

7 BILLION

GLOBAL POPULATION



8.3 BILLION

...egro split into two separate countries
...mmer, Israel fought two brief conflicts
against the terrorist group Hezbollah.



MAKING THE HEADLINES

Tensions have peaked again across the Middle East, and the US and Israel are at war against Iran. The world was united in wonder, however, at NASA's Artemis II mission to the far side of the moon last month, as the astronauts urged us to appreciate our planet.

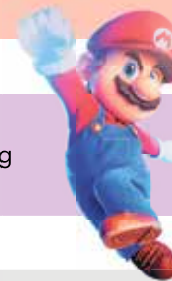
...Swift (left) released her debut album.
...song and album at the BRITs, and *Ice*
weeks at the top of the UK box office!



MOVIES AND MUSIC



The Super Mario Galaxy Movie tops the UK box office. And it's not a male group but female solo artist Olivia Dean dominating the awards! And what's become of young Taylor Swift? She's a billionaire, and the richest female musician in the world.



...before the iPhone. A new social media
...PlayStation 2 and Nintendo DS were the
...the PS3 and Nintendo launched the Wii.



TECH UPDATES



Twitter is now X and has been joined by Instagram and TikTok, with governments worldwide planning social media bans for kids to curb smartphone addiction. The world is increasingly powered by AI and last month, a robot won the Beijing Half Marathon.

...Premier League that
...Man City!). Arsenal's
...the 2006 World Cup.



FOOTBALL FOCUS



Lampard has just celebrated another title – this time as boss of Premier League-bound Coventry! Man City's men and women are both in the hunt for their league titles, as football gears up for a 48-team World Cup (without Italy!) in the USA, Canada and Mexico.

...the 1901–2000 average, and scientists
...records began in 1850. Met Office climate
...ordinary" year for the UK's temperature.



HEALTH OF THE PLANET

The global temperature is now closer to 1.3°C above the 20th century average. Extreme weather events like cyclones, floods and droughts have become more common, too – but the deforestation in the Amazon rainforest is slowing down and countries are investing far more in cleaner energy.

...milk was 35p, a Cadbury Freddo was
...and unleaded petrol was 96p per litre.

THE WEEKLY SHOP



A pint of milk is 85p, a Cadbury Freddo is 35p and unleaded petrol is 157p per litre – although that's shot up recently as a result of the ongoing war in Iran.



The average UK house price has rocketed from £163,000 in 2006 to £270,000 today.



Kimi Antonelli
● F1 driver
● Born: 25 August



Grace McKenna
● *Ghostbusters* actor
● Born: 25 June



Miles Lewis-Skelly
● England footballer
● Born: 26 September



Jacob Tremblay
● *Luca* star
● Born: 5 October



LEGO SOARS INTO SPACE

Ryland and Rocky go on another space adventure



Sent into Space

A LEGO astronaut has taken a record-breaking trip into space.

The model, based on new film *Project Hail Mary*, included mini figures of teacher-turned-astronaut Ryland Grace and his alien friend Rocky. It was launched by British company Sent Into Space using a balloon, before safely returning to Earth.

The set reached 34,988 metres (114,790 feet) – about three times higher than a plane flies – in a feat confirmed by Guinness World Records.

Dr Chris Rose, Head of Projects at Sent Into Space, said: "Getting the chance to incorporate a LEGO build into the spacecraft development process made this one a whole heap of fun."

In the film, science teacher Ryland Grace, played by Ryan Gosling, wakes up on a spaceship light years from home, with no idea who he is or how he got there. As his memory returns, he realises his mission: to save the Earth from extinction.

Check out footage of the LEGO in space on the *First News* app!

Giant killer octopus?!

ANCIENT octopuses could grow as long as a bus and hunt like top ocean predators, scientists say.

A study led by Hokkaido University and published in *Science* suggests early relatives of today's octopuses may have reached nearly 20 metres long and sat at the top of the food chain around 100 million years ago.

Scientists studied fossil jaws using AI and found signs of strong, repeated bites, showing they crushed hard prey.

Professor Yasuhiro Iba said the wear revealed an "unexpectedly aggressive feeding strategy".

The findings suggest these ancient octopuses were active and powerful hunters – and may even have been surprisingly clever for their time.



Yohhei Utsuki, Department of Earth and Planetary Sciences, Hokkaido University

The giant octopus could've looked like this

JOKE OF THE WEEK

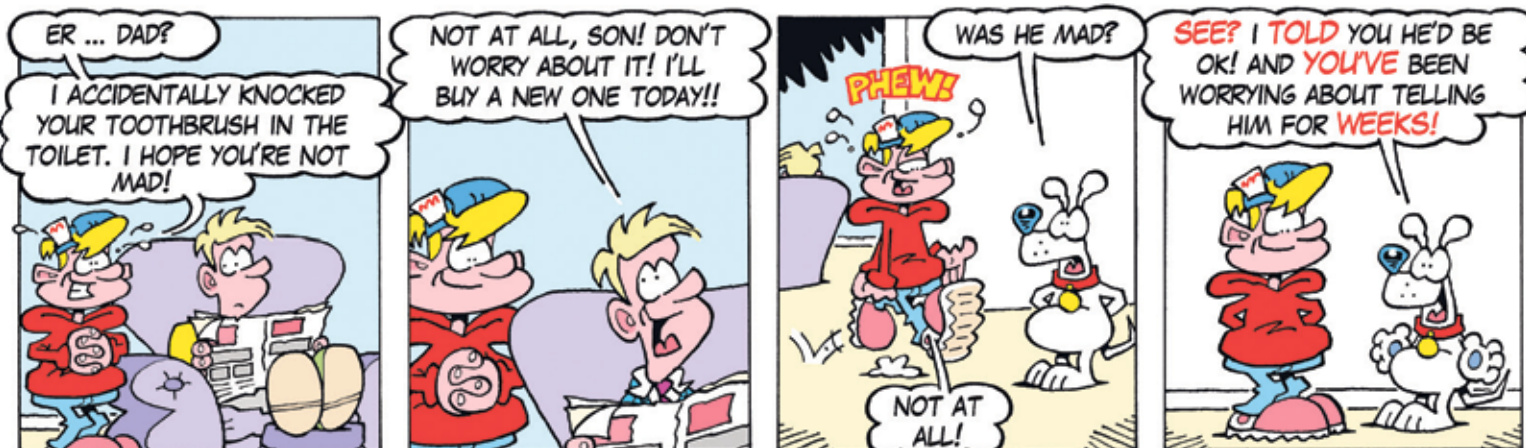
haha
haha

Why did the octopus beat the shark in a fight?
Because it was well-armed!



Paper Boy!

Written and illustrated by Paul Palmer





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.

STAR WARS GETS ROYAL TREATMENT

QUEEN Camilla is set to join the cast of a new *Star Wars* movie. The royal is said to love the sci-fi franchise and enjoys watching the movies with her grandchildren. She'll play a majestic character in the latest instalment, but all other details are being kept under wraps.

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



May the Fourth be with you!



This story is **FAKE**. Queen Camilla has not shown an interest in *Star Wars*. Although it's been reported in the past that *Star Wars* movie producers wanted to film in Windsor Great Park but the request was rejected.

IN NEXT WEEK'S ISSUE!

DAVID ATTENBOROUGH'S BIG BIRTHDAY!

THE SHEEP DETECTIVES

AUTHOR STEPHEN MANGAN

Do you want to write for **FirstNews**?

JUNIOR JOURNALIST

Send us your reports at yournews@firstnews.co.uk
or see our list of opportunities at first.news/junior-journalists



OUT OF THIS WORLD!



WANT to see the world through the eyes of an astronaut? Music composer Ilan Eshkeri has worked with the European Space Agency to create an amazing *Space Station Earth* experience. We caught up with Ilan to find out more...

What can people expect from the show?

You feel like you're flying in a spaceship, looking at Earth just like an astronaut. The show is huge, with lots of musicians and real footage of our planet filmed by astronauts, so it's not just a concert, it's like you're on a journey through space. There are moments that make your skin tingle and others as exciting as a rocket launch. I want people to feel amazed and see how beautiful and fragile our planet is.

What different instruments are being used to bring it to life?

I've mixed electronic and organic instruments. Synthesizers create that feeling of space and technology, while strings, brass and voices bring the emotion, from quiet moments to huge, powerful sounds. The music really brings those astronaut experiences to life.

How does the music work with the footage to transport the audience?

I wrote the music first, then made the visuals move

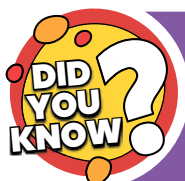
with it across three huge screens – it's much bigger than a normal cinema. As the sound grows, the images expand – you've got real weather systems moving, city lights glowing, the thin atmosphere around Earth. The music lets you feel big emotions with the amazing images.

How did you get your inspiration for this?

This piece started with visiting NASA and meeting astronauts, asking them what it feels like to see Earth from space. I also saw a real rocket launch and even experienced zero gravity myself! I took those experiences and experimented with music until it felt just like them.

Why is spaceflight still so fascinating to people?

Spaceflight lets us see something we can't normally see – our whole planet at once – and that can change how you think. *Space Station Earth* is about realising we're not just passengers, but part of the crew looking after our planet and each other. At the concerts, you can join the crew with a Kids Crew space patch designed by the same people who make real astronaut patches.



ILAN has composed the music for films, television, videogames, theatre and live performances. He's worked with Coldplay and Sir David Attenborough!

Space Station Earth is touring the UK with shows in Glasgow, London, Birmingham and Manchester. To book tickets, visit comm.tix.to/spacestationearth

BITE-SIZED NEWS



Star Wars: The Mandalorian and Grogu is coming!

The final trailer and poster for *Star Wars: The Mandalorian and Grogu* have been released. In the film, the evil Empire has fallen and Imperial warlords remain scattered throughout the galaxy. As the New Republic works to protect everything the Rebellion fought for, they ask for the help of legendary Mandalorian bounty hunter Din Djarin and his young apprentice Grogu. The movie is set to hit cinemas on 22 May!



Wrestling movie to be turned into musical

The wrestling movie *Fighting With My Family* is being turned into a stage musical! The 2019 film starring Dwayne 'The Rock' Johnson tells the true story of British pro wrestler Saraya Bevis, otherwise known as WWE's Paige (above). The musical will hopefully arrive in 2027, with Johnson saying that "no doubt it will be an absolute blast for theatregoers". We can't wait!

GET INTO FILM WITH INTO FILM!

EACH month, education charity Into Film will share some exciting opportunities for children and young people, putting film at the heart of their learning. We'll also share some top film recommendations to watch at the cinema and in the classroom on educational streaming platform Into Film+.



ONE of the most exciting film awards ceremonies of the year, and one that celebrities tell us is their favourite, is not the Oscars or the BAFTAs but the Into Film Awards, because it celebrates the brilliant film-making achievements of children and young people just like you.

This year's awards received hundreds of entries from every corner of the UK, across categories ranging from animation to documentary to review writing. The amazing number of entries – and the unbelievable quality of them all – made the selection process harder than ever, and once again serves to demonstrate the phenomenal passion, creativity and talent of young people in the UK and those who support them.

The nominated films' stories range from light-hearted comedies to thought-provoking films and documentaries, such as being a Ukrainian refugee in *Lost Youth*; staying safe online in *Navigating the Net*; youth mental health in *Seven Minutes*; tips for supporting young people with special educational needs in *SENDing Voices*; to female, Muslim identity in *Unveiled Voices*.

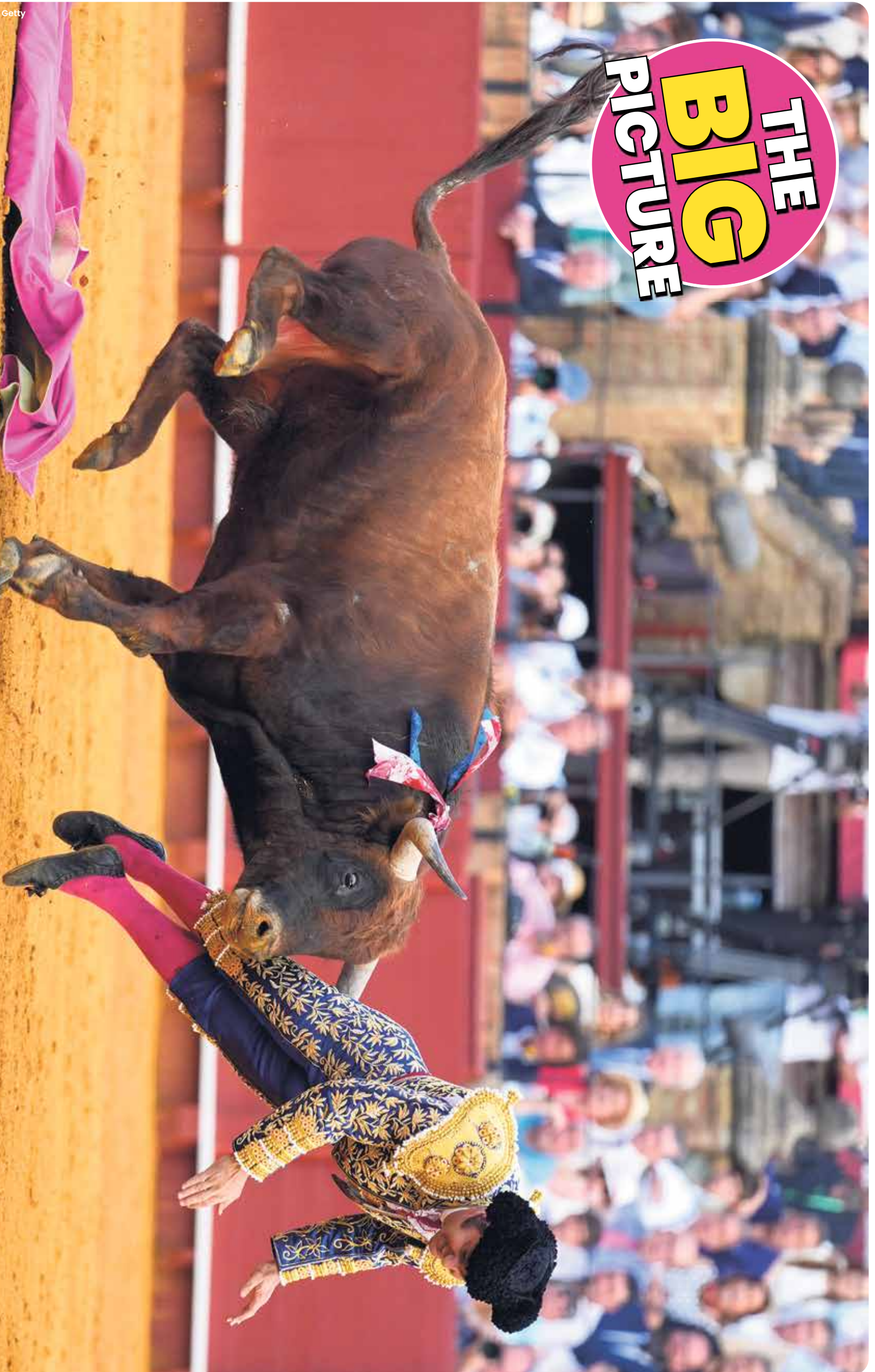
All of our nominees will be joining us at the Into Film Awards ceremony at ODEON Luxe Leicester Square in London on Tuesday 16 June 2026, where a host of film-making talent will be on hand to present the various awards to our eventual winners. Watch this space for more news and to discover which famous film stars gave our winners their prizes!

For further information about the Into Film Awards, head to intofilm.org/awards.

20 YEARS AGO...

A HOST of hit movies were released, including Disney Pixar's *Cars*, *Happy Feet* and *Pirates of the Caribbean: Dead Man's Chest*.

THE BIG PICTURE



Getty

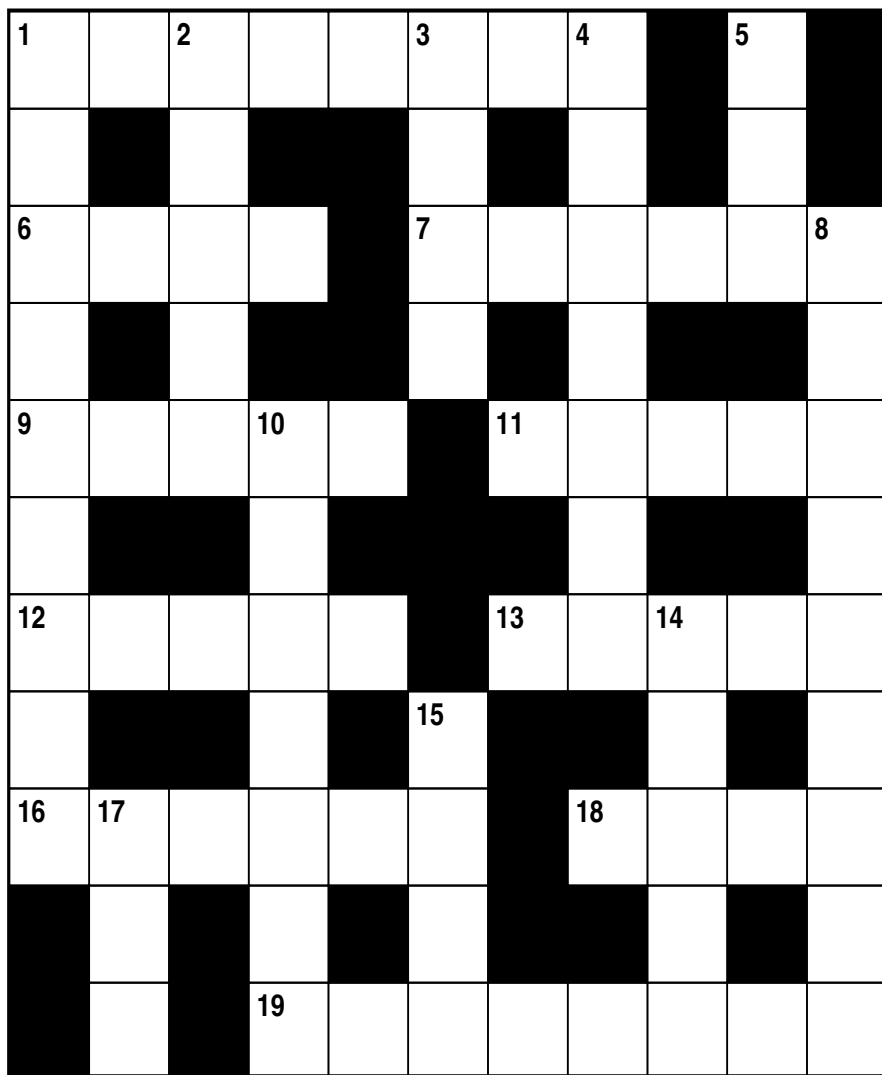
ANY readers who are a bit squeamish about gruesome injuries might want to skip this next bit and turn the page. The photo shows José Antonio Morante de la Puebla, one of Spain's most famous bullfighters, coming a bit of a cropper as a half-tonne bull called Clandestino gets the better of him. De la Puebla had only just come out of retirement, but probably now wishes that he'd carried on enjoying a nice bit of gardening. "I had a rather rough night," he said from his hospital bed, after surgery for a perforated rectum, which basically means the bull's horn went right up his backside. Animal rights group PETA said the injury was "a predictable result of an event built on violence. In the ring, fighters deliberately provoke, torment and mutilate [cut bits off] bulls in front of jeering crowds – and for the animals, the outcome is almost always far worse."

Around 180,000 bulls are killed in bullfighting around the world each year, and many fights involve men on horseback, so thousands of horses also lose their lives due to the severe injuries from a bull's horns.



CROSSWORD

CAN you solve our crossword puzzle using the clues below?



ACROSS

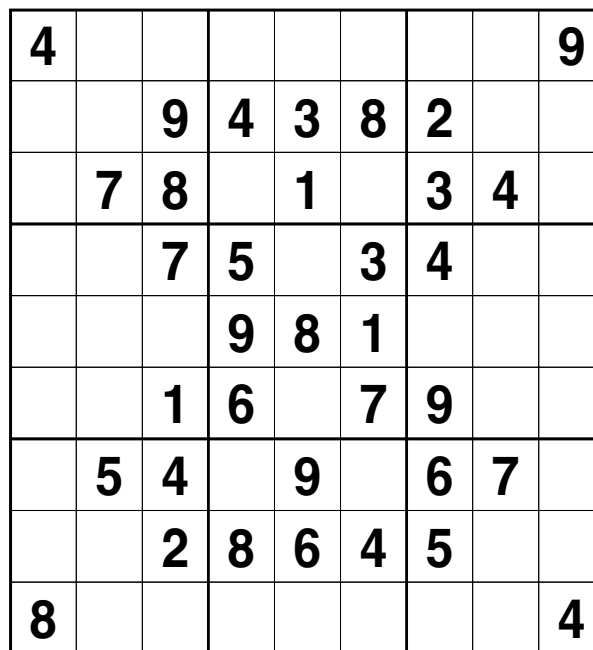
- 1) Global computer network you use to visit websites (8)
- 6) Light in colour (4)
- 7) Pointed piece of metal used for sewing (6)
- 9) Fast (5)
- 11) Item put on a letter before posting (5)
- 12) Type of fruit (5)
- 13) What you do at school (5)
- 16) Large striped cats (6)
- 18) Cab (4)
- 19) Feeling of uncertainty; tension (8)

DOWN

- 1) Of great significance (9)
- 2) Popular flower (5)
- 3) Eight plus one (4)
- 4) Playhouse (7)
- 5) Bird of prey (3)
- 8) Very dear; costly (9)
- 10) The experience of feeling unwell (7)
- 14) Once more (5)
- 15) Puts a question to (4)
- 17) Frozen; very unfriendly (3)

Sudoku

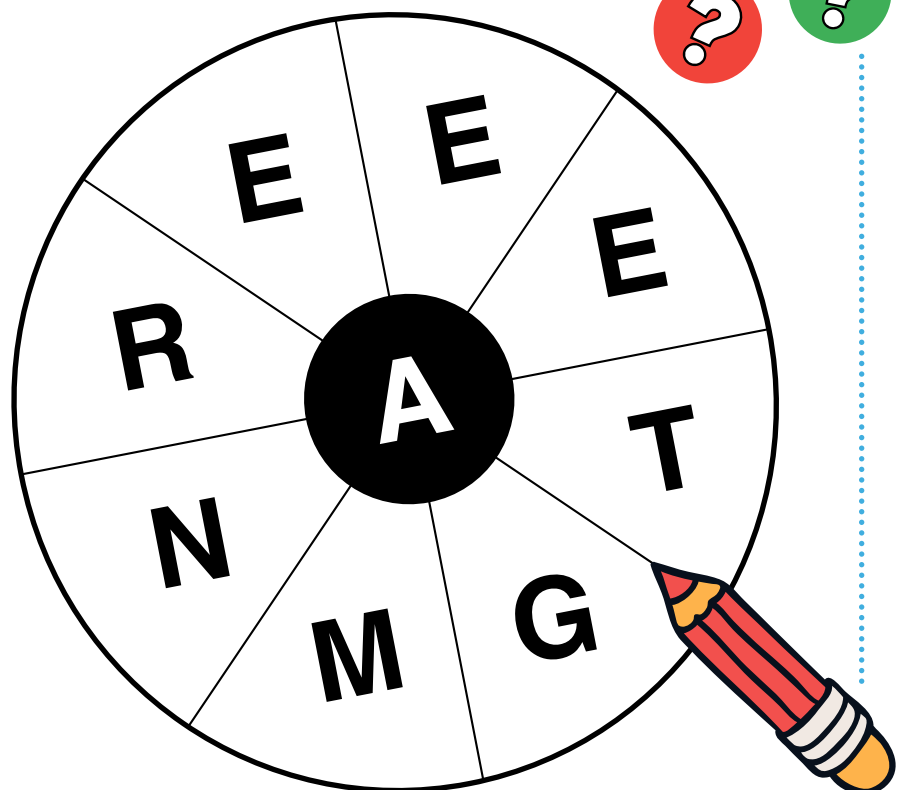
CAN you complete our sudoku puzzle, filling in the numbers one to nine?



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.

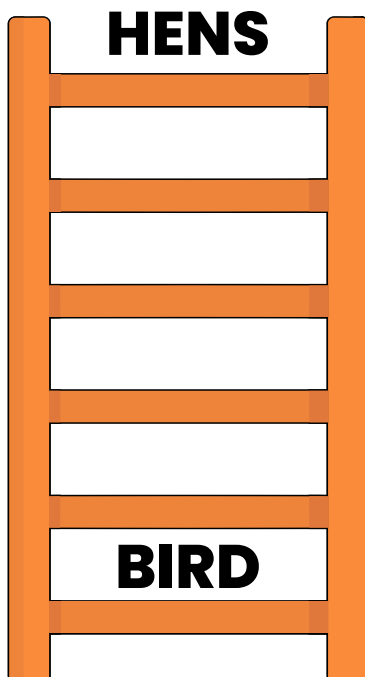
Word wheel

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?



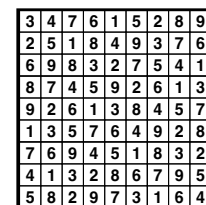
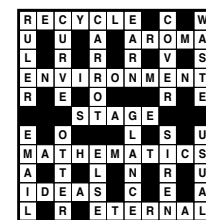
Word ladder

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 1,036 ANSWERS:

- Word wheel:** meanwhile.
Word ladder: feel, feet, meet, meat, moat, coat.
Spot the difference:
- 1) Image on screen missing
 - 2) Man's hair changed colour
 - 3) Gold record missing
 - 4) Man's shoe changed colour
 - 5) Extra handle on desk door
 - 6) Tile in roof different colour
 - 7) Extra speaker
 - 8) Girl's top has changed colour
 - 9) Wire missing off microphone
 - 10) Microphone head bigger.

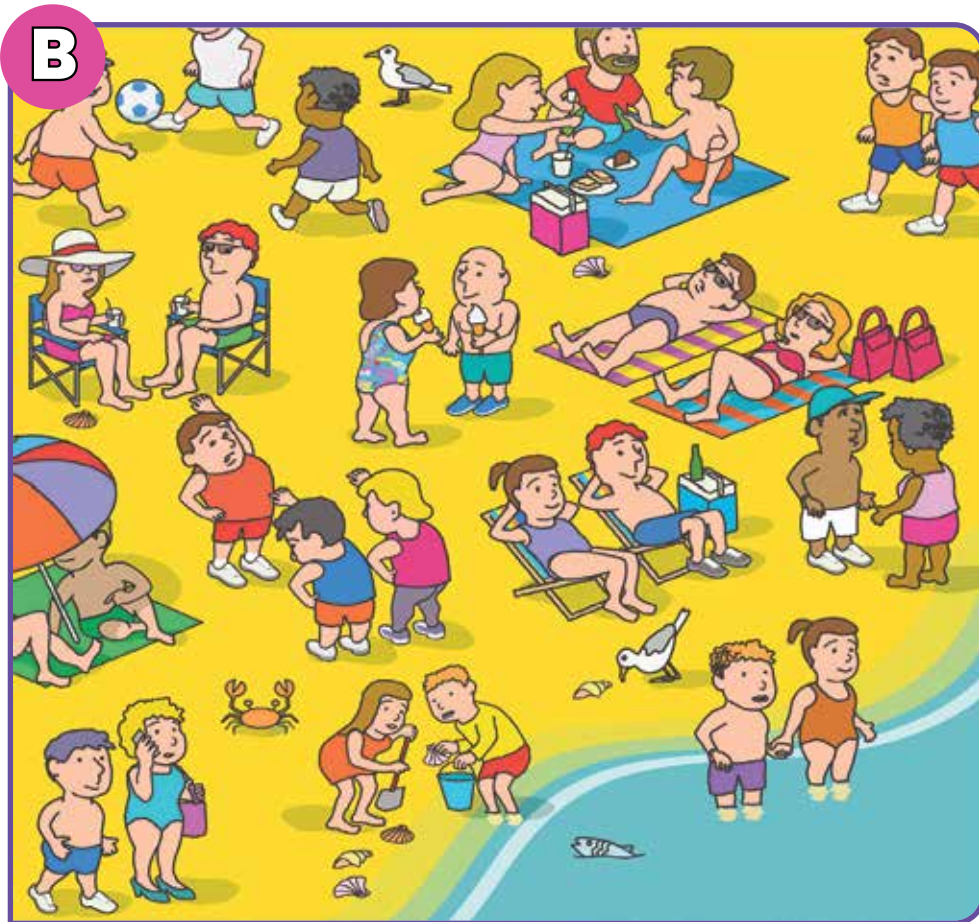
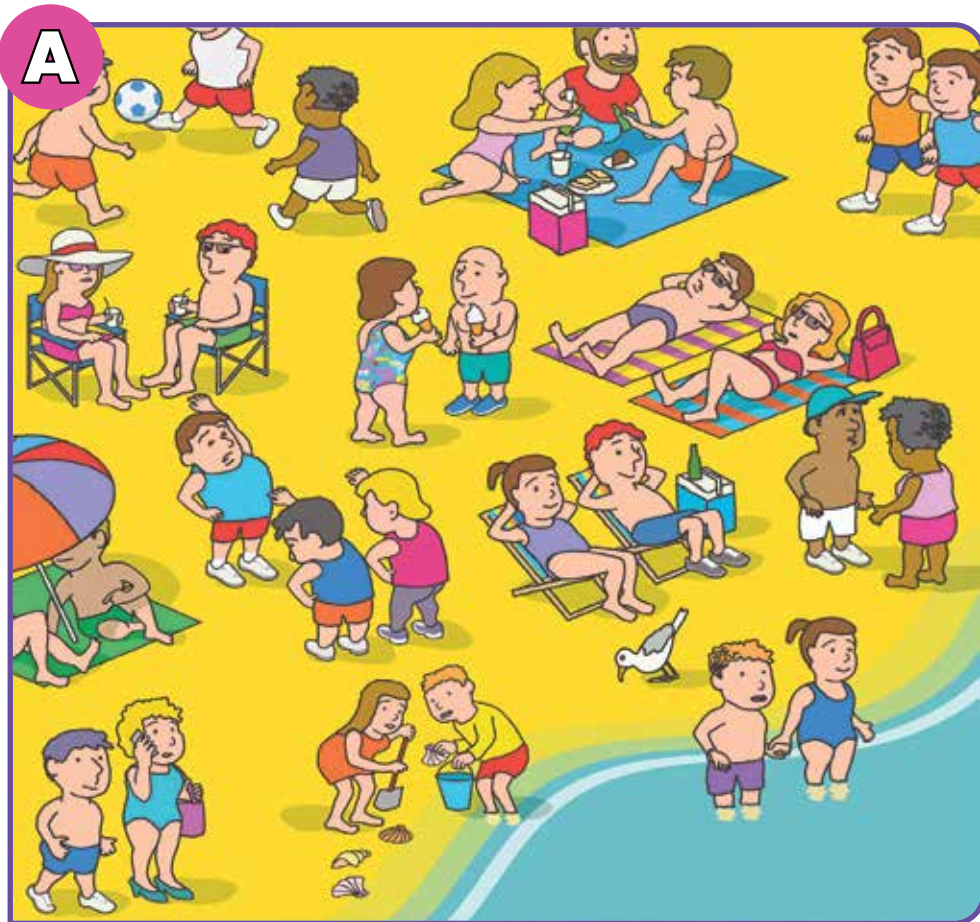


Enjoying the puzzles? See the *First News* app for more fun, quizzes and games! This QR code should be scanned by a responsible adult.



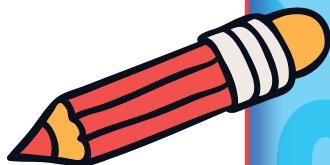
SPOT THE DIFFERENCE

CAN you find the ten changes we've made to this beach scene?



Wordsearch

CAN you find all of these activities? Tick them off as you go!



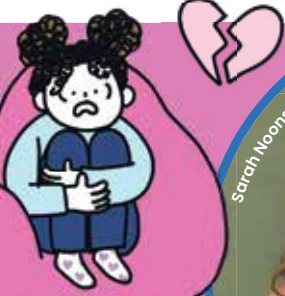
- Draw
- Craft
- Garden
- Swim
- Write
- Read
- Dance
- Cycle
- Cook
- Skate



o o v b t v u t f q n p k b n c n g t t s m r t k
 q g e l n q z y i m n d e q n s b d s k a t e r l
 c y c l e c q x t w j n i r t u r x p u n f w o w
 x h b x o m g k g q w n q l p n e p l e j h m r h
 q n w f q b l c o o k l t c z x a k d l l f s x v
 z z y i j u b o g l b n v r k n d r n q o z w s m
 j c g t m y z y m o g v y a w c a f p f i a o a o
 a l x i a f i f v m t v q f x g x y k h d c s r j
 h m w p m p j d l z z p h t s i a r n i w r e z r
 z s c f l m m s y x u x y u p b p a h w g z a f m
 a x r s f j l v a i s o s d m f m q g r a t q w y
 p s s v l u p d n f n g o e e j c y t i n p u i b
 y c k f n d p d t n l r i c z j l u c t d a n c e
 i w o h m e u n i f t l c d t f e d t e a j o r o
 b x n k q l n j r y d w y f m t k f n d j p h d n

HAPPY HACKS!

AUTHOR Nat Luurtsema tells *First News* how a 'happy list' that she scribbled down during the Covid-19 pandemic inspired a brand-new book series about a girl trying to survive school, family feuds and friendship dramas. Get ready to meet *The Overthinkers' Club!*



by Nat Luurtsema

I HAVE always had anxiety, it follows me around like a smelly dog and I resent it. (I wouldn't resent a real dog, to be clear, I would wash it.)

During the first Covid lockdown, when we were told to stay at home, I was stuck with nothing but my thoughts and worries and this was AWFUL. So I made a list of things that made me happy, or were scientifically proven to do so.

These all had to be things I could do from my room and that cost no money. And so, when I was looking at this list years later, I realised it would be perfect for younger readers as it's all practical, achievable daily habits to make you happier and less anxious.

I can't recommend backpacking across the world – you might have double maths after lunch, it's just not practical. My happy list is full of things you can try right now – you don't need time, money or to make any huge life changes.

Be like Birdie

My main character, Birdie, is 12 years old and she is working her way through her (my) happy list. For example, drinking water is on the list because hydration is proved to reduce irritability and boost joy. That's a habit you can start right now (I am reaching for my water bottle as I type. I never

drink enough water, it's like nothing juice, but I am TRYING).

Some items are more difficult, like living in the moment; emptying your mind of all your thoughts, allowing yourself no distractions – not even some music to soundtrack your living in the moment. It's so difficult! But it is a great way to feel happier and less anxious, it costs nothing and you can try it literally right now.

Find your happiness

Take a look at the list in *The Overthinkers' Club* and take anything you like from it, then add your own.

If you're struggling to identify what makes you happy, think ahead to what your plans are for the next couple of weeks and ask yourself, what are you looking forward to? And if the answer is 'nothing' then that's an answer too! Perhaps that means you find happiness in spending quiet time by yourself and doing nothing – a perfectly legit route to happiness, and one I use myself.

Good luck!

***The Overthinkers' Club: Happy List* by Nat Luurtsema, illustrated by Cécile Dormeau, is out now.**



Recommended reads

in partnership with Peters



Journalists

IT'S important that journalists are free to do their jobs! They write for newspapers or magazines to keep their readers informed and to hold powerful people to account. Here are some books about journalists to celebrate World Press Freedom Day on 3 May.

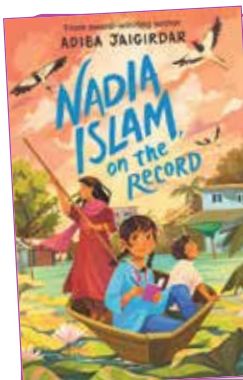


***Ajay and the Mumbai Sun* by Varsha Shah**

Orphan Ajay starts his own newspaper and hunts down the truth to fight for justice and save his slum from bulldozers.

***Good News: Why The World Is Not As Bad As You Think* by Rashmi Sirdeshpande**

Discover the amazing true stories around the globe that are making a positive difference among the disinformation.



***Nadia Islam, on the Record* by Adiba Jaigirdar**

Nadia Islam dreams of becoming a journalist. When she travels to Bangladesh with her notebook and pen, her reporting skills are really put to the test – has she got what it takes?

***Breaking News: How To Tell What's Real From What's Rubbish* by Nick Sheridan, illustrated by David O'Connell**

Join real-life journalist Nick Sheridan and get the inside scoop on the industry and how you can be a true newshound!



***Rani Reports on the Missing Millions* by Gabrielle and Satish Shewhorak, illustrated by Navya Raju**

Rani and her naughty Nani are on an eccentric millionaire's treasure trail! Can Rani avoid a dangerous nemesis and get the perfect scoop?

FirstNews

BOOK OF THE MONTH

May 2026



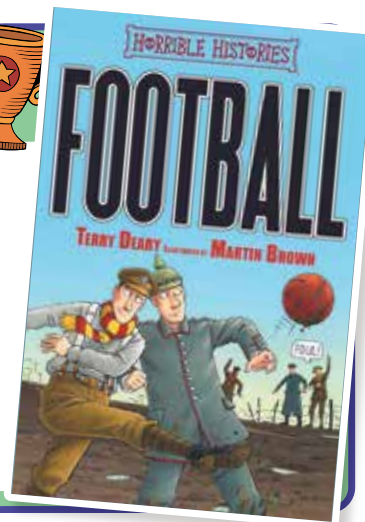
***Horrible Histories: Football* by Terry Deary, illustrated by Martin Brown**

LOTS of us enjoy PE and are fascinated by history, but what happens when those two subjects collide?

Terry Deary's new football-focused entry in his Horrible Histories series takes the beautiful game all the way back to its not-so-beautiful beginnings in the measly Middle Ages. Then, like a box-to-box midfield maestro, it covers every blade of

grass from awful injuries, silly supporters and wartime Christmas Day clashes.

You know what to expect from a Horrible Histories book – shocking stats, stomach-turning tales and side-splitting sketches from illustrator Martin Brown. If you like your sporting glory a little bit gory, find *Horrible Histories: Football* in bookshops on 7 May.



***Riley Wright is Always Wrong* by Mel Taylor-Bessent**

RILEY is funny, kind and the best person you can ever meet.

She moves to a new school, meets a student and they become BFFs. Also, Riley's dad is the head teacher, and Riley doesn't want anyone to find out!

Riley is very resilient and I think she will be relatable to lots of people out there. I loved this book, with its fun pictures and style. I miss reading it.

I'm sure this will be a favourite to lots of children, and you too might become Riley Wright's new BFF!

Review by Ada Robinson, aged eight



DID YOU KNOW?

IT'S National Share-a-Story Month! In 2026, the theme is Once Upon a Storytime. This is your chance to share a love of books and storytelling! Book groups, schools, libraries and individuals will be running a host of events throughout the month.



A **LANDMARK** is a building or place that is easy to recognise and helps people to know where they are. What are the landmarks in your town?

LONG-LOST LANDMARKS!

Illustrations: Franziska Höllbacher

ALL across the world, there are traces of our past.

Humans have been building structures for almost half a million years, starting with circles of stone and simple shelters to keep out the sun and rain. Bit by bit, we improved our skills, mastered different materials and got increasingly artistic, and today, our shimmering skyscrapers touch the clouds!

Some of the landmarks built centuries ago are the stuff of wonder – but sadly, not all survived. Here are five included in *The World's Last Mammoth*, a fascinating book about amazing things lost to time...

COLOSSUS OF RHODES

Location: Rhodes, Greece

This epic bronze statue of the sun god Helios towered 32 metres (105 feet) over Mandraki Harbour. People travelled from afar to see it, until it was toppled by an earthquake in 226 BCE. It lay there for 800 years and people took the bronze, piece by piece, until it was all gone.



THE tallest standing figure today is the Statue of Unity, in India. It depicts the politician Vallabhbhai Patel. It's an epic 182 metres (597 feet) tall, with lifts in the legs that take visitors up to a viewing platform!

HANGING GARDENS

Location: The ancient city of Babylon (Iraq)

One of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World, the lush Hanging Gardens were built in a desert and designed to remind Amytis, the wife of King Nebuchadnezzar II, of her distant homeland. They vanished in around 1 CE, and modern digs have found no trace of them.

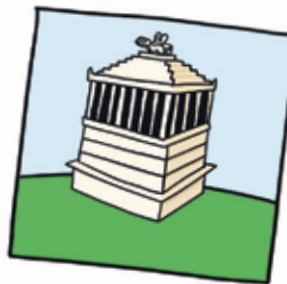


MASSIVE MAUSOLEUM

Location: Halicarnassus (now Bodrum, Turkey)

This grand marble tomb held the ashes of a king called Mausolus – that's how we get the word 'mausoleum' for a burial place! His wife and successor, Artemisia II, ordered it to be built after Mausolus' death in 353 BCE.

Artemisia died two years later and her ashes were placed inside the tomb too, before an earthquake destroyed it.



LEGENDARY LIGHTHOUSE

Location: Alexandria, Egypt

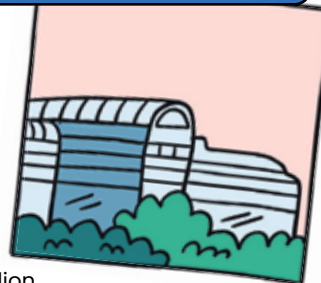
The Egyptians built this tower, on an island in the harbour of the city of Alexandria, in 280 BCE. At night, a huge fire would burn at the top to warn ships about sandbanks in the Nile's shallow water.

Unfortunately, another pesky earthquake knocked it down in the Middle Ages. Some of its stones and statues can still be seen today, resting at the bottom of the harbour.

THE CRYSTAL PALACE

Location: London, UK

This vast hall was built in Hyde Park in central London in 1851 for a global fair called the Great Exhibition. The fair invited nations around the world to showcase their best inventions and goods, and more than six million people came to see it. The palace, and its 293,655 panes of glass, were moved to the south of the city in 1854, and it was enjoyed by visitors until it burned down in a fire in 1936. Its legacy lives on – in 1905, the Crystal Palace Company, which owned the palace and its grounds, established the football club we know today!



The author says:

"I love a good mystery, and history is full of them.

"I find it amazing that famous people and famous places can simply disappear and be lost forever. The mighty Mongolian warrior Genghis Khan had the largest empire ever seen, but to this day no-one knows where his remains lie buried. Egyptian queen Cleopatra is the most famous pharaoh ever, but her grave is also missing. So much for having all that power and wealth!

"If they were alive today, they would have been rich enough to fly on the Concorde supersonic airliner, the super-powered passenger jet. Of all the 'missing marvels' in the book, Concorde is one I actually saw in action before it was grounded forever some 20 years ago. It was super-fast, but also super-noisy, and I remember it rattled windows as it went by!

"Of all the animals in the book, I think bringing back the dodo would be fun. And certainly safer than the dinosaurs, if those Hollywood movies are anything to go by!"



Mike Barfield

The World's Last Mammoth by Mike Barfield, illustrated by Franziska Höllbacher, is out now.





HELLO!

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

From an author interview to a trip to the circus, there's so much to get your teeth into on this week's Your News pages.

Also, be sure to send in your acts of hope (see bottom of the right-hand page) for a chance to feature in an upcoming issue!

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

MEGA PETS!

BOOKLANDIA book club from Martin Primary School got the chance to interview author-illustrator Gary Northfield (inset) about his new book, *Mighty Mega Pets: Freaky Food Fiasco!* Gary has created comic strips for magazines and written a number of his own books, including his famous *Julius Zebra* series. So, Booklandia had a lot of questions to ask him!



by Booklandia book club

● What was the inspiration behind *Mighty Mega Pets*?

When I was about your age, I had pet dogs and I was really into superheroes. So one of the earliest drawings I ever made was of superhero dogs. For the last 50 years I've been wanting to put those ideas into a proper book... and I've finally got around to doing it!

● All the pets in the book have different superpowers. Which superpower do you think would be the most useful for you or your pets?

One of my dogs, Sammy, is very lovely, but she can't stop barking. I would love it if she could be very quiet. That's more of a superpower for me, though! I think she'd love to have the power to battle villainous foxes! We'd both like to fly like Superman. Sammy's always trying to see what's going on over the fence and I think it would be really exciting to fly to the top of famous buildings, like the Eiffel Tower or somewhere like that.

● From all of the characters in the book, do you have a favourite?

I really like Arthur the tortoise because he's desperate to get superpowers and he's very grumpy! Every time he turns up on a page, I think he really lights up the story. He's very funny and silly... without giving too much away, he gets what he wants and hates it! I've got big plans for Arthur for book three, so I'm excited about that.

● I'm a fan of Julius Zebra. Why did you make Julius a zebra gladiator?

That came from a comic strip I used to work on, where I had to research different periods of history. One month, I was researching the Colosseum in Rome. I found out that the Romans used to put animals in the Colosseum so they could pretend it was a hunt and kill the animals. I really didn't like that, so I made a comic strip that had all the animals fighting back! I thought that would be a good idea for a book. I thought a lion or tiger was too obvious. I wanted a character you could really stick up for when he fights back, so I came up with the most unlikely animal... a zebra!

● Do you have any tips for young people who would like to create comic books in the future?

My biggest tip would be to keep writing and keep drawing. If you have an idea for a story, whether it's long or short, try to see it through to the end. Then you go through the process of creating a beginning, middle and end and you've got a story that you can then improve on. Also, keep reading stuff! I've got walls full of books. I'm always reading and always looking at things. When I was your age, I was always in the library, reading books on everything, whether it was dinosaurs, ghost hunting or ants!



The Booklandia book club are: Olivia, Zelda, Sherry, Areej, Imala, Manel, Hargun, Hannah, Harvey, Laila, Louis, Sai, Amelie, Aliza, Ankush, Elise and Yasmin



Amelie and Aliza set up Booklandia this year!



● Can you give us a hint about what will happen in the second book, *Dino Duck Disaster*?

Well, I've always wanted to write a book about time travelling. So, the duck you see at the end of the first *Mighty Mega Pets* book is actually a time-travelling duck! The book has lots of dinosaurs and mammoths... with the Elizabethan times thrown in! In time-travelling stories, if you change little things in the past, it really affects the future, so there's a lot of that going on. The Mega Pets meet different versions of themselves in the future. It's a crazy book. I hope you enjoy it!

Mighty Mega Pets: Freaky Food Fiasco! is out now. Check out the full interview with Gary on the *First News* app!

SCARLETT TALKS POLITICS



Scarlett

HELLO! I am a junior journalist and A level student, studying politics, English and psychology. I write a fortnightly column for Your News about major politics issues in the UK, with a focus on stories that affect young people.

THIS week, I'm asking: will mobile phones be banned in schools?

Mobile phones are restricted in many schools, but now the government wants to go further. A new plan could make mobile phones banned in all schools in England.

At the moment, there is no law that bans phones in schools. Instead, the government has given strong advice saying phones should not be used during the school day, including lessons, break times and lunchtime. Schools have a choice how to enforce this, which is why rules are slightly different depending on where you go.

This could soon change. The government is working on a new bill to make phone bans compulsory.

● What is a bill?

A bill is a proposal for a new law. It starts as an idea, which is then discussed and debated by members of Parliament (MPs). They look at the details, suggest changes, and vote on it. If both the House of Commons and the House of Lords agree, the bill is approved and officially becomes a law.

The mobile phone ban is currently at this stage. This means it is still being discussed and has not yet been fully passed. If the bill is approved, all schools in England will have to follow stricter rules on mobile phones.

While schools can still decide exactly how to manage them, phones will likely have to be kept switched off and out of use throughout the school day. There is no exact date yet, but the change could happen later this year. In short, phones are not fully banned by law yet, but they could be very soon.

● Why just England?

The ban would only be in England because education is controlled separately in each part of the UK. The government in England can only make rules for its own schools and not for Scotland, Wales or Northern Ireland.

Each nation has its own government in charge of education and other things – this is known as devolution.





MOKSHA'S ECOWAVES

MOKSHA Roy is a ten-year-old sustainability champion who has been advocating for the planet and its people since she was just three years old! She has influenced climate change policies both in the UK and globally.



Moksha

You can find out more about her by going to moksharoy.com.

This week, Moksha writes about **the link between Earth Day and the Artemis II moon mission**.

ON Earth Day (22 April), I found myself discussing with friends about how the Artemis II mission and protecting Earth are closely connected.

We wondered if the billion-dollar mission was just about space exploration or preparing humans to live on the moon.

But we found how space exploration could help us understand planet Earth and drive new technologies that could make our future cleaner, safer and more sustainable.

Here are some of my favourites:

- **Smart sensors on spacecraft:** Help scientists track climate change from space.
- **Closed-loop water recycling:** Zero-waste systems used on spacecraft help design solutions for drought-affected communities.
- **Super efficient solar panels:** Spacecraft have powerful solar panels to survive far from Earth. These unique designs inspired the ultra-efficient panels we now use on our homes and schools.
- **Advanced insulation materials:** Insulation developed for rockets inspires greener and low-energy buildings.
- **Faster Earth-monitoring satellites:** Help track storms, deforestation and ocean health so we can protect ecosystems.
- **Future lunar habitats:** Can guide research into low-waste, self-sufficient housing on Earth.
- **Experiments on growing food in lunar-like soils:** Can develop futuristic farming methods for harsh climates and reduce pressure on land.

I hope that you will join me in learning from these space explorations, linking our small blue planet to the rest of the universe.



A photo taken by Artemis II

Our essay for Words Matter

Ethan says childhood verbal abuse can stay with someone for their whole life



Choose your words carefully, the science is plain

ETHAN is on a mission with Words Matter, a charity that is working to end childhood verbal abuse. Along with other young people, he helped write a first-of-its-kind essay for *The Lancet Child & Adolescent Health*. He tells us why it is so important to him.

by Ethan Adonteng, aged 14

Childhood verbal abuse by adults is a serious problem in our society today.

One of my main motivations for joining and supporting the Words Matter charity and contributing to this *Lancet Child & Adolescent Health* essay is that I have seen and experienced unkind and harsh words first-hand and witnessed my classmates experience the same by teachers.

What I aim to do is spread awareness of this growing issue. I don't want to see my friend being told he is rubbish, or to ever be told that I am unskilled again. I want to grow up in a world where verbal abuse is outlawed and shunned.

I also think that this issue is so important because even though you could be a victim of this today, it can and most probably will stay with you for the rest of your life.

As children, our brains are still developing and we soak in all the information we get. So when an adult tells you you're worthless, or that any other child would have done a better job, your brain automatically tells you that these things are true.

I think it's like planting a seed. It seems harmless at first, small and insignificant, but over time it begins to grow. It then starts to grow branches and this represents it branching out and affecting more people and the people around you. Because the thing about childhood verbal abuse is, it never just stops there. It grows in you. In all of us.

I think that we have to act now to stop the cycle of kids growing up in an environment where verbal abuse is normal. I don't want to see another child go through something that hurts them. Even if I can help just one person, it will all be worth it.

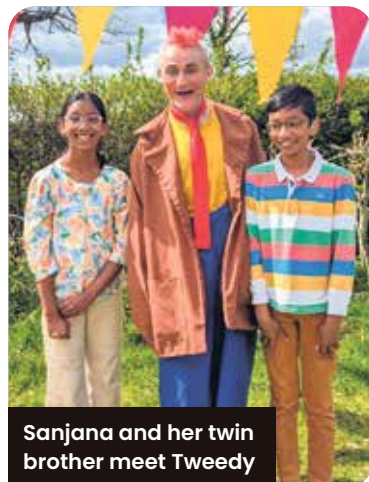
Fun at Tweedy's circus

FIRST News Press Club member Sanjana had a whale of a time at Tweedy's Massive Circus! She tells us what happened.

by Sanjana

Tweedy's Massive Circus was a show like no other. The tent was small but the fun was BIG! I have been to a circus before but this just took it to the next level.

There were three main acts: Sam, a technician with some tricks up his sleeve, Lady Crinklebottom, who performed amazing acrobatics, and Tweedy the Clown himself.



Sanjana and her twin brother meet Tweedy

When the show started, Tweedy entered the circus tent like any typical clown and performed some juggling. But unlike any other typical clown, he added a twist of magic to his acts. The one that made me crack up the most was the vampire act because Tweedy posed as a vampire and transformed into a baseball bat – not a real one!

The grand finale was spectacular because there was lots of singing, unicycle riding, juggling and acrobatic tricks involved.

It was hilarious from start to end, with lots of audience participation. I would recommend *Tweedy's Massive Circus* for an unforgettable day out.



A million acts of hope

Get in touch!

From 13-20 May, hundreds of charities and communities will come together for A Million Acts of Hope.

It's a celebration of everyday kindness, from park litter picks to volunteering for charity, to show that hope will always beat hate.

We're celebrating the week too and would love to hear all about your acts of hope! They may even feature on these pages in our 15 May issue.

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

FirstNews Quiz

THE answers to all these questions can be found in the pages of this issue. 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 What did a ten-year-old girl find while playing in a river in Wales?



2 How old would Queen Elizabeth II have been this year?



3 Who paid for this giant ice sculpture to be created in Toronto?



Getty

4 How old is *First News* this year?



5 A LEGO model based on what film took a record-breaking trip to space?



Sent into Space

6 The movie *Fighting With My Family* tells the story of which famous wrestler?



7 How many species of animal, plant and fungus have been recorded in the New Forest as part of a new project?



Russell Wynn

8 Ukraine will receive a new loan from the European Union. How much is it?



iStock

9 What does the Chinese word Tiangong mean?



10 What are Gibraltar's macaques eating to stop them from getting upset stomachs?



iStock

11 What did Jordan Adams run with on his back at the London Marathon?



12 How many pine hoverflies have been released into the Cairngorms National Park in Scotland?



13 Which country has come up with a new name for extremely hot days?



Getty

14 How many people ran the 2026 London Marathon in under two hours?



15 Which teams will face off in the FA Cup final?



If you enjoyed this, why not check out our Quiz that you can play online as an individual or with your family? You can find it at [firstnews.co.uk/quiz](https://www.firstnews.co.uk/quiz) and on the *First News* app!

Head online for more quiz questions!

At home? Ask a grown-up for your Web ID to use the app.

At school? Teachers can access the quiz at [first.news/school-quiz](https://www.firstnews.co.uk/school-quiz).

- Answers:**
- 1) A Mexican axolotl (2) 100 (3) Drake
 - 4) 20 (5) *Project Hall Mary* (6) Page 7 (7) 1,100
 - 8) €90 billion (£78 billion) (9) Heavenly palace
 - 10) Soil (11) A fridge (12) 30,000 (13) Japan (14) Two
 - 15) Man City and Chelsea

First News team details available at www.firstnews.co.uk/team. For editorial enquiries, contact newsdesk@firstnews.co.uk. For home subscription enquiries, email subscriptions@firstnews.co.uk or call 0330 333 0186 (Mon-Fri 9am-5pm). For school subscription enquiries, email education@firstnews.co.uk or call (01371) 851 898 (Mon-Fri 9am-5pm). Web: www.firstnews.co.uk. All material in this newspaper is © 2026 First Group Enterprises Ltd and cannot be used without written permission. 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.



High fives all-round from England cricket star Heather Knight

THE BIG CRICKET COUNTDOWN IS ON!

Joel Chester Filides

HISTORY was made this month as more than 236,000 children picked up a bat and ball as part of Schools Cricket Day. It marked 50 days to go until one of the biggest UK sporting events of this summer – the ICC Women’s T20 World Cup! Ebony Rainford-Brent – a World Cup winner and the first black woman to play for England – and two pupils spoke to us about why they’re excited for the tournament.

■ **Hi Ebony! How excited are you for the T20 World Cup this year?**

It’s a home World Cup, so it just doesn’t get better than that. But the competitive side of me loves the fact that the England women have always won when we play at home. Let’s hope we keep the tradition going!

■ **What makes T20 such an exciting format?**

Normally a cricket match goes on for days, but T20 is very simple. You have 20 blocks where you bowl six balls in each, then you face 20 blocks from the other

team, and whoever scores the most runs wins. So it’s really fun and there’s always something happening.

■ **How did you get into cricket growing up?**

I think I was about 10 or 11 when I first played in school, but I was 14 or 15 when I fell in love with the game. I had lots of role models to look up to, like the current England coach Charlotte Edwards. Now kids can look up to the current generation of amazing players, like Lauren Bell and Danni Wyatt-Hodge!

■ **You won both the World T20 and 50-over World Cup in 2009. What does it take to win huge tournaments?**

It takes teamwork. We had a really successful year because we all supported and believed in each other.

■ **Who do you think is going to win this summer’s tournament?**

Well, I have to say England first! But it’s really competitive now. Australia are the toughest team to beat, and teams like the West Indies can be underdogs and come out of nowhere. But the good news for us



Reporter Charlie chatted with Ebony in Raynes Park, London

is that our group is nice. I think we should get through the first few fixtures, then we’ll see if we can take down Australia and South Africa!

■ **How would you describe it all in one word?**

Electric!

OUR WICKET DAY!

GEORGIA and Aimee took part in the Schools Cricket Day, which was the largest single-day cricket participation event in UK history! They tell us how it went.

by Georgia and Aimee, aged 12

It was an amazing day. We had a lot of fun playing in teams against each other, which was nice because if someone messes up, it’s not a big deal.

Our favourite player is Heather Knight. Her batting’s brilliant and she’s just a really good player.

She’s also great at keeping the team together.

We can’t wait for the tournament to kick off on 12 June. Bring on the summer!



The trophy



HEAR FROM HEATHER KNIGHT

CHECK out our interview with England international superstar Heather Knight on the *First News* app!

Tickets are selling fast and fans can catch the spirit of the ICC Women’s T20 World Cup 2026 and be part of history by buying tickets at tickets.womens.t20worldcup.com.



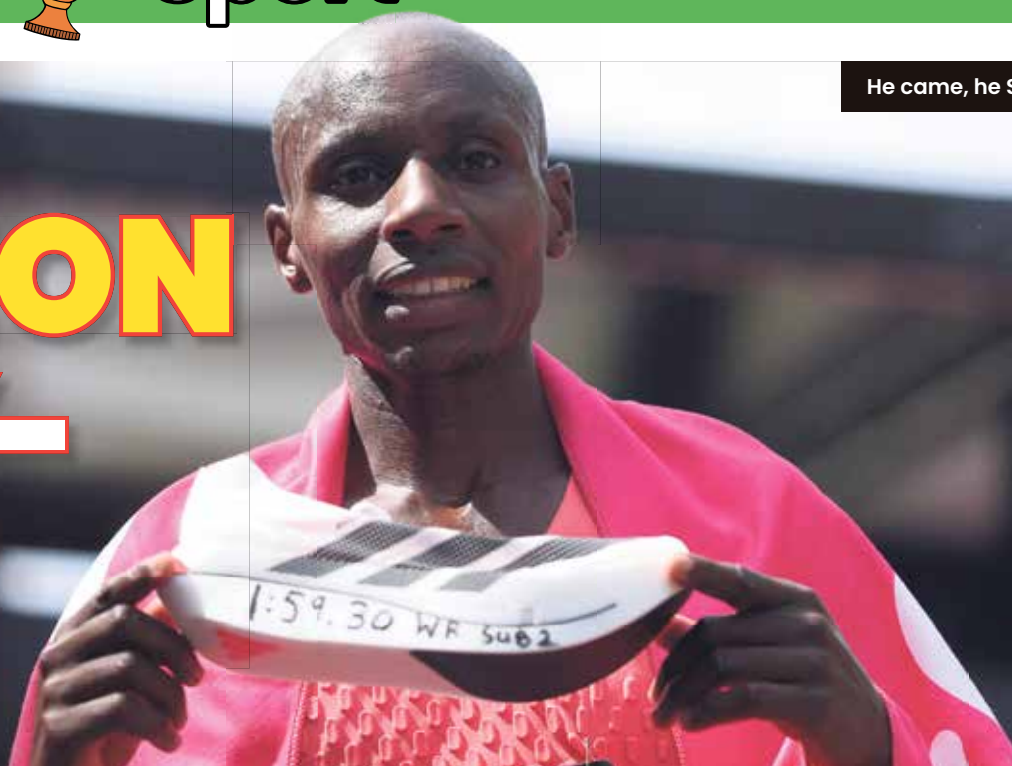
Knight is the former England captain





He came, he Sawe, he conquered!

MARATHON HISTORY-MAKERS



All pics: Getty

HISTORY was made at the London Marathon, as Sabastian Sawe became the first athlete to run a competitive marathon in less than two hours.

The 31-year-old Kenyan came home in an incredible time of one hour 59 minutes 30 seconds. It sealed victory in London for a second year in a row.

What's more, he wasn't the only runner to finish in under two hours! Ethiopia's Yomif Kejelcha, in his first ever marathon, finished in a time of 1hr 59min 41sec after pushing Sawe all the way.

Legendary marathon runner Eliud Kipchoge did become the first man to complete a marathon in under two hours in 2019, but it didn't officially count as it wasn't held under race conditions.

Records tumble elsewhere

In the women's race, Ethiopia's Tigst Assefa (inset) smashed her own world record to win for the second year in a row. She was level with Kenyan rivals Hellen Obiri and Joyciline Jepkosgei right up until the final few turns, before one last surge by Buckingham Palace handed her victory in 2hr 15min 41sec.

Eilish McColgan was the fastest British woman, battling through blisters to finish seventh overall.

In the elite men's wheelchair race, Swiss star Marcel Hug made it six wins in a row, equalling Great Britain's David Weir on eight overall victories in London.

Catherine Debrunner also retained the elite women's wheelchair title.

One big charity celebration

The London Marathon is the single-biggest day of fundraising in the world. Many of this year's 59,000 runners wore fancy dress while raising money for charities close to their hearts.

Head to pages 6-7 and the *First News* app to check out some of the best outfits from this year's event!



"We started the race well. Approaching finishing the race, I was feeling strong. Finally reaching the finish line, I saw the time, and I was so excited."
Sabastian Sawe

FOOTBALL



Nico nets at Wembley

MAN City and Chelsea will face each other in the FA Cup final after they both scraped through at Wembley.

City looked set to lose to in-form Championship side Southampton but were saved by a Jérémy Doku equaliser and a stunner from Nico González.

A day later, Chelsea played their first game since sacking manager Liam Rosenior after a terrible run of form. They edged out Leeds 1-0 thanks to an Enzo Fernández header.

The FA Cup final takes place on Saturday 16 May, a week before the end of the Premier League season.

NETBALL



Wallace-Joseph was the star

LOUGHBOROUGH Lightning stayed unbeaten with an 82-62 win over LexisNexis Dragons, moving back to the top of the Netball Super League table.

Lightning have now won all nine games and secured a play-off place. Samantha Wallace-Joseph scored 46 goals, while Georgia Rowe hit 41 for Dragons.

Elsewhere, London Pulse beat Birmingham Panthers 61-35, and AO Manchester Thunder defeated London Mavericks.

Lightning have scored the most goals in the league this season – an incredible 98 more than second-placed London Pulse.

FOOTBALL



Huge win for Hearts

THE Scottish Premiership title race took another thrilling turn at the weekend with two crucial late goals.

Hearts went three points clear with an 86th-minute winner away to Edinburgh rivals Hibernian, who had already received two red cards.

Rangers, on the other hand, conceded late at home to Motherwell to lose 3-2. They had earlier come back from 2-0 down, but the late loss has dented their title hopes.

They now sit third – four points behind Hearts, who they visit next in a huge clash. Celtic are second after they won 3-1 against Falkirk.

You have to go back to the 1984/85 season for the last time Scotland's top division saw a winner that wasn't Celtic or Rangers, when Aberdeen won.



Josh Stones' late, late goal sealed York the title

IS this the most dramatic ending to an English football season ever?! York City scored a last-gasp equaliser at Rochdale to win the National League and gain automatic promotion to the Football League. Just two points separated the sides going into the match. Rochdale needed to win, and thought they had done it when they went 1-0 up in the 95th minute. Fans briefly invaded the pitch, but their dreams were crushed as, 13 minutes into added time, York got the goal they needed. Rochdale must now try to do it the hard way – through the play-offs.

Issue 1,037 £2.95

