



Rosalind's view: Britain is broken



The state of our NHS



Train Strikes, Trials and Tribulations p2



Protests in Iran worsen

Since September this year, protests against police brutality and lawful misogyny have been ongoing in Iran, with around 500 people dead because of it. On the 16th September, a woman named Mahsa Amini, from Saqezz was killed while in police custody – she was arrested for allegedly violating Iran's

mandatory hijab law because she was wearing it "improperly" while in the city of Tehran. Eyewitnesses say that she was aggressively beaten by Iran's "Guidance Patrol". Protests began in her hometown of Saqezz, where they then spread throughout the province and the rest of the country.

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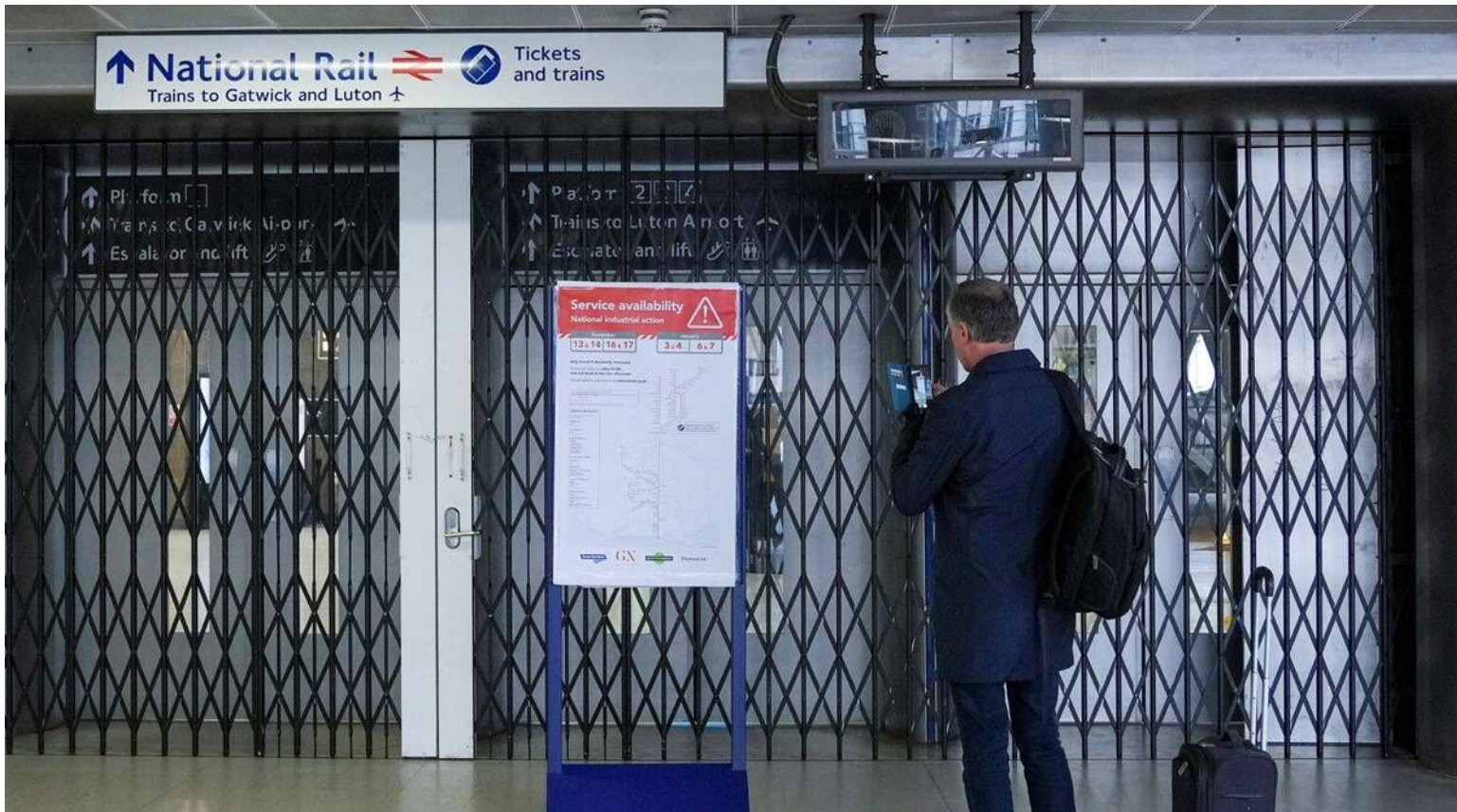
5 dead in Jersey explosion

On Saturday 10th of December at about 4:00pm an explosion took place at a three-storey flat. A total of 9 residents were present just before the blast, with 5 losing their lives and 4 unaccounted for. As of today, the rescue operation has been

moved to a "recovery operation", sadly emergency services do not expect to find anymore survivors. The emergency leaders are unsure of the cause, but it was most likely a gas explosion. Gas supplier island energy said they were working with the fire investigators

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Christmas chaos as talks fall apart



Since June, RMT has held a series of strikes in an increasingly bitter dispute with Network Rail and the Train Operating Companies. Network Rail had offered a 5% pay rise this year, backdated to January and a 4% rise next year. However, the RMT'S executive rejected the offer, on the grounds that the unrest was inextricably linked to "significant" changes in working practices.

RMT General Mike Lynch told BBC Four's Today Programme that RMT wanted, "an agreement, rather than an imposition." Lynch went on to explain that the changes Network Rail want to impose would cut 50% of the maintenance regime on the railway, change workers' life balance (forcing them to work more nights, more weekends

and more consecutive weekends). It would radically alter job descriptions and contracts of employment. He then described how although he remained optimistic that a deal could eventually be reached," at the moment they [the government] are deliberately obstructing that deal." This was later denied



RMT General Secretary Mick Lynch remains "optimistic"

by transport secretary Mark Harper, whose main comment was that he was happy to facilitate negotiations but, "there isn't a bottomless pit of taxpayers money to throw at the problem." This could be a reasonable sentiment, but aggressive anti-union rhetoric from the government has only further contributed to low staff morale and a marked absence of goodwill between parties. Most recently, train strikes lasting up to 48 hours have been underway all across the UK leading to a reduced service in urban lines and in some

Government “deliberately obstructing” a deal to save Christmas



Rail workers picket outside Preston Station, Lancashire

rural places, no trains have been running at all. Of course strikes are inconvenient to the public, as public transport is an integral part of life in Britain. Some families only mode of transport is public, many students who travel into cities for school have faced delays of 30 minutes or more, eventually resorting to a replacement coach service. Commuters have also been affected - in the worse case scenario, if they aren't able to come to work then they may not be paid, resulting in unwanted pressure on top of the cost of living crisis.



Mark Harper: “we won’t blink first”

But for the foreseeable future these strikes will continue until a deal is made, and the workers are given a pay rise and a change in conditions. Not only would this improve the wellbeing and

quality of life of the railway workers, it would also improve the integrity and structure of our transport system that we claim to be so proud of. However, a solution to the issue of public transport in Britain seems like a distant dream. A fairy-tale we recall with a wistful smile before hopping on the replacement coach service. Haines' final comment seemed to adhere to much the same sentiment, with his final comment on the matter, "Where I stand today, I'd have to say that with the level of disruption the RMT are imposing, the way forward isn't obvious."

Opinion - Britain is broken

We are in the ravages of a crisis



Britain is currently being throttled by a cost of living crisis – multiple factors that have been brewing beneath a façade of being a functioning country for the past few years have finally culminated in a perfect storm of discontent.

Families are choosing between electricity and food in one of the economically harshest winters Britain has faced in recent years, with official figures showing that 22% of people in UK are living below the poverty line. Surviving on less than 60% of the median household income. This is only being exacerbated by the current prolonged cold snap, which is expected to prompt excess deaths, as vulnerable households skimp on heating as a result of financial worries. Simon Francis, coordinator of The End Fuel Poverty Coalition told the Guardian “people are now literally choosing between heating and dying.” And things aren’t likely to improve any time soon - the NEF have predicted that by 2024 almost 90% of single parents and 50% of workers with children

less than 60% of the median household income. This is only being exacerbated by the current prolonged cold snap, which is expected to prompt excess deaths, as vulnerable households skimp on heating as a result of financial worries. Simon Francis, coordinator of The End Fuel Poverty Coalition told the Guardian “people are now literally choosing between heating and dying.” And things aren’t likely to improve any time soon - the NEF have predicted that by 2024 almost 90% of single parents and 50% of workers with children would fall below a minimum income standard – this desperately shows the need for a radical overhaul of the welfare system. But no one in this oh so green and pleasant land seems to actually be able to give you a clear or certain idea as to what the government is doing to help. Does this sound like you’ve fulfilled the promises you made in that first speech outside 10 Downing Street all those months ago to “fill tomorrow and every day thereafter with hope,” Mr. Sunak?

By Rosalind Hynes Bird

Real wages fall by 2.7% as unemployment rises



As the cost of living steadily increases, the last thing people want is wages to fall – but that’s the ironic truth about what’s happening, people need more money, but are getting paid less, and less people are working. Real wages show the value of wages adjusted for inflation. They are a guide to how living standards have changed. For example, if wages increase by 2%, and there is an inflation rate of 3%, your real wages is -1%. Because real wages are now -2.7%, it means wages are not keeping up with inflation.

The United Kingdom's unemployment figures for August to October 2022 rose to 3.7 percent. Between September to November 2022, the projected number of vacancies decreased to 1,187,000. Alongside this, wages have fallen by 2.7 percent over the space of the year (adjusted for inflation). Experts have said that the UK “edges closer to recession” as a result. Real wages falling creates a big problem for people as they will not have the money to be able to heat their homes or eat, causing malnutrition and freezing in their own homes.

By Amy Peck

Horrorifying Jersey accident continued

Cont. from P1

to "understand exactly [what] has happened." On the Friday prior, a smell of gas was reported and the officers were called to investigate at 8:26pm. Due to the blast and the damage, the explosion has caused damage towards the surrounding buildings it has been estimated that around 40 people have been displaced. Adding to this, the remains of the building is said to "not even look like a building". Near the the explosion, workers held

a minute silence as they paused the search to show respect. The vice minister of Jersey said 'the past week has been one of the most difficult for our island community in recent memory.' The Jersey government said on Friday the 23rd of December flags will be flown at half-mast until sunset. This devastating event comes just days after a skipper and two crew members were killed when their fishing boat collided with a freight vessel.

By Emily McCarron



Protests in Iran continued

Cont. from P1

Although these protests have not been as deadly as the ones in 2019 (when more than 1,500 people were killed), they have been "nationwide, spread across social classes, universities, the streets [and] schools," and it has been considered the biggest challenge to their government since the Islamic Revolution in 1979. The Iranian Government's response has been severely condemned by other nations.

Initial protests demanded an end to the mandatory hijab law, however the protests have become significantly more widespread than previous action (such as in 2009 and 2019), and have also become a turning point for the Iranian women's rights movement, with people of all social classes and backgrounds participating – even schoolchildren have turned out in droves for the protests. In return, people have formed counter-protests supporting the government across many cities in Iran.

Initial protests demanded an end to the mandatory hijab law, however the protests have become significantly more widespread than previous action (such as in 2009 and 2019). These protests have also become a turning point for the Iranian women's rights movement, with people of all social classes and backgrounds participating – even schoolchildren have turned out in droves for the protests. In return, people have formed counter-protests supporting the government across many cities in Iran. Protestors often form "flash mob" gatherings, where the protestors show up for a brief period of time only. Some of the actions done by protestors have been: knocking turbans off Iranian clerics; boycotts of civil services such as universities; and even a general strike which occurred on the 5th December.

By Ewan Harrison-Payne

New coal mine backtracks on climate plans

In the past 30 years there have been no new coal mines in the UK. This is down to certain factors such as moving to renewable energy to help reach our goal as a country to be carbon neutral by 2050, including proposals for “decarbonising all sectors of the uk economy to meet out net zero target”. This is all about to change as a mine in Cumbria has been approved by Cumbria County Council and the government. It sparks huge controversy as it has been granted access to mine for coal until 2049, 1 year before the government’s 2050 carbon neutral target. It is expected that the mine



What the new coal mine could look like in Whitehaven, Cumbria

will extract just under 2.8 million tonnes of coal per year for use in steel-making. The UKCCC warned the government in February 2021 that the steel-making industry shouldn’t use coal after 2035 if the UK wants to meet it's climate targets. It went on to call the proposal “indefensible”. After the project was suspended, a

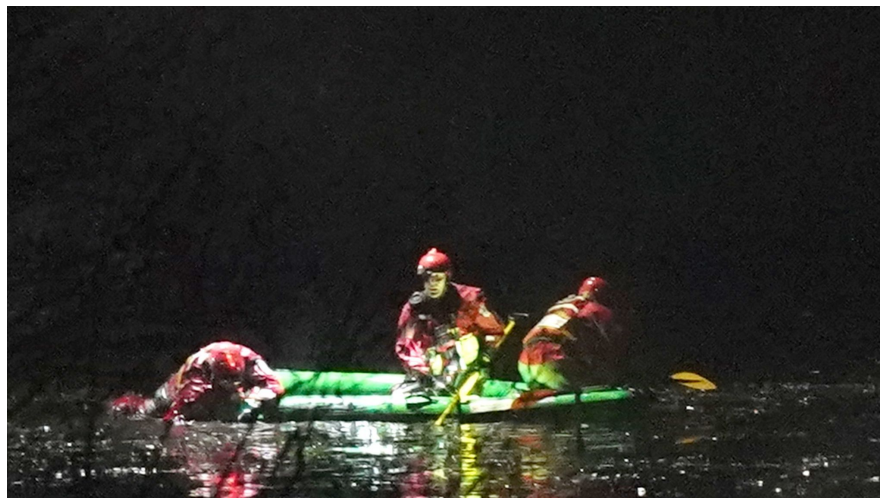
report was sent to Michael Gove (the Levelling Up and Communities Secretary) who went on to approve the project, claiming the mine would, “To some extent, support the transition to a low-carbon future”, due to emissions reduced by importing less coal from Russia. This would also mean that we would be less dependent on

imports from other countries. It also leaves Cumbrian locals split with some saying the mine will bring much-needed jobs to the area and bring back its industrial heritage, while others argue it puts more fumes into the air they breathe and Is a step backwards for UK climate targets. Mining coal is not a new thing in Cumbria though, with records showing one of the earliest excavations dating back to 1560. However in 2022, with climate awareness rising, the UK government need to act soon and this seems like a step in the wrong direction.

By Dylan Chaffer

Solihull Tragedy leaves 3 dead One child remains in critical condition

On Sunday 11th of December, three boys, aged 8, 10 and 11 sadly died after falling into an icy lake near Solihull. Emergency services responded to reports of 6 missing children, but only 4 of them were found and although the investigation continues, authorities have warned that it is "No longer a search and rescue operation", with countless hours of searching for the two reported children and



no sign or trace of them yet. It is believed that the children were attempting to skate and play on the unstable ice, which then collapsed. Responders suspect

they could have been there since Saturday, 24 hours before they were found. it is also shown that one the children that died went in to save the others but suffered

cardiac arrest and died too. A first responder also leaped in, in full uniform, to help recover the frozen children. At this moment in time, it is unclear whether the Hospitalised child (unnamed) will survive but what we know at the moment is that their condition is 'critical' after cardiac arrest. By Dylan Chaffer and Laurel Greenwood

What has happened to our NHS?



Our NHS. For the past 74 years we have been privileged to be provided with public funded healthcare that has been recognised many times as “the world's best healthcare system”. However, a system that is fuelled solely on the goodwill of people cannot be forever sustained. Strikes, cancellations, long waiting times, a global pandemic, low pay, burn-out and high levels of low mental health among NHS workers is the pitiable reality we face today.

What has happened for so much to go so wrong? In short, the lack of government spending. In 2017 it was reported that the UK was trailing behind EU countries in terms of spending. Germany had twice as many nurses per capita and naturally were better equipped to deal with beds and patients. Moreover, it is reported that the money being spent on the NHS is being swallowed up with no real change being had. However, there are other factors that have attributed to the current NHS crisis. An aging-population with 11 million people aged 65 or over. Whilst a high life-expectancy is a positive result of the modern-day science we have today, the rise in

older people in our population will inevitably cost the NHS more money on drugs and services. Adding to this, the cost of care for the elderly comes with a large price tag. There is an ever-growing issue regarding social care and as of 2020 36.5% of elderly people were cared for by family and friends - and worryingly 30% received no care at all. Vacancies, there is a new record of 133,000 unfilled posts in the NHS adding to the workload of the sustaining members. The NHS has prided itself on being free at the point of service and sorrowfully that is no longer looking to be a viable option due to the pressures in place. All of this has amalgamated into mass concern regarding the mental health of NHS workers with more than 360 GP'S leaving the NHS since 2021 and around 48% of junior doctor's choosing to not continue to carry on and enter medicine as a profession. The NHS is slowly collapsing and for the first time in the 120 year history of the Royal College of Nursing (RCN), nurses are going on strike, with 100,000 nurses

expected to go on strike. The RCN has said that nurses have endured a real-term pay cut of 20% since 2010 and 25,000 nurses leaving the health service over the past year. They have accused the government of “belligerence” as Steven Barclay refused to talk about pay with Pat Cullen, the general secretary. As the government show little remorse for the current predicament of the NHS. Essentially strikes happening mean that services will be reduced therefore non-essential work will be inhibited and vital critical work will still take place. No NHS worker will be thrilled by the process of striking, but action needs to be taken to ultimately save and preserve our NHS. By Erin Hickey

A post-mortem of the government's response to the Covid-19 pandemic

Over the last few decades there have been some major changes to the UK's public health structures which, alongside a decade of underfunding, meant that public health systems across the UK entered the pandemic without the resources, workforce, capacity, structures, or voice they needed in order to influence the governments' responses to COVID-19. This meant that when the first wave of the pandemic hit, the NHS was overwhelmed under the influx of patients being hospitalised from COVID. As well as not enough staff to manage the number of patients flooding into hospitals, there was also not enough hospitals in the UK to support the dramatic rise in patients that we saw when COVID hit. Even though we didn't plan for a pandemic quite as large as COVID, the NHS was hit a lot harder than it would have been, had it received the necessary funding that the government should have been providing. Aside from lack of funding for the NHS for years before COVID, when planning for a potential pandemic the government focused their planning on an influenza-like pandemic. So when COVID came despite having plans in place for a pandemic, the government decided to ignore several recommendations. The slower response to COVID in this country and the government ignoring several

recommendations from top scientists, meant that even though we are an island nation, we recorded more COVID cases than much larger countries such as

health agencies such as WHO (World Health Organisation) and the advice being implemented by the UK Government. In late March when it became apparent that COVID 19 would overwhelm the

failures on the governments part came during the summer of 2020, when instead of preparing for the inevitable increase of cases during the autumn and winter months the government was focused on ending the restrictions as soon as possible rather than being cautious and easing off the restrictions slowly. Localised lockdowns were introduced in the late summer of 2020, but these failed to control the rapidly spreading virus and last-minute changes did nothing but damage the public's trust in their government. The mass rollout of the COVID 19 vaccine was a huge turning point in the governments' pandemic responses and the NHS led rollout of the vaccine was a success that signalled a step away from the restrictions. Despite this COVID hospitalisations and deaths remained high moving into May of 2021 and the start of the third wave. The rapid spread of the Delta variant meant more pressure on the UK's



Sweden and Australia. This proves that had the government responded faster and more effectively we would have been able to contain COVID a lot better than we did. When the UK started recording the first cases of COVID 19 in March 2020 and there were significant delays in response from the government with regards to social distancing and later a 2–3-month gap between face coverings being recommended by global

NHS' critical care capacity several NHS Nightingale hospitals popped up across England which aimed to support the NHS with the surging COVID 19 cases. Although many of the Nightingale hospitals are now being decommissioned or repurposed, the rapid converting of buildings into COVID 19 hospitals should be praised. But further



Clockwise from top left: Matt Hancock at the lectern, a warm embrace, London in the depths of lockdown, Boris Johnson as he made his announcement

public health system and with the NHS delivering both COVID and non-COVID care they were at full capacity and their workload was at a maximum. The fact that entering the third wave, COVID cases and deaths were still very high even with over 70% of the country being vaccinated shows that the quick rollout of the vaccine was key to helping stop the spread of COVID. Just imagine what the impact would have been on the public had we entered the third wave with no vaccine- this was one of the governments biggest successes during the pandemic and they should definitely be credited for how quickly they rolled out the vaccine to the public. Recently there has been a decline in COVID cases but at the start of the fourth wave, nearly a year

ago, the Omicron variant was spreading at an alarming rate which caused concern about the impact on the UK health service during the winter. To prevent this the Government should have reintroduced measures far earlier than they did. In early 2022 all UK governments published strategies for replacing legal restrictions with guidance. However, the removal of key public health measures (such as free testing and self-isolation support payments) means that only those able to afford it can protect themselves. Due to the scaling back of public health systems and testing capacity means that if there is another spike in cases or even a new pandemic the UK will struggle to respond, and the NHS will be placed under huge strain.
By Neela Wilde

The power of the sun

In the palm of our hands

US Department of Energy officials announced on Tuesday that US scientists for the first time successfully produced more energy from a nuclear fusion experiment than used by the laser used to power it. This means we have cracked cold fusion.

Over the past year with the cost of living going up and the cost of fuel rocketing due to the embargo on Russian oil, many places working in this field have had to cut costs and have agreed to cut down on the amount of energy used. A notable example of this is in Cern, with the Hadron collider which fires protons 99.997% of the speed of light before the two hit each other and pictures are taken at the time of the impact.

The US Department of Energy however has continued forward in their quest to solve the question of Nuclear fusion. This is the fusion of two hydrogen atoms (which produces helium and) to produce energy. This happens in the sun every day because of two main things: High pressure in the core, and high temperature in the core. This process is what powers the sun to heat up our solar system. This idea to use nuclear fusion has been around for some time now but there are two main issues, Not enough heat and not enough pressure. This is because the Earth is not a star like the sun so scientists must figure out a way to use cold fusion on earth.

To solve this issue of how to produce cold fusion scientists have used a laser. This laser has been described as "The power of the sun". This laser heats up the two hydrogen atoms to 100 million degrees Celsius and to a pressure of 100x the Earth's atmosphere. This then produces 3.15 megajoules and only used hydrogen isotopes which can be found readily in salt water.

By Ethan Bowden



The Russo-Ukrainian War

The situation so far

Russia declared war on Ukraine on the 24th February - the same time that they invaded Ukraine. The invasion has likely resulted in tens of thousands of deaths on both sides and caused Europe's largest refugee crisis since World War II. There are approximately 8 million Ukrainian citizens which fled from the country to avoid the war, and about 200 thousand Russian soldiers sent to fight. But why has Russia invaded Ukraine out of nowhere? Putin stated to the Russian people that "demilitarising and de-Nazifying Ukraine" was his goal*. His stated mission was to defend those he claimed had been subjected to eight years of bullying and genocide by the Ukrainian government. Later, warplanes, missiles, and rockets struck Ukraine's capital city of Kyiv as well as other regions, followed by a sizeable ground invasion from many different directions.

The movement of people and products across all modes of transportation in the EU has been significantly impacted by the invasion of Ukraine. Fuel availability and rising fuel costs, as well as logistical difficulties related to border crossings and airspace restrictions, are among the key problems. The European Council decided on May 30-31 2022 to prohibit over 90% of all Russian oil imports by the end of 2022, with a brief exception for crude oil shipped by pipeline. They asked the Council to complete and pass the sixth set of sanctions, which will include this ban, as soon as possible. Russia appeared to change it's strategy earlier in October when it launched missile strikes against Ukrainian cities farther from the frontlines for the first time in months. In the assaults, Russian forces employed ballistic and cruise missiles as well as Shahed-136 drones that they had recently acquired from Iran. Blackouts have been caused by Russian-led attacks on Ukraine's energy

infrastructure, affecting key cities such as Kyiv, Lviv, Zaporizhzhia, and Kharkiv. In September, the Russian Federation annexed Donetsk, Luhansk, Kherson, and Zaporizhzhia from Ukraine. Although, all four of these regions are not entirely under Russian authority. After a missile struck its territory on the 15th November and killed two people, Poland's military was put on high alert. It happened as Ukrainian military attempted to knock down scores of Russian missiles that had been fired at targets in Ukraine. The air defences in Kyiv were "most likely" to blame, according to Nato leader Jens Stoltenberg, while Ukraine's president Volodymyr Zelensky said he had assurances from his top commanders that "it wasn't our missile."

We do not know what is going to happen in the future with Ukraine or Russia, however it is clear to say that the war has had quite a big impact and will be remembered in history as the Russo-Ukrainian war.

By Eduard Alexandru



The USA and Europe have been a lifeline in providing arms to Ukraine



Brutal clampdowns in Russia have not curbed opposition to Putin

Belt and roads initiative

Rail, Road, Air and Sea: the four main types of travel. They connect nations together, helping to expand global trade and they are at the forefront of modern technology, with developments such as EVs and High Speed Rail. With the support of other countries, nations can be brought into the modern age with the assistance of transportation and in the lead of such projects is China with their Belt and Road Initiative (BRI). In 2013, President Xi Jinping announced the introduction of the BRI with its stated aim of “developing an expanded, interdependent market for China, grow China’s economic and political power, and create the right conditions for China to build a high technology economy,” (Royal Institute of International Affairs). Xi has described the BRI as having two main parts: the overland “Economic Belt” corridor has become a main artery for the BRI valued at \$62 billion. It boosted Pakistan’s GDP and created a tight political bond between the two countries. For China, the port of Gwadar created a convenient link to the oil and gas wells of the middle east and Chinese construction companies saw a huge boost in profit because of contracts to construct BRI projects – the result of it being a requirement to have China be involved in the construction of such projects. and the “Maritime Silk Road”

(referencing the ancient trade route used to export silk from China to Europe). Some examples of projects from the BRI are: pipelines linking to the Caspian Sea; a Southeast Asian High Speed Rail network; a chain of seaports linking the South China Sea all the way to Africa; many new industries (such as the Tavan Tolgoi Coal Deposit in Mongolia) have also been built. In an example closer to home, due to the BRI, it is possible to make a journey from London to Yiwu, China now.

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countries taking loans from China for the BRI, many economists predict that the whole programme will flop. Nonetheless, China stands to gain when partner countries can’t repay their debt as most countries lease the BRI facilities to China as a form of repayment. More sinisterly, China has built an active naval base on the coast of Djibouti – one of a group of locations being theorised as part of the “string of pearls,” a series of naval bases and ports across the Indian Ocean and South China Sea which China has ownership or lease of – creating links from China to India, the Middle East and Africa While China is bringing value to the international economy and developing countries’ infrastructure in return for preferential economic and financial returns, the extent to which the BRI is part of China’s long-term ambitious foreign policy objectives remains to be seen.

By Ewan Harrison-Payne



As of August 2022, 149 countries had signed onto the programme, with more expected to sign on in future due to the seeming success the BRI generates. As an example, the port of Gwadar in Pakistan, which was once a small fishing town and has become a major hub for global trade after China built a port for Pakistan there in 2001. Since 2018, the port, as well as a railway and

China be involved in the construction of such projects. Furthermore, the relatively lenient Chinese funding requirements has made them a far more attractive partner to poorer and corrupt countries compared to the Western world. However, due to the amount of economically unstable

Kick off your Sunday shoes!



Hairspray liberally applied in a panic, crashing into flats during blackouts, excited whispers after a successful scene and waving from the wings, mouthing encouragement as the adrenaline takes hold. What makes a musical? I think it's safe to say the school will be 'Still Rockin' for some time. But why Footloose? Speaking with the director of the show, JOK (Mr Oakland) provided an insight on this question and many others. When selecting a musical, first you've got to think of the popularity of the show; how often is it performed? Certain musicals appear as overplayed, however Footloose is not one of these, already assisting in the selection process. In addition, Mr. Oakland mentioned that the choice was a personal one, as he 'grew up with Footloose'

and that he 'remembers buying the vinyl album when it came out.' This element of nostalgia also led to his favourite song in the musical



being 'somebody's eyes' as the original was 'fantastic' and the musical version was 'even better'. But that's not the only reason Footloose was picked. 'Footloose is a high energy, fun show celebrating the importance of singing and dancing to the general enjoyment of life, something particularly important after covid' (getting a bit philosophical at this point).

So how did our director feel after the performance? Bearing in mind a ridiculous amount of technical issues for all of the dress rehearsal, we had a thoroughly positive response although there is 'always room for improvement'. A full rundown on Monday night's show can be read about in the reviews section, however what can't be written about by a theatre critic is what goes on backstage; people running around to help you take your mic off the second you get off stage, others organizing schedules to take on and off scenery and older years fixing hair, zippers and make up for those in years below. It's a truly beautiful environment and emphasizes just how much community there is in both the drama department and school as a whole.

Welland Park shines on stage with its first production in years



The cast

This environment takes time to build. A musical can't be made in a day (or at least not a good one anyway). Besides time, what other challenges are there to making a musical though? Once again, back to the director for input. 'Year eleven.' Ouch. To be fair, the statement was followed by an explanation of how, as a year, we tend to have a lot on our plate (welp). Other challenges faced by those running a musical include maintaining the energy throughout the course of rehearsals and gaining support. However, the Footloose team has been 'incredibly lucky to have the support of senior management' and JOK has stated that he is 'very proud of everyone who's taken part – ALL staff and students'. All in all, it's been an unforgettable experience and taught all involved to have fun and 'Cut Footloose.'

By Kezia Pinnock

“An unforgettable experience “



Rusty and Willard together at long last

Will you cut Footloose?

Footloose, is it worth the watch? As many of you may know, there is a school musical production being performed at Welland Park Academy, but is it really all that it's hyped up to be? It is a particularly important show because over the last few years, many school productions have been cancelled due to covid disruptions. That resulted in many students only recently being given the chance to flourish at the performing arts. The show was on the 13th, 14th and 15th of December and was run by Mr Oakland with the help of other staff members. But what does the audience have to say about the show? A member of the audience stated that they were "Pleasantly surprised by the quality of the production" and when I asked if it was worth the watch the said that it was "An Outstanding watch, definitely worth it" . Now it's up to you to decide if Welland Park Academy's production of 'Footloose' is worth the watch.

By Tanwen Warren

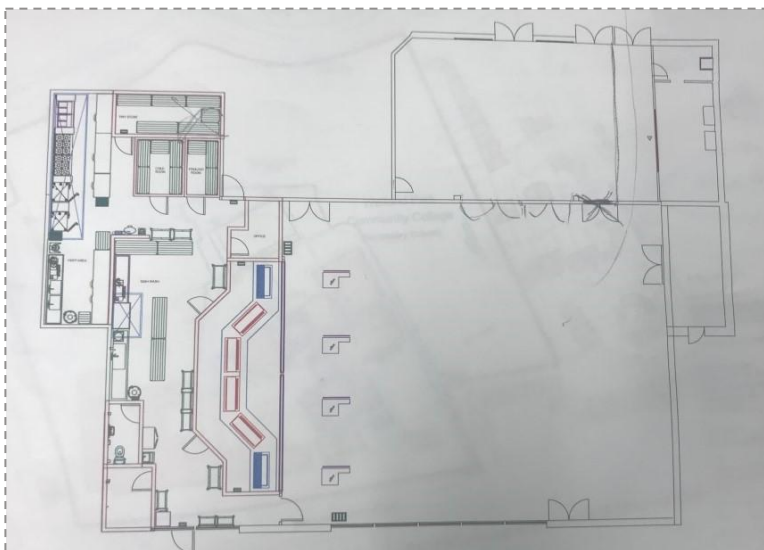
New Sports Hall to Be Here by Christmas

As many students will already know, Welland Park is getting a new sports hall as well as a new canteen where the assembly rooms are currently situated. With an overall cost of only £1.5 million (having risen from 1.3 million due to the price of steel being inflated), the new sports hall will be used by many different teams outside of our school. These teams include: the Market Harbough netball club (who want to use it as their home base) and the local badminton team. Its overall size will be 33m x 18m, which is four badminton courts and extra space. It will have changing rooms, an office, and an internal and external sports store.

The sports hall is expected to be open by February (fingers crossed!) and the canteen open by Easter- in time for even the leaving year elevens to be able to use it. The new kitchen will be up to date and of a better quality than our current one. The existing oval running track/rugby pitch will also be slanted so that it will still fit.



Clockwise from top: the new sports hall; a plan of the canteen; a peek at the progress of the canteen



The canteen will be painted in our Welland Park colours - magenta and teal, as well as silver. There will be booths for people to sit in and new tables and chairs. The colour scheme was handpicked by four members of the student council. Students will be able to enjoy sleek new designs and comfortable chairs while eating their lunch prepared in the modern kitchen. There will also be a window in which students can grab cold food, almost like a drive-thru restaurant.

By Amy Peck

The end of an era

Miss McBrearty's retirement



The end of an era has arrived. After 11 years, our head teacher Miss McBrearty will be leaving us at the end of the academic school year. So, to celebrate her time here, we asked her a few questions.

The first question was about her favorite memory at Welland Park Academy. She answered that the first prom, and the first GCSE results were the best. She told us how it was a detailed process to go from an 11-14 school, to an 11-16 school. Miss McBrearty described the pride she felt seeing the school grow under her observation and care.

We then asked why she became a head teacher, and she replied that she always enjoyed working with young people and enjoyed seeing them flourish. She wanted to impact them more than just by being their teacher: she wanted to have an impact on the teachers, who would then go on to impact the students.

Before her time at Welland Park Academy, she was a deputy head teacher in Rugby, as well as an assistant head teacher. She has taught and led in many schools all around the country- and all around the world. She has visited schools in Cambodia, Canada, and

America. As a child, her favorite subject was Biology. She enjoyed the 'study of life' and how important it is to understand how life worked. This led her to become the head of biology in a previous school she has taught in- one where Mr. Gaskell (the head of the Maths department) studied as a child, although he doesn't remember her!



Now, the question that is most likely plaguing your mind: why did she decide to leave? Why now? Well, our head teacher told us that it's always hard to leave, as you are leaving behind students that have not yet finished their time at secondary school. But it is a good time for her to leave, as the school is

evolving- perfect for a new head teacher to come and take over.

What is she going to do now? Many people can't even imagine teachers not being teachers, so what will a *head* teacher do? Well, Miss McBrearty plans to travel. Ireland is one of her top places to go- known for its scenic coastlines and rugged landscape. Next up is visiting family over in America.

What Will Happen Now?

The job vacancy will be advertised nationally, meaning anyone can apply. However, the person will need to show they can lead a lot of people- especially with Market Harborough growing quickly and the new intake of Year 7s the largest yet. Both staff at school and others can apply, but people with deputy or assistant head teacher roles will be mostly considered. As Miss McBrearty's time at Welland Park draws to its conclusion, we must take

a moment to reflect on the time we have had here, and how our head teachers have made the most of our experiences. Miss McBrearty says she 'really loved' working at Welland Park, as pupils normally live close by so Miss can see former students - and even talk to them at the gate. She spoke to us about how it's not the power, or the pay, but the connections you make with the students that makes being a head teacher so fun and desirable. She talked about how she remembered former students who had come to Welland, and how they have come back as staff. Miss McBrearty talked about the perspective, a student's one, and a teacher's one.

The final quote we have from our beloved head teacher is, 'The work you do has a legacy'- and we couldn't agree more.

By Amy Peck

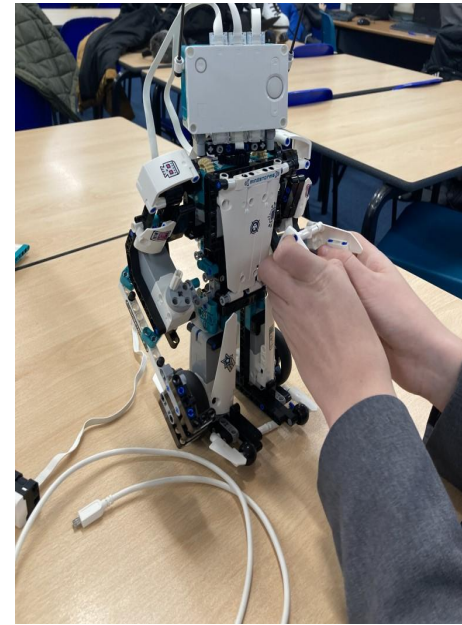
Exciting extra-curriculars

CICT club

Why not come to CICT club? Have fun practicing skills and code robots or games and make wacky pictures on different software, learning new skills to improve your computing knowledge and make friends along the way! Running on Wednesdays after school until 4:15 in D11 and open to all KS3 students, the club encourages creative minds to produce fascinating pieces of work to show to their friends. Recently, the school have invested in brand new Lego Mindstorms to build a robot to any design and then code it on an app! There are also Micro-bits which you can code to display any text or pattern

as well as pair with a Micro-bot to steer and write with a pencil. CICT club also boasts all the software we use in lessons from serif photo X8 to scratch and python, so you can create and learn in a fun and engaging environment. Mr Mayes, who runs computer club, says “Computer club is a fun way to work together to create projects and follow up on work with amazing support from friends and Teachers. You can also do things that are not on the curriculum like Electronics (A year 9 Exclusive)”.

By Dylan Chaffer and George O’Connor



Students grappling with Lego Mindstorms

Mandarin Club

Come along to Mandarin Class and learn a new language and improve your multilingual skills in a fun and welcoming environment. Open to everyone whether you don’t know a single word or if you are fluent, come along and practice on a Thursday after school for free and have some fun learning everything from Chinese culture and food to how to start a conversation in mandarin. Run by an external organisation in Leicester set to help more people learn Mandarin, speak with teachers who know mandarin fluently and who are very helpful and friendly. Milosz, a Year 9 student who Attends says, “Mandarin is an epic way to enrich your experiences and learn a cool new language”.

By Dylan Chaffer



Kezia P and Eva SCV celebrate their test results from their Mandarin exam

Try your hand at the endless choices of groups to join!

Sports

Are you interested in sports or want to become more engaged in them? Then why not try out some extra curriculum sports clubs, such as badminton, table tennis, or football when the time of year changes. Welland Park Academy boasts a number of both after-school and lunchtime activities catering for everyone with a variety of sports every week for all students. Check the timetable as it gets sent out by the PE office in an email ready by Monday. So find your next best sport and get active! By George O'Connell

Creative writing club

Creative Writing Club is run on Friday lunchtimes in A7 by Ms Lucchesi. Students can come along and write their own pieces of creative writing independently or with help from your friends or Ms Lucchesi. Students should come with a packed lunch or grab bag and can choose to write on paper or on school laptops. These are some pieces written by members of Creative Writing Club.

The expectations of society

How societal expectations of our bodies can shape us all

Nowadays, body images for all genders have been set with harsh expectations. Everyone must be "beautiful", "skinny" or "muscular", otherwise they are excluded from society and "unworthy" of love. Since 2016, the number of body positivity social media accounts have risen and people's opinions are starting to change - but people are still persisting to shame others for what they look like, resulting in mental health issues like eating disorders and depression. When people try to lose weight they join groups such as Weight Watchers or Slimming World, where people are awarded for losing more weight than others. This makes those with slow metabolisms feel guilty for slow progress even though everyone's bodies work differently. Through this perverse reward system, losing weight turns into a competition, meaning that people go to extreme measures to "win", while losing in the process - and slimming world turns into starving world. As well as this, celebrities set insane body standards in pictures that are not even real, then people try to recreate their body to meet the unrealistic standards of photoshop.



Women are constantly being put down for their looks. Clothing brands are a main culprit for this behaviour, naming plus size as a different category to "normal" sizes. This makes women feel more ashamed on top of all the crazy standards set by the people. Women are also expected to have hairless bodies, making them feel pressured into shaving, despite the fact that body hair is a completely natural thing. Also perceptual views are created as they try to lose weight and feel bad about their body for having to lose weight.

On the other hand, men are expected to be muscular and tall - throughout adolescence boys are teased for being too "weak", "lanky" or "fat", leading to over-exercising, steroid abuse and, like women, eating occur. Men are also expected to have hair and feel ashamed if they have receding hairlines, especially in young age, they then go to the

measures of spending up to £10,000 on hair transplants. However, beauty standards are particularly hard for people who don't conform to "normal" genders. They are belittled for not having a body type to fit to. But over recent years, society has got better at accepting unique people along with social media platforms and magazines, who are supporting a more diverse range of body types. This means society in general is becoming accustomed to people who look "different", but people are not fully past body shaming. If we want to create a world that judges us not by our bodies, but by our hearts and minds, we must question the things that are treated as "normal" and be conscious of our own ingrained beliefs, shaped by this toxic media landscape. Help stop body shaming, feel good about your body if you can and promote body positivity.

Where can I find body positive spaces?

We are fortunate today that there are many social media accounts and websites specifically for body positivity, for example [Iweighcommunity.com](https://www.iweighcommunity.com), focuses on inclusivity and helping people feel good about their body - no matter the size. They also have an Instagram @I_weigh. Other examples of social media accounts include @bopo.boy, otherwise known as Stevie Blaine, who provides a space to show that men deserve to love their bodies as well.

By Bea Bott



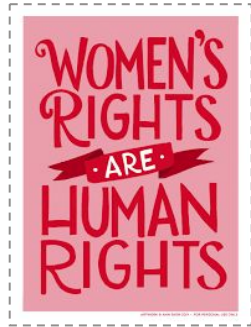
By awarding people for losing weight, dieting groups turns counting calories into a competition which everyone loses

Women's Rights

We should be grateful for the progress made, but women are not yet equal

Politicians across the world pay homage to the importance of human rights, minority rights, women's rights, but first of all, what are rights? Rights are moral or legal; entitlement to do or have something. However not all people are treated with the rights they deserve. Many people are being attacked because of certain aspects within them that people do not agree with - for example, race, religion and gender. This is not right. However, now more than ever, women are recognised as equals with men. Over the years more understanding and fairness is showing through and positive change is still continuing. But this couldn't have been achieved without people speaking up for what is right, for example Rosa Parks, the Suffragettes and so many more. So what do you do if you recognise discrimination? Be heard and do what's right. This world can change - let's make a positive impact together.

For many, many years women have been seen as being the weaker sex in society, with men being seen as more dominant, taking control of nearly every situation in life. One of the first female activist who fought for women's rights was Elizabeth Cady



Stanton, who was a writer in America. More than 70 years before the 19th amendment, Elizabeth Cady Stanton helped organize the Seneca Falls Convention, considered to be the beginning of the women's suffrage movement in the United States. In the UK, we were lucky enough to have Emmeline Pankhurst to start the women's suffrage movement and change the world for the better, which was the start of bringing us into the modern world, enabling women to finally have their say, although sexism still remains. There are many cases of women being kidnapped and sexually assaulted on their way home, such as the tragic case of Sabina Nessa and countless others. Why can't women feel comfortable just walking home - even during the day? Although women may have come far, society still has far to go in its treatment of the "fairer sex".

The \$44 billion blunder

Will Twitter swim or sink under Musk?

On October 28, 2022 Elon Musk, the CEO of Tesla, finalised the acquisition of Twitter for \$54.20 per share, or a total of almost \$44 billion.

Elon began purchasing company shares on April 14th, eventually increasing his stake to 9.1 percent. After initially declining a board position offering, Elon made a bid to purchase Twitter for 44 billion dollars (or about 52 dollars per share). Elon claimed that while Twitter has enormous potential, its current form will neither be successful nor meet its social need. Twitter's board of directors originally tried to prevent Musk from taking over the company by implementing a "poison pill" approach, which was initially activated when Elon gained over 15% ownership in the company but by the time April 25th rolled around, Twitter had agreed to his terms. For some time Musk followed through on his offer, garnering nearly \$7 billion in outside finance. Drama began to develop when Elon announced that he would be continuing the offer while "temperately putting it on hold." As Elon continued to accuse Twitter of failing to address their problem with spam accounts and bots, Twitter responded by stating that Musk had

already consented to the \$54.20 transaction and that it intends to close on and enforce the merger agreement. However, by the 18th of May the Tesla CEO took a more aggressive approach, saying that the purchase "cannot proceed forward" until his issues with the amount of spam accounts were addressed.



Despite this on the 8th of July due to the situation not improving, Musk announced that he would be ending the contract because, in his opinion, Twitter had repeatedly broken their agreement. In response, Twitter said they would take legal action against Elon to force him to buy the business. After this a lot more drama would ensue, but during October Elon Musk unexpectedly offered to purchase Twitter per the parameters set forth in April. He then became the official owner of Twitter. Posting on the platform "Entering Twitter HQ – let that sink in!" By Noman Shaik

England's cricket conquest

England cricket is developing fast, with new young stars arriving and improving the English game. England are now the reigning T20 World Cup champions. They have had an incredible test match summer and are looking dangerous in all formats of the game. So far England are beating Pakistan 2-0 in a great victory. Here is what happened in that first test.

England posted a great score of 657 in just over 1 day because of their great run rate. There were 4 centurions for the English who all batted fast and skilfully. England were heavy favourites at this point. Then Pakistan came in to bat, a strong opening partnership helped put them in a good position. Pakistan ended up with 579 - 78 runs behind England. The England cricket team as of recently has a new test team captain, Ben Stokes, whose career started in England cricket in 2011 in the T20 International cricket team. He was part of the England team who won the 2019 cricket world cup, on top of being a top-scoring England cricket player and batting in the tied super-over, winning the Man of the Match award. He has made 658 England test cricket caps, and has made 5429 runs in 86 matches.

Another recent event for England was the T20 world cup that England won and beat Pakistan again in the final. The 2 teams that qualified from group A was India-1st and Pakistan-2nd. The two teams that qualified from Group B was New Zealand-1st and England-2. That meant it was New Zealand Vs Pakistan (Pakistan won) and England vs India (England won) Then the final was England vs Pakistan (England won). Overall



A joyous Ollie Pope

England played well with every player contributing to the team. There is a promising future for this English side and could win many more trophies in the near future. Cricket is evolving around the world and especially in England. More children are learning to play this magnificent game and if we carry on pushing cricket towards a younger audience the bigger it will grow, because cricket is a great sport to be enjoyed for all. The Hundred has massively helped cricket

because children are loving it and it gets them out and being active. It is also promoting the women's game and showing people that sport is for all genders. The little girls watching the games feel like they can also have fun and play sports. Cricket is being enjoyed all around the world and that should keep spreading until everyone is on that cricket pitch. By Finn Atkinson and George O'Connell

Welland Park Sports results

Well done to the year 8 girls basketball team, they finished 1st in a school games tournament after successfully beating KMC and BC before playing Gartree in the final game and beating them to bring home the title.

Congratulations to the U16 girls Futsal team, they finished 2nd in the south Leicestershire tournament, you all played amazingly.

A brilliant performance from the year 7 boys basketball team. Team 1 finished 2nd in pool A and Team 2 finished 4th in pool B. Congratulations!

Well done to the year 11 boys basketball team, came home with a 46-28 win again TECC. Amazing work.

Finally, congratulations to the year 8 boys rugby team. Although they didn't come home with a win, they scored 5 tries!

By Freya

Qatar controversies

Cruelty, corruption and the world's greatest competition

The world cup. This tournament is notoriously a chance for football fans to relish in the sport that is football and subsequently is patriotism on a mass scale in England. From addicts to amateurs, anyone can take pleasure (score depending!) on the 90+ minutes of entertainment. However, this year the world cup is tinged with an air of controversy which has drawn the spotlight away from the game and has raised bigger questions. Should Qatar have hosted the World Cup? away from the game and has raised bigger questions. Should Qatar have hosted the World Cup? Is football getting too involved in political events?

So why is there a large presence of controversy surrounding this year's games? Qatar is a country in the Middle East and their laws are overwhelmingly restrictive for example women are heavily restricted in what they can do and it is illegal to be a member of the LGBTQ+ community- the consequences for going against this law could be fines, prison sentence or even a death sentence. Adding to this, migrant workers (30,000 of them) built 7 stadiums from scratch. There have been many accusations surrounding

the treatment of these workers and according to the economic times, 6,500 workers have died in the making of these stadiums. Qatar claims that there have only been 3 "work related" deaths but sources predict that Qatari government have overwhelmingly miscommunicated their failings and have blamed workers deaths on "natural causes".

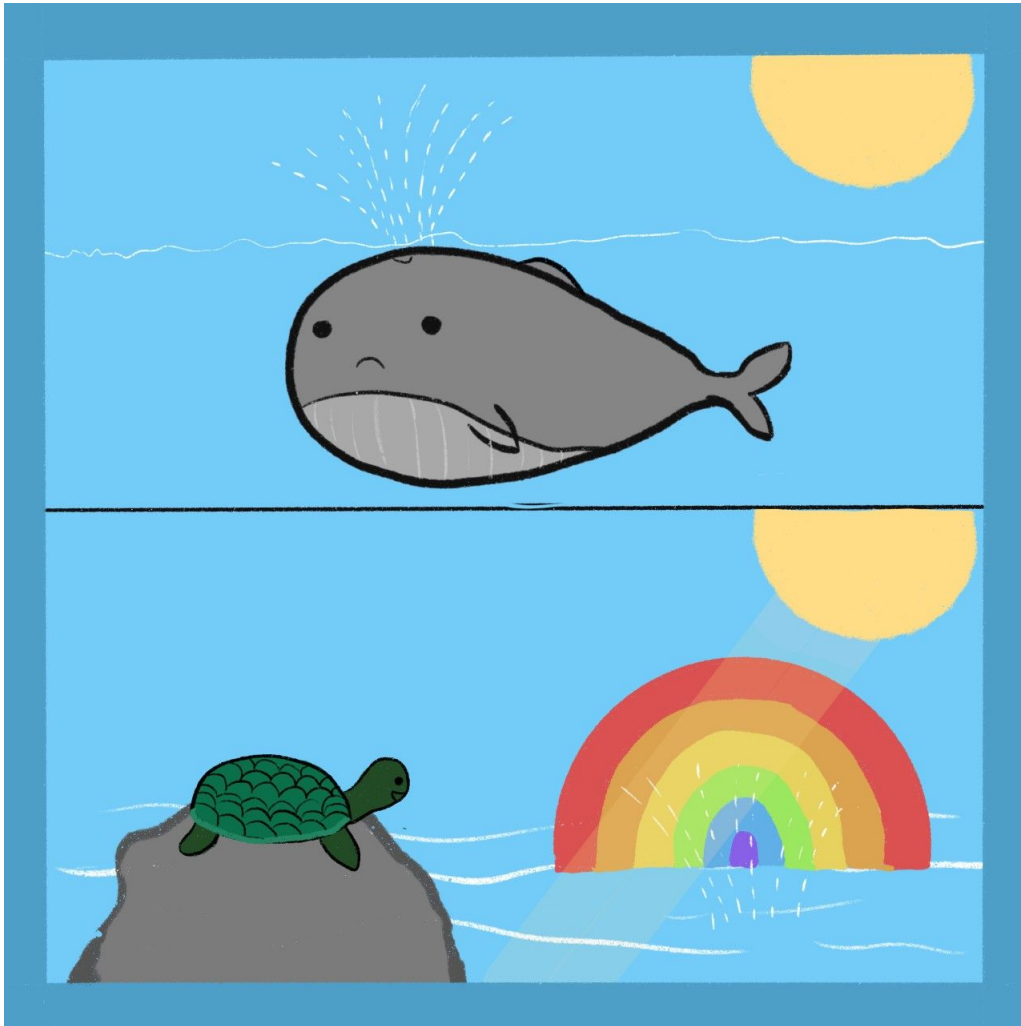


Qatar won their bid 12 years ago to host the World Cup and promised that they would amend their laws- and yet no action has been taken. The concern is that by FIFA giving the stage to Qatar they are presenting themselves to be in support of the government and legislation of Qatar. It's right that not only wealthy countries should have a chance at the hosting the World Cup, the concern is that FIFA are giving light to a country with a mass number of failings in the way that the country is run.

Rightly, there has been protest this year's games, including teams competing finding their own ways of making their voices heard. The European football teams in the world cup were planning to stand together and wear the "one love" armband, a way to campaign against the same-sex laws in Qatar. Yet, that decision was never seen

on the pitch. FIFA was adamant that sporting sanctions would be seen if the teams were seen to be wearing the armbands, with Infantino (chairman of FIFA) saying that the teams should "focus on football". I believe that wearing an armband does not encourage of football instead it allows the viewers to understand that the players do not encourage the laws of Qatar and they can encourage support for the LGBTQ+ community. Germany had the most striking response to the statement. Prior to their game against Japan the team stood and put their hands over their mouths, this was to emulate how the team felt that they had been "gagged" by FIFA. Their silent protest sent powerful ripples around the world.

Games



You make more people happy than you think you do

By Laurel

Wordsearch

S	L	U	J	G	A	G	U	I	C	J	S	T	Z	G
S	R	E	I	L	R	P	Q	L	G	T	A	M	F	J
D	I	F	S	P	F	T	X	C	E	A	M	R	Z	U
Y	T	J	F	N	P	W	L	O	N	T	T	K	U	S
Y	Z	W	G	C	I	E	K	K	K	N	S	M	M	T
R	P	I	B	H	S	T	B	M	A	A	I	C	E	E
R	Q	X	D	O	Q	Z	K	N	M	S	R	V	Q	R
V	A	O	K	L	T	F	D	L	R	E	H	O	S	F
F	S	N	D	I	W	R	S	T	I	R	C	R	J	W
D	B	O	D	D	I	V	E	Y	Q	F	B	G	T	P
E	V	B	X	A	Z	G	L	E	J	T	X	X	N	U
G	O	S	R	Y	X	L	H	I	R	P	E	R	P	V
K	F	D	Q	K	O	K	W	Y	Q	R	Q	J	I	B
F	H	D	O	H	P	R	E	S	E	N	T	Q	L	N
N	O	I	T	A	R	B	E	L	E	C	I	B	F	H

See if you can find all 9!

- Celebration
- Holiday
- Santa
- Christmas
- Holly Tinsel
- Gift Present
- Tree

By Ethan Bowden and Cerys Heath

Puzzles

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

Are Brussels Sprouts a Crime?

Ewan Harrison-Payne investigates

The age-old question: it has divided families for millennia (probably). But now it is judgement day, where the world will finally know the verdict. Apparently no, brussels sprouts are not a crime. 15 staff members were questioned and 13 said that they were not a crime, compared to 2 who said they were. Interestingly enough, 2 adults further commented, saying they go well with balsamic vinegar. 8 said it goes well with bacon. And most said it needs to be cooked carefully. A relatively decisive verdict compared to the international number: 51% of the world like brussels sprouts.



Agony Aunt*

Problem One:

The woman I'm dating isn't rich enough, what do I do?

- Anonymous dater

Solution:

Give them your trust fund.

Problem Two:

What is the meaning of life?

-Soul Searcher

Solution:

42

Problem three:

My cat hasn't moved for five days, what should I do?

-Forlorn feline friend

Solution:

Steal your Neighbours cat, they told me it was ok.

Problem Four:

I hate winter as it's really dark. I hate waking up when it's dark outside. What do I do?

-Summer sleeper

Solution:

First, make sure to wrap up warm, no one likes to wake up cold. Also, try to get more sleep, I always find that when I am well rested, I find it easier to wake up and get out of bed.

Alternatively, you could just not wake up.

**Note: our resident agony aunt is not trained in therapy (or at all for that matter). Please do not follow this advice. By Amy Peck*