

BETTER LATE THAN NEVER: FANS GET READY TO WATCH EURO 2020 THIS SUMMER pages 22-23

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WITH LOVE ISLAND SET TO RETURN WE LOOK AT THE SUMMER BODY PROBLEM Page 8-9

# FESTIVALS ARE BACK: BUT THEY'RE GOING TO BE DIFFERENT

GLASTONBURY IS RETURNING THIS YEAR BUT WITH A FAMILY FOCUS See page 29





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# Stalking ‘shadow pandemic’ sees helpline demand triple

By Lauran O’Toole

Restrictions on movement have caused more people to be online, making it harder for people to conceal their location, and leading to an increase in cyber stalking.

Stalking incidents reported to Scotland Yard rocketed by more than 300% between April 2020 and February 2021.

You might think of stalking as a shadow constantly following you but it can come in many forms.

National Stalking Awareness Week, entitled: ‘Unmasking Stalking, A Changing Landscape’, took place between April 19 – April 23 with the aim of voicing the experiences of victims whilst pushing for changes in the criminal justice system.

The Suzy Lamplugh Trust was set up to support victims of stalking

following the disappearance of 25-year-old Suzy Lamplugh in 1986.

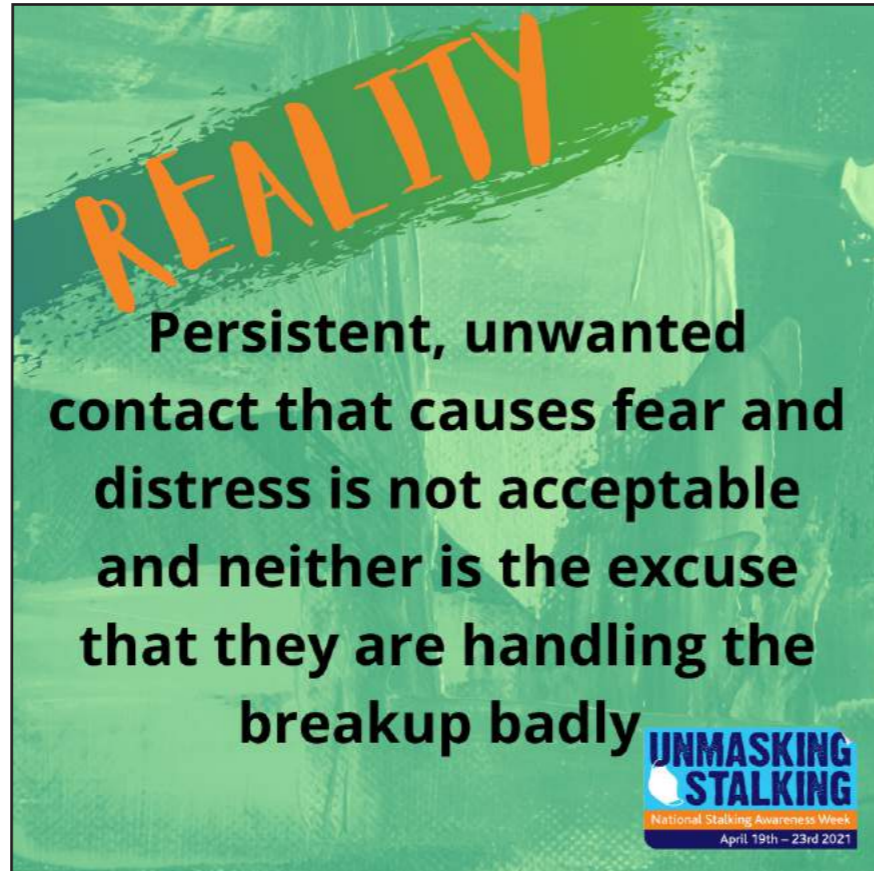
Violet Alvarez, the Senior Policy and Campaigns Officer at Suzy Lamplugh Trust, said: “Stalking is a crime of psychological terror that impacts on all aspects of a victim’s life, often in ways that are long lasting and traumatic.

“Since March 2020 we have seen a rise in calls to the helpline, clients are more distressed and are requiring much greater support.

“Demand has fluctuated to the helpline over the course of the pandemic, in some periods it has tripled on pre-Covid levels.

“Around eight in ten victims of stalking experience symptoms consistent with post – traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) in the aftermath of being stalked.”

The Suzy Lam-



STALKING AWARENESS WEEK: Entitled: ‘Unmasking Stalking A Changing Landscape’ it’s focused on changing behaviours of perpetrators since the outbreak of coronavirus

plugh Trust received funding from the Mayor’s Office for Policing and Crime in 2020 to launch the London Stalking Support Service and is particularly aimed at those who may not realise they are being stalked or are not comfortable speaking to someone.

Every female

friend I have spoken to has a story where they feared they were being stalked and each story further hit home the constant fear for our safety.

Maybe I have unlucky friends, but I think it’s more that stalking is a problem that is happening now and the danger won’t go away.

problem for many is that home is far from a safe place.

While they may have been protected against the virus, staying home was dangerous for stalking victims who stayed in one place, it provided stalkers an opportunity for surveillance.

Cyber stalking can include trolling or observing your social accounts, threatening to share photos of you, impersonating your online identity or hacking into your computer and installing tracking devices.

Emma Short, Associate Professor in Psychology at De Montford University first did a study in 2011, looking at people who had been cyber stalked, and it was about 33%.

Emma said: “In recent years, that has gone up to between 78% and 88% because the cyber means of intrusion

are so much greater than they were. It is complete saturation when someone locks into your life.

“We need to start using models of the physical world when thinking about the cyber world.

“You’d change your lock on your front door if someone left who was suspicious or violent against you, you have to treat every password as if it’s a key that needs changing.”

Ten years ago, stalkers may bombard you with emails or hack your Facebook but now, any Wi-Fi enabled devices can be hacked or manipulated.

Emma said: “Stalking is about preoccupation and sessions, if they have empty time they will fill it.

“The responsibility for securing devices used to be with the IT department but now, we are managing and servicing ourselves.

“Often the default settings of apps is that privacy is wide open and many people fail to dig deeper into their settings.

“Inexperienced people need to be upskilled on how to protect themselves since everyone is more skilled online because of the pandemic and stalkers’ empty time has increased.”

The distress and anxiety caused on victims can cause self-doubt and self-blame while some perpetrators have utilised their daily exercise to watch their victims.

Emma said: “An average of 21 people around you are affected if you are being stalked. It does affect other people and often victims blame themselves for bringing it into their circle.

“It is absolutely not their fault, it is the behaviour of someone else who is trying

to pursue or impose a relationship on you that is unwanted.”

Emma said often stalking is viewed as a gendered crime because more women are stalked and killed but male victims are often overlooked in popular press and social media.

One in five women and one in ten men will experience stalking in their lifetime.

The Alice Ruggles Trust was set up in 2017 after the death of 24-year-old Alice on 12th October

2016, after she endured a relentless campaign of stalking.

Strategy and development manager for the Alice Ruggles Trust, Victoria Charleston, said: “Our long term goal is to equip a gener-

ation with the confidence to recognise coercive control and stalking.

It is the mission of the Alice Ruggles Trust to prevent what happened to Alice but male victims are often overlooked in

Victoria added: “We need to bring stalking to an end.

“We need more specialist support for victims, more training and awareness in the criminal justice system to keep victims safe and handle perpetrators effectively.”

Victoria believes the criminal justice system and support services need a thorough understanding of the issues involved with stalking.

Contact the National Stalking Helpline: 0808 802 0300.



VICTIM ALICE RUGGLES: The trust (set up in 2017) ensures relevant legislation is effective and adhered to



# Local casinos not always a safe bet

By Joseph Marshall

London is full of real life spaces in which to gamble.

Casinos and betting shops are on high streets in every borough and they are seriously profitable businesses.

There is however, a great deal of controversy surrounding what addiction charities such as GamCare call 'land-based' (not online) gambling.

A GamCare spokesperson said: "Nearly half of people who come to us cite issues with land-based gambling.

"This covers high street casinos, betting shops and arcades.

"There's not really such a thing as the typical gambler.

"It's quite a diverse range of people that we get.

"They find themselves hooked on it either after a trau-



LONDON VEGAS: Concerned parties protest as high street gambling terminals pop up across the city

matic life event or they're someone who just got into it as a hobby."

Addicts are often dealing with mental health issues, domestic abuse or trauma, which exacerbate their problem.

Recently, there has been a raging dispute over the opening of a new casino in Enfield's Palmers Green.

Part of an established international gaming empire, Merkur Slots would

feature slot machines in a noisy, brightly coloured environment designed to encourage people to part with their cash.

Thousands of angry residents petitioned the council to review the company's licence to operate in their area.

One of their major concerns is that the new establishment will promote problem gambling.

Self exclusion has proven to be a suc-

cessful way to curb the problem in the virtual world.

People can sign up to a scheme whereby the bank blocks all transactions on their cards relating to various online operators.

The spokesperson said: "Land-based gambling needs to catch up with that.

"Schemes need to be integrated and more consistent so there aren't loopholes."

Gamblers can of course end up los-

ing massive sums of money.

Of all callers to the national gambling helpline, 10% report losing between £20,000 and £100,000.

Anyone who has watched a televised football match in the past decade will be aware of the huge increase in adverts for betting companies.

They can glamourise the pursuit, enticing the already vulnerable into throwing good money after bad.

The GamCare spokesperson said: "Advertising is problematic and needs regulation in terms of frequency."

They added it needs safer gambling messaging.

As for the proliferation of high street fruit machines, GamCare's stance is neutral.

They said: "We can't comment on what the industry does."

# Ramadan student daily challenges

By Rahima Miah

The Islamic month of Ramadan has just passed, as it started on Tuesday 13 April and finished last week on Thursday 13 May.

During this month, Muslims fast daily so they go hours without any food or drink including water.

Ramadan is a time when Muslims get more in touch with their religion and spirituality, but while some are trying to connect with their spiritual side, they're also trying to stay connected to their books.

I'm talking about students, and as a Muslim second year university student myself, I can say that it has its challenges.

This might surprise you but for me not being able to eat or drink anything at all for over 12 hours isn't what I find most difficult,



PRAYER MAT: As well as the regular five daily prayers, Muslims pray an additional long prayer in Ramadan at night, a couple of hours after breaking their fast

it's the broken sleep and feeling drained that really gets me.

Muslims start fasting before sunrise and finish after sunset.

On one day I started my fast at 3.30am and finished it at 8.42pm, so I woke up around 3am to eat something, then went back to sleep.

I spoke to other Muslim university students to find out about how they're coping.

Owais Mahmood,

20, an optometry student, said: "Ramadan this year has been quite lonely for me because I've spent it alone."

Last year Ramadan fell in the first lockdown so a lot of students like Owais were at home with their families completing their studies online.

This was a blessing in disguise, because it meant students could break their fast with family eating together and were able to

focus on religious commitments like praying on time since they were at home.

Owais has spent Ramadan at his student flat this year where he lives by himself.

He added: "I've found it a bit hard to make time to read the Quran, and I've rushed home from uni to make sure I'm not missing my prayers, as well as making time for my assignments and revision."

Hana Rais, 18, an English literature student, said: "Ramadan is always a special time of the year and since lockdown has been eased I've been able to break my fast outside with friends or family, making use of restaurants' outdoor dining."

I'm sure some people can agree that as lovely and comfy as it is eating at home, it's nice to be able to eat out too and have that option.

Hana also told me what she finds challenging about having to study during Ramadan and it is not being able to drink water.

She added: "Usually when I'm studying or doing an exam I have a quick sip of water because I feel like it helps me to keep going so not being able to do this makes me feel less motivated to carry on with my work."



# The problem with Love Island and the summer body image

By Emily Hemsley

Summer is finally here, which means the days are getting longer, the weather is getting warmer and our cosy jumpers and sweatpants are swapped for bikinis and skimpy dresses, but with that comes the social expectation and crushing anxiety to achieve the infamous 'summer body'.

Summer also means that ITV's well-loved reality show Love Island will once again return to the nation's screens, full of young attractive bikini-clad singletons looking for love.

The new series is expected to begin at the end of June when a new group of Islanders will stay in a villa in Majorca for the chance to win £50,000.

The hugely popular show hit more than six million viewers in 2019 with

more than half aged between 16 and 34 and 58% female.

Yet the show's emphasis on unrealistic appearances, physical attraction and competitiveness can negatively damage people's body image and self-esteem, leaving them feeling insecure and self-critical.

Mia Harling, 22, a student from Kingston, said: "Honestly, watching shows like Love Island which focus so much on appearance really triggers me, so I try to stay away from them which is hard because society seems to be so obsessed with them."

"As someone who has suffered from an eating disorder my whole life, it makes me feel self-conscious of my body and I compare myself to the people on TV, so it just makes me feel worse about myself."

In 2019, 24% of people aged 18 to 24



BIKINI BODY READY: Images of perfect summer bodies are often spread across social media, making the problem worse

said reality TV made them worry about their body image, according to UK survey data released by the Mental Health Foundation.

Also, 23% said they had experienced suicidal thoughts and 15% said they had self-harmed because of concerns about their body image.

Although contestants on the show are typically size six to eight, the average woman in the UK is a size 16 and 63% of UK adults are overweight or obese, therefore it is not a true representation of the population.

So why do we watch a show that is likely to make us

feel worse about ourselves?

Thomas Midgley, behavioural and cognitive psychotherapist, eating disorder dietitian and company director at The Body Image Treatment Clinic, said: "A show like Love Island markets a body image ideal and that

is aspirational and

attractive for people to watch, but at the same time we then negatively compare ourselves automatically to these ideals and that generates a sense of feeling inferior and self-critical.

"This is a cultural process that is playing out and Love Island with its popularity massively plays

into that.

"Love Island would not have anywhere near as much interest if the individuals were normal with women sized 14-16, it would not bring the same numbers.

"The second you watch a show like Love Island, you are promoting it in our culture, which is feeding the present boom we have in eating disorders and body image shame and that is incredibly toxic and not without harm to vulnerable individuals."

In the UK, rates of eating disorders have risen in recent years.

The UK's leading eating disorder charity, Beat, has seen an 81% increase in calls to its helpline since March, while the Mental Health Foundation found last year that because of their body image 20% of adults felt shame, 34% felt down, and 19% felt disgusted.

So what exactly is a summer body and why does society strive for one?

Midgley said: "A summer body is a marketing strategy. If an individual knows summer is coming, they are more likely to wear less clothes and go on holiday and that starts generating anxieties.

"In order to manage that, those individuals try to change their bodies to fit the body image ideals such as lose weight, change their eating habits, exercise more and get cosmetic treatment."

For years the media has typically portrayed women's summer bodies as being thin, toned and tanned while wearing little clothing to expose their figure.

Now, with the influence of celebrities such as the Kardashians, women are now often striving for an hourglass figure with

a small waist, wide hips and chest.

Meanwhile, men are expected to be muscular and fit by spending hours on end at the gym and drinking countless protein shakes.

Workouts and diets which can be damaging to your health are also advised in order to achieve the perfect beach-ready body.

Victoria Deborah, franchise owner at GYMGUYZ, said she sees an influx of customers looking to shape-up and lose weight approaching the summer months as people get ready to be going on holiday and wearing fewer clothes.

She advised: "Find the reasons why you want a summer body, it should be more than just bums and tums but also a healthy heart and lungs.

"You should not compare your ideal

summer body to anyone else.

"The most requests especially from females is a smaller waist and bigger gluteus which comes from the image they see online.

"People don't realise that everyone comes with a different body type.

"Your body type may never allow you to look like the person next to you but you should be okay with the best version of you."

So is it time for society to ditch the drive for a summer body and instead learn to accept ourselves as we are?

Midgley advised to focus more on our values rather than our appearance.

"Confidence is the most attractive, we need to be the best we can be in the body we have today and stop comparing ourselves," he stated.



SUMMER BODY WORKOUT: People endure agonising workouts aimed to achieve the perfect summer figure



# It's a marathon, not a sprint: the world of extreme running

By Joseph Marshall

To most people, running a marathon is a tall order.

The prospect of a 26 mile race sounds painful, gruelling, or downright impossible.

To go above and beyond that, running the equivalent of multiple marathons in one go, is surely beyond the realms of possibility. Enter ultramarathon runners.

Kate Allen, 49, is the content manager and web administrator for runultra.co.uk.

She regularly runs ultramarathons herself.

Beginning seven years ago, her first foray into the sport was a cool 100km.

She said: "It's a real feeling of accomplishment when you push yourself and your mind wins over your body."

"Your body is always going to be

saying 'we don't want to do this, we want to sit down on the sofa'.

"When you win that battle mentally it's a great feeling of achievement and you feel like you can extrapolate that to different areas of your life."

Ultra events are experiencing a boom.

Kate said: "People are becoming more and more aware of how welcoming and encouraging they are."

This has been perpetuated by a renewed interest in running in general, due to the coronavirus lockdown.

In terms of what drives people to put themselves through painful extremes, Kate said: "We want to push ourselves further and further each time."

"When you achieve something you think right, what's my next challenge?"

Big Dog's Backyard Ultra is one of the



RUNNING AMOK: Fitness fanatics take on the Marathon des Sables in the Sahara Desert, aka the toughest race on earth. Credit: Steve Diederich

most fiendish challenges out there.

Based in rural Tennessee, USA, it has no finish line.

The runners repeat the same four mile circuit every hour until only one of them is left standing.

The record is a knee buckling 312 miles or 75 hours.

Lindley Chambers,

47, is taking time out due to injury.

This year, he is organising Suffolk Back Yard Ultra.

The winner will receive a golden ticket to the aforementioned American contest.

As for how Big Dog's compares to Marathon Des Sables - a seven day,

156 mile race in the Sahara Desert, billed as the toughest on earth, Kate said it can be worse.

Earlier this month, Lindley organised the 615 mile Monarch's Way ultra.

In the midst of their pain, runners take in some of the most beautiful parts of the English coun-

tryside.

Speaking from a checkpoint, Lindley said: "They're not even warmed up yet."

"They're 97 miles in and they're only on the second day out of 14."

"It's hard to compute the distances in your head."

"The likelihood is that at least half

of the people don't make it.

"It was three years before we got anyone finishing at all because we're asking them to do 43 miles a day minimum for 14 days."

"They only get to a checkpoint every 45 - 50 miles."

The runners come from a variety of

backgrounds.

Lindley said: "We've got a couple of city type guys, another guy who does trading online, selling bits and pieces."

"The stuff that motivates them I'm sure is the same stuff everyone else gets motivated by."

"They think of their family, they think of why they're doing it, they think of finishing, lots of visualisation stuff about finishing and just how immensely proud and uplifted they'll be at the end, just like they'll feel really bad if they don't finish as well."

"It's fun to watch people really push themselves and test themselves."

"Ultimately some will fail and some will want to come back and finish it."

"Some will decide that's their limit and they've learnt about their limits, they've learnt how far they can get."

Lindley said that 20 years ago in the UK, when he was starting out, completing a marathon was seen as a far more unattainable feat than it is today.

The London Marathon was one of the only events around.

Now there are five or six hundred.

He cites the social aspect of marathons as a driving force behind the boom.

They're no longer just a bucket list activity.

There is a culture of one upmanship whereby people are posting their achievements on social media as a sign of prowess.

An ordinary marathon no longer carries the same social clout it once did, encouraging people to go further and beyond in their quest for kudos.

He said: "A lot of the friends I now have from this racing community are the people that do the really silly distances."

"Some of them don't warm up until they've got 20 miles done."

Eddie Izzard is the ultimate example of an amateur athlete who has successfully turned their hand to

super-long distance running.

In 2016, she ran 27 marathons in 27 days.

Kate said: "What's lovely about what she's done is it proves that anyone can do it."

"You can put any barriers you want in front of yourself, but someone like that removes them and shows that if you get up in the morning and decide to do something you can do it."

Contrary to what you might think, Lindley believes traditional marathons can be harder than ultras.

He said: "In some cases it's easier than a marathon because you don't have the same time pressure or expectation of time and distance that you would have in a normal race so you don't feel like you have to hit an arbitrary time number, you can just enjoy yourself and get outdoors."

As ultramarathons go from strength to strength, we can expect to see competitors breaking records previously considered impossible, as they find and surpass their mental and physical limits.

# It's A Sin 'has had a huge influence'

By Michael Phillips

It is the drama that has affected so many people and shone a light on how deadly HIV and AIDS first was, how so many lives were lost and the struggle to raise awareness.

According to figures released by Channel 4, the series has 18.9m views on All 4.

It is the streaming service's biggest ever instant box set and the most binged to date, contributing to a record All 4 growth in 2021.

It is written by multi-BAFTA award-winning writer Russell T Davies, who told the Terrence Higgins Trust: "It's a stark reminder it shouldn't take another 30 years of graveside regret for us to achieve sufficient empathy to confront the injustices of today. We



STARSTRUCK: The singer from Years and Years received a huge amount of praise for appearing as main character Ritchie Tozer, who battled with AIDS in the show

should start now."

Dr Vincent Wong, a Harley Street doctor, has worked with many of RuPaul's Drag Races' stars, as well as creating a safe space for transgender patients.

He works to feminise and or masculinise their faces.

He said: "There are so many things you can learn.

"A lot of younger generations don't really understand what went on in the past, so I think it

was really good to show the younger generation.

"It's amazing. I think he did a brilliant job, it's just a good balance of everything. I remember crying at the end of the last episode, it does pull on the heart strings."

Asked if Olly Alexander did a good job at the character portrayal, he said: "I think he did a really good job. Everyone in the cast did an amazing job.

"I think my favourite would have to be the girl who played Jill, I loved her character most I think we need more people like her.

"The whole 'acceptance from family' part is certainly something I can relate to, and coming from an Asian culture it's very difficult even now and that part I can certainly relate to most.

"A lot of companies use the rainbow flag in June

and July to celebrate pride and I think a program like this puts it into perspective and reminds us of the true meaning of the pride celebration and any kind of LGBT awareness events.

"I think people who watched the program who don't understand HIV and AIDS were look at the whole thing and take-away a lot of the stigma and taboo around it.

"I think a lot of people even within the community feel a lot more aware of the research and the progress in that area."

Asked what the government can do to promote more awareness around the HIV and AIDS, he said: "We need more programs.

"It's amazing and I think it could be incorporated into sex education in school as I think kids need to learn from a young age."

# Lethal threat of eating disorders

By Lauran O'Toole

People fear different things, from heights to spiders, but for many, what they fear the most is food.

Eating disorders consume a person's mental and physical health, their personality and brain functionality.

During the height of the pandemic the usual support systems were not, in place which contributed to eating disorders worsening or developing.

The Maudsley Charity was founded to fund the people and projects who are striving to improve care, support recovery and prevent mental illness and works with the South London and Maudsley NHS Foundation Trust.

Danielle Glennon, clinical lead at the trust and national co-lead of eating disorder ser-



MAUDSLEY CHARITY: The charity works in partnership with South London and Maudsley NHS foundation Trust to support patients and carers

vice FREED, said: "Eating disorders are everybody's business. They are serious mental illnesses, which no one chooses.

"We need more celebrities to come forward to talk about their experiences, more media coverage and to spread a sense of hope that people can make a full recovery.

"The pandemic has meant that some of the usual support systems

haven't been in place and people have found themselves isolated with increased stress, all of which can contribute to an eating disorder developing or worsening."

Eating disorders grew in the pandemic environment, where many focused on eating and weight control as a coping mechanism and, without friends and family checking in on them in person, it became up to in-

dividuals to ensure they stayed on track.

UK eating disorder charity Beat saw a 140% increase in their helpline services between February and November last year.

The development of eating disorders tends to peak during teenage years and in the early 20s, a time full of challenges and big curves in psychological and social development. Early interven-

tion is vital as it improves the speed or recovery and improves the likelihood of staying free from the illness.

Glennon added: "There continue to be biological changes happening after a person turns 18, and brain development continues into your mid-20s.

"When someone develops an eating disorder, this interferes with a person's development and can derail someone on their journey to successful flourishing and reaching their potential.

"Whether a mental or physical illness, getting help early greatly improves someone's chances of a full recovery."

People with eating disorders fear certain foods and that it will make them fat whilst classing others as 'safe.

Contact Maudsley Charity on 0800 731 2864.



# The use of TikTok as a platform to inspire and nurture audience

By Amelia Oprean

When the pandemic hit one year ago, many of us got swept up in the whirlwind of the famous app, TikTok.

TikTok's value is £35 million, with an estimated 689 million users last year.

There are around 100 million users from Europe, and the UK ranks first in terms of the most users – with a huge 17 million users.

I spoke to two creatives who use TikTok as their platform to entertain and inspire their audience.

Tom Houghton is a 36-year-old stand-up comedian, who has been living in the Tower of London for the past three years.

Tom studied drama at the University of Kent, and then took a Masters in stand-up comedy.

He said: "Comedy has always been a part of my life. I think doubts were

raised when I was aged five, performing Cats The Musical to my dad and all his army officer friends.

"They would be summoned to the bottom of the stairs to watch me perform 'Skimble Shanks' down the bannister."

As a soloist, pre-pandemic, Tom was able to do shows in Sydney, headline the Comedy Store, and appeared on TV in Johannesburg in South Africa, among many others.

After leaving the group, who are still active today, he moved to London.

Tom said: "My father is the ex-head of the British Armed Forces, and when he was moving into the Tower of London, I got the choice to rent a cupboard in the middle of the city or live in a castle.

"I'd question anyone who wouldn't take that chance."

Tom, alongside his solo work, also runs



HONOURABLE TOM: The comedian does daily walks through where Guy Fawkes' was interrogated, and claims he fell ill because of a young girls' ghost's hate for men when he moved into his room

a comedy duo called Chaps, which started this March, with his long-time friend, Naz Osmanoglu.

He said: "It was quite clear that he and I were the robots of both our comedy groups.

"We struck up a big friendship. Everyone around us said we'd be a great duo."

Tom is 'the honourable clown' who lives in a palace and Naz is a Turkish prince, 16th heir to the Ottoman Empire.

Their most famous sketch, 'Educate Our Boys', was uploaded to TikTok and has racked 993.5k views and 382.5k likes.

The skit explains to a group of men

about the ways that they shouldn't approach women, such as cat-calling them.

He said: "Guys who still don't understand movements such as #MeToo won't listen to women, at all.

"They listen to other men, and that's why it's important to be educating them. They'll listen to us."

iversity of Aberdeen.

He then got a scholarship in Princeton, New Jersey.

David also takes interest in vintage, antique era aesthetics, and commonly dresses as such – it was no exception for our interview, where he donned a white patterned blouse and a blue tweed cap.

He said: "I hope to continue to be the voice for other people to be yourself.

"I didn't have a voice like that when I was growing up. I didn't have anyone telling me that queer is okay, or 'wear whatever you want to the coffee shop'".

David is freelance, he teaches piano and voice, sings opera, is a piano accompanist, and audition coach.

He also performs, composes and takes part in modelling and photography.

One TikTok on his page reached more than one million views and was a

reel of a few outfits, calling them 'ghost outfits' – as in, today is the last day you might live, so you want to dress for the occasion.

He gained 200,000 followers in a day.

He said: "My niche is just being myself."

On his TikTok, he makes sure to empower others with his words.

Sitting at his piano, he plays slow and calming music whilst watching his audience come into his daily live TikTok streams and ask any questions they have.

During a live. David talked about his confusion as to why people will hurt and bully others.

He said: "It makes me very intrigued as to why these people don't want to reach out and become friends. They'd rather do the opposite."

Tom thinks that social media plays a large part.

He said: "Social

media is such a horrendous place.

"It's people's cherry-picked moments. They all lie about how good life is."

Tom recalls a time pre-pandemic where he was partying and falling into an abusive lifestyle when it came to drinking.

The pandemic gave him a chance to reflect, go back home and sober up – and now, he is living in London for the time being before he starts up on his tour which will have him booked until April next year.

David says that the pandemic gave him an opportunity to even release an EP album, called 'The Nocturnes'.

Whether it is comedy and sharing skits to educate others like Tom or sharing a part of his identity and empowering others through music like David, it is easy to see how TikTok can be a home for many creators, no matter what their background is.

He said: "I composed this work so that it's something people can listen to and remember the pandemic."

For both Tom and David, TikTok has allowed them to grow and share their passions for the content they create, and this was monumentally uplifted because of the pandemic.

Whether it is comedy and sharing skits to educate others like Tom or sharing a part of his identity and empowering others through music like David, it is easy to see how TikTok can be a home for many creators, no matter what their background is.



OPEN SPACE: David expressed his happiness in being able to be given a space through TikTok to show what he really is as a person, and talk openly to his growing audience



# The dating world after lockdown

By Emily Hemsley

Like most aspects of life, the COVID-19 pandemic caused a bit of a dry-spell in the dating world.

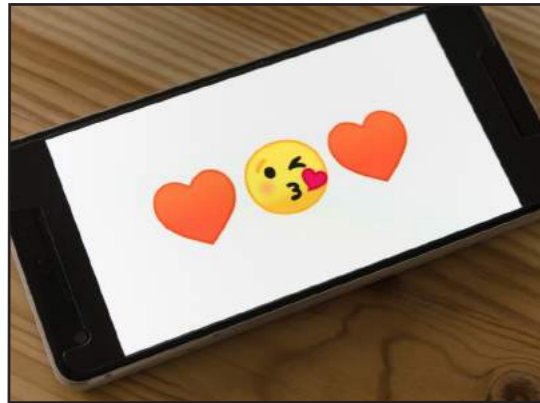
With lockdown restrictions and the worry of spreading the virus, real-life dates came to a halt.

But now restrictions are easing and the world is returning to normality, are we ready to brave the dating world again?

During lockdown, many singletons turned to the 1,400 UK dating apps to meet new people.

eharmony's relationship expert Rachael Lloyd said sign-ups to eharmony increased by 50% year-on-year in April and May last year.

"People have been stuck with online dating over the course of the pandemic and it shows how keen people have been to find



ONLINE DATING: Dating apps saw a boom in the number of users during the lockdown

new ways to date," she added.

New popular styles of dating include Zoom meetings, Netflix nights, virtual dinners, online museum tours and socially distanced picnics in the park.

Sonia Oblitey, global director of marketing at OkCupid said data showed that British daters are now 12 times more likely to say they'd like to find someone special rather than date around after the pandemic and that being vaccinated increases your chances of finding a match.

Yet these changes to the dating landscape can cause people to feel more anxious and fearful. According to research by the dating app Badoo, 60% of users are experiencing fear of meeting up, otherwise called FOMU. This is due to concerns about the virus (51%), increased social anxiety (38%) and feeling shy around new people (35%). However, one in five people said they enjoyed virtual dating due to not having to worry about spending money or having to travel. Lloyd said: "The pandemic putting interactions on

hold has actually helped a lot of people see their love life in a different light.

"Our recent research found that half of single Brits say they feel more empowered after the isolation of the past year and there's an appetite to enjoy being single more on your own terms."

Gurpreet Singh, a Relate counsellor for love and relationships, said that the re-introduction to dating can induce people's anxieties in different ways.

He said unestablished intimacy boundaries may also cause unease as kissing, hugging and holding hands, once considered normal, may be uncomfortable for some people.

Amy King, 27, and Eliot Wilkinson, 30, met in April 2020 during lockdown via the dating app Hinge and are now in a

strong relationship. Eliot said: "I didn't date for a long time due to the lockdown as the thought of having socially distanced dates made me cringe.

"I did worry that I had forgotten how to socialise with new people, not meeting anyone new for months and months to going on a date where you want to impress and be your best self felt like quite a jump."

Amy said: "I didn't want to date for ages during lockdown as it definitely made me more anxious to get out there and meet new people, especially as you didn't know if they were being as careful as you.

"I wanted to connect with other people without spreading infection and putting others at risk.

"I feel lucky to have found someone who I'm genuinely happy with."

# Gym surge to get fit after lockdown

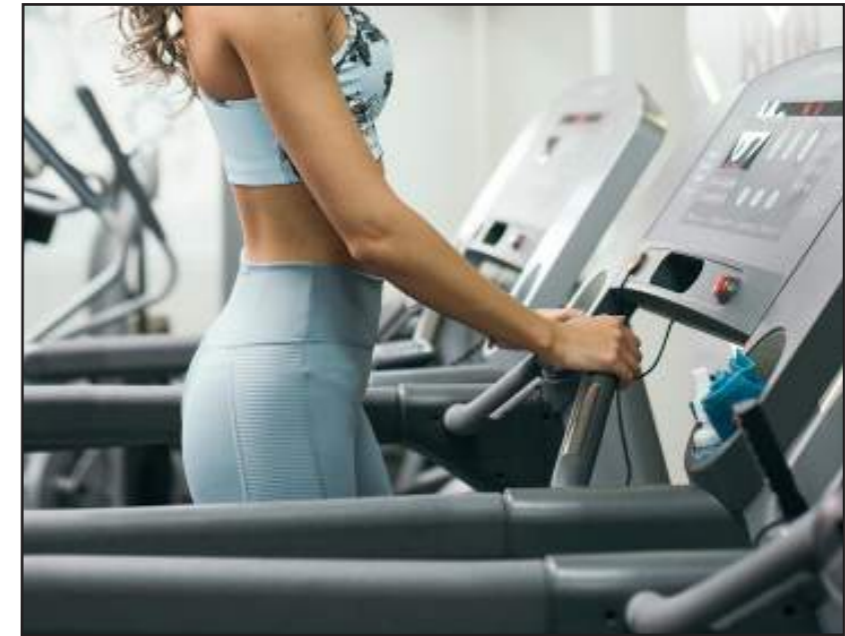
By Logan Forbes

During the past year, many people have been inactive and are now looking to get back to leading a healthy lifestyle.

National lockdowns imposed by the government to lower the number of daily COVID deaths played a key part in leading people to lose the benefits of exercise and all the hours of work put in the gym.

The suspension of team sports at grassroots level, the closure of gyms and the government advice to work from home if possible, has meant people have felt sluggish for a sustained period of time.

Since gyms were able to reopen from 12 April, they have been inundated with new membership requests with people eager to regain their fit-



GYM MEMBERSHIPS SOAR: With the easing of restrictions and gyms finally being able to reopen their doors, many are inundated with requests from people to join

ness levels and shed body fat.

Roy Meadows, owner of FitBox, said: "I have had to take on an additional trainer to cope with the demand.

"The gym levels are currently pretty similar to pre-lockdowns but I feel there is a slight groundswell of more people waiting to join once all restrictions are lifted.

"Enforced periods of sedentary be-

haviour have highlighted decreasing fitness levels.

"This has caused many people to gain weight."

The number of people who plan on paying for a gym membership post-lockdown is set to increase even further once Prime Minister Boris Johnson lifts all restrictions on the proposed date of 21 June.

Meadows explained that his gym has a fair num-

ber of calories and exercise as prescribed, consume plenty of water and make sure you are getting enough rest and sleep too."

However, for those who cannot afford or do not have the time to attend a gym, there are other activities that can help achieve the same target.

Meadows said: "I am a great believer in all exercise does not have to happen in the gym.

"Walking, jogging, cycling, for example, are valuable additions to all round fitness and wellbeing."

With more people looking to get fit after the lockdowns, he highlighted that the benefits of leading a healthy lifestyle include improved mental health, a greater sense of happiness and a greater ability to feel more motivated to do tasks.

ber of older people who are waiting for this date to arrive before heading back.

For people returning to the gym, being in a calorie deficit is crucial if weight loss is to be achieved.

Meadows said: "For clarification, I would always do the following; consult with your GP before undertaking any new exercise regime, get advice from a trainer and then follow a set



# Is fashion back from the dead?

By Emily Hemsley

Fashion took a back seat during the pandemic as many of us ditched our work and going-out clothes for loungewear as we worked from home and cancelled plans.

After shops were forced to close, the fashion industry saw clothing sales decrease by 34.8% from the start of lockdown, according to the Office of National Statistics.

So, as the world is opening up again and restrictions are easing, are we ready to say goodbye to our sweatpants and hello to the new trends set to come?

Anthony McGrath, a lecturer at the Fashion Retail Academy in London, said: "Comfortable clothing and leisurewear were the biggest winners from lockdown and people aren't willing to give them up.



COMFORT DRESSING: Loungewear had a surge in demand during lockdown as people worked from home

"Comfort clothing is here to stay, and will likely play a bigger part in people's lives as so many more people are going to be working from home.

"People are extremely eager to get out and about, and most people are looking forward to dressing up again.

"As the restrictions continue to ease, we will see people embracing new styles outside of leisurewear.

"Shops are seeing an increase in demand for summer staples as people get their wardrobes ready for warmer weather."

He added that we can expect to see party dresses and heels come back into fashion once people are allowed to take part in larger gatherings and their pre-pandemic social activities.

He said: "Colourful and patterned loose-fitting dresses will be one of the

most popular items hitting rails at the moment.

"These breathable dresses look chic without compromising on the comfort we have become accustomed to."

Sophie Jones, a tutor at the British Academy of Fashion Design added: "As we transition out of lockdown I think we will start to see more of an emphasis on brighter colours alongside the more natural tones we have been seeing in trend at the moment.

"Trends emerging now are oversized midi dresses, puff sleeves, utility inspired jumpsuits, colour blocks and easy fabrics.

"Evening wear on the other hand I believe will be super luxe, embellished and glitzy."

During lockdown, consumers turned to online retail sites as they had

no other choice.

Online sales increased by 44% from January and Boohoo reported a 41% rise in yearly sales as demand for activewear and loungewear rose while sales for dresses and going out clothes significantly declined.

McGarth said: "Many people have formed a habit of buying online rather than in store.

"However, shoppers have also missed the experience of buying clothes in person.

"We expect to see physical stores regain their popularity, as shopping in person is often seen as a social activity."

So now is the time to revive our love of fashion, to say farewell to our well-worn sweatpants and welcome back to the clothes that have been stuck in our wardrobe collecting dust for the past year - finally!

# New Twickenham outdoor gym open

By Michael Phillips

A new outdoor gym has opened in Twickenham, for a range of abilities including for wheelchair users.

I spoke to Derek Sanders, chair of the current committee of the friends of Carlisle Park, which put forward the proposals to the council for the outdoor gym which was granted.

I began by asking him why the committee wanted an outdoor gym.

He said: "It's a selection of aerobic exercise machines or gyms, including ones for wheelchair users.

"We just wanted to help the older community. We didn't want to help muscle builders as we don't want to replace gyms but it's an outdoor work out area for people to feel better and fitter, to help with body circulation



EASY ACCESS: The apparatus in the opposite the tennis court in the park and is suitable for people above 140cm and even wheelchair users

and breathing.

"We see lots of people in the park walking around and doing a few circuits of the park because it's not circular, it's got one continuous path around the park, which people like to jog around and they might do three or four circuits of it. I think three circuits is just under one and a half miles.

"There are a number of groups that from time to time will lead people

under instruction, private instruction under private insurance, and we just wanted to make sure that this was an area where people can exercise more briskly."

All the apparatus are organised in pairs so if you want to exercise with a friend, you can socialise and get fit at the same time.

Sanders joked: "If you're nervous about making a fool out of yourself you can do it with

a friend and have a laugh together."

The gym is aimed at anyone taller than 140cm however, people under this height can also use it.

Each machine has instructions attached to it explaining how to use it effectively.

He explained the disability apparatus and said: "If you drive up to it in your wheelchair or if you were wheeled up to it then you can get your feet on

the pedals and exercise your legs.

"Of course if you're a wheelchair user, your legs aren't very strong so it's a good way of exercising your legs and stopping yourself getting even more morose and unable to move yourself."

Warren Kirwan, media and PR manager at disability equality charity Scope, said: "This is a step in the right direction. All public parks should be as accessible as possible.

"Far too often disabled people are an afterthought.

"When disabled people are not able to participate in activities that many people take for granted, they can often feel isolated and cut off.

"We know that making areas accessible is hugely important, helping to be an inclusive community for everyone."



# Immigration: How does it feel to be living in another country?

By Mariana Viveiros

The Portuguese government estimates that 400,000 Portuguese people are living in the UK.

Living away from your country can be an interesting and unforgettable experience, but at the same time it has a very important effect on the life of those that choose to do it.

Susana Mendonça, 45, has a completely different perspective to many about being an immigrant.

Susana, part of the Portuguese community, said: "People don't know how hard it is being in another country and being an immigrant, because they have never done it and I believe that the majority of them would not last a month here in the UK."

"Life in England is beautiful but not easy!

"It is the oppo-

site of what many think, I do not have a money tree in my garden, I do not own an iPhone for £1.99, I do not dress in big brands for the same price as a banana.

"Here in England my life moves fast, I need to use public transport all the time to move from one place to another,

"There are times where I work 12 to 16 hours a day without complaining. I do not have one hour to lunch or even a timetable with lunch included."

Susana stressed that someone in her position can't afford to spend the time or money to study a second language, as there aren't enough hours in the day.

She added: "A lot of people that live here for many years, they only know how to say 'hi' or 'bye'.

"You must be asking yourself is it worth it? Yes, it is worth it.



FLYING THE FLAG: Portugal estimates there are 400,000 Portuguese people living in the UK. Credit: fdecomite via a creative commons licence

"This is the land where I am challenged, it is learning and accepting other languages, people from different backgrounds. It is the way we miss our homeland, all in one place."

"England makes us stronger, makes us warriors.

"But do not think England is an ocean

of roses, a Portuguese saying which means nothing is what it looks like.

"It might look all nice and perfect but underneath it might be something else.

"Being an immigrant, where the language they speak is completely different

to my own, forces me to adapt to the cul-

ture and follow the UK's rules."

Susana's experience while living here for about 15 years is that she is asked many times by many people 'why did you move here?' 'Your country is so sunny'.

To that she said: "Portugal has great weather and food, and it is so much bet-

ter to live there. But the problem is that there are no conditions there for me to live."

Moving here was her best decision, for her as she can pay her bills, save money, and go out if she wants.

She added that whenever she goes back to Portugal on

holidays, people over there assume she is rich because of the clothes she wears and the fact that she has the latest phone on the market.

This is purely because she is in another country and they assume she has the same lifestyle as she would have in Portugal.

For teenage immigrants, it is even harder.

Francisca Franco, 19, shared her experience moving to the UK when she was just 17-years-old.

She said: "I was happy to move here, I always wanted to move to another country.

"If we stayed there for another month, my parents would not have been able to put food on the table.

"The reason why I had to move here was that both my parents lost their jobs back in Portugal and it was extremely hard for them to find another job there as society considers them too old to work but too young to retire.

"Their last option was to move here, in search of a better future for me and them."

She also experienced in the beginning people asking her the same questions as Susana and

the same answer is given.

Portugal is going through an economic crisis meaning that there is not much work available.

The cost of living is also extremely high compared to the basic wage.

Francisca added: "I love Portugal, but the UK provided me with a better future.

"I know that here I will be able to find a job straight after I finish my degree.

"I don't forget where I am from and Portugal will always be in my heart, however, I do not plan to go back to Portugal permanently."

There are many different reasons why

people leave their own country to go to another one.

But it is not easy to adopt a different culture and language and both of these experiences show how hard it is to be an immigrant and that the life they have in another country is hard to adapt to for everyone.

It takes a lot of mental strength for a human being to go through it and fight for a better future.

Having Susana and Francisca's experience, you could say looking for a job is one of them and to have a better education is another reason why people choose to emigrate.



RULE BRITANNIA: The UK is home to many immigrants. Credit: creative commons.



# EURO 2020: Delayed Euros set to take place this summer

By Logan Forbes

After being postponed last year due to COVID-19, Euro 2020 is set to take place this summer from 11 June to 11 July with 11 host cities sharing the games.

The tournament, which has been held every four years since 1960, is wide open this year with a number of countries hoping to be crowned champions of Europe at Wembley Stadium on 11 July.

This year, the betting cannot separate England and France as favourites to win, with Belgium, Germany, Spain and Portugal among the other likely winners.

The last eight European Championships have offered up seven different champions (Portugal 2016, Spain 2012 & 2008, Greece 2004, France 2000, Germany 1996,

Denmark, 1992 and Netherlands, 1988).

Justin Peach, from The Second Tier Podcast, said: "Usually teams don't dominate internationally for a short spell as Spain did in 2008, 2010, and 2012 and the key to that is squad consistency.

"With the weird year or so we've had, I wouldn't be surprised to see an underdog win it again like Portugal did in 2016."

Since its introduction back in 1960, the European Championships has had various different formats.

The 1960 tournament, held in France, had 17 teams enter the competition with only four competing in the finals.

The expansion to eight teams came in the 1980 tournament hosted by Italy.

It meant there was a group stage with the winners of the groups being able to



EURO 2016: Cristiano Ronaldo and his Portugal side lifting the trophy back in 2016 after defeating hosts France 1-0 AET in the Stade De France. Portugal drew all their games up until the semi final stage where they beat Wales 2-0 with the help of goals from Ronaldo and Nani

contest the final and the runners-up in the groups playing against each other in a third-place playoff.

The format changed slightly four years later in 1984, where instead of the top two teams in each group heading straight to the final, they reached a semi-final first with

the third-place playoff being abolished. The number of teams then doubled to 16 when England hosted the 1996 tournament.

Moreover, since 2016, 24 teams have been competing in the European Championships and this will be the case this summer.

Peach said: "I think more teams makes it more competitive. Euro 2016 was just amazing with so many different stories coming out.

"Iceland beating England, Wales reaching the semi-final, Portugal winning the tournament despite drawing their way to the final.

"It was incredible." England, Scotland and Wales are the home nations' chances of success this year.

England are the most likely out of the trio to go the furthest in the tournament as the fourth highest ranked team in the world according to the FIFA world rank-

ings compared to Scotland (44th) and Wales (17th).

After making history reaching the semi-finals in 2016, Wales are looking for a repeat of that effort.

But it looks a mammoth task including a difficult group involving Switzerland, Turkey and Italy to navigate out of.

Peach said: "Wales are in a strange place; they have a much better squad than 2016 but have the Giggs issue hanging over them."

Elsewhere, after an agonising 23-year wait to reach a major international tournament, Scotland supporters can finally celebrate.

A nervy 5-4 penalty shootout win over Serbia in the playoff, meant long-suffering Scotland fans are now able to replace the years of disappointment with elation, at the prospect of seeing their country play at the Euros.

Peach said: "Scotland are at their first tournament since 1996 so I believe they might have a similar tournament to what Wales had in 2016."

The final hope of success for the home nations lies with one of the tournament favourites England, hoping to rectify the demons of that bleak

exit against Iceland back in 2016.

England have been international football's big underachievers since 1966 and the nation is hopeful that this is about to change with plenty of young talent coming through the ranks and performing at the highest level this season.

Mason Mount and Phil Foden, both Champions League finalists at the ages of 22 and 20, are set to play a crucial role in England's side alongside captain Harry Kane this summer.

England manager Gareth Southgate will believe his team will have the ability to be crowned European

champions in their own backyard on 11 July, but can he place his trust in the gifted young players to step up and perform to the levels they have shown for their clubs straight after a grueling season?

He will be hoping that home advantage can balance the pressure and be a powerful tool for his side this summer.

Peach said: "I can see England doing fairly well if the home crowd is behind them but I can't see that happening."

He added that animosity has sparked among fans over the last 18 months towards Southgate and his team selections.



EURO 2020: 24 nations are set to take part in this year's European Championships. England and France are among the favourites to lift the trophy at Wembley on July 11



# Self-employed in a global pandemic

By Mariana Viveiros

The self-employed community has suffered a tremendous loss during the pandemic.

The government has helped and supported them throughout these tough months with grants.

Grants are a self-employed income support scheme (SEISS) grant, which covers up to 80% of lost earnings.

Chancellor Rishi Sunak has introduced measures to help self-employed people with grants.

Joanna Wood, a self-employed international interior designer, said: "It is not a disaster, but it is pretty terrible for us."

"The very lucky thing is that we come under construction, so we can continue to work."

Joanna has two sides to her business, these include



HOW TO WEATHER THE STORM: Joanna Wood's window shop in Victoria. The interior designer described the pandemic as "pretty terrible but not a disaster"

a retail shop and her interior design business.

She said: "The retail shop was closed twice now, just as all Christmas decorations have gone up, all the stock has been put up, all the investment has been made. For retail it has been a disaster."

"Interior design is very hard work. It is very stressful being a boss, but we will survive in the end."

She added that her staff have men-

tally suffered during this lockdown.

She said: "Some people were fine and other people were becoming very anxious and positively paranoid about the illness."

The government has been able to help self-employed people with grants and loans but how is she managing the situation?

She said: "We got our local government grant, and we could have taken a delayed payment

and a loan on our VAT payments but chose not to do that."

"We have reserves that we have been able to use to pay our bills."

"We have taken advantage of the grants, loans and holiday rates but we are also using our reserves since we are lucky enough to have them."

Wood explained what measures she took in order to protect the business.

She said: "We are

protecting our business by taking as much work as we can to be able to turn this around.

"I try not to overspend. It is very nerve wracking to pay large sums of money because some of us can easily sign a check of £8,000, £10,000 or £12,000 for something."

She also gave her thoughts on how this pandemic has caused damages to other parts of society and how it should be treated.

She said: "I think we need to try and promote more people in having operations so that they can have their everyday health taken into consideration."

"We need to give people more confidence. I feel getting back on track has to do with confidence in the system, confidence with each other, I think that is very necessary."

# New outfits for the end of lockdown?

By Rahima Miah

The end of lockdown is near and one thing on some of our minds is clothes.

What outfits do we want to wear out now that we can go to social places again like bars and restaurants?

Lots of people have been thinking about their post lockdown 'fits and some online fashion retailers even have categories of clothing specifically for lockdown being eased.

Pretty Little Thing has a whole section called 'Lockdown Lifted' and Boohoo has a 'June 21 Outfits' category.

Some people might think this is great, but others are more critical.

Fabio Ciquera, London College of Contemporary Arts' programmes director and Marie Claire Italia journalist said:



DRESS UP AND PARTY: A group of people dressed up, celebrating and having a fun time together as people are likely do on 21 June at the end of lockdown

"The fact that a company would market 21 June as an opportunity to buy things they should throw out the next day is absolutely despicable in my opinion."

"It's just a marketing ploy for them to entice that sort of binge shopping for cheap clothing with no ethics kind of approach and I totally resent that."

On top of the clothing section specifically for lockdown being

lifted, Pretty Little Thing is also having a post lockdown sale where shoppers can get up to 60% off everything.

You might be someone who is excited to buy new clothes to wear on 21 June to go out to celebrate the end of lockdown and there is definitely no judgement if you are.

Fabio added: "There will be two ways of seeing this: there will be people that will go all out

and be incredibly flamboyant, possibly because they were like that before.

"Or there will be people like me who will always prefer that kind of subdued style that's more about details and more about what you wear in the moment."

Fabio is a firm minimalist, who likes to wear simple but classic clothing like a cashmere jumper or a navy blue t-shirt and he

describes these simple clothes as his kind of uniform.

He looks up to Giorgio Armani's fashion sense and items he would wear like a pair of blue chinos and white sneakers.

I'm sure you've heard of the saying 'quality vs quantity' and this is something Fabio strongly supports.

He added: "We should be ready to leave our homes with whatever we have."

"We were put into lockdown without any warning so we have plenty of things we can fish out."

If, like me, you are guilty of spending money on a new outfit for an upcoming occasion, try to take a leaf out of Fabio's book and get that sense of newness by combining something you already have with something new!



# Are supermarket workers the forgotten pandemic heroes?

By Michael Phillips

They've kept our shelves full and put their lives at risk every day of the pandemic, but two supermarket workers are now speaking out about feeling undervalued and underappreciated.

Customer assistant, Mair Tewkesbury, 45, who has worked at a supermarket for more than 25 years, criticised the government's priority list on vaccinations.

She said: "All these so-called key workers, or so they're classed as, seem to have been forgotten about, because we haven't been offered a vaccine which we should have been offered first of all, as well as the NHS workers and the care-workers, as we are mixing with hundreds and hundreds of people each day. It's like they didn't care."

"We've kept the

country going by feeding them and that's as far as it went. They didn't give us any vaccinations, which I think is terrible!"

Asked if they have been supportive of the fact they're key workers she said: "No. I don't think they have."

"They could have given us a big bonus, not just 2% of annual earnings which is what colleagues are receiving and a tax free bonus which would have been nice."

"I think the company) should have given us all £1,000 every month we worked during this pandemic instead of a 2% bonus which is taxable."

"It's not like they can't afford it, they earn billions each year."

She explained that customers' reactions haven't always been positive either.

She said: "The abuse you get for asking



EMPTY SHELVES: The sight that became so familiar in the first wave. Items such as toilet roll, pasta and baking essentials were all high on people's priority list

people to abide by the one-way system we used to have in store, people used to moan about that, and just basic abuse from just asking them to pull their mask up."

"There are the odd ones who have been nice and said you're doing a brilliant job, we wouldn't be able to eat if you lot weren't open."

"I had one incident when a bloke told me to go away and tried to grab me all because I told him to pull his mask up and then he said: 'what are you going to do call the police?'"

"He then got chucked out by security because he was abusive and wouldn't obey the rules."

"We also had two

men who came into the store and told me they had tested positive for Covid and the management would not do anything about it."

"I felt like they didn't give two hoots as it's not only the staff that have been put at risk knowing there were two people in the store with coronavirus."

"It's been scary, very scary and constantly worried about whether you're going to catch it and die."

However, she recognised that her company has provided PPE and the strain that they've been under.

In a statement Usdaw, the union that represents many industries including supermarket workers, said: "We have truly been through a year like no other."

"Whether as a key worker facing the daily anxiety of going to work, a furloughed worker, facing increased financial worries, or a clinically extremely vulnerable worker, isolated from communities as a result of shielding; the pressures of the virus have clearly affected every Usdaw member."

"Any reflection of the past 14 months must clearly recognise all those who have lost their lives and the millions

more who have been affected by the mental and physical health impacts of long Covid."

"Despite legitimate health concerns, and unacceptable levels of abuse from customers, Usdaw members worked tirelessly, making sure that everyone could get access to the food they needed."

"It is no exaggeration to say that the remarkable efforts of Usdaw members kept the UK going."

The union was also critical of the government and its handling of the pandemic in the first wave – which they say resulted in panic buying

It said: "From the beginning of last year, an unprecedented crisis rapidly spread across the globe and as other countries introduced restrictions and other safety measures, the Conservative Government failed to take appropriate

action."

"A shameful dereliction of duty – with COBRA meetings skipped, a refusal to listen to the science, and a failure to lock down quickly enough."

"The result being confusion, fear and severe panic buying. Shoppers quickly stripped the supermarket shelves of items such as toilet paper, pasta, and hand sanitiser."

"Retailers were forced to limit the amount of goods individuals could purchase and queues were seen outside stores."

Supermarket worker Chloe Keedy, 28, also recognised the strain that she and her colleagues have been under.

She said: "Working in retail was hard enough before the pandemic. But the pandemic has just accelerated the stress even further."

"Although we are all so lucky to still

be in a job it's been far from easy and at times I wish I didn't even work here."

"The abuse has always been challenging but the pandemic has brought out an even worse side to some people."

"I have been and still am shouted at on a regular basis by customers because of the long queues on the checkouts and because I am a team-support runner on the checkouts I am often the focus of their anger."

"I have been called every name possible and I just feel like this is not acceptable."

"I have risked my life on a daily basis to serve the people of Britain and all I have received back is a torrent of abuse and vitriol. I just don't feel we are appreciated enough."

"You see a vague mention on the tv and in the media about supermarket workers but nowhere near enough than other key workers."

She said it has taken a toll on her mental health.

She added: "At one point in November I had to take some time off. It just got too much, it wasn't easy taking the time

off either as we are often made to feel guilty and that we are kind of crying wolf."

"I wish people knew the impact their words have, it made me feel like I wasn't good enough for my job, one which I have always taken seriously."

"I have worked there for eight years and this is by far the worst year I've had working there."

She agreed supermarket workers are the forgotten key workers of the pandemic.

Her physical health has also been subject to abuse."

She said: "I also have asthma and are therefore unable to wear a face mask."

"I have also had customers comment on this when at first I didn't even have a visor, one told me regardless of my condition I should be effectively forced to wear a mask by management."

"I feel like we are treated as robots who have no emotion."

"I am not the only person who has been affected, and some people have seemingly coped just fine but I guess we're all different at the end of the day."



# An tiny, ITSY bitsy bit of kindness

By Amelia Oprean

Pre-lockdown, charities were able to keep up their usual activities of donations, helping those in need and offering their help wherever possible.

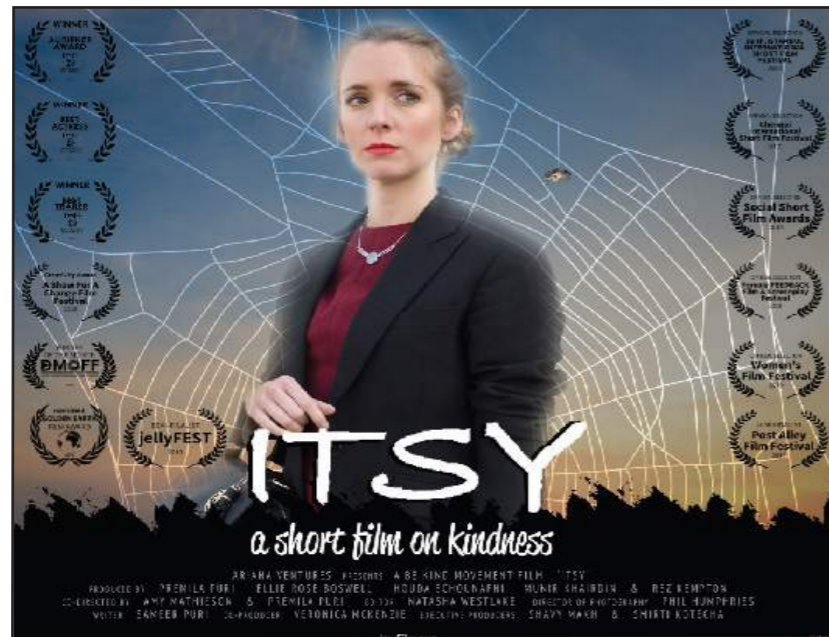
However, going into lockdown changed the way these charities ran, and everything halted for them.

Premila Puri, founder and CEO of Be Kind Movement (BKM), as well as a filmmaker, found herself feeling the same way.

Based in Wandsworth, BKM was set up as a charity in 2015.

Premila said: "Our vision is to build a future generation of emotionally intelligent children and young people who can show compassion and integrity."

"We aim to entertain children and young people through the medi-



SHORT FILM: ITSY is based on Puri's husband's true story, of meeting a spider in a car, who helps a young woman overcome her anxieties and other issues

um of film and educate them about the transformative power of kindness."

One integral way that BKM achieved this was through their short film ITSY, commissioned in 2017.

ITSY was inspired by a true story of a spider in a car that helps an anxious woman see herself and the world differently and ultimately find a friend in her neighbour.

It encapsulates the importance of

kindness as a fundamental human need that is often overlooked.

She said: "When I moved from Mumbai to the Netherlands, I was bullied as a child. One way I dealt with that was through films."

"Short films especially can really deliver striking, powerful messages."

ITSY won six awards, and has been screened in Canada, Portugal to Turkey, Nigeria and India.

There was a warm response to ITSY at the October 2019 UK screening.

After its success, Premila's close friend mentioned that ITSY would work really well in schools, and that's where the Kindness in Schools programme began.

The Kindness in School programme is a series of workshops where students are given the space to think about how their kindness, or lack thereof, can

affect others.

Many charities faced the same fate when lockdown was announced.

Premila said: "We had an entire year planned where we could've shown ITSY because that was a part of our fundraising."

Their goal of delivering workshops to 10 different schools in low-income boroughs in Wandsworth also came to a halt.

She said: "The challenges pivoting to a virtual delivery were immense, and something that was very tricky for us."

"That non-direct access to children is not as engaging."

BKM are reliant on funding, donations and links for these can be found on their website.

Signing up to their newsletter is also one of the best ways to show support: <https://www.bekindmovement.co.uk>.

# Pastures new for the Glasto crowd?

By Joseph Marshall

In 2021, Glastonbury Festival will be replaced by a new, one-year only event: Worthy Pastures.

A family orientated campsite, people will be encouraged to have barbecues, take walks and ride bikes with their children, and go on cultural, tourist-driven excursions in the Somerset area.

It's billed as a non-party event, and there is even a noise curfew in place after 11pm.

All this is a far cry from any counter-cultural aspirations Glastonbury might have retained from its 1970s beginnings, as it will be more of a cup of tea and a stroll in the countryside than a left-field freak out.

Richard Power, 30, is a podcast producer and Glastonbury Festival aficionado.



THE DAYS OF YORE: Would-be punters are nostalgic for the Glastonbury Festival as it once was

nado. He said: "It's like walking into an alternate universe for four days."

"Anything can happen. There's this explosion of colour and music. The spontaneity of it is the most striking part."

"Once upon a time, you could be going to see a band or something and then you follow some bloke dressed in a weird zoot suit and disappear for four hours dancing

to some jazz and it's like the best night of your life."

That was before Covid-19 struck. Because of the pandemic, the huge, iconic gathering has been cancelled twice.

Richard cited seeing The Rolling Stones and Arctic Monkeys play headline shows as deeply affecting but that's not the highlight of the festival for him.

He said: "The spontaneous, more

bizarre encounters are the most fun."

"Having a complete time away from everything and being transported into this complete alternative universe - it's such an amazing community."

Richard wouldn't mind attending Worthy Pastures for a pleasant staycation with his own extended family but he showed nothing like the enthusiasm he has for the Glastonbury of old.

The organisers have since announced a single day music event which takes place tomorrow in lieu of their traditional shindig, but for the initiated it just won't be the same.



WORTHY FARM: A scenic experience



# Wandsworth procurement manager turned entrepreneur

By Rahima Miah

Let's face it: the coronavirus pandemic has been tough on us all.

Even more for those people who lost their job, their income and their regular day-to-day life like 45-year-old James Dempsey from Furzedown, Wandsworth.

After losing his job, he had to find a new way to earn a living and from that URBNHERD was born.

URBNHERD is his new, online burger business, launched in March, that offers DIY burger boxes to customers in south west London.

Inside the box you get patties, burger buns, sliced cheese, lettuce, dill pickle and house burger sauce.

And what's better is that you can get a plant-based burger box if you're not a meat-eater so these

burger boxes can be enjoyed by everyone.

The concept of James' brand is fantastic quality ingredients that are sourced from different places.

The burger is from a butcher he has known for more than 20 years and together they designed the burger recipe that combines three prime cuts: brisket, chuck and rib.

James said: "By using those cuts of meat it also offers a juicy burger that's got a really nice bite to it."

The burger bun is from a baker based in Colliers Wood who he has known for a long time too.

It is made of 70% brioche and 30% flour.

A lot of burger restaurants and chains use a 100% brioche bun but James finds that too sweet for his liking and doesn't think it complements the meat very well.

Also, as his bun is



BURGER BOX CLOSE UP: The contents of a DIY URBNHERD meat burger box including burger patties featuring the URBNHERD logo, brioche buns, baby gem lettuce and a pot of dill pickles

not fully brioche, it is slightly more dense and has more of a bite to it so it doesn't fall apart when you eat the burger.

And if you're wondering where the name URBNHERD comes from (like I was) I'll tame your curiosity.

It's based on where James lives.

Furzedown is an urban area and the herd concept is about gathering together to spend time with each other and eat together like cows or other animals do when they come together in herds.

Lockdown has forced people to come together and eat with each other

under one roof so he wanted to keep this community spirit alive whether it's by eating with family, friends or neighbours.

Food is a communal activity so he knew he could use it to bring people back together now that lockdown is ending. Sure, you can go out

to eat in a restaurant, café or pub but there's nothing like a home-cooked meal with good company in the comfort of your own home.

Before founding URBNHERD James was responsible for global procurement for InterContinental Hotels Group (IHG), primarily with a fo-

cus on the Middle East, South East Asia and a bit of Australasia.

Going from having a corporate job to opening your own business has its fair share of challenges, the main one being money.

James said that when you're in full time employment

you know you've got your monthly salary coming into your bank account but when you're self employed you rely on other people ordering your products.

He added: "You've got to be very much positive and have a positive mental attitude. Times will be very hard but the way I see it is you forget the bad things and remember the good things and if you can focus on the positives that will definitely help with your business and with growing it."

Throughout his journey, James had the support of his wife who he said has been amazing during this process and has been 100% behind him.

With her help, he began to understand the complexities around marketing a business on Facebook and using social media for a business purpose.

The key thing he learned was to build a marketing campaign prior to launch.

He explained that he was so engrossed with making sure the product was correct and that the quality and ingredients were up to scratch that he didn't focus on broadcasting to the community about his product until day one when he was sat in front of his computer asking himself why nobody had ordered.

He wished he spent more time making flyers and leaflets that he has now rather than focusing so much on the food and paying less at-

tention to the marketing side.

Looking ahead he plans for his business to expand and grow.

He wants to expand his delivery area because now he serves customers in SW16, SW17, SW18, SW19 but he has a vision to go further south.

As well as this, he is working on creating a summer BBQ box that will be able to offer customers barbequing options and if they don't have a BBQ they can cook the food in the oven.

He is planning on having a meat and veggie BBQ box to suit all diets.

Check out URBNHERD on <https://www.urnherd.co.uk>



STREET SHOT: James posing on a south west London street proudly holding a burger made from one of his DIY burger boxes



# How do you deal with a toxic boss?

By Mariana Viveiros

We all have dealt with people at our workplace who we do not get along with.

Everyone will have had a job where we did not get along with someone.

It is normal. We do not have to get along with every single person that we encounter.

Ida Sabuni shared her experience while working for the very first time, and explained how hard it was and what she had to do to show that she was capable of doing her job and proving her doubters wrong.

Ida, 21, said: "It was my very first job at Soho, at an Indonesian restaurant. On my first ever shift, my supervisor was extremely rude.

"He made me take an order for a really big table, bearing in



FED UP: Work conflicts can lead to jobs becoming toxic

mind that this was my very first job and I hadn't done this at all.

"I ended up messing up the order, so he went to my manager and told him that I did not ask for help when I asked for it multiple times. Even the people on the table asked for help from my supervisor.

"When he went to my manager, he said to him that I was refusing to ask for help and I didn't want help at all.

"I made sure every time I worked with him, I worked extremely hard so that he didn't have anything to complain to the manager about."

This part made her prove her main manager wrong and showed that she was capable of doing the work and she kept working for this business for about two years.

She added: "When I started getting tips my manager saw that I was putting

effort into it and every table that I had gave me a tip.

"That shows that I was putting in effort and hard work, so then the supervisor could not say anything negative about me."

Another of Ida's experiences was when she was working at Chicago Rib Shack and her head manager didn't like her.

She said: "Every time a new manager would work in the restaurant, she would always tell them that I should get fired because my attitude stank and customers always used to complain.

"But, this wasn't true because every other manager that ever worked there spoke highly of me.

"One time she tried to challenge each employee to get the most tips in a week to see who would win.

"I ended up

winning for two months straight.

"I worked 10 times harder to prove I am capable of doing my job and to prove her wrong."

Ida also mentioned that she had to be superior to those comments and to those people who didn't like her.

She had to ignore a lot of comments and continue with her job and prove to every single person there that she can do her job regardless of what they might think.

She also gave the advice to keep detailed records, to remind yourself with as much detail as possible what happened.

Don't gossip, try not to talk bad things with other co-workers as you might never know who is on your side.

And make the decision if it is okay for you to stay or go, depending on how toxic it is.

# Change the tune: music since Covid

By Lauran O'Toole

Music is the beat of people's lives, providing a soundtrack to our mood whatever this may entail.

For many the pandemic felt like the highway to hell with the concentration being on staying alive – is it too late to say sorry for that pun?

The pandemic has left a stamp on the music we hear with the rise of TikTok and Instagram reels and videos going viral on social media, which kept the spirit of music alive.

Music Gateway created a list of resources, gathering different initiatives the music industry were holding during lockdown.

Mary Woodcock, marketing manager at Music Gateway said: "We had a lot more people reach out to us after the resources were published to tell us



MARY WOODCOCK: Marketing manager for Music Gateway, the company ran live streams in lockdown

about more initiatives that were happening.

"It warmed our hearts to be honest!

"TikTok seems to have brought about a trend in which particular songs are well-known by the majority of a generation.

"I'm very curious to see what that means for the music industry in the coming years."

Concerts and festivals were taken away from us last year.

What we were left with was the memories of togetherness, the noise and seeing artists in person.

Mary said: "I'm impressed by how quickly everyone turned to online avenues once the pandemic started, rather than giving up or waiting for in person live music to return.

"Unfortunately a lot of artists have had to stop focusing on music or given up on music as a

career entirely due to the pandemic."

Music no longer helped people get ready for the day, because they had nowhere to go and although the pandemic pressed the mute button on

The Italians took to singing from their balconies, whilst Spanish policemen played the guitar as they patrolled the empty streets.

This added life to the desolate roads and people could quite literally dance like no one was watching.

Music has the ability to unite people whether this was the banging of pots and pans, or certified music therapists providing zoom sessions.

Music Heals raises awareness of the healing power of music and fundraises for music

therapy in Canada.

Cindy Dai Thiesen campaign and event coordinator for Music Heals said: "Music is so flexible because it is so inherently human.

"Music is a necessary tool for feeling connected to one another when we are forced to be apart.

"Music is a powerful tool for healing, to helping a child on the Autism spectrum find different tools for communication to soothing anxiety and fear at the end of one's life.

"It is evident that music is a necessary tool for feeling connected to one another when we are forced to be apart."

Due to Covid, Music Heals lost 90% of their funding revenue, thank-

fully, their fundraiser raised over £250,000 to fund local music therapy programmes.



# The tea-riffic rise of boba in the UK

By Amelia Oprean

Almost two years ago, bubble tea was an unheard of and weird concept for me.

I was surprised with how many different flavours, toppings, and extras you could add onto a single drink.

Now, I can confidently say I drink bubble tea at least once a week.

Today, bubble tea is a \$2B global market.

Redon Bushi, owner of Bubble Tea Hut in Twickenham, said part of it is to do with social media.

He said: "It's just one of things where it can sell itself by appearance."

"Lots of people enjoy Asian food and cuisine. This beverage is the same."

The creation of tea dates back to Ancient China, where an Emperor in 2732 B.C had



TASTY TARO: The flashy purple drink is made from sweet potato, which comes in pink and white, originating in Southeast Asia and has been used since 100 B.C.

leaves blown into his water and was interested in the scent, and drank it, which is how tea came about.

Bubble tea, on the other hand, originated in the 1980s in Taiwan.

People grew bored of drinking tea, so when a teahouse owner found tapioca at their market and combined the two, it started flying off the shelves.

Tapioca is starch extracted from a

Cassava plant from Brazil, which was brought over to South America, Africa, and Asia by the Portuguese in the 1940s.

Currently, Thailand exports around 60% of the world's tapioca.

In bubble tea, they are hard, powdery, white balls, boiled in syrup for more than 30 minutes.

With more than 50 bubble tea stores across the UK alone, Asian entertainment, food and

culture has definitely made its great presence known.

Redon is constantly expanding his business, making new drinks all the time, like many other boba shop owners and managers.

He said: "I made a drink called the Bobaccino, which is like an iced coffee. I recommend it with coffee jelly."

"Parents ask all the time if we have coffee, and when I tell them, they

laugh at the name, but they end up really liking it."

At his store, I also tried the drink at this recommendation, and I absolutely loved it.

The jelly tamed the bitter taste of the coffee drink, and like Redon, I am also a passionate coffee lover, which is exactly the reason why he made the unique drink.

He said: "I didn't think anyone would actually drink it, when I made it. I'm not a fan of tea, so I wanted to make something for myself as well."

"But as it turns out, a lot of parents enjoy it, and I'm glad that others can enjoy it as well."

There's no doubt that this growth – both bubble tea and other parts – of Asian culture will continue.

This flexible, customisable, and simple drink is the start.

# Grassroots sport gets its green light

By Logan Forbes

Since the return of grassroots football at the end of March, the positive difference in mood among the nation has been noticeable.

This contrasts massively to previous months where it was doom and gloom and there seemed to be no way out of the COVID-19 pandemic, in which thousands of deaths were regularly occurring on a daily basis.

However, now that Prime Minister Boris Johnson has provided a clear roadmap to lift COVID-19 restrictions on 21 June, the country has something to look forward to.

Grassroots football has been one of many activities that have been given the green light to safely restart.

Staines and Lale-



IT'S BACK: Grassroots sport finally got the green light from the government to return at the end of March, meaning pitches like this are now ready to welcome players again

ham player Butrint Kqiku, 16, said: "When I heard the news that we could get back playing at the end of March, I was buzzing."

"Our manager put a message on our WhatsApp group telling us when our first game back would be and I couldn't wait to get back into it and see my mates."

Towards the end of March, the FA released a statement in response to the government's

easing of restrictions.

The statement included that the grassroots season would be extended until the end of June.

This was in order to provide extra flexibility and time for fixtures to be completed.

As of 12 April, there has been updated guidance surrounding national restrictions which has then had a knock-on effect to grassroots football.

ities.

Regarding spectators, clubs and facilities are permitted to accommodate supporters to attend matches with the expectation that they observe the relevant guidance from the government.

From 17 May, when the country moved to step three of the roadmap, spectators will be allowed to view events on both public and private land but will still need to follow social distancing rules and the social gathering limit of 30 people outdoors.

Currently, only one parent is permitted to accompany their child at a match.

Julie Thomas, 46 and a parent, said: "Both my husband and I have never missed one of our son's matches since he started playing at the age of 6, it is frustrating."

Step two of the government's roadmap out of lockdown allows for outdoor hospitality at grassroots football, as long as all participants are following the guidance set out by the government which includes adhering to the legal gathering limits.

Changing rooms are also allowed to be used however, people are advised to minimise their time spent using the changing facil-



# Keep running up that hill

FULL STORY PAGE 10-11



Credit: Kate Allen