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FirstNews

Issue 761 £2.25 15 – 21 January 2021

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MY EARTH CHARTER

PRINCE CHARLES CALLS ON BIG BUSINESS TO SAVE THE PLANET

THE Queen's son, the Prince of Wales, launched a plan this week calling on big business to save the planet.

He wants organisations to sign up to his ten-point Terra Carta – or Earth Charter – which is inspired by Magna Carta.

You will probably have learned about Magna Carta at school. It set out the rights of people in England, and was agreed by King John more than 800 years ago in 1215. Prince Charles' Terra Carta is

about the rights of nature, and sets out a plan to bring the success of businesses into harmony with nature, people and the planet over the next ten years.

Prince Charles, who is in line to be Britain's next king, has a passion for the planet and has campaigned on green issues for 50 years. He has had nearly 100 meetings with businesses and supporters leading up to the Terra Carta launch.

This is the Prince of Wales' message to First News readers:

by HRH Prince Charles

THE link between human health and the planet's health has never been more clear.

As we start a new decade, it is time to focus on the future we wish to build and, indeed, leave for generations to come.

People have made incredible progress over the past century, yet the cost of this progress has caused a lot of destruction to the planet that sustains us.

We simply cannot keep going like this. To build a growing and sustainable future, it is critical that we speed up care for the planet so it is at the heart of everything businesses do.

To move forward, there must be a central hub for this huge effort. To that end, I am launching the Terra Carta as the basis of a recovery plan for nature, people and planet.

I am making an urgent appeal to leaders from around the world to give their support to this Terra Carta. It is this which will decide whether or not our children and grandchildren look back on a series of broken promises, or instead see that there was a tipping point when the world shifted direction for the recovery of the planet.

WONDER-FUL SHOW

It's hoped that an exciting new Alice in Wonderland exhibition will open at the V&A Museum in London this March. The Alice: Curiouser and Curiouser show will feature original Disney artwork, costumes from Tim Burton's live-action film and many other iconic illustrations. It will run until the end of the year.



FELINE FINE

Stray cats in Portugal are being given new places to shelter, thanks to household waste. Officials in Valongo are turning old or broken washing machines into cosy beds for the cats by removing doors, lining the machines with warm blankets and painting them. Please don't try this at home!

HATCHING EARLY



A new study from a team at James Cook University has found that in oceans warmed by the climate crisis, baby epaulette sharks emerge from their egg cases earlier – and are weaker. Epaulette sharks are unique to the Great Barrier Reef. The team says that it's worried about the knock-on effect this will have on the reef and other ecosystems. Dr Jodie Rummer, co-author of the study, said that "healthy coral reefs need healthy predators".

PUSHING POWER

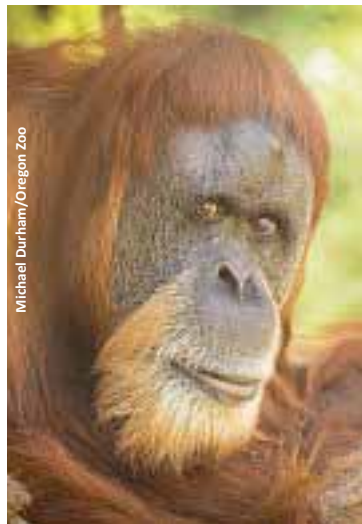
A man in India has set a new world record for four-finger push-ups – two on each hand (yes, really!). Athlete Laithangbam Vidyasagar Singh managed to complete an impressive 85 four-finger push-ups in one minute. That means he used just two fingers from each hand to push his entire body weight off the ground. Wow!

QUICK NEWS

TO READ YOURSELF AND SHARE WITH FRIENDS

OLDEST ORANGUTAN

The world's oldest orangutan has died at the age of 61. Inji lived at Oregon Zoo in the USA. She arrived there all the way back in 1961 when she was about one year old. Last week she was put to sleep by vets after suffering poor health. Zookeeper Bob Lee said: "Inji's ability to connect with people was incredible. She inspired generations."



PARROT MIX-UP

A dad's 'bird rescue' attempt has gone viral on the internet. Stephen Maguire, from Glasgow, thought he spied a poorly parrot in his back garden and vowed to help save it. However, when Stephen approached the parrot, he discovered it was in fact something entirely different... a cleaning brush! The family shared the mix-up on Facebook and thousands of people have liked it. Oops!

KEEPING THE CASTLE

I'm A Celebrity... Get Me Out of Here! could be returning to Wales again this year. ITV bosses have booked Gwrych Castle for a second year, in case the coronavirus again stops the show from being filmed in Australia. Giovanna Fletcher was named the first-ever queen of the castle in 2020.

POOH DAY

Did you know it's Winnie-the-Pooh Day on 18 January? People across the world will celebrate all things about the fictional bear, who just loves honey! The day falls on the birthday of Pooh's creator, author AA Milne. Why not read one of his stories during lockdown?

FAMILY FITNESS

The BBC is helping to keep families fit during lockdown with a special series of programmes. Stars from Strictly Come Dancing, PE hero Joe Wicks and swimmer Adam Peaty are among those who will take part in fitness challenges and fun activities. You can enjoy a Super Movers session each morning by tuning in to BBC Bitesize Daily on CBBC.



MISSING MOGGY

An escapee cat has been reunited with its owner, after going missing at an airport. Taylor Le and her pet cat Muji were travelling from New York's LaGuardia Airport to California, when the moggy made a break for it. After 11 days on the run, and with the help of a sniffer dog, Muji was eventually found safe and well – hiding in the airport's ceiling.

EUROVISION'S BACK!

Eurovision Song Contest organisers say it's going ahead this year. The show had to be cancelled in 2020 because of COVID-19, but organisers say the competition will take place in Rotterdam in the Netherlands in 2021. Some of the songs might be pre-recorded if acts can't travel to the venue or have to self-isolate. The show is set to air on 22 May.



LOVING LOAVES

Bakers in Seattle, USA, are donating bread to local food banks, to help those in need during the pandemic. Nearly 500 home bakers are involved with the Community Loaves initiative. More than 1,300 loaves were baked and donated in one day recently!



SUSSEXES QUIT

The Duke and Duchess of Sussex have quit social media, says the Sunday Times. Harry and Meghan, who stepped down from royal duties last year, are not expected to use any social media platforms for their non-profit organisation, the Archewell Foundation. They have not used their Instagram account since March.



JOE BIDEN TO BECOME AMERICA'S PRESIDENT

The White House – home
of the US president

POLL OF THE WEEK

Do you think Joe Biden will be a good president? Vote at first.news/polls

PRESIDENT-ELECT Joe Biden will be inaugurated on Wednesday 20 January, meaning he becomes the 46th President of the United States. This follows him winning the Presidential election at the end of last year.

But it won't be a normal ceremony for a few reasons.

The coronavirus pandemic and new security worries following violence last week by a mob supporting outgoing President Donald Trump means there will be changes to what is a historical American day.

Here's what you need to know:

- Joe Biden is expected to arrive in America's capital city, Washington DC, by train – his favourite way to travel. See our "WOW!" below.
- He will still be sworn in on the steps of the Capitol Building, the scene of last week's riots. Although there are fears about more protests, Joe Biden said on Monday: "I am not afraid to take the oath outside."
- Biden will be joined by Kamala Harris (right), the first female and the first Asian-American vice president of the United States. She said: "While I may be the first woman in this office, I will not be the last."
- They will both lay a wreath after they take the oath.
- The Bidens will receive a presidential escort to the White House (above) after his swearing-in.
- Celebration events will be smaller than usual because of the health risks from the coronavirus pandemic. There are very few tickets for the ceremony and viewing stands have been taken down to discourage crowds.
- Normally people gather along the National Mall to celebrate, but the parade is being replaced by a virtual parade.
- The parade will celebrate America's heroes, and highlight Americans from all backgrounds, in different states and regions, reflecting the country's diversity.
- The theme for the event will be 'America United' – after Donald Trump is said to have caused so much division in the country during his time as president.



WOW!

Joe Biden travelled by train for 36 years between Wilmington and Washington DC, while serving as a senator. Amtrak, the national rail network, estimates he has travelled 2.1 million miles.



So, why was there a riot last week?

SUPPORTERS of Donald Trump stormed the Capitol Building (the US parliament) in Washington DC, leading to five deaths.

President Trump has been accused of encouraging the angry mob. He gave a speech to a crowd of his supporters near the White House, just a short walk from the Capitol. During the speech, Mr Trump repeated his false claims about the election being stolen from him, and urged people to "stop the steal".

The invasion of the Capitol started soon after Mr Trump's vice president, Mike Pence, officially confirmed the result of the election, which Joe Biden won.



Opponents of President Trump, including some in his own party, were due to begin the impeachment [committing a crime in office] process this week. Mr Trump is due to leave his job this month anyway, so some people think an impeachment trial is pointless, but his opponents say it would help to block him from running for president again in four years' time.

4. NEWS IN PICTURES

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NAPLES, ITALY



THIS huge sinkhole opened up in a hospital car park, after the ground beneath the park gave way.

SHANGHAI, CHINA



BULL statues are being placed in the streets for the upcoming Chinese New Year, the Year of the Ox. This year Chinese New Year falls on 12 February, and the festival will last until 26 February.

LONDON, UK



THE London Eye is lit up in blue in support of the NHS. To show thanks to the NHS workers and volunteers working on the frontline of the COVID-19 pandemic, lots of London's landmarks, historic buildings, sporting and entertainment venues will be turned blue.

MANILA, PHILIPPINES



DEVOTEES observe social distancing as they hear mass outside Quiapo church to celebrate the Feast of the Black Nazarene. The feast is usually attended by as many as six million people and happens every year on 9 January. The Black Nazarene is a dark wood sculpture of Jesus brought to the Philippines in 1606 from Spain and considered miraculous by many Filipinos.

BLACK FOREST, GERMANY



SKIERS make their way through heavy snowfall to the top of a mountain in the Black Forest.



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TOUGH TIMES FOR THE NHS

AS VACCINE ROLLOUT CONTINUES



ENGLAND'S Chief Medical Officer (CMO), Professor Chris Whitty, has warned that the next few weeks will be "the worst" of the pandemic for the NHS, as seven new vaccine 'super-hubs' open up across the UK.

Professor Whitty urged people across the UK to try to avoid unnecessary contact with others as much as they possibly can, as the NHS is under so much pressure.

In an interview, he said that there were more than 30,000 people in English hospitals with COVID-19, compared to about 18,000 at the peak of the first wave of infections in April.

Some hospitals have had to cancel urgent operations for cancer patients.

Fortunately, the UK has been quick to roll out vaccines, and last week a third vaccine was

approved. Created by the American company, Moderna, it will be available in the spring.

As First News went to press, more than 2.6 million jabs had been given out to around 2.2 million people, including the Queen, who received hers at Windsor Castle.

New 'super-hubs' are being set up around the country, which the Government hopes will help reach its target of 2m vaccinations a week.

However, the PM says that people shouldn't get careless, now that a vaccine is on its way – saying the UK is at a "very perilous moment".

EDITOR'S COMMENT



PRINCE Charles has spoken for 50 years about his passion for the planet.

He was talking about his concerns about single use plastic way before it had become a common worry for the environment. At the time, some people even thought his views were a bit crazy.

But he has been proven right and it was good to see him launching his Terra Carta project this week – which he writes about on our front page. Big businesses and every single one of us can do our bit for the planet's recovery, he says.

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GOOD WEEK FOR...

CHRISTINA McANEA

THE UK's biggest trade union, Unison, has elected its first female leader, former NHS worker Christina McAnea. Unison represents 1.3 million people who work in public services, such as education, health, energy and police.



BAD WEEK FOR...

GREEN ENERGY IN AFRICA

A NEW study in the journal *Nature Energy*, by scientists at the University of Oxford, has predicted that it's unlikely Africa will "leapfrog" into using renewable energies, and is set to be "locked into" using coal, oil and gas until 2030. But the report also says that it's not too late for that to change.



BEE-HARMING PESTICIDE ALLOWED

A PESTICIDE banned in the EU and believed to harm bees has been approved for use in England.

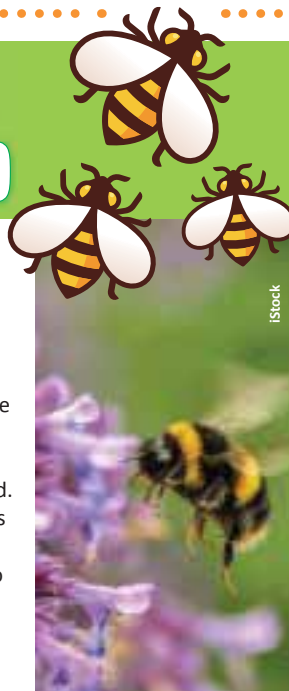
In 2018, the European Union and the UK agreed to a ban on all outdoor uses of the pesticide thiamethoxam to protect bees.

At the time, former Environment Secretary Michael Gove promised to uphold the ban, even after Brexit.

However, the UK has now allowed the "emergency use" of the pesticide to protect sugar beet crops in east England.

The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) has said that there are no other ways to protect the crops, and that Belgium, Denmark and Spain have also approved the pesticide for the same reason.

DEFRA also said that the pesticide will only be used on 'non-flowering' crops which bees don't visit and that "protecting pollinators is a priority for this government."



BUNGLING BURGLARS BUTT-DIAL THE POLICE!

TWO burglars are being called "the world's unluckiest", after one of them sat on their phone and called 999 – mid-burglary!

After listening closely to the accidental call, officers in Staffordshire realised that the pair were talking about their illegal antics.

Officers worked out where the call was coming from, and sent a patrol out to arrest the careless pair.

At no point did the burglars realise that they had accidentally rung the police, so officers at the station could hear the patrol arriving, over the phone!

Chief Inspector John Owen tweeted the details of the arrest, alongside an image of the world's most famous bungling burglars – Home Alone's Wet Bandits.





UK

● Festivals ask for help

The music industry is asking the Government for a plan for this summer's festivals, or some may have to pull the plug. Jamie Njoku-Goodwin from UK Music, which campaigns on behalf of the British music industry, said: "We have a matter of weeks in which we can convince major events to hold off cancelling." UK Music is asking the Government to provide a scheme to insure events, so that if they all have to be cancelled for a second year, there will be some compensation.



TYNE AND WEAR

● Is that a pota-toe?

When a dog walker saw what looked like a toe poking out of the ground in a muddy field, she understandably called the police. But when Northumbria Police came to survey the scene, it turned out (thankfully!) it was just a potato. Inspector Phil Hamrani said: "The search team did have a chuckle when they realised it was a potato, but the call was made in good faith and we can only praise the vigilance of the woman who made the call."

EAST AYRSHIRE

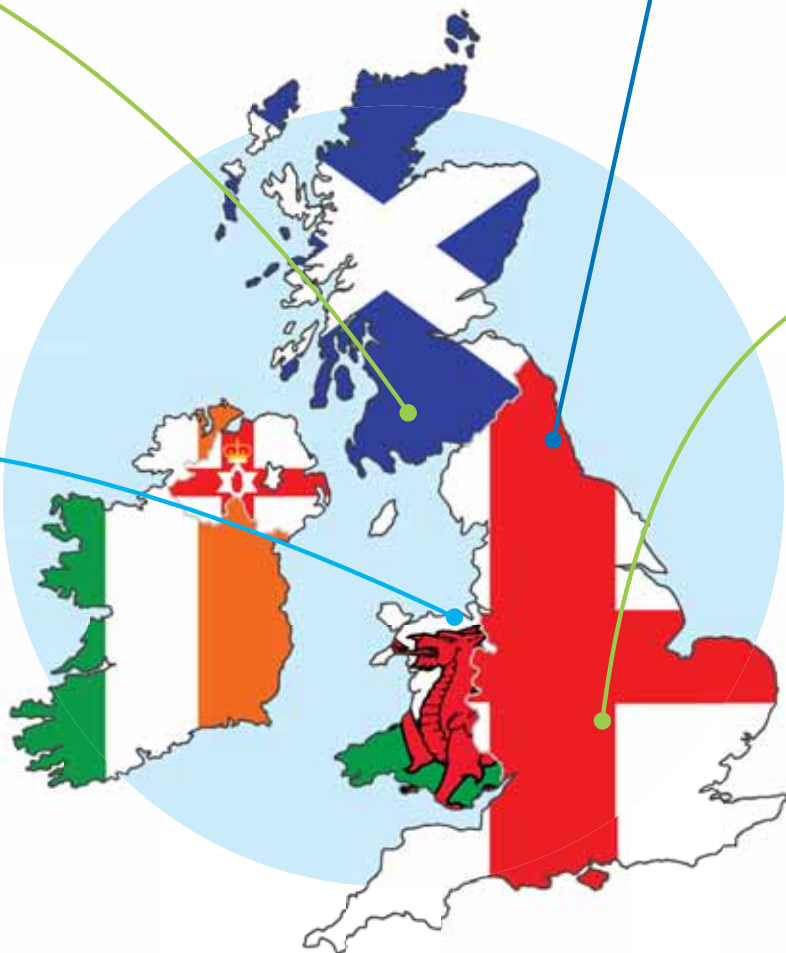
● Sledge shock

If the snow is tempting you to take the sledge out for your daily exercise, make sure you check there are no fences or other obstacles in your path. Finn Johnston, 18, learned a very painful lesson while sledging at Afton Reservoir, after he collided with a fence and a long chunk of wood pierced his bum cheek and he had to be rushed to hospital. "It was horrific, I'm still in shock," he told the Daily Record from his hospital bed.

WALES

● Weather warnings

Police in Flintshire have warned people not to break lockdown rules, particularly after snow and ice warnings. When officers were called to help a driver who skidded off the road, they also got stuck in the hazardous conditions. Police said: "This is why we say to you do not come out. [The incident] is now involving two agencies, two police vehicles, two mountain rescue vehicles, three police officers and the casualty."



NORTHAMPTONSHIRE



● Iguana escapes fire

An iguana made a daring escape from a house fire by jumping onto a firefighter's helmet. A spokeswoman for Northamptonshire Fire and Rescue Service said: "The fireman didn't realise the iguana had climbed on top of him. What a surprise he had to find an iguana chilling on his head, eager to escape the burning building!" The fire was caused by a heated mat for the reptile, but luckily no-one was hurt, including the iguana. According to the London Fire Brigade, the number of animals being rescued increased in 2020. They saved 755 animals in 2020, including 337 cats, 214 birds, 73 dogs, 61 foxes, 17 horses, 17 deer, seven squirrels, a goat, a sheep and a cow. The figures show a big jump from the 602 animal rescue calls in 2019.

UK

● Protesters taken to court

Hundreds of people involved in Extinction Rebellion (XR) protests are being taken to court. The protest movement aims to push the world's governments into taking more decisive action to stop climate change. XR protests have been common since 2018 and XR says around 1,700 people are being charged, mostly for minor offences like obstructing the highway. Lawyers say that some may still be expected to travel to London to face trial in person, despite the risk of the pandemic and current lockdown.



XR protesters outside oil company Shell's offices

UK

● Black Lives Matter funding

Black Lives Matter UK will start funding black-led organisations across the country in January, using the £1.2 million in donations that the group received over the summer. Educational projects, campaign groups, police monitoring projects, and some new protest groups will be receiving the donations. More than 260 towns and cities held protests in June and July last year, and activists from a youth group called All Black Lives UK say more protests will take place this year.



BRAINY BIRDS!



A NEW study has found that, at just four months old, ravens are as smart as fully-grown orangutans and gorillas!

Ravens and other crows are well known for being proper clever-clogs, with the ability to work with others to find food, and collect and use tools.

Now we know just how smart they are in comparison to other animals, thanks to the work of Professor Dr Simone Pika and her team from the University of Osnabrück.

They adapted an exam designed to test the brain power of different primates, called the Primate Cognition Test Battery (PCTB), so that it could be completed by ravens.

The adapted PCTB tested the ravens' learning abilities, their social skills and their ability to understand where objects go

when they can't see them any more.

Eight young ravens were hand-raised especially for the study, and given the PCTB at 4, 8, 12 and 16 months old.

The researchers found that, at just four months old, the ravens were able to complete the test just as well as adult apes could. The scientists also say that the birds' performance didn't change much over time, which suggests that their brains develop very quickly after birth. At just eight weeks old, they can already follow another bird's or human's gaze to see what they're looking at.



THE UK'S FIRST ALL-ELECTRIC BUS CITIES



TRANSPORT Secretary Grant Shapps has announced that Coventry and Oxford are set to become the UK's first cities to have a bus network run entirely on electricity.

Coventry and Oxford beat 17 other towns and cities in a competition to become the first all-electric bus cities.

They were judged on how difficult it would be to install an electric bus network, the impact it would have, and whether they'd had investment in electric buses before.

Now, the two cities are developing proposals to deliver to the Government, explaining how they'll use a £50 million grant to transform their bus networks.

If their proposals are accepted, the cities could replace all their buses with electric versions, and install other necessary equipment, such as charging stations.

RICHEST MAN SHUFFLE



ELON Musk, the man behind Tesla cars and the SpaceX programme, briefly became the richest man in the world last week.

He overtook Amazon founder Jeff Bezos to hit the No1 spot, but slipped back to second after losing \$14bn (about £10bn) in a single day! The fall was down to his electric car company, Tesla, which lost 8% of its value.

The ups and downs of the stock market, where the value of mega-companies is decided, shows how quickly and easily huge sums of money can come and go.

At the time of writing, Musk is worth about \$176.2bn (£128bn), while Bezos is worth \$182.1bn (£132bn). Musk is still well ahead of the third richest person, French luxury tycoon Bernard Arnault, who is around \$20bn behind him.

Musk, who also helped found PayPal, has been focused on his SpaceX programme in recent years. SpaceX uses rockets to deliver cargo to astronauts aboard the International Space Station. Also, it has been putting its Starlink satellites in the sky to offer faster broadband. The goal of SpaceX is to reduce the costs of taking things to space and, eventually, to put people on Mars and build a colony there.

WOW!

IN 2020, more than half of the cars sold in Norway were electric.

That's a first for anywhere in the world. The four best-selling vehicles in the country were the Audi e-tron, the Tesla Model 3, the Volkswagen ID.3 and the Nissan Leaf – all fully electric.

Norway aims for all new cars sold to be "zero emission" by 2025.



Prince Charles uses an Audi e-tron

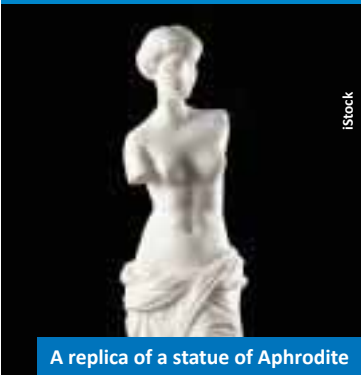
SWEDEN



Film festival for one

The Gothenburg Film Festival will carry out the ultimate social distancing cinema experience this year, inviting one person to spend a week watching all 60 of the festival's films while isolated on an island in the North Sea! The winning applicant will not be allowed to take anything with them: no phone, no computer, no books, but they will be staying in a luxury converted lighthouse. They'll be expected to review the movies, using the theme of 'social distance', in a daily video blog.

TURKEY



A replica of a statue of Aphrodite

Temple discovery

A 2,500-year-old temple to Aphrodite, the Greek goddess of love and beauty, has been unearthed in western Turkey. The researchers who were documenting the area found a piece of a statue of a woman, a terracotta female head and an inscription stating: "This is the sacred area".

EUROPE



Surprise Brexit charges

European customers of UK businesses have been hit by unexpected charges when ordering products across the Channel. Others have found that certain companies, such as Fortnum & Mason, are no longer shipping products to Europe at all. The deal signed with the EU means that while there aren't any taxes on goods shipped between the two regions, certain products will now be subject to charges called customs duties.



INDIA



Farmers' protest continues

Up to 250 million farmers in India have been on strike for almost two months, protesting against three new laws they claim are "anti-farming". The government says the new laws will improve the industry, but protesters say that they change decades-old rules on how crops are produced, stored and sold, and give big, private companies lots more power in the agriculture industry. In December, thousands of farmers captured world headlines when they marched through India in protest, making it past police with tear gas, and eventually setting up a huge camp on the borders of the capital city, New Delhi. Talks between the farmers and the government are ongoing, and while the government has tried to compromise, farmers want all three laws repealed (cancelled). There is a lot at stake in the protests – around half of all workers in India are in agriculture.



HONG KONG



Opposition crackdown

Last week, dozens of politicians, campaigners and activists were arrested in Hong Kong for allegedly breaking the state's new national security law (NSL). The law was created by the Chinese government last year. The government said that those arrested had taken part in an illegal poll. A few days later, most were released, but were required to give authorities their passports, and will have to report their whereabouts.



AUSTRALIA

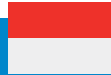


Nude fugitive found

Two fishermen laying crab traps near Darwin caught more than they bargained for, when a wanted man called for help from a tree. They then noticed Luke Voskresensky, 40, who was naked and clinging to a tree. The man was on the run and had broken free from his location-monitoring ankle bracelet and escaped into the crocodile-infested waters. He told the two fishermen that he was very thirsty, and had survived for four days eating snails. They rescued him, and returned him to the authorities.



INDONESIA



Flight disappears

Sixty-two people are thought to have died after a flight from Jakarta crashed into the sea, shortly after taking off. Since the crash last week, pieces of the plane have since been recovered in the Java Sea. As First News went to press, divers had recovered one of the plane's black box flight recorders.



WHY DO PEOPLE FALL FOR CONSPIRACY THEORIES?

Conspiracy theories are often crazy, making out that the truth is some kind of cunning cover-up.

Dr Allington says one of the main reasons people believe in conspiracies is because they're deliberately designed to sound like really good stories. Even though men have landed on the moon six times, decades later there are still lots of people who believe the landings were faked and filmed in a studio on Earth. Saying NASA made it all up and pulled the wool over the whole world's eyes might be a good story, but you have to ignore reality and evidence for it to make any sense.

ARE CONSPIRACY THEORIES DANGEROUS?

The moon landing example is pretty harmless, but when conspiracy theories involve vaccines or the new coronavirus, it can mean that people stop listening to medical advice that could save their lives.

"For example, there is a small group of people who believe that COVID-19 is caused by the introduction of 5G [a new, faster version of mobile internet]," says Dr Allington. "Because they blame 5G, they're not wearing masks, they're not social distancing. Some people have even set fire to mobile phone masts in protest.

"In a series of surveys earlier this year, we looked at what people believe about COVID-19, where people get their information from about it, and whether they are following the Government guidelines. We found that people who take their information from social media are more likely to believe in conspiracy theories about COVID-19.

"The people who believe in these conspiracy theories are also less likely to be following guidelines. Someone who believes that the symptoms of COVID-19 are caused by 5G is more likely to have gone outside with possible symptoms than somebody who doesn't believe that. We have clear evidence that people who believe in these false stories are more likely to behave in a way that puts themselves and others at risk."

WHAT EFFECTS DO CONSPIRACY THEORIES HAVE?

Conspiracy theories are dangerous because it means people point fingers in the wrong direction, and this can lead to persecution [cruel and unfair treatment of a group of people].



WHY DO PEOPLE BELIEVE FAKE NEWS?

YOU don't have to look online for long to find all sorts of fake news. It includes what are known as 'conspiracy theories' – wild ideas that ignore basic facts, science and evidence. To learn more, we spoke to Dr Daniel Allington, a senior lecturer at King's College London and an expert in the social science behind why people believe in conspiracy theories.

"The main example of this is Nazi Germany," Dr Allington says. "Adolf Hitler claimed that all of Germany's problems were caused by Jewish people, which is why Germany carried out the Holocaust [the murder of six million Jews during World War Two]. The Nazis believed that, although the Jews seemed to be powerless, they



One anti-mask protest in Trafalgar Square saw 16 people arrested and nine police officers injured



were secretly in control of everything."

Anti-Semitism (hatred of Jews) has been creeping into conspiracy theories for hundreds of years, with false accusations that Jewish people are secretly running the world.

It's also still shockingly common to see people spreading the conspiracy theory that the Holocaust didn't happen. Germany and more than a dozen other countries have made Holocaust denial illegal.

HOW DO WE KNOW CONSPIRACY THEORIES AREN'T TRUE?

Dr Allington says that in order for most conspiracy theories to be real, "you would need thousands and thousands of people working together for the conspiracy, without one of them spilling the beans. People just aren't like that – people talk.

"It's just impossible to keep anything that involves thousands of people a secret. Not even prime ministers or presidents can control everything to the level that conspiracy theorists say they do.

"When problems happen, people want an explanation that feels right to them, but this can mean ignoring real problems."

HOW DO WE STOP THE SPREAD OF CONSPIRACIES?



In the UK, the Independent Press Standards Organisation (IPSO) was set up to prevent lies being published in newspapers; Ofcom is an organisation that does the same for television. But on social media, there's no IPSO or Ofcom to step in when people are spreading misinformation and lies.

A tip from Dr Allington: "If you're seeing something only on social media, and you're not seeing it in newspapers or on television, then it's probably wrong. There's just not the same level of journalism there. So, you should make sure that you're getting your news from reputable sources."

If you want to find out more about how to spot conspiracy theories and fake news, your teacher can get First News' free Special Edition, *Making Sense Of The News*, at first.news/fakenews.





ZSL London Zoo

CREATURE COUNT

ZOOS may be closed because of lockdown, but keepers at ZSL London Zoo still have a very big job ahead of them this week – counting all the animals.

Every year, the staff at ZSL London Zoo do an annual stocktake and count every creature that lives at the zoo. The zoo must catalogue every living creature once a year, as part of the rules of its zoo licence. With more than 400 species calling the zoo home, it's a pretty mammoth task.

Despite being a bad year, in 2020 the zoo welcomed a host of new arrivals, including Ede the okapi (pictured), who was born in September.

The data from the annual stocktake is added to an international database, which helps conservationists keep an eye on animal species and their populations in captivity.

SNAKE SHIMMY

SCIENTISTS have discovered that brown tree snakes in Guam have an unusual way of moving, which helps them to catch birds.

A team from Colorado State University and the University of Cincinnati found that the snakes use a move that's been named lasso locomotion, which allows them to move and shimmy up large cylinders, like drain pipes, trees and power poles. The lasso-like body position helps them get to places other snakes can't, which means they can find different prey, including endangered bird species. It is the first time movement like this has been recorded in snakes.

Since brown tree snakes were accidentally introduced to the island of Guam in the late 1940s, the population of forest birds has dropped steadily. It is hoped that this discovery will help people find new ways to protect endangered birds from the snakes. The full report is published in *Current Biology*.



Tom Seibert, Colorado State University



Blom Lardner, United States Geological Survey

KITTENS SAVED!

TWO newborn kittens have been rescued by the RSPCA after being found at a recycling centre.

The tiny kittens were spotted on a rubbish conveyor belt by an eagle-eyed worker who plucked them to safety. It's believed they were born in a recycling bin that was collected by workers, before being tipped onto the conveyor belt. Staff at the Hartlepool recycling plant called the RSPCA, who came to collect the tiny male kittens. They were taken to Stanhope Park Veterinary Hospital, where they are being hand-reared. They will then be rehomed when they are old enough.



RSPCA

BITESIZE NEWS

RESEARCHERS have captured rare footage of a jaguar hunting another predatory cat.

The footage, taken from a camera trap in Guatemala, shows a male jaguar waiting at a waterhole to ambush its prey. He ignores a large tapir that passes, but soon after attacks and carries off an ocelot. The footage was shot during a particularly dry spell and scientists are looking into whether there is a link between predator-on-predator attacks and a shortage in water supplies. The full research has been published in the journal *Biotropica*.



Washington State University



A packed Brighton beach during last August's heatwave

LAST year was the Earth's joint warmest in history, according to the European Union's Copernicus Climate Change Service.

Despite coronavirus lockdowns all around the world leading to a drop in fossil fuel use, 2020 matched 2016 for the highest global temperatures ever recorded. Copernicus experts say the last six years are the warmest six on record.

The average surface temperature across the planet last year was around 1.25°C higher than the 1850-1900 pre-industrial period. 2020 was also 0.6°C warmer than the average across 1981-2010.

Europe had its warmest year on record last year, at 1.6°C above the 1981-2010 period, and 0.4°C warmer

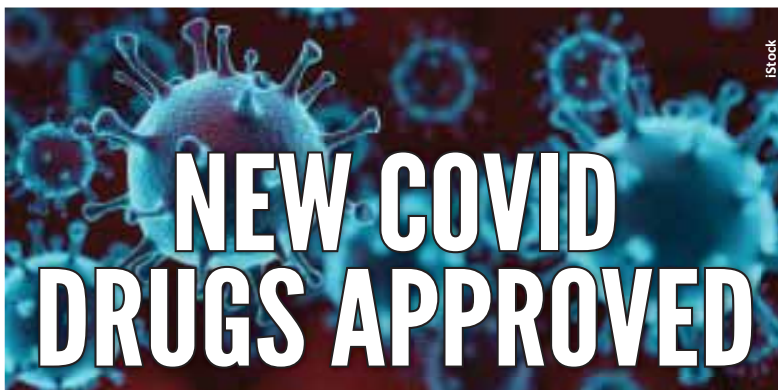
than 2019. In the UK, we experienced our longest stretch of temperatures above 34°C since records began in the 1960s. For six days last August, the thermometer was above 34°C, while the third hottest day ever (37.8°C) was recorded in the UK in July.

The increasing temperatures worldwide continue to have a direct effect on the planet. Last year's warming temperatures led to a very active wildfire season in parts of the Arctic Circle. Fires released a record 244 megatonnes of carbon dioxide in 2020. That's over a third more than the 2019 record. Levels of

Arctic sea ice also dropped in 2020.

Experts have responded to the worrying data by calling for urgent action to slow down global warming. The European Commission's Matthias Petschke said: "The extraordinary climate events of 2020 and the data from the Copernicus Climate Change Service show us that we have no time to lose."

As First News went to press, more data about 2020's temperatures was due to be published by NASA and the UK's Met Office.



TWO medicines used to treat a condition called rheumatoid arthritis have been found to help save the lives of coronavirus patients.

Last week, the NHS began using tocilizumab and sarilumab on the sickest COVID-19 patients. The drugs reduce the risk of death by 24%.

Both medicines work by reducing inflammation in the body. A small number of people with COVID-19 suffer a serious reaction that causes their immune systems to go into overdrive. That leads to dangerous levels of inflammation and organ damage, which can be fatal.

A recent study analysed the effects of tocilizumab and sarilumab on 792 patients in six countries across 21 days.

Doctors found the drugs had a big impact on reducing the chances of a

seriously ill patient dying. The medicines also helped people recover far more quickly, leaving intensive care units up to ten days earlier than people who did not take them. The drugs will not be used for people with mild illness.

In other COVID news, new research from Wuhan in China has found that most patients taken to hospital with the virus still have at least one symptom six months after falling ill.

Some 1,733 patients were monitored, and a shocking 76% of them were still suffering half a year later. The most common symptom was fatigue (extreme tiredness), followed by sleep difficulties and anxiety or depression.

IDENTICAL TWINS NOT SO IDENTICAL



A NEW study by scientists in Iceland has found that identical twins do not have identical genes.

Twins who look the same develop from a single fertilised egg. Experts looked at DNA from 387 pairs of identical siblings, and found "early mutations". These are changes in a sequence of DNA that can affect physical features, such as height. Mutations take place when a cell divides and an error is made as the DNA is being copied. The study in Iceland found that, on average, identical twins had 5.2 mutations, but some pairs had up to 100.

SCIENCE MUSEUM GROUP

This report is from the Science Museum in London

HAVE you spent more time in the kitchen lately?

You may have noticed that it's the room most likely to be full of gadgets. In fact, our kitchens are full of technological innovations!

Even Victorian and Edwardian kitchens of wealthy families were full of cleverly engineered appliances and utensils, from cutting-edge gas cookers, water-cooled refrigerators and ovens with adjustable temperatures.

Gadgets that to us may seem ordinary, like kettles, kitchen scales and saucepans, helped transform cooking at the end of the Victorian age.

You can find out more at tinyurl.com/KitchenTech.



An ice-cream making machine from 1880

'With echoes of *Carrie's War* and *Goodnight Mister Tom* ... Quietly brutal and brilliantly heartfelt. I absolutely **ADORED** it'

Emma Carroll, author of
Letters from the Lighthouse

'Evocative and heartfelt ... it's gripping, heartbreaking and yet full of hope'

Liz Hyder, author of
Bearmouth

'The Welsh backdrop and Jimmy's journey to acceptance stayed in my heart long after I'd closed the book'

Nizrana Farook, author of
The Girl Who Stole an Elephant



'An evacuee story with all the makings of a classic'

Anna Fargher, author of
The Umbrella Mouse

'A gripping mystery, overflowing with heart ... one of the very best books I've read this year'

Carlie Sorosiak, author of
I, Cosmo

'A brilliant debut'

Ross Montgomery, author of
The Midnight Guardians

A mesmerising mystery about bravery and brotherhood. Perfect for fans of Emma Carroll, Michael Morpurgo and Goodnight Mr Tom.

BLOOMSBURY

Waterstones **Children's**

Book of the *Month*

● How did it feel to come back to Junior Bake Off?

It was a relief that it happened because there was a big question over whether or not we would film it. I hadn't done 'presenting' as such before, so for the first series I was a bit nervous, but this year I knew what I was coming back into and this increased the enjoyment of it.

● Did returning to the show feel like finding a comfy pair of slippers?

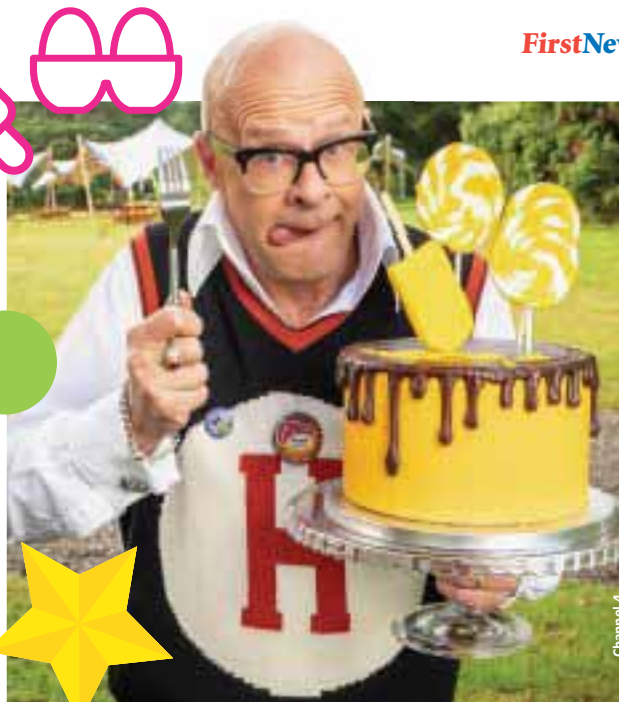
I felt more comfortable this time round. I haven't slavishly followed Bake Off but my kids wanted me to do Celebrity Bake Off, and I did that and I really trusted the production company. You never know how you are going to be portrayed, but I soon found out they were a good bunch, and my trust was in them. I know the format now so well, especially after watching it go out. It's all about the junior bakers, and that's how it should be. My goal is to have a light touch and try to make the kids laugh, and equally the camera crew – they are my audience and I get satisfaction if I make them laugh, but you won't see that on screen!

● What were the filming restrictions like?

You arrive at the tent, and it's reassuring to see it, like seeing a bit of normal after lockdown. The safety protocols were all in place, and then you just get on with making the show. It was great to meet the same crew, and it always surprises me that although they do the same kind of job the year round, they seem to really enjoy it. Which makes it a very positive experience for everyone.

● What did you enjoy the most working on this series?

The fun of it is being surprised by the bakers. I am not a judge but I am constantly surprised by the extent of their baking capabilities. The difference with this show is that the junior bakers will have a day when everything goes completely wrong and there are tears and that is heartbreaking, but you know that in ten minutes they will have bounced back. It's not the same as a grown-up crying! The fun is seeing them react to my questions and the funny things they say. They don't self-edit and their spontaneity can be very funny.



THE DISASTERS MAKE GOOD TV!

HARRY Hill steps into the famous Bake Off tent to present the new series of Junior Bake Off. We caught up with the TV funnyman to find out more!

● Did you do any baking yourself during lockdown?

My lockdown became quite busy, as my background is in clip shows so I had a lot of interest from broadcasters talking to me about work. I was working on Harry Hill's World of TV and preparing links for Junior Bake Off, so I didn't really have much downtime. I don't generally bake, but with my 16-year-old daughter we made focaccia. We forgot to put olive oil in and then I added it halfway through, but it came out fantastic and became a regular favourite.

● What do you think is the most annoying thing you do in the tent?

A lot of the kids were transparent when they found me annoying, particularly with the older ones who are very focused, but I like to break them down and have a comedy moment with them. I wanted them to have some fun, and find a sense of perspective. It's not all about winning; it is a TV show and I want them to enjoy it, so they remember the fun bits when they watch back. It's good to try and have an icebreaker, particularly on the first day when the bakers are getting to know each other. So I try and have running gags with them, and help them relax a bit and not be nervous. The younger ones are more wide-eyed and relaxed.

● Rav is the new judge on the show, alongside Liam. Does she bring a new surge of energy?

They really work well together. It's a totally different dynamic this time round. When I heard Prue wasn't able to do it, I thought that's a shame, but sometimes change is good, to bring a different perspective to a show. We all got on so well; there is no side to Liam, he is just a nice guy. He is so good with the kids, and they really, really warm to him. When they are upset, he is so reliable in reassuring them and turning the situation around. He is so interested in baking, it's a big love for him. He believes in crumb structure – it's not an act. Rav is really good fun too. She has a fantastic laugh and is quite self-deprecating [can joke about herself]. There was one funny moment where I broke down laughing, because one bake looked like dog muck, and served on astro turf. We all just lost it, crying with laughter!



● Were there any disasters during filming?

A baker mistook salt for sugar in one challenge, and there are things that go completely wrong – often the bakers can be over-ambitious in their efforts to achieve and that can fall short. But the disasters make good television!



Watch Junior Bake Off weekdays at 5pm on Channel 4

CHARITIES SUPPORTED BY FIRST NEWS



GET YOUR SKATES ON!

THE coolest competition on TV is back on our screens this week, so we took a quick look at the 2021 cast of *Dancing on Ice* (DOI)!

1 Former athlete Colin Jackson CBE had a taster of DOI as part of a DOI Olympic special in 2012. He's back to learn a new skill and challenge himself.

2 TV presenter Denise Van Outen says DOI is the scariest thing she has ever done. She has lots of dance experience, but can't skate. Yet!

3 Graham Bell is best known for being an Olympic skier. While he is used to ice, he is worried about the dancing and performance side of the show!

4 Music star Lady Leshurr signed up for DOI to take herself out of her comfort zone. She has hardly any skating experience but says she is good at picking up dance routines.

5 Capital FM DJ Sonny Jay is excited to learn how to skate backwards. He's hoping constructive criticism from the judges will help him improve each week.

9 Actor Joe-Warren Plant is the youngest contestant on the show. He has been in a soap opera for ten years and so is nervous about the live elements of the show.

6 Actor Faye Brookes hopes her musical theatre background will help her with her performances. Unlike most of the other contestants, she isn't afraid of falling over!

7 Reality TV star Billie Shepherd has no skating or dancing experience, so hopes hard work and determination will help her learn. She's most worried that her nerves will get the better of her.

8 Jason Donovan has been performing since he was a teenager, so he's ready to embrace the fantastic costumes. His biggest worry is getting injured on the ice.

10 TV star Myleene Klass signed up for the show because her children love to skate and they want her to join them on the ice. She's most worried that her fingers will get skated over!

12 TV presenter Rufus Hound is looking forward to getting fit as part of his DOI training. He wants to bring fun and entertainment into people's homes.

11 Media personality Rebekah Vardy skated quite a bit when she was a child but hasn't been on the ice in over ten years. She's scared of taking on the famous headbanger move.

THE JUDGES SAY...

John Barrowman: "I think that everybody is going to be excited to see the entertainment, the fun, the style, the sparkle and most of all the fabulousness that we will bring to the ice this year."

Jayne Torvill: "I have to say we're very excited about who is in this year's show and the level that they're starting at."

Christopher Dean: "I'm always all about technique. If somebody can show me they can master the glide on the ice, then that will impress me."

Ashley Banjo: "I think viewers can expect a lot of energy this year. Because of the pandemic, it's the kind of thing none of us take for granted any more!"

Dancing on Ice returns Sunday 17 January on ITV!

PICS OF THE WEEK

TOM Gates is coming to a TV screen near you at the end of this month!

The brand-new animated show follows Tom and his adventures both at school and at home.

Liz Pichon, Tom Gates' creator, said: "The Brilliant World of Tom Gates is exactly the kind of TV show that as a kid I would have completely devoured! The cast is amazing, and I was so excited to see how they brought the characters to life. Now I can't wait for the children to see what we've all been working on."

Fans of the hit book series will also get to see Liz Pichon herself, in a live craft element of the show.

The Brilliant World of Tom Gates comes to Sky Kids on 25 January!



THIS WEEK



1 Chris Pratt has confirmed that he will appear in the next Thor film, *Thor: Love and Thunder*, as his *Guardians of the Galaxy* character Star-Lord. The actor revealed he was looking forward to flying to Australia for filming, while talking to his *Onward* co-star, Tom Holland, in a live social media chat. The new Thor film is also rumoured to feature the first female Thor.

2 Filming for the 15th series of *Britain's Got Talent* has been delayed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The show usually starts filming around this time of year, but has been postponed until it is safe for all contestants, judges and crew members. It is hoped that production of the show can begin later this year.

3 Little Mix have had their first No 1 as a trio. The band shared some behind-the-scenes footage from the video shoot for *Sweet Melody* on social media, thanking fans for their support.



SHERIDAN SMITH

IF you like dogs then you'll love BBC One's new reality show *Pooch Perfect*! Host Sheridan Smith told us more...

What's *Pooch Perfect* all about?

The series features 16 professional dog groomers from around the country, and they all battle it out to create incredible transformations on family pets, and compete to be crowned the UK's top dog groomer!

What's your role on the show?

This is my first prime-time hosting gig. I can't believe I got asked, to be honest! But I am a huge dog lover and the time just seemed right. I had just had my son, Billy, so it was an absolute honour to be asked. Being the host, I got to know each contestant really well – I am a people person and I love getting to know people. I became really attached and wanted them all to win! I hated even just announcing who was going home each week, so I was thankful it wasn't my job to judge them.

Tell us about your co-host!

I have a co-host called Stanley. He's the star of the show; I am in fact his co-host! Stanley is a dog, to avoid any confusion... a well-trained dog; better trained than me! He's a cross-breed, and was originally rescued from Battersea. The nation will fall in love with him. He is just beautiful. Stanley needs his own Instagram; he would get millions of followers. I'm sure he's going to win an Oscar soon enough!

How important is dog grooming?

Grooming is so important when it comes to caring

for dogs. Bolu (the show's vet) works closely with groomers because often a groomer can spot any problems a dog has with its fur or skin, and with regular visits these issues can be avoided. It's great for the dogs' welfare, and it's really important in caring for your dog. I have learned so much from being on the show and I hope people at home do, too.

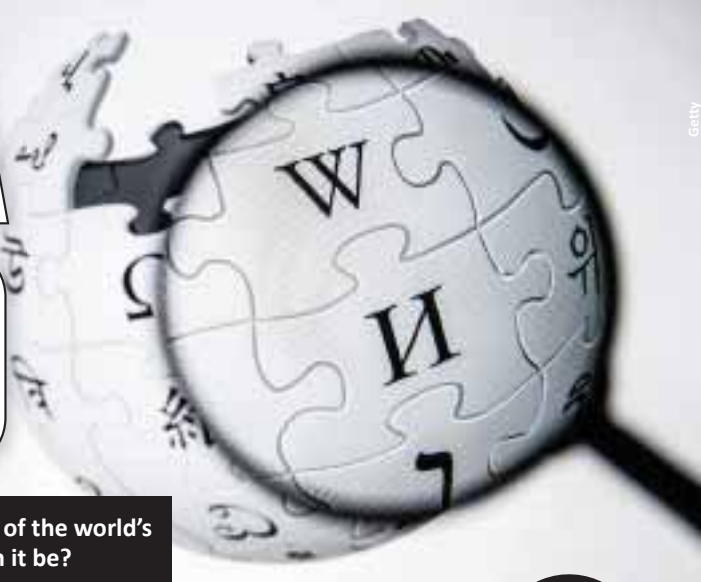
How many of your own dogs do you have?

I have six dogs already and I was warned not to bring any dogs home from filming! I promised my mum no more livestock, because I also have donkeys. The donkeys live in the field at the end of my garden. They're gorgeous. They're similar to dogs in that they are loving and loyal, and they know their owner. Donkeys are always in pairs; you rarely see a donkey on their own, so we have two sisters and a couple. They always stay together; I think it's so sweet and romantic!



Catch *Pooch Perfect* on BBC 1 Thursday at 8pm

WIKIPEDIA TURNS 20



WIKIPEDIA is 20 years old today (15 January). The free online encyclopedia is one of the world's most popular websites, but when anyone can go in and change it, how reliable can it be?

THE BEGINNING

Founded in 2001 by Jimmy Wales and Larry Sanger, Wikipedia is not like other encyclopedias. While traditional encyclopedias get information exclusively from academics and experts, the key to Wikipedia's success has been collaboration and accessibility.



Wikipedia founders Jimmy Wales (left) and Larry Sanger

Wikipedia – the name combines the Hawaiian word for 'quick' (wiki) and encyclopedia – allows anyone to write an article (accessibility) and for anyone else to edit and improve it (collaboration). This simple combination has led to Wikipedia becoming one of the top ten most popular websites in the world.

For an independent website that relies on donations and is not designed to make money, Wikipedia's success is an incredible feat. Its information is free to all, it has no adverts, and it doesn't sell or track the information of its users or contributors.

ISSUES WITH FREEDOM

While the idea of everyone in the world collaborating together in an online space to further human knowledge sounds perfect, it also brings problems. By offering its 'anyone can edit' level of freedom, the site was often (and sometimes still is) prone to acts of vandalism.

If anyone can put what they want on there, then some of the information is going to be misleading or just plain wrong.

However, things have improved over the years. Daria Cybulska, who works at Wikimedia UK (the charity that supports Wikipedia), said: "The reality is that Wikipedia is a pretty reliable source of information these days and it's improving every day.

"Individual editors often keep an eye on articles to pick up incorrect edits, especially when a certain topic is very popular. But a lot of the work is done by 'bots' programmed to pick up vandalism and errors."

So although Wikipedia can still be edited by anyone, gone are the days where you could write something stupid like: 'Mr Smith next door smells of farts and thinks the world is flat' and expect to see it online straight away.

As well as bots and dedicated editors, Wikipedia has administrators who check content before it goes up on the site. As of January 2021, there are 1,114 administrators working on the English Wikipedia website.

WIKISTATS!

More than **55m** articles

500m daily page views

5.6bn monthly visits

Available in more than **300** different languages

6.2m articles in English

1.7bn unique monthly visitors

PRINT VS ONLINE

Before the internet, a weighty bunch of books called the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* was the place to go for information. The academic nature of *Encyclopaedia Britannica* led to a lot of people mistrusting Wikipedia's open-to-all approach when it was invented.



These were a common sight on people's bookshelves

However, a 2005 study by journal *Nature* looked at 42 science articles and found that while Wikipedia averaged four minor mistakes per entry, *Britannica* also averaged three, a small difference.

Bearing in mind that this study was in the very early days of Wikipedia, when some crazy stuff could slip in (see Wikipedia's *Weirdest*), the results are surprising.

Another benefit of online information is its ability to quickly change mistakes. A mistake in a printed book can't be changed until a new edition comes out.

“It was like a giant community leaf-raking project in which everyone was called a groundskeeper. Some brought very fancy professional metal rakes... and some were just kids thrashing away with the sides of their feet or stuffing handfuls in the pockets of their sweatshirts, but all the leaves they brought to the pile were appreciated. And the pile grew and everyone jumped up and down in it having a wonderful time.”

– author **Nicholson Baker**, in 2008, compares the early days of gathering information on Wikipedia to people gathering leaves

A RESOURCE FOR SCHOOLS?



Getty

Speaking to Year 6 teachers at Portway Primary School in London, they all admitted they rarely use Wikipedia in the classroom. However, they all agreed that the site could be a valuable resource for education.

Newly qualified teacher Ahmed Diria said: "When I was in education, using Wikipedia was frowned upon, but I think in recent times there is space for it in research. You have to apply a little scepticism [doubt] but it can still be a useful tool for learning."

Steve Trask, on the other hand, is very positive about Wikipedia's role in the classroom. As lead consultant for computer science across 50 primary and secondary schools, he thinks that "Google and Wikipedia are the go-to methods of research for students".

He believes the issue isn't about Wikipedia's reliability but more about making sure teachers help students to use it correctly. In an instance where a student

has copied work from Wikipedia, he says: "The next step should then be that the teacher actually formally teaches searching techniques and in particular discusses the ever-changing nature of Wikipedia articles, and how they can be biased."

It's something our own Head of Education at First News agrees with. Nic Smallshaw says: "I'm a big fan of Wikipedia. It is incredibly useful and there is so much to learn by dipping into it. There is a very important 'but' though! You need to know how it is put together..."

SEEKING OUT SOURCES

Nic recommends keeping an eye on those little numbers in brackets that regularly pop up next to the information on Wikipedia. Those show you where the information has come from.

She says: "It is really important that we think about and question the sources of our information. Understanding reliable sources of information, and being able to recognise misinformation, are important skills needed now and in the future."

Although Wikipedia can be a great help for research, Daria believes its real power is not in reading it, but writing it. "Writing Wikipedia encourages people to understand, navigate, and evaluate information, while helping create this global, open educational resource for everyone else to use."

Her work at Wikimedia UK has involved setting up projects with schools and universities where students write Wikipedia articles for a grade. At the very least, she points out, "by getting students to write Wikipedia articles, they can't copy them to create their essays!"

A SOUND STARTING POINT

Wikipedia itself isn't shy about its problems. It even points out on its website that it "is not a reliable source for academic writing or research". But for school work, as a place to start, Wikipedia can prove invaluable. The site recommends you follow two simple rules:

1. **Do your research properly and wisely. Remember that any encyclopedia is a starting point for research, not an ending point.**
2. **Use your judgement. Remember that all sources have to be evaluated.**

As someone who has been teaching for 23 years, Steve sums up his feelings on the site pretty clearly: "The bottom line is that students want an easy way to find information, and they need to be formally taught about misinformation and the reliability of sources. If used properly in lessons, Wikipedia offers just that."



Getty

WIKIPEDIA'S WEIRDEST

WIKIPEDIA will always be vulnerable to pranksters to some degree. Here are some of the weirdest lies that made it onto the website. It should be noted that these all made it onto Wikipedia several years ago and have long since been deleted!



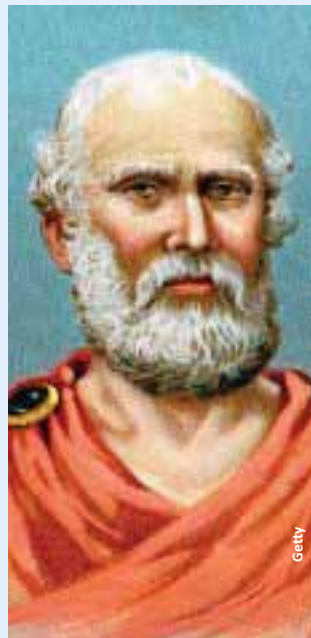
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It was claimed that pop star Robbie Williams eats pet hamsters "in and around Stoke".



Getty

Footballer David Beckham was apparently a Chinese goalkeeper in the 18th century. He looks pretty good for someone over 200 years old!



Getty

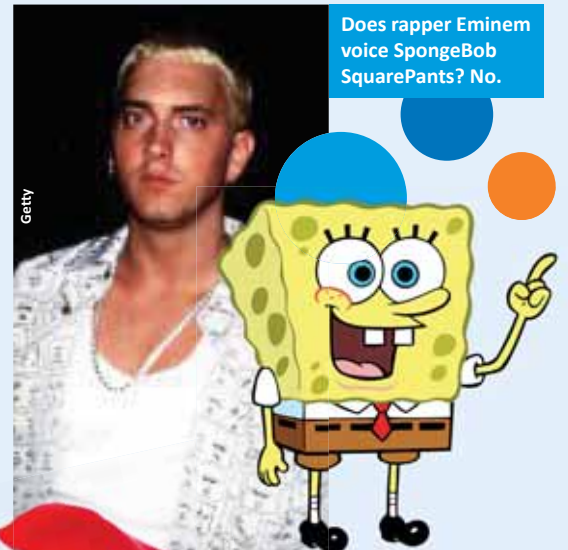
Greek philosopher Plato was supposedly a Hawaiian weatherman and surfer.

Actor Gary Oldman had an interesting birth as someone posted that a doctor thought he was a girl before realising he was a giraffe!



Getty

Does rapper Eminem voice SpongeBob SquarePants? No.



Getty



Getty

As a tribute to his cat, Ed Wild made up a 1970s kids' TV show called Olimar the Wondercat. Olimar had magical powers and battled his nemesis, Evil Derek the Dark Dalmatian. Of course, the show never existed, but Ed put in a lot of effort to pretend it did, creating fake episode titles and pictures from the show.



Hi! Do you remember us? We're Lampo and Milady, two friends who are in the band The Buffycats. Our other band members are Meatball and Pilou. The four of us live in the garage next to Granny Pina's house and that's where we play The Buffycats music to all our pawtastic friends.

One of the things we love to do is spend time outside and playing with our friends. We know that being in the fresh air is very good for us and it's where we learn about plants, flowers, animals, and the seasons.



LAMPO

In the last year we've been spending lots of time outside at a wonderful entertainment park for kids and families, called Gulliver's World. Every day Milady and I have been saying "hi" to children who've been visiting and enjoying the rides and activities at Gulliver's. We're really sad that we've not been able to give them bear hugs this year but, instead, we've been doing socially-distanced selfies and air hugs! Let's hope this year is better for everyone.

Check out our competition on this page for three lucky families to come to see us in 2021 and have a pawtastic weekend away.

2020 was a strange year, wasn't it? No hugs, no holidays and lots of time spent at home. We've learned that having friends is so important as we can help each other, especially when things are a little bit different. In our TV show on POP TV we spend time helping each other, and the music from our band, The Buffycats, always puts a smile on our cat-tastic friends' faces. Don't forget, there's nothing more important than friendship! Let's hope that 2021 is a year where we can spend more time outside, playing and having fun with friends and family.



MILADY

WIN!

A pawtastic weekend away for three families of up to five people each at Gulliver's World in Warrington, near Liverpool, where the 44 Cats are currently making daily appearances. The prize includes accommodation for one night, evening meals and entrance to the theme park resort for two days. Travel expenses will also be included and a 44 Cats goody bag for the kids! To enter, just answer this question:

Who is NOT a member of The Buffycats?
a) Meatball b) Granny Pina c) Pilou

Send us your answer, along with your name, age and contact details to: win@grapevine-pr.co.uk

The competition closes on 30 January 2021

*The prize can be redeemed on any weekend during 2021 subject to availability and COVID-19 restrictions. Entry is open to residents of the UK and Republic of Ireland only. Please make sure you have your parent or guardian's permission to enter. Full terms and conditions can be found at live.firstnews.co.uk/terms



44 Cats is on Pop TV every morning, seven days a week.
It's also available on Nick Toons, Netflix and YouTube.

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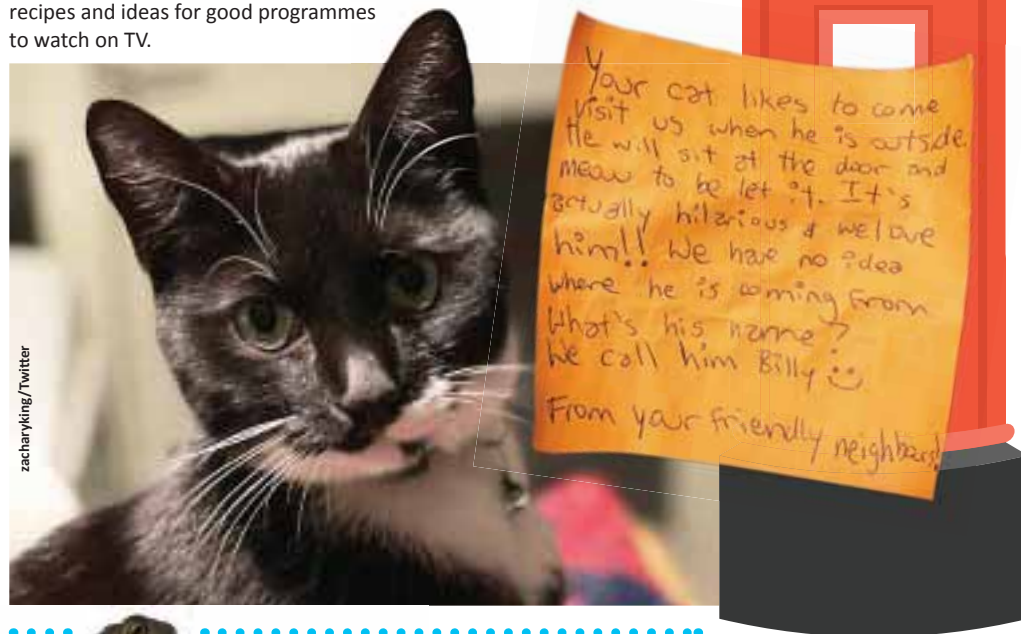
PURRFECT POSTIE

A CURIOUS cat has become an unlikely postie, delivering notes between neighbours.

Billy, the British shorthair, has been paying cheeky visits to another home during lockdown. One day, the couple he's been visiting decided to attach a handwritten note to Billy's collar, informing his owners of his antics.

Zack King and his girlfriend Olga were so amused by the note that they decided to write back.

The neighbours, who live in Hackney, East London, have now become pen pals. They've sent and received around ten notes, which Billy takes back and forth between them. The new friends have been sharing recipes and ideas for good programmes to watch on TV.



zacharyking/Twitter



iStock

OFFICIAL DINOSAUR

KIDS in Massachusetts, USA, are being asked to help pick an official state dinosaur.

While some places have flags, birds or flowers, politician Jack Lewis wants his state to be represented by a dinosaur.

Mr Lewis has invited young people to vote between two dino species discovered in the area. The first is *Podokesaurus holyokensis*, famed for being named by Mignon Talbot – the first woman to name and describe a dinosaur. The second is *Anchisaurus polyzelus*, which is among the oldest dinosaurs to have been found in North America.

Mr Lewis is filing the paperwork today (15 January). Which one do you think has scooped the win?

DID YOU KNOW?

Twelve states in America already have a state dinosaur!

BAKE OFF



That's a lot of pies!

A DELICIOUS new record has been set for the longest line of pies.

Chefs from the United Arab Emirates joined forces to bake a whopping 2,209 pear pies and place them in a very long line.

The Guinness World Record attempt took place in Dubai and smashed the previous record of 1,608 pies.

The fruity creations didn't go to waste: the organisers donated them to a charity called Sahem for Hope, which gives food to those in need.



Scottish SPCA

TINY TEARAWAY

A PET hamster has been reunited with its owners, after making a great escape on New Year's Eve.

The tiny animal was spied heading to the shops in Glasgow on 31 December. CCTV footage caught him clinging on to an unaware shopper entering a Poundland store, before heading for the pick 'n' mix!

The Scottish SPCA collected the escapee, with animal rescue officer Amy Stirton saying: "We've named the little adrenaline junkie Tom Cruise for now, given his *Mission Impossible*-esque attempt to get some treats."

After a rescue appeal to find the hamster's owners, the cheeky rodent is now back home where it belongs.



Written and illustrated by Paul Palmer



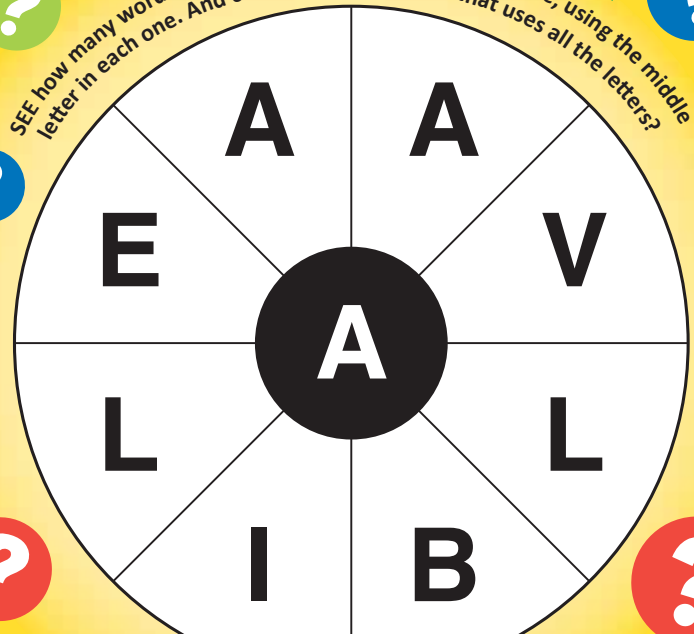
SUDOKU!

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

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

WORD WHEEL

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



WORD LADDER

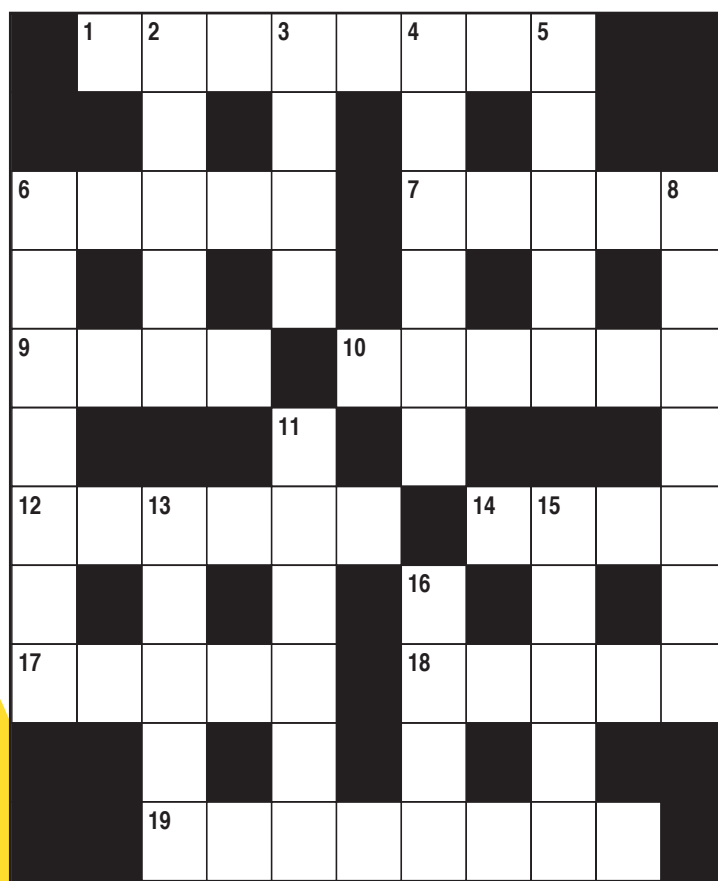
SEE if you can get from the top of the ladder to the bottom by changing one letter at a time to make a new word.

WIFE

LADY

CROSSWORD

CAN you complete our crossword puzzle by using the clues below?



ACROSS

- 1 Not cautious; inattentive (8)
- 6 Sorcery (5)
- 7 Series of linked metal rings (5)
- 9 Swallow food or drink quickly (4)
- 10 Scratches (6)
- 12 This is collected by bees (6)
- 14 A lasting mark on the skin (4)
- 17 Warning sound (5)
- 18 Fourth month of the year (5)
- 19 Increase greatly in number (8)

DOWN

- 2 A spiritual being that has wings (5)
- 3 A Sketch: drawing toy (4)
- 4 Cause to feel very enthusiastic (6)
- 5 Break into lots of pieces (5)
- 6 A purplish red colour (7)
- 8 Part of the nose (7)
- 11 E.g. monkey or whale (6)
- 13 State something is the case (5)
- 15 Type of hard substance that forms large reefs (5)
- 16 A vehicle that transports people in exchange for money (4)

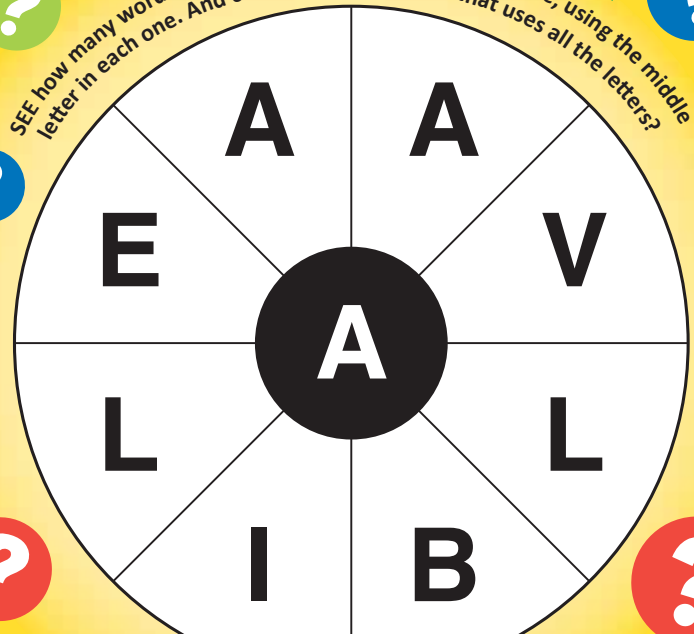
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THE POWER OF LIMITLESS PLAY



DID you know that as well as being fun, playing is really important and is crucial to our development? The LEGO Group told us about it and introduced us to a very special young man!

We all know that playing is fun, but we have now found out just how good it can be for our development too! The LEGO Group believes that play can help develop lots of core skills we need for future success, including creativity, problem solving and resilience. Pretty good news, right?

● Rebuild the world

That's why the LEGO Group launched its Rebuild The World campaign, designed to celebrate how kids of all ages build, unbuild and rebuild the world with LEGO creations. Recently, as part of this project, the LEGO Group worked with a London primary school to re-imagine and rebuild the world around them to make it a happier place for all, with some very creative results!

But there isn't a one-size-fits-all approach to play and it doesn't need to be in the form of a big project. Play is something we all experience differently and is unique to our personalities, skills and strengths. One person who is taking the concept of 'limitless' play to the next level is Year 9 secondary school student Alejandro Fernandez-Khonyongwa, who is visually impaired and incorporates LEGO Braille bricks into his version of limitless play. We found out about Alejandro's story and how play has helped him to explore his creativity and imagination.



MEET ALEJANDRO

JUST after Alejandro was born, he developed a condition called retinopathy of prematurity (ROP), an eye disorder that led to Alejandro having to undergo multiple surgeries at a very young age. Unfortunately these were not successful and meant that Alejandro lost all his sight in his left eye, and most sight in his right eye.

Play is a vision-dominated activity, where we see a toy and reach out to grab it, but this was difficult for Alejandro due to his sight loss. Living in a sighted world where we rely on our vision to interact meant that play was naturally more difficult for Alejandro, who couldn't see the objects or toys to touch, hold or explore. Instead, he had to be taught how to use all his senses, such as his hearing and touch, to learn how to play and do all the things that most of us do automatically.

None of these challenges blocked Alejandro's creative abilities, or meant he couldn't have his own unique play experiences. Having been introduced to LEGO at around four years old, Alejandro used senses such as touch and sound to help him imagine and build his own world. For example, Alejandro would listen to the click sound the LEGO bricks made when they snapped together to understand how they connected, to help him build something spectacular. He also uses his LEGO Braille bricks to spell out words to add to his creations.

Alejandro's mother explained that because Alejandro does not see the world in the same way the rest of us do, his imagination has no limits, leaving him free to re-imagine and redefine. Because he doesn't start a build in the same way we might, the outcomes of his LEGO builds are wonderfully different, as well as creative. Inspired by the LEGO Rebuild The World campaign, Alejandro built a LEGO model inspired by his love of travel, which he named a 'Carplaneship'. It featured elements of a car, plane and ship, because, as Alejandro asked: "Who says they can't function together simultaneously?"

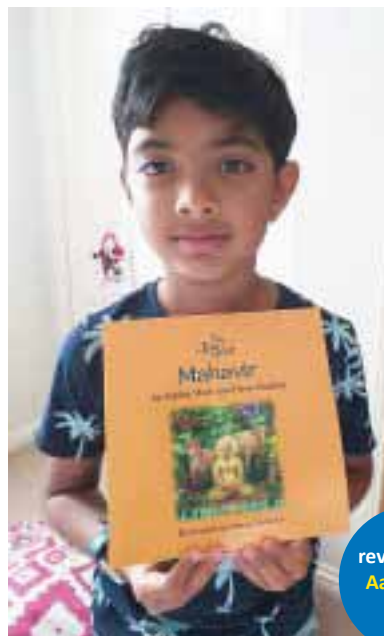
Now, that's out-of-the-box thinking!

While play always will be fun, it can also stretch our imagination, unleash our creativity, broaden our horizons and develop skills needed for the future.



To find out more about LEGO Rebuild The World, please visit www.lego.com/en-gb/campaigns/rebuild-the-world

YOUR READS!



MAHAVIR SUNITA SHAH AND NIRAV GUDHKA

This book is a story from the Jain religion, about a boy called Mahavir who goes on to become a special god called Tirthankar. Mahavir was born part of the royal family of Kundapur, India, but stayed away from all the glories of royalty.

I recommend the book to all age groups who can read, as this book is made for everyone to read and the illustrations are very detailed, which makes the reader understand more about the characters.

My favourite part was when Tirthankar Mahavir stopped a stampeding elephant, the elephant quietened down and came to a steady halt.

reviewed by
Aadi, aged
eight

Five out of
five stars!

WE WANT YOUR BOOK REVIEWS!

We'll need around 100 words on a book you've been reading and a picture of yourself (with parents' permission!) sent to bookreviews@firstnews.co.uk.

National Literacy Trust's Virtual School Library

PRESERVE the planet with Josh Lacey, our author of the week in the Virtual School Library!



Are you giving Veganuary a go or making an effort to preserve the planet?

Visit the Virtual School Library from the National Literacy Trust to read *Hope Jones Saves the World* for free, watch an exclusive video about Josh's latest book, *Hope Jones Will Not Eat Meat*, and find recommended reads.

Josh recommends these books:

- *Charlotte's Web* by EB White
- *The River Cottage Family Cookbook* by Hugh Fearnley-Whittingstall and Fizz Carr
- *Politics for Beginners* by Alex Frith, Rosie Hore and Louie Stowell

Words for Life

Virtual School Library

FOR MORE TIPS AND ACTIVITIES TO IMPROVE
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WIN! A £150 LEGO GIFT VOUCHER

ARE you fanatical about LEGO?
If so, this is the competition
for you, as we are giving one
lucky reader the chance to win
£150 worth of LEGO vouchers!

The online LEGO store is packed full of amazing sets, Minifigures and collector's items to help inspire you. You'll be able to add to your collection or start a new one with this great prize.

One lucky winner will get a £150 gift voucher, to spend online or in-store (when the shops reopen).

To be in with a chance of winning, just answer this question:

LEGO blocks originated
in which country?

a) Finland b) Sweden c) Denmark

ENTER NOW! MARK YOUR ENTRY LEGO

firstnews.co.uk/competitions or see page 21. The closing date is 28 January 2021.

Start the new year
with a mesmerising mystery!

Fans of Emma Carroll,
Michael Morpurgo and
Goodnight Mister Tom
will love this timeless,
unforgettable debut
about bravery and
brotherhood.



Scan here for downloadable
teaching resources



Waterstones Children's
Book of the Month

BLOOMSBURY

NINTEND-WOAH!

ACCORDING to a games industry insider, more Nintendo Switch consoles were sold in the UK last year than all other consoles combined!

Christopher Dring, head of the games industry website gamesindustry.biz, tweeted the startling statistic this week.

He said that in the UK, through 2020, if you add up the sales of every PS5, PS4, Xbox One and Xbox Series X/S, you get a number that's pretty close to the total number of Nintendo Switch sales!

While he didn't give specific numbers, it's quite easy to imagine this being the case. The Nintendo Switch is cheaper than the next-gen consoles and has a larger library of games that are aimed at all the family. Did you get a Switch last year?



Nintendo

CONTROLLER QUESTIONS



Microsoft

THIS week, the controller that comes with the Xbox Series X/S was in the news for a couple of reasons.

First, Microsoft sent a survey to Xbox gamers, asking if they were "aware of" the features of the PS5's DualSense controller, and if they'd like to see them in the Xbox's controller.

While that doesn't mean changes to the Xbox controller are coming anytime soon, after the Xbox One was released, Microsoft released a new controller featuring a share button and a headphone jack, after being a big hit with PS4 gamers.

It was also widely reported that the only reason Xbox controllers still use batteries is because of an ongoing deal with battery company Duracell. However, Microsoft denied that there is any deal, and said it wanted to give choice to Xbox gamers and that using batteries is just one option.

WALLACE AND GROMIT'S BIG FIX UP!



THE nation's favourite cheese-loving inventor and his loyal canine companion are back in a brand-new augmented reality (AR) adventure!

The free new app, which launched on

Monday, lets you experience an all-new adventure where fans help out Wallace and his faithful hound with their latest business venture: Spick & Spanners. They've been hired to 'fix up' Bristol, but the game can be played in the UK, US and Canada.

Using AR technology, Wallace and Gromit's Bristol can be seen through your phone, similar to Pokémon GO. Help out by completing jobs for the duo, and you'll encounter all sorts of crazy characters, voiced by an all-star British cast.

You'll also end up coming across some of Wallace's past inventions, which might need a bit of a tune-up.

One of the mad machines to make an appearance in the app is the Litteration. The robotic figure – one of over 1,500 entries in a competition run by the Intellectual Property Office and Aardman Studios – was designed by nine-year-old Dominic Marday, and roams the streets while eating, sorting and recycling litter!

This year's Cracking Ideas competition launches soon. Visit www.crackingideas.com to find out more.

To download the new app, head to www.thebigfixup.co.uk.



Aardman/Pioneers

HOME-SCHOOLING WITH THE FIRST NEWS HOME iHUB



THE First News iHub is an interactive e-learning platform created to support children aged 7-14 to develop key reading, comprehension, writing and oracy skills, while also learning about key news stories from around the world.

With hundreds of activities available, this is a fantastic tool for parents to support their child's learning at school and for home educators.

AWARD
WINNING!

"The iHub has become a regular and popular choice for our 'home-school' during lockdown!"

A Crawford, parent, May 2020

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3 MONTHS**

HEAD TO WWW.FIRSTNEWS.CO.UK/HOMEIHUB TO FIND OUT MORE

WIN! NATIONAL PARKS PRESENTATION SETS

ROYAL Mail has released its first Special Stamps issue of 2021, which celebrates the 70th anniversary of the founding of Britain's first National Parks.

Featuring some of the UK's most popular and visited landscapes, the stamp set features 10 of the 15 National Parks.

The UK's National Parks cover a breathtaking range of natural environments: from cold tundra to temperate rainforest, from gigantic sea cliffs to rolling chalk hills, from razor-sharp mountains to marshy wetlands. They are also places where people have lived, worked, worshipped, farmed and traded for centuries, in ways that have shaped – and been shaped by – the surrounding environment. These landscapes are unique combinations of human culture and natural history.

We have 15 National Parks Presentation Stamp Packs up for grabs. To be in with a chance of winning, just answer this question:

In what year were Britain's first National Parks founded?
a) 1941 b) 1951 c) 1961



ENTER NOW! MARK YOUR ENTRY PARKS

firstnews.co.uk/competitions or see page 21. The closing date is 28 January 2021.

CANINE BISCUIT BUSINESS

by Josh

MY name is Josh and I am 13 years old, and I have set up my own business – Mustard's Miracle Services.

Initially I just watered people's gardens and did odd jobs for them, but during the first lockdown I decided to develop my business and start making dog biscuits.

I was amazed by the support I received from locals – both human and canine!

How did this come about? Well, some family friends inspired me by giving me a dog biscuit machine as a Christmas gift and, even more importantly, a secret recipe for canine treats!

So, each weekend during both lockdowns, I made the dog biscuits

in our kitchen (the smell wasn't too great!), and then I cycled around delivering them, as I wanted my business to be eco-friendly.

As we all know, 2020 was a very tough year for all local businesses, so I put together a festive dog biscuit gift bag and encouraged friends and neighbours to #supportlocal.

I also gave half of the proceeds to Foodshare in Maidenhead (£205!), a wonderful charity that supports local families in the Maidenhead area who are struggling.

Josh at Foodshare



Josh's dog biscuits

JUNIOR JOURNALIST

WE WANT TO HEAR WHAT YOU/YOUR SCHOOL IS UP TO

Write in to let us know what you've been up to lately! Have you been getting creative? Been for a great day out? How has the coronavirus affected your school, friends and family? Why not share your experiences with First News readers?

Email your report (including pictures) to yournews@firstnews.co.uk

Don't forget to include your name and age (and your school's name and address for school news reports). By writing in, you give consent to First News printing details and photographs of those involved in the report.

SNAPPED



Jude's recycled Christmas wrapping paper

by Jude

I'VE been getting First News for two years now.

After I have finished reading them, I've been giving them to my school so my classmates can read them too, but this year because of COVID I couldn't do that.

So, I thought of using my old First News copies to wrap Christmas gifts up and recycle them. I took this picture of all of the presents.



BMX playground fun!

by Sophia, Home Farm Primary School

WHEN we returned to school last year, we were very lucky that our school tried to keep things fun and normal.

We had BMX experts come to our school and teach us how to do cool tricks. They even jumped over our teacher, Mr Holton, on their BMX bike. It was such a great day.



by Dylan, Buckingham Primary School

LAST October, my school celebrated Black History Month.

We were asked to research a famous black person and create a post box model, just like the ones installed throughout the UK. I chose Rosa Parks. Here are the pictures of my model.

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CALL: (020) 3195 7256 EMAIL: [SCHOOLS@FIRSTNEWS.CO.UK](mailto:schools@firstnews.co.uk)

WHAT'S IN THE SHOPS?

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IWANTONEOFTHOSE.COM £7.99

Express your love of burgers from head to toe with these fun and unique socks with a hamburger pattern. Packaged in a 95% recyclable hamburger-design novelty box, these would be the perfect gift for a burger buddy – or for yourself!



*All prices correct at time of printing

UNITED ODDSOCKS SOCK PUPPET GIFT SET

FLAMINGOGIFTS.CO.UK £10.99

These socks are irresistibly cute and great for keeping feet nice and toasty. This beautiful Bamboozle gift box contains six individual socks, so of course none will match. You get to mix and match them however you like, to make up to 15 different sock puppet combinations!



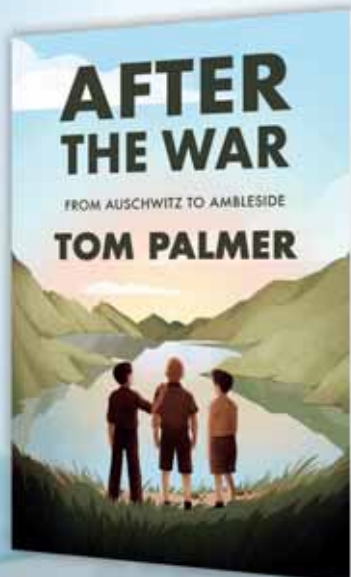
SOCKS

ALBERT EINSTEIN JR CHATTYFEET.COM £6.00

If you're into all things techy, treat yourself to a pair of these funny science socks. With Einstein's famous formula printed on the ankle, these will add a touch of fun to your day and will help to inspire anyone who dreams of becoming a super scientist.



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TIM ROBERTSON,
CEO ANNE FRANK TRUST UK

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SPORT IN PICTURES



Crawley Town players celebrate scoring their third goal against Leeds United in the third round of the FA Cup. Crawley, who play in League Two, beat the Premier League side 3-0



On day five of the third Test in the series between Australia and India in Sydney, India finished the day on 334-5, drawing the match and keeping the series at 1-1



Italy's Sofia Goggia on her way to winning the downhill at the Alpine Ski World Cup meet in St Anton, Austria. She leads the downhill rankings by 60 points



Marta Kostyuk of Ukraine plays against Sara Sorribes Tormo of Spain in the quarter-final of the Abu Dhabi Open. Marta staged a stunning comeback to win 0-6, 6-1, 6-4 and set up a semi-final against Russia's Veronika Kudermetova



Rangers' Alfredo Morelos beats Aberdeen keeper Joe Lewis to make it 2-0 in their Scottish Premiership clash. The Gers won 2-1, putting them 22 points clear at the top of the table. SPFL Leagues 1 and 2 and SWPL 1 and 2 have all now been suspended due to COVID-19

SPORT IN NUMBERS

4 goals were scored by Fran Kirby as her Chelsea side thrashed Reading 5-0 in the Women's Super League. The win moved Chelsea to within three points of league leaders Manchester United, with a game in hand. Fran is pictured below scoring Chelsea's fourth.



10-time European champion Elise Christie will not compete at the European Short Track Championships in Poland this month, after Team GB pulled out. The squad of eight won't participate due to fears they could get stuck because of COVID-19 rules.



6 February is when the men's Six Nations rugby union tournament is due to start – but the women's competition has been postponed until April at the earliest, due to the pandemic. The reigning champions are England (below).



Dave Ryding celebrates on the World Cup podium with a very large cow bell!

RYDING HIGH

BRITAIN'S Dave Ryding produced an excellent performance in the men's slalom at Adelboden in Switzerland to win bronze.

The skier from Lancashire made it to the podium for the third time in his World Cup career, and the first time since 2019. He finished behind Austria's Marco Schwarz in first place, and Germany's Linus Strasser in second.

Dave was 0.15 seconds behind Schwarz and just 0.01 seconds behind Strasser.

The Brit, who has participated at three Winter Olympics, first made the podium when he won silver in the slalom in 2017. It was Britain's best Alpine Skiing World Cup result in

more than 35 years.

Marco's win at Adelboden moved him to the top of the slalom standings. The World Cup season is made up of five disciplines: downhill, Super G, giant slalom, slalom and parallel. The overall standings are currently led by Alexis Pinturault (above right), the most successful World Cup skier in France's history.

The next events in the schedule are the downhill and slalom at Wengen, also in Switzerland, starting on Friday 15 January.



TRUMP DUMPED

THE Professional Golfers' Association of America (PGA) has cancelled plans to play a top event at the Trump National Golf Club Bedminster in the USA next year.

The PGA Championship is one of the four "major" tournaments in men's golf. Less than a week after a mob of Donald Trump supporters broke into the Capitol building in Washington DC (see page 3), the PGA announced that it no longer wanted to play the Championship at Mr Trump's golf resort in New Jersey.

PGA of America President Jim Richardson said hosting the event at Mr Trump's club would be "detrimental" (harmful) to the PGA.

The Trump Organization, which is owned by the US president, said it was "incredibly disappointed" and that the PGA "have no right to terminate the agreement". The event is still scheduled to take place in May 2022, but a new location has not been confirmed yet.

Separately, NFL coach Bill Belichick has said he will not accept President Trump's offer of the Presidential Medal of Freedom following the deadly riot.



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