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## POCKET ROCKET

Honda's Super-N might be the first small EV in ages that actually looks like fun

See page 39



## WHAT'S ON IN CINEMAS THIS MONTH

See pages 35-37

# No more underplaying

Nominations open for the **BPA Empowering Women Awards 2026** as organisers call for overdue recognition of the women shaping futures



Yorkshire is full of women leading from the front - in business, public life, the professional sector and the communities that hold this region together - but too often their contribution still goes under-recognised.

In a region where Mayor Tracy Brabin has consistently championed inclusive growth, opportunity and leadership, the case for properly recognising women's contribution is no longer symbolic - it is economic, social and cultural.

Women are increasingly central to the story of Yorkshire's progress, yet public recognition still too often lags behind reality.

That is the backdrop to the return of the 'BPA Empowering Women Awards 2026', which is open for nominations, and renews its call to spotlight the women whose work is shaping lives, industries and futures across the UK.

Continued on pages 6 & 7

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# One missile. One refinery. One billion tonnes of CO2:

## How US-Iran war could torch climate targets overnight

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**Bradford expert warns a single strike on Iran's South Pars gas facility could unleash an environmental disaster that would make years of global climate pledges look meaningless**

As the world exhales after a sudden pause in the escalating US-Iran conflict, a chilling question remains: How close did the Middle East come to an environmental catastrophe so vast it could have wiped out years of global climate progress in a single blast?

According to a University of Bradford pollution expert with first-hand experience in the Gulf's oil fields, the answer is terrifying.

Dr Nejat Rahmadian has warned that a direct missile strike on Iran's vast South Pars gas complex - one of the world's largest energy sites - could release more than double the amount of carbon dioxide the UK emits in an entire year, alongside toxic gases capable of poisoning air, sea life and ecosystems far beyond Iran's borders.

And if that happened, he says, the fallout would not stop in the Gulf.

"It would be significant and global," Dr Rahmadian said.

"If there is a direct hit on any kind of refinery, you are not just destroying the structure itself - you are releasing whatever chemicals, including CO2 and toxic gases, are stored there."

**Climate promises up in smoke**

The stark warning lands at a time when governments across the world continue urging households, businesses and industries to cut emissions, change habits and pay the price of climate responsibility.

Yet one act of war, Dr Rahmadian says, could make that entire effort



Dr Nejat Rahmadian, engineer and former South Pars gas field worker in South Pars

look absurd.

Iran currently produces around 900 million tonnes of CO2 a year - roughly double the UK's annual emissions. But he warns that if a major refinery such as South Pars were destroyed, the result could be the equivalent of another 1,000 million tonnes of CO2 being released almost instantly.

In simple terms: one missile strike could undo years of environmental sacrifice in a matter of moments.

"No-one is talking about the environmental effects of the war," he said.

"We all pay significant taxes to reduce emissions and protect the environment, yet here we have a situation where one strike has the potential to cause an environmental disaster.

"Such impacts also have the potential to undermine the global commitment to tackling climate change, because if something like this does happen, some countries might rightly ask: 'What's the

point?'"

**'Gases do not respect borders'**

Dr Rahmadian, Associate Professor in Chemical and Petroleum Engineering at the University of Bradford, knows the risks not only as an academic - but from lived experience.

He worked as a process engineer on the South Pars Gas Field between 1997 and 2005 and says the danger posed by any strike on refinery infrastructure is not confined to Iran alone.

"Gases do not respect borders," he said.

"The pollution can go anywhere. It can easily rise into the stratosphere and travel around the world.

"It would pose a major risk not just to people but to ecosystems, animals and especially to marine life, as so many refineries are on the coast."

The warning is especially stark in a region where oil and gas infrastructure sits alongside fragile marine habitats, coastal ecosystems and internationally significant wildlife zones.

**Black rain and toxic clouds**

For Dr Rahmadian, this is not theoretical.

During the first Gulf War, while studying at the Iranian Petroleum Technology University - around 100km north of Iraq - he witnessed the environmental devastation caused when Saddam Hussein's forces set Kuwaiti oil fields ablaze.

The memory has never left him.

"I remember walking outside in a white shirt after Saddam Hussein set fire to the oil fields in Kuwait," he said.

"It began to rain and my shirt turned black.

South Pars gas field



“That was not a normal cloud. The same thing could happen again if refineries or oil fields are targeted.”

That image - black rain falling from a war-fuelled sky - is a haunting reminder that modern conflict does not just kill on impact. It can poison landscapes, seas and skies for years after the headlines fade.

**‘Like a chemical weapon’**

Among the gravest dangers, Dr Rahmanian says, is the threat posed by sour gas - unrefined oil and gas containing dangerously high concentrations of hydrogen sulphide, one of the most toxic industrial gases.

South Pars, he says, removes around 220 tonnes of hydrogen sulphide every day.

If the site were hit, that toxic burden could be unleashed into the atmosphere.

“If the refinery was to be hit, all of that - along with other chemicals

- would be released into the environment,” he said.

“The effects would be similar to a chemical weapon.”

He also warned that any major strike near South Pars could put nearby ecological treasures at risk, including the Naybandan Wildlife Sanctuary, Iran’s largest protected area and one of the last remaining refuges of the critically endangered Asiatic cheetah.

**The nuclear nightmare no-one wants to name**

The most chilling scenario, however, lies beyond oil and gas.

Dr Rahmanian says if Iran’s Bushehr nuclear power plant were ever to become a military target, the consequences would be catastrophic.

“Any radioactive emissions would permanently contaminate water in the whole of the Gulf,” he said.

“There would also be severe damage to marine life.”

In a region already tense, heavily

militarised and environmentally fragile, the idea that conflict could trigger not only mass casualties but long-term radioactive contamination is a prospect few leaders are publicly discussing - but one experts say cannot be ignored.

A warning the world cannot afford to dismiss

For now, the pause in fighting has bought time.

But Dr Rahmanian’s message is blunt: the world may be talking about missiles, retaliation and geopolitics - while overlooking the possibility that the next strike could trigger an environmental disaster felt across continents.

If climate targets are supposed to represent a serious global mission, he argues, then war cannot remain the loophole nobody wants to confront - because in the space of a single attack, decades of emissions-cutting, carbon taxes and political promises could go up in flames.



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## Thousands of unpaid carers could miss out on vital cash as benefit rules changes

Thousands of unpaid carers across the UK are being urged to check whether they could now qualify for extra financial support, as changes to Carer's Allowance come into force.

From 6th April, both the weekly payment rate and the earnings limit for Carer's Allowance increased - a move that could make the benefit accessible to more people balancing work with caring responsibilities.

The weekly rate rose by £3.15, increasing from £83.30 to £86.45, which amounts to £4,495.40 a year.

But for many households, the more significant change is the rise in the earnings threshold.

Now, carers are able to earn up to £204 a week after certain deductions and still remain eligible for the benefit - up from £196.

That means some people who previously earned just above the cut-off may now qualify for support without having to reduce their working hours.

The change follows a government decision to link the Carer's Allowance earnings limit to 16 times the National Living Wage, meaning it should now rise in line with annual increases to the minimum pay floor.

### More carers could now be eligible

Other support payments for carers

## A major Carer's Allowance shake-up from 6th April could mean thousands of unpaid carers now qualify for nearly £4,500 a year - but many may not realise it

also increased from 6 April as part of the government's annual uprating.

The Carer Element of Universal Credit rose from £201.68 to £209.34 per month, while the Carer Addition for Pension Credit increased from £46.40 to £48.15 per week.

Helen Walker, Chief Executive of Carers UK, welcomed the higher earnings threshold, saying it could make a real difference for carers trying to stay in work while supporting a loved one.

She said: "Because the threshold is rising, some carers who previously earned too much to qualify may find they are now eligible for support.

We are encouraging all carers to

check their entitlement so they don't miss out on money they could now receive."

However, she also warned that the wider picture remains deeply concerning.

"Even with the recent increase, Carer's Allowance remains the lowest benefit of its kind," she said.

"Nearly two-thirds of Carer's Allowance recipients live in poverty, and the vast majority think it falls short of meeting their financial needs."

For more information about Carer's Allowance and its eligibility criteria, visit <https://www.carersuk.org/help-and-advice/financial-support/carers-allowance/>.

### Who can claim Carer's Allowance?

You may be eligible if you:

- care for someone for at least 35 hours a week
- earn no more than £204 a week after deductions (from 6 April)
- are aged 16 or over
- are not in full-time education
- care for someone who receives a qualifying disability benefit

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# No more underplaying

## Nominations open for the BPA Empowering Women Awards 2026 as organisers call for overdue recognition of the women shaping futures

# BPA LIONESSES

### Cover story continued

Returning on 25th June 2026, the awards are fast becoming one of the region's most meaningful platforms for female recognition. But their purpose reaches beyond the event itself. At the heart of the awards is a simple truth: too many women are still relied upon professionally, praised privately and overlooked publicly.

That is the gap the Business Power Awards and Asian Express Newspaper set out to challenge. For more than 25 years, the publication has built its reputation on giving overdue visibility to people and stories too often missed by the mainstream. The launch of the Business Power Awards took that mission from page to stage.

The BPA Empowering Women Awards have taken it a step further, creating a dedicated platform for women whose contribution deserves not just celebration, but recognition with real and lasting value.

### From winners to BPA Lionesses

What already sets these awards apart is what happened after the first ceremony in July 2025.

Last year's inaugural events honoured 19 outstanding women, but the legacy of the evening did not end with a winners' list.

These women came together as the 'BPA Lionesses' - a network of female leaders, professionals and change-makers whose recognition has since evolved into mentoring, peer support, collaboration and continued visibility.

That matters.

Too many awards nights end when the photographs are taken and the ballroom empties. The BPA model is trying to do something more meaningful - treating recognition not as a final flourish, but as the beginning of a wider conversation about leadership, visibility and what happens when women are properly seen.

It is a model that feels especially relevant now.

Across Yorkshire and beyond, women are building businesses, shaping policy, leading institutions and sustaining communities. They are driving progress in business, education, law, healthcare, entrepreneurship, public service and grassroots leadership. Yet many remain more likely to be described as "supportive" than strategic, more likely to be admired quietly than acknowledged publicly.

### Recognition that reaches beyond the room

The wider Business Power Awards have already shown how central women are to the region's economic and civic life, with female honourees among the standout names recognised for enterprise, innovation and leadership.



Rizwana Mahmood-Ahmed MBE



Dr Saira Ali



Sarah Khan-Bashir MBE



Rifhat Malik MBE



Noor Ali BEM



Aqsa Mushtaq



Fatima Khan-Shah



Humma Nizami



Lois Monks



Naheed Akhtar



Nazreen Ahmed



Prity Farooq



Rukhsana Siddique



Dr Saghira Sharif



Samreen Akhtar



Shanaz Gulzar MBE



Sobiya Jawaid



Usha Parmar



Wania Ahmed



The 'BPA Empowering Women Awards' give that truth a sharper and more intentional focus - creating a space where women are not treated as exceptions, but as a driving force.

Organisers have again stressed that the awards are not reserved for the already prominent.

"Nominees do not need formal titles

or high-profile public platforms," says Business Power Awards chairperson, Andleeb Hanif.

"What matters is impact - whether in a boardroom, a classroom, a clinic, a legal practice, a local initiative or a business built steadily and often quietly from the ground up.

"If a woman is making a meaningful

difference, she belongs in the conversation."

With Janan.com confirmed as Headline Partner for 2026, the platform continues to grow in both profile and purpose. But its real value lies in what public recognition can unlock - confidence, connection, opportunity and the chance for one woman's visibility to widen the horizon for another.

**Nominations** for the **BPA Empowering Women Awards 2026** are now **open**. To nominate or find out more, visit [www.businesspowerawards.co.uk](http://www.businesspowerawards.co.uk)

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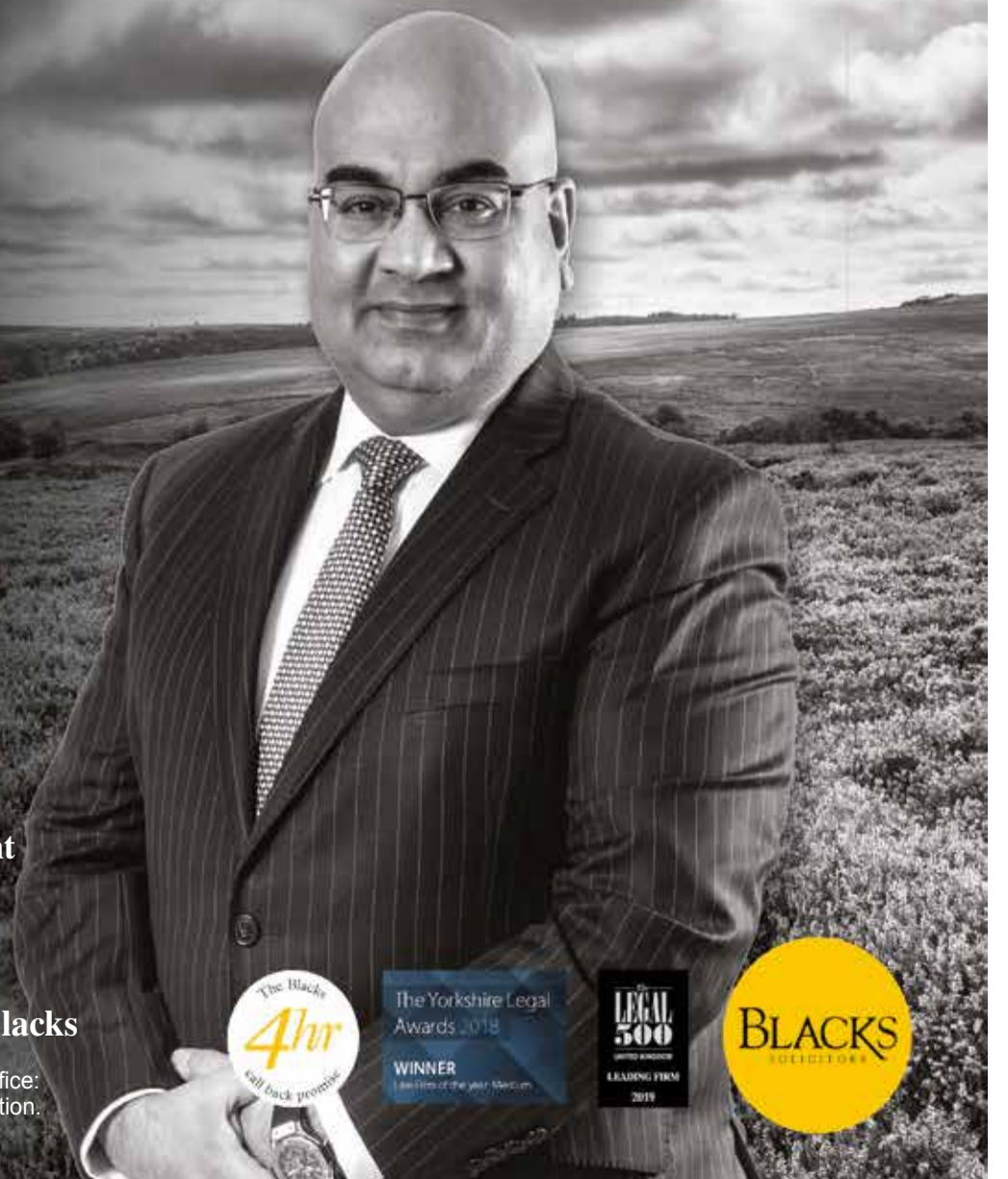
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# A million reasons Leeds is getting culture right

Move over night life - the city's museums scene proved stronger - and more popular - than ever!

For anyone still clinging to the idea that museums are dusty, dated spaces reserved for school trips and rainy afternoons, Leeds has just delivered a very clear answer.

Think again.

Because while so much of modern life is spent scrolling, swiping and staring at screens, more than one million people chose instead to step through the doors of the city's museums and galleries last year - and that says something worth paying attention to.

New figures show the eight sites run by Leeds Museums and Galleries welcomed a remarkable 1,046,372 visitors in 2025 - a strong 16 per cent rise on the year before.

That is not just an impressive statistic.

It is a powerful reminder that when culture is made accessible, relevant and enjoyable, people show up for it in their thousands.

And in Leeds, they clearly did.

Councillor Salma Arif, Leeds City

Council's executive member for adult social care, active lifestyles and culture, said: "These incredible visitor numbers are a huge endorsement of our wonderful museums and galleries and the hard work, diligence and creativity of our curators, site teams and volunteers, who all contribute so much to creating such a fantastic experience for hundreds of thousands of people."

"It also speaks volumes about the boundless appetite people in Leeds and all over the world have for discovering more about history, culture and the arts as they come and explore our sites and world class collection."

"The council is very proud that our commitment to culture has enabled such a successful year for our museums and galleries and given so many people the chance to have fun, learn and be inspired."

One of the biggest success stories came from Leeds City Museum, where the hugely popular Miffy exhibition drew an astonishing 127,000 visitors,

helping drive a 25 per cent increase in footfall.

For a small white rabbit with a famously simple expression, Miffy turned out to be one of the city's most unlikely cultural heavyweights.

But Leeds's standout year was never just about one exhibition.

Abbey House Museum also saw visitor numbers soar by 44 per cent, following a passionate public conversation about the site's future - proof that local people do not simply enjoy these spaces, they value them deeply.

And that matters.

Because museums are never just about objects in glass cases.

They are about memory. Identity. Belonging.

They are where children discover something new, where families spend time together, where older generations reconnect with the past, and where cities preserve the stories that shaped them.

Abbey House, with its much-loved



Victorian streets and displays of childhood toys and games, is a perfect example. It is the kind of place that quietly reminds people why local heritage still matters - not as nostalgia's sake, but as a living part of the city's story.

Dr David Hopes, head of service for Leeds Museums and Galleries, added: "As well as thanking our staff and volunteers for their tireless work, I'd also like to thank the people of Leeds for continuing to visit their local museums and galleries."

"The extraordinary collections built by generations of local people are a precious resource and belong to every citizen. We deeply appreciate public support as we continue to invest in making our museums and galleries even better."

Leeds Museums and Galleries operates eight sites across the city: Leeds Art Gallery, Leeds City Museum, Temple Newsam House, Lotherton Hall, Abbey House Museum, Kirkstall Abbey, Leeds Industrial Museum and Leeds Discovery Centre.

For more information on current exhibitions, family days out and upcoming events, visit Leeds Museums and Galleries online: [museumsandgalleries.leeds.gov.uk](https://museumsandgalleries.leeds.gov.uk).

**"The council is very proud that our commitment to culture has enabled such a successful year for our museums and galleries and given so many people the chance to have fun, learn and be inspired."**

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**“Even in death, he found a way to give.”**

# HE WAS OUR HERO

## Family honour son with Down's syndrome whose final act saved three lives

**A Sheffield family are sharing the extraordinary story of their son's final act of kindness - a decision that saved three lives and is now inspiring an urgent call for more families, particularly from ethnic minority communities, to talk openly about organ donation.**

For Eashan Madan, helping others was never something he switched on for special occasions. It was simply who he was.

So when the 27-year-old, who had Down's syndrome, died last summer following complications during surgery for a rare heart condition, his family say the fact he went on to save lives through organ donation felt heartbreakingly fitting.

Eashan had made the decision to join the NHS Organ Donor Register in 2018.

“Knowing Eashan and his personality, he would do anything to help others. It was his final noble act,” said his mother, Suvira, a trauma consultant.

“He was our teacher in every respect. He showed us how to live happily, help others, and see the beauty in everything. Even in death, he found a way to give.”

### A life that challenged every assumption

For his family - mum Suvira, dad Sanjeev, an orthopaedic surgeon, and younger brother Rishin - Eashan's legacy is not only one of immense love, but of purpose.

They now hope his story will help challenge lingering misconceptions around disability, organ donation and who is seen as capable of making a lasting impact.



Eashan Madan worked at Sheffield Railway Station



Eashan with his family

Following his death, he donated both kidneys and his liver, giving three people on the transplant waiting list a second chance at life. His pancreas was also donated for research, a further gift that could help many more in years to come.

To those who knew him best, it was a final act that captured everything about the young man they adored.

Far too often, families still wrongly assume that having Down's syndrome may limit a person's independence, their contribution to society or even their ability to become an organ donor. Eashan's life powerfully dismantles every one of those assumptions.

“Adults with Down's syndrome can lead independent lives and contribute meaningfully to society. Eashan

showed that," said his father Sanjeev.

"We also want people to understand that they can give life to others."

And Eashan lived fully.

He attended Talbot Specialist School, where he was twice elected to the student council and took part in the National Shakespeare Festival. He achieved his Silver Duke of Edinburgh Award and a National Citizen Award, before going on to gain qualifications in Maths, English and Catering at Sheffield City College.

**A legacy that now speaks to others**

His younger brother, Rishin, said: "Even though that day was the hardest, every day after is easier knowing he helped others. Eashan's life was guided by honesty, kindness and compassion. He dedicated himself to helping others - at school, at work and among his friends.

"He had no meanness, no selfishness, no jealousy - only goodness. He was a brother to all. Once seen, never forgotten."

Now, his family are using Eashan's story to



Eashan working at Chatsworth

**More than 8,200 people are currently waiting for a lifesaving transplant, including over 2,000 people from ethnic minority communities**

Through Project Choice, he completed an NHS internship. Later, with support from the Down's Syndrome Association's WorkFit programme, he worked at Sheffield Railway Station and the Carriage House Café in Chatsworth. During the Covid pandemic, he also volunteered at a local foodbank - another quiet example of the generosity that ran through his life.

He was organised, independent and deeply proud of his work.

But Eashan was far more than a list of achievements.

He was a talented musician, artist and DJ. He loved music, art, parties and being surrounded by friends. He performed with his Clubland Detectives band, learned to create animated films at Flycheese Studio, made art with Artworks, and DJed at Leadmill Sheffield with support from the Under the Stars team.

Those close to him remember his cheeky smile, his warmth and the way he made people feel instantly seen.

highlight the need for more organ donors from ethnic minority backgrounds.

Across the UK, more than 8,200 people are currently waiting for a lifesaving transplant, including over 2,000 people from ethnic minority communities. Yet last year, Eashan was one of just 80 people from ethnic minority backgrounds who donated organs after death.

For many patients, matching by ethnicity can improve transplant outcomes - making those conversations within South Asian, Black and other minority communities even more important.

Anthony Clarkson, Director of Organ Donation and Transplantation at NHS Blood and Transplant, said it is stories like Eashan's that show the life-changing power of one decision.

And for his family, that is what remains strongest through the grief: the knowledge that in their darkest moment, Eashan still gave others hope.

"Even after death," said Suvira, "he continues to help mankind and save lives through organ donation. Eashan is our hero."



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# Bradford's culture future just got a major new name

## Council hires top arts boss after blockbuster 'City of Culture' year - as David Watson vows to keep Bradford 'shining brightly' across the North

Bradford Council has appointed a new senior culture chief to help turn the city's UK City of Culture success into a long-term legacy.

The authority has confirmed David Watson as its new Assistant Director for Culture, Policy and Events - a key leadership role that comes just as Bradford looks to build on the momentum of its landmark UK City of Culture 2025 year.

And in a powerful first statement, Watson hailed Bradford's recent rise as something far bigger than a one-off title.

"Bradford's moment in 2025 has been powerful to witness... ensuring Bradford continues to shine brightly within the constellation of creative excellence across the North."

The appointment lands at what council chiefs describe as a defining moment for the district, with culture now firmly positioned as a serious driver of growth, opportunity, participation and civic pride.

Watson brings more than 20 years of experience as a senior cultural leader, consultant and creative producer, having worked across the UK on arts, culture and heritage strategies, major programmes and audience development.

His background spans strategic planning, programming, marketing and brand, digital innovation and income generation - making him one of the key figures now tasked with helping



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shape what Bradford's cultural future looks like after 2025.

Working closely with Bradford Culture Company, he will help steer the district's long-term cultural ambitions and further develop the strategy that sits at the heart of Bradford Built Different - the council's recently launched 10-year growth plan.

The role is expected to focus on attracting top cultural talent, major events and long-term investment into the district, while also strengthening partnerships across organisations and services to ensure delivery is joined-up, responsive and built around local need.

There will also be a strong emphasis on supporting homegrown creativity - from nurturing local talent and opening doors for young people, to helping the wider cultural sector grow in a sustainable way.

Lorraine O'Donnell, Chief Executive of Bradford Council, said: "Growth is one of our key priorities for the District, and this role will be central to ensuring culture and creative industries play a major part in delivering this.

"One of the real benefits of our year as UK City of Culture has been the levels of participation and access to cultural activities. Engagement with culture enables our communities to come together, to connect, and be stronger and more cohesive.

"David will bring a wealth of experience and knowledge to Bradford to drive ahead with our ambitions for cultural legacy following 2025."

Watson, meanwhile, made clear he sees the job as being about much more

**"Bradford's moment in 2025 has been powerful to witness. It's the result of years of ambition, graft and belief from people right across the district."**

than maintaining momentum.

David Watson commented: "Bradford's moment in 2025 has been powerful to witness. It's the result of years of ambition, graft and belief from people right across the district. What's been achieved didn't happen overnight, and that's what makes this next chapter even more meaningful.

"I'm delighted to be part of what comes next, building on that energy and momentum to create something that continues to transform opportunities and deliver real impact in people's lives.

"For me, it's about sustaining the arts and the infrastructure that supports them, keeping people and place at the heart of the work, and ensuring Bradford continues to shine brightly within the constellation of creative excellence across the North."



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# Seen at last?



British-Kashmiri artist Haseebah Ali

Women in art, especially British Asian and Muslim creatives, are still fighting to be seen

**In the art world, talent has never been the problem. Access has.**

For years, women artists have created bold, original and culturally important work – yet many still remain underrepresented in galleries, collections and major exhibitions.

London's art market is one of the most international in the world. Artists from the Middle East, South Asia and across the global diaspora increasingly live and work in the city.

Only five per cent of London galleries achieve gender parity. The Tate's own published research, and the Freelands Foundation's Representation of Female Artists in Britain report, found that 78 per cent of London's major commercial galleries represent more men than women, with female artists and their estates making up just 32 per cent of artists represented.

However, breaking into established gallery systems often requires visibility, contacts and confidence navigating an industry built on relationships as much as artistic ability.

The issue is widely recognised. The change, far less so. That is why Women in Art Fair, returning to London on 9th and 10th May 2026, matters.

"Sometimes people will pigeonhole your artwork into a certain box, especially if you come from a certain background or culture," says Haseebah Ali.

Founded by Jacqueline Harvey, the fair was created to challenge a system that too often rewards networks over ability.

In an industry shaped by connections, collector confidence and who gets introduced to whom, many women – especially those from diaspora backgrounds – can struggle to get through the door.

The fair provides a platform where that first barrier is removed. Artists are seen first for their work rather than their connections.

For younger artists especially, seeing people who share their background or experience exhibited publicly makes participation feel possible.

Inequality in art is rarely deliberate. It is often

structural and reinforced over time. Curators select artists they know, collectors invest in familiar names and galleries manage financial risk. Without intervention, the cycle repeats.

The result is not a lack of talent. It is a lack of visibility.

"We are not waiting for the art world to fix itself," says Jacqueline Harvey.

"We are building the platform that should already exist."

It is a powerful line – and an important one.

Because for many British Asian and Muslim women, the barriers are not just professional. They can be cultural, social and deeply personal too.

For Haseebah Ali, a British-Kashmiri artist based in the UK, that experience feels all too familiar. "The challenges I have faced as a Pakistani woman trying to exhibit in Britain have been quite a lot," she says.

"A lot of creative events have alcohol and trying to navigate that as a Muslim woman can be extremely difficult.

"People assume you will give up on your career a few years in. And sometimes people will pigeonhole your artwork into a certain box. It can feel claustrophobic."

For Haseebah, that is exactly why the fair matters.

"Women in Art Fair seems to be the kind of opportunity where these barriers are being pushed down. Starting out as an artist seven years ago, seeing that would have made me feel so included and less anxious about my creative path."

This year's fair includes a Creative Health and Wellbeing Day in partnership with Crystal Clear Health. The 2026 edition will also introduce new prizes, including the Christian Levett Prize and a collaboration with Hunger Magazine.

Women in Art Fair 2026 takes place in London on 9th and 10th May. Venue details are due to be confirmed by organisers. For updates, follow Women in Art Fair online: [www.womeninartfair.com](http://www.womeninartfair.com).



Jacqueline Harvey, founder of the Women in Art Fair



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# Life-saving 'fat jab' for 1 million people at risk of heart attack and stroke

**More than one million people in England will soon be offered the weight loss jab Wegovy on the NHS to help stop heart attacks and strokes.**

The move marks a major shift in how the drug is used.

Until now, many people knew Wegovy as a treatment for obesity. But health experts now say it can do far more than help people lose weight.

The drug's active ingredient, semaglutide, has been shown to lower the risk of serious heart problems in people with cardiovascular disease - even when weight loss is not the main factor.

That means the jab is now being seen as a life-saving treatment, not just a weight loss aid.

The decision follows new guidance from the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE).

NICE says the NHS in England must start offering semaglutide to patients who meet the rules. The guidance also applies in Wales.

**People may be eligible if they: have a BMI of 27 or above; have already had a heart attack or stroke; or have severe complications linked to peripheral artery disease.**

People may be eligible if they: have a BMI of 27 or above; have already had a heart attack or stroke; or have severe complications linked to peripheral artery disease. The jab is taken once a week.

Doctors will prescribe it alongside healthy eating, exercise, and standard heart medicines such as statins or blood pressure tablets.

Health experts say the change could save many lives.

Heart and circulatory disease remains one of the biggest killers in the UK. For many patients, the risk of a second heart attack or stroke is a constant worry.

Clinical trials found semaglutide can cut the risk of another major cardiovascular event. Crucially, researchers found the benefit was not only linked to weight loss.

That is why the drug is now being treated as an important new tool in heart care.

Semaglutide is already used on the NHS in other ways.

Wegovy is available through specialist weight management services for some people living with obesity. Ozempic, which contains the same active ingredient, is also widely used to treat type 2 diabetes.

Dr Sonya Babu-Narayan, Clinical Director at the British Heart Foundation, welcomed the move. She said: "So-called 'weight loss drugs' like semaglutide have proven benefits beyond reducing the number on the scales - they are now considered important medicines for preventing deadly heart attacks and strokes.

"Today's guidance will no doubt help save lives as cardiovascular disease is still one of the country's biggest killers."

**Wegovy to be given to patients with heart and artery disease in major NHS move that could save lives**

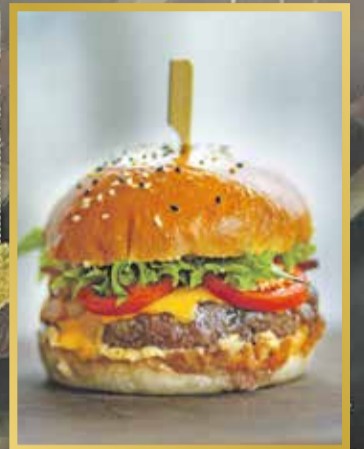





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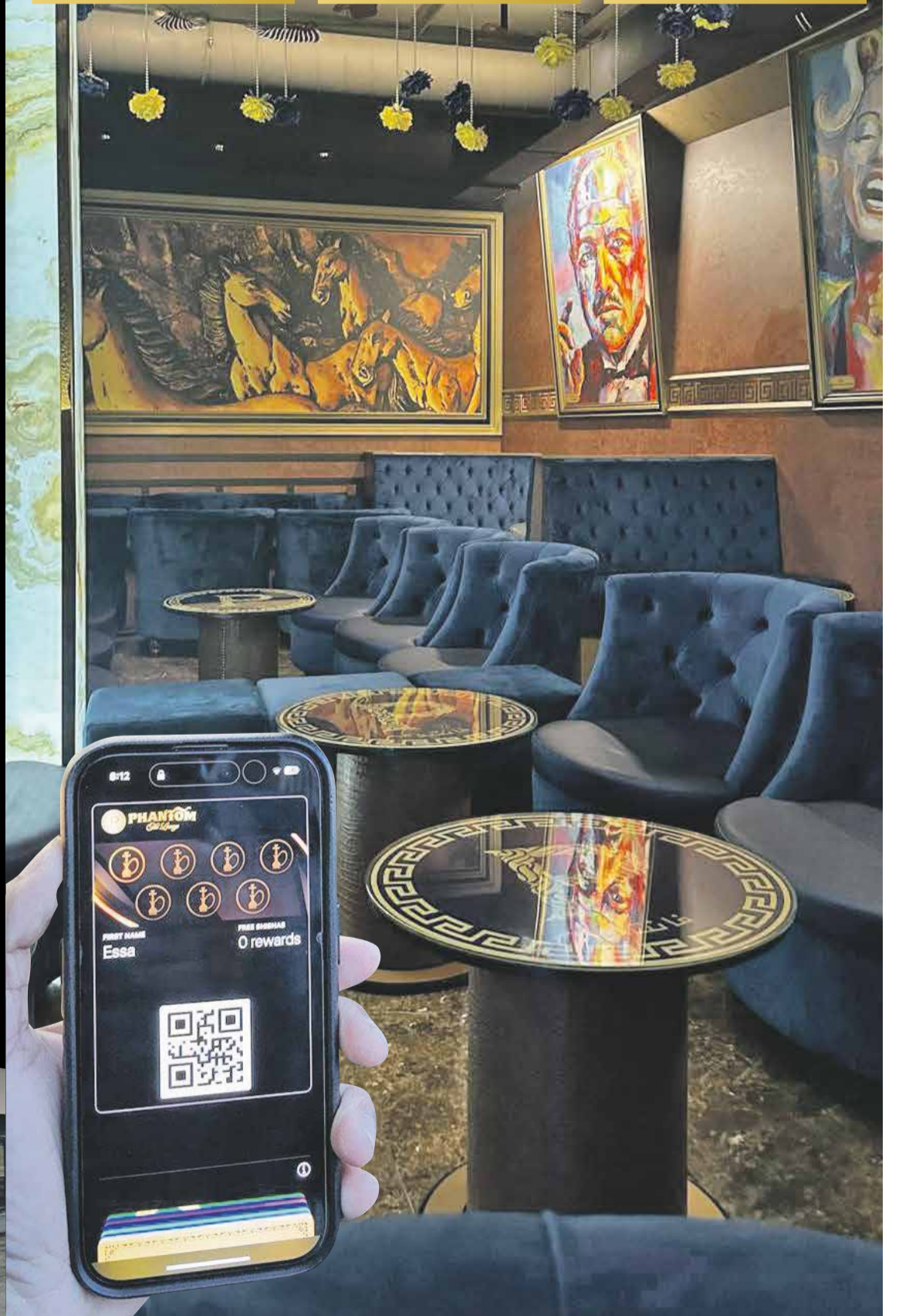
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# CAR WASH SMUGGLING EMPIRE

'Businessmen' jailed for  
38-years after running  
migrant trafficking  
network from car wash



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**Two men who posed as successful businessmen running a car wash in south Wales have been unmasked as the ringleaders of a sprawling people-smuggling operation that moved hundreds of migrants across Europe.**

Dilshad Shamo, 43, and Ali Khdir, 42, were each jailed for 19 years after a National Crime Agency investigation exposed what prosecutors described as a slick, multi-national criminal enterprise operating behind the façade of an ordinary Caerphilly car wash.

countries including Italy, Croatia, Romania, Bulgaria, Slovenia, Germany and France.

Investigators believe the gang smuggled more than 400 people in just six months.

The routes came with a chilling price list.

Migrants were allegedly offered three “packages” - the cheapest involved travelling on foot or hidden inside HGVs and smaller vehicles.

A more expensive option involved cargo ships or yachts. The premium service? Flights by plane.

platforms and social media were used to advertise routes, complete with disturbing footage showing families travelling by plane, by boat and crammed into the backs of lorries.

Shamo and Khdir were arrested in April 2023 and charged with facilitating illegal migration through Europe. Both denied the full scale of their role before eventually pleading guilty part-way through their trial in November.

But prosecutors challenged what they said was an attempt to downplay their senior involvement - and following a Newton hearing, the court sided with the prosecution.

Sentencing them on Thursday 9th April, the judge handed down 19-years each - a combined 38-years behind bars.

NCA Branch Commander Derek Evans said the pair had been “working around the clock” to orchestrate migrant movements while presenting themselves as legitimate businessmen.

He said: “While on the surface they portrayed themselves as successful businessmen running a car wash from Caerphilly, they were actually leading an entirely separate life as part of a criminal network.”

Kate Hurst of the Crown Prosecution Service said the pair had tried to “minimise their leading role” in moving hundreds of migrants illegally into Europe, but the court accepted the prosecution’s evidence.

The NCA said the case was supported by Gwent Police and international partners, with officials warning they will continue targeting organised immigration gangs operating at every stage of the route.

**Their operation stretched through Belarus, Moldova and Bosnia, before funnelling people into countries including Italy, Croatia, Romania, Bulgaria, Slovenia, Germany and France.**

The pair, who were under surveillance for months in 2023, were found to have played central roles in a sophisticated network transporting migrants from Iraq, Iran and Syria through a dangerous maze of routes across Europe.

Their operation stretched through Belarus, Moldova and Bosnia, before funnelling people into

Payments were handled through Hawala bankers in Iraq and Istanbul, with deposits released only once smugglers were given the green light to move people along agreed routes and timescales.

The court heard the two men used WhatsApp to stay in constant contact with fellow traffickers across the continent. Other messaging



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The police watchdog is investigating six Metropolitan police officers over the stop and search of a Black teenager in north London after he suffered a fractured knee during an encounter in Tottenham.

The Independent Office for Police Conduct (IOPC) said it launched an investigation in November 2025 following a mandatory referral from the Met over a complaint made on behalf of the boy, who was 16 at the time.

According to the watchdog, the incident happened at about 2pm on 26 April 2025 on Northumberland Park Avenue, when an officer, who said they were concerned about the boy's manner of riding and general behaviour, used force to remove him from an electric bike.

The boy injured his knee during the stop. He was searched, but nothing was found. Officers then removed the battery from the e-bike and told him he was free to leave, the IOPC said.

The watchdog said the teenager remained at the scene and was interacting with another group of officers when, a short time later, the original six officers returned and arrested him on suspicion of racially aggravated public order, threats to kill and dangerous driving.

He was taken into police custody, but after a medical examination his detention was refused so he could receive urgent treatment. Officers then took him to hospital, where he was diagnosed with a fractured knee.

The IOPC said its investigation is examining the decision-making and actions of the six officers involved, including the force used, whether the boy's race or age played a role in how he was treated, and what aftercare was provided.

Since January, three officers have been told they are under criminal investigation.

One constable is being investigated for potential offences of assault occasioning grievous bodily harm or actual bodily harm, while two others are being investigated for intentionally encouraging or assisting an offence under section 44 of the Serious Crime Act 2007. All three are also being investigated for potential gross misconduct.

A further three constables were informed last week that they are being investigated for potential misconduct, in relation to alleged failures to challenge the conduct of the other officers and their treatment of the boy.

Amanda Rowe, an IOPC director, said: "The use of stop and search is an important policing tool, however it must be used proportionately.

**"This is a serious case where a child has been injured as a result of force being used and we are investigating the officers' actions in this case and their treatment of the child, who was not provided with immediate first aid."**

"This is a serious case where a child has been injured as a result of force being used and we are investigating the officers' actions in this case and their treatment of the child, who was not provided with immediate first aid."

She added that the watchdog had been in contact with the boy's family and had obtained further evidence as the investigation continued.

The IOPC said investigators have reviewed body-worn video, taken accounts from some of the officers involved, obtained a statement from the teenager and examined medical evidence. The officers are due to be interviewed under caution, while further witness statements are being gathered.

The watchdog said the issuing of notices does not automatically mean criminal charges or disciplinary proceedings will follow. At the end of the investigation, it will decide whether any officers should be referred to the Crown Prosecution Service and whether disciplinary action should be recommended.

# Six Met officers probed after Black teen suffers fractured knee in stop and search



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# 'I may be the first, but I won't be the last': the Bradford daughter breaking barriers at the Bar

**The daughter of a taxi driver from Bingley, and the first in her family to attend university, Rukhsar Jahangir has become the first woman in her family to be Called to the Bar.**

At just 24, her rise is about more than legal success. It is about class, courage and changing what an entire generation believes is possible.

Some achievements change a life. Others change the direction of a family.

For Rukhsar, being Called to the Bar was never just about earning a title. It was about stepping into a world no one in her family had entered before - and proving that the doors of Britain's most exclusive professions do not belong only to the privileged.

It is a milestone she carries with pride - but also with the weight of everything it took to get there.

"I'm proud to say I'm the first barrister in my family," says Rukhsar. "And the first woman in my family to be Called to the Bar."

what feels possible for everyone after you."

Rukhsar is the eldest and only girl among five younger brothers - and she speaks of them with visible pride.

During exam seasons and long nights of revision, they helped with chores, brought her favourite snacks and sat beside her through the stress, even when they did not fully understand what she was studying.

Today, one of her younger brothers, now 14, is already inspired to pursue a career in law after watching her be Called to the Bar.

"Representation doesn't just change rooms," says Rukhsar. "It changes households."

It changes what younger siblings grow up believing is possible."

In the three months since her Call, Rukhsar has already been working alongside a barrister in the Military Court, specialising in military law - an intellectually demanding arena that has

**Some achievements change a life. Others change the direction of a family.**

Raised in a modest household by a father who spent most of his life working as a taxi driver and a mother who later worked in education after dedicating herself to raising six children, Rukhsar did not grow up surrounded by lawyers, judges or professional networks.

What she did grow up with, however, was something far more powerful: belief.

Her parents built a home, she says, that was "safe from negativity and full of encouragement" - a place where ambition was protected, not questioned. Her mother quietly made sure she never missed an opportunity, balancing lifts, timing and costs behind the scenes so her daughter could keep showing up.

"She understood something before I did," says Rukhsar.

"Exposure builds confidence, and confidence builds courage."

#### **Courage was forged long before the photographs in a gown**

Behind the polished milestone was a much harder reality: three jobs while studying, long shifts in healthcare, private health struggles, relentless pressure and the kind of self-doubt that rarely makes it onto social media.

"Resilience is built in private," she says.

"That's where the real work happened."

For many children of working-class and immigrant families, success is never purely individual. It is collective. It is shaped by sacrifice, responsibility and the quiet determination to make your parents' struggle mean something.

"'First' carries uncertainty because there's no blueprint," she says.

"It means figuring out applications, networking and professional systems alone. It means learning the unspoken rules without guidance. But it also carries power. Being the first means you change

sharpened her advocacy and confirmed what she already knew: this is not simply a title, but a responsibility.

Yet for all the prestige of the profession, it is one memory that seems to matter most.

The moment her mother and father saw her in her wig and gown.

"Seeing their pride, their relief, their joy, all in that single moment, made every struggle worth it," she says.

For the next "first in the family" girl watching from the sidelines, Rukhsar's message is clear: "You do not need connections to build credibility. You do not need to shrink yourself to succeed. You do not need permission to dream beyond what you've seen."

"I am not here because it was easy. I am here because I refused to be reduced."



business

# power



Rifhat Malik MBE



Dr Saira Ali



Sarah Khan-Bashir MBE



Noor Ali BEM



Rizwana Mahmood MBE

**The BPA Empowering Women Awards 2026 has unveiled the powerhouse women tasked with choosing this year's winners.**

As nominations continue to gather momentum from across the UK, organisers have confirmed a formidable five-strong judging panel made up of women whose own careers reflect the very values the awards were created to champion - leadership, resilience, influence and real-world change.

Joining the judging panel this year are Saira Ali FLI FRSA, Sarah Khan-Bashir MBE, Rizwana Mahmood Ahmed MBE, Rifhat Malik MBE and Noor Ali BEM - each bringing a wealth of professional experience, community insight and lived understanding of what meaningful achievement truly looks like.

**Continued on page 27**

# THE JUDGES FOR THE 'BPA EMPOWERING WOMEN AWARDS 2026'



SEKHON GROUP OF COMPANIES



# business power

## The Perils Of Oral Agreements

**U**nder Section 2 of the Law of Property (Miscellaneous) Provisions Act 1989, any contract for the sale of land must be in writing, incorporate all of the agreed terms and signed by the parties. An oral contract for the sale of land is legally void and cannot be enforced.

In English law there is also a legal remedy called Proprietary Estoppel that can be used to stop a person from going back on earlier promises to transfer property or land to another person. In order to succeed with a claim for Proprietary Estoppel, the applicant must demonstrate that:

- there was a clear assurance or promise relating to the land or property;
- they relied on that assurance; and
- the reliance caused them to act to their detriment causing financial loss.

What happens when the doctrine of Proprietary Estoppel clashes with the requirements of the 1989 Act? This was the question that the Court had to answer in the case of Conway v Conway and Another.

In that case Peter Conway was the proprietor of land which included a large barn. In 2019, discussions took place between Peter Conway and his cousin, Stephen Conway and his wife, Amber (“Mr & Mrs Conway”), who were interested in buying the barn from Peter Conway. A purchase price of £150,000 was agreed orally, a figure well below market value to reflect the fact that substantial building works would need to be carried out on the barn to make it habitable. Over the next two years, Mr & Mrs Conway spent over £230,000 renovating the barn with the payment of £150,000 payable to Peter Conway being deferred while the works were ongoing.

During belated attempts to formalise their oral agreement, the relationship between Peter Conway and Mr & Mrs Conway broke down and in 2022 Peter Conway issued a claim seeking a

declaration that Mr & Mrs Conway had no proprietary interest in the barn and for an injunction to prevent access. In response, Mr & Mrs Conway launched a counterclaim in Proprietary Estoppel, seeking an order that the barn be transferred to them pursuant to the terms of the oral agreement as it would be unconscionable for Peter Conway to deny them the barn after encouraging them to spend vast sums of money in renovating it.

In the County Court, Mr & Mrs Conway’s counterclaim succeeded with the Court finding that they had acted to their detriment in carrying out the extensive renovations based on the assurances that had been given by Peter Conway that the barn would be transferred to them. The Court made an order for specific performance of the oral agreement for the sale of the barn. Peter Conway appealed the decision.

The High Court allowed Peter Conway’s appeal finding that Proprietary Estoppel could not be used to enforce the oral contract for the sale of land as that contract was unenforceable as it did not comply with the requirements of the 1989 Act. Proprietary Estoppel could not be used to circumvent or bypass the requirements of the 1989 Act where doing so would result in enforcing a void agreement.

However, the Judge recognised that such an outcome was deeply unjust and although Mr & Mrs Conway did not succeed with their counterclaim the Judge did however remit the case back to the County Court for a further trial on the issue of compensation to be paid to Mr & Mrs Conway for the work which they had carried out on the barn. Therefore, although they did not succeed in getting the barn transferred to them, Mr & Mrs Conway may still get paid for the work which they had carried out on it.

Cases like this demonstrate the need to obtain proper legal advice and to have any agreement put into writing, especially if the agreement relates to property or land.

If you are involved in any commercial or property related dispute, then Blacks Solicitors can assist. Please contact Luke Patel on 0113 227 9316 or by email at “L.Patel@LawBlacks.com”



## Leeds children’s charity seeks new Chair to drive growth and reform

**Leeds Children’s Charity at Lineham Farm has begun the search for a new Chair of Trustees as it prepares to enter a pivotal new phase of growth and transformation.**

The Leeds-based charity, which supports vulnerable and disadvantaged children from across the region, is reshaping its Board following a comprehensive governance review.

Several new Trustee roles are being introduced to strengthen oversight, build long-term sustainability and expand the charity’s reach to even more young people.

The move comes as the organisation progresses a wider programme of reform, including a full rebrand and significant investment in new fundraising and community engagement roles.

Together, the changes are designed to futureproof the charity and ensure it continues to meet rising demand for its services.

The Board is now seeking an inclusive,

values-driven leader to help steer the next chapter. Strengthening equity, diversity and inclusion at Board level is a central priority, with the charity keen to better reflect and represent the communities it serves across Leeds and West Yorkshire.

Chief Executive Sharon Milner said the organisation was entering the next stage of its journey with renewed confidence.

“We look ahead with confidence and optimism, united by a shared purpose - to give more children the chance to learn, grow and thrive,” she said.

“If you share our commitment to inclusive leadership and creating lasting positive change, we would be delighted to hear from you.”

The Chair recruitment pack is now available. For further information about the Chair and wider trustee opportunities, or to request the full recruitment pack, contact info@leedschildrenscharity.org.uk.



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## THE JUDGES FOR THE 'BPA EMPOWERING WOMEN AWARDS 2026'



Rifhat Malik MBE



Dr Saira Ali



Sarah Khan-Bashir MBE



Noor Ali BEM



Rizwana Mahmood MBE

**Continued from page 25**

Spanning sectors including law, education, business and public service, the panel has been carefully selected to ensure the awards are assessed through a lens of credibility, substance and integrity. Organised by Asian Express newspaper and Business Power Awards, the BPA Empowering Women Awards returns on 25th

June 2026 at Cedar Court Hotel, Bradford, shining a spotlight on women across the UK who are leading from the front - often without the recognition they deserve. In a climate where women continue to break barriers while still being underrepresented in positions of visibility, the importance of who sits in judgement matters. These awards have never been

about tokenism or titles. They exist to celebrate the women building businesses, leading organisations, transforming communities and shifting the culture in ways that often go unseen. Each judge represents a different dimension of female leadership - from legal excellence and educational impact to entrepreneurial strength and community-rooted influence.

Together, they reflect the breadth of ambition and achievement that the awards aim to honour. Organisers say the panel will play a vital role in ensuring the process remains rigorous, fair and reflective of the calibre of women being nominated. With entries open across a wide range of categories, the 2026 programme is once again expected to attract a powerful field

of nominees - from founders and professionals to change-makers, mentors and unsung leaders whose work is making a lasting difference. The BPA Empowering Women Awards has rapidly established itself as more than just an annual celebration. It is becoming a platform for visibility, validation and long-term support - built on the belief that recognition should be the start of something, not the end.

# NOMINATE

Nominations for the BPA Empowering Women Awards 2026 are open now, with the winners to be revealed at the gala awards evening on 25th June 2026. To nominate, visit: [businesspowerawards.co.uk/nominate](https://businesspowerawards.co.uk/nominate)





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Spring always arrives with the same familiar pressure: clear out the cupboards, tackle the mess, get organised and somehow transform your home into a calmer, cleaner space.

But for most people juggling work, family life and the everyday rush, a full-on decluttering mission can feel exhausting before it has even begun.

The reality is that not every tidy-up needs to involve emptying wardrobes onto the bed or turning the kitchen upside down.

Some of the most useful spring resets are the small ones - the bits of clutter we ignore every day that quietly build up and start to weigh on us. The overflowing inbox. The mystery cable drawer. The pile of unopened letters. The tray full of keys, coins and random odds and ends.

And the best part? Some of the easiest wins can be done in under 10-minutes.

If you are looking for a low-effort way to feel more organised this spring, these five simple tasks are a good place to start.

**Continued on page 32**

**FIVE easy spring decluttering jobs you can do without breaking a sweat**

# Sorted

**Becoming a parent is one of life's greatest joys but it can also bring plenty of questions.**

From pregnancy to preparing your child for school, every stage of early parenthood can come with new decisions and uncertainties: I'm pregnant, what should I do first? Am I feeding my baby the right foods? Can I get financial support with childcare? How can I help prepare my child for school?

In many families in our community, parenting is very much a shared experience. Advice often comes from parents, grandparents, aunts and friends. While this support is invaluable, it can sometimes leave parents feeling overwhelmed when different people offer different guidance.

The truth is, many parents are navigating these questions every day.

That's why the Best Start in Life website brings together information and advice from NHS and government in one place - helping families find reliable information about pregnancy, feeding, childcare and preparing their child for school.

#### **Starting your pregnancy journey**

If you've just found out you're pregnant, the first step is to book your first midwife appointment. This is known as the booking appointment and should happen before you're 10 weeks pregnant, where possible. To do this, you just need to self-refer online to your local maternity service. They will then contact you to arrange your first appointment and kickstart your pregnancy care.

If you are already more than 10 weeks pregnant and have not yet booked this appointment, it's not too late. You can still self-refer, and your local maternity service will support you with catching up on the care you are entitled to.

Looking after yourself in pregnancy can help give your baby the best start, but it can be confusing if you get different advice from different people. Some women don't know what to expect at their appointments and this can make them feel worried, too.

The Best Start in Life website offers week-by-week guidance on how to have a healthy pregnancy, including diet, exercise and what to expect at appointments. You can also sign up for free weekly emails for tailored advice throughout your pregnancy and up to your child's 4th year. Plus, the emails are also available in different languages.

Benash Nazmeen, UK midwife and Assistant Professor of Midwifery explains: "The information on the Best Start in Life website can help women prepare for



# When you're a parent, every question is a good one

appointments, know what to expect and feel more confident raising questions. The NHS is there to support you every step of the way. Because giving your baby the best start in life means feeling informed, confident, and able to make decisions that are right for you and

your baby."

#### **Weaning your baby**

Introducing babies to solid foods as they grow can feel like a huge step and it's perfectly normal for parents to have lots of questions about how and when to start weaning and what foods are suitable.

The NHS recommends waiting until your baby is around six-months

old before you start introducing them to solid food, alongside their usual breastmilk or formula. Weaning is all about introducing your baby to a varied diet and getting them used to different textures and tastes - so it's perfectly OK if it takes several tries.

Many family meals can be adapted for babies by mashing or softening them - just make sure there is no added salt or sugar. However, there are a few foods babies should avoid, such as honey before the age of one.

For guidance on what foods to start with, what foods to avoid and weaning recipe inspiration, visit the Best Start in Life weaning Hub.

Benash adds: "Weaning is about helping babies get used to a range of foods, textures and tastes from around 6 months. Families can use the flavours they already cook with, adapting meals so they are softer and milder to start with, and gradually increasing flavour as babies become more used to them. Just make sure there is no added salt or sugar in their meals."

#### **Early years education and childcare**

Formal childcare can help children to build confidence, communication skills and friendships. It also offers parents greater flexibility to work or make time for other important activities.

Depending on their child's age, parents may be eligible for up to 30 hours of government funded childcare each week for 38 weeks of the year.



**Benash Nazmeen, UK midwife and Assistant Professor of Midwifery**



## Body shaming, marriage, and women's mental health

By Prity Farooq

Prity Beauty & Aesthetic, Bradford

In many societies, a woman's body is treated as a public subject - scrutinised, judged, and discussed openly, often by those closest to her.

From childhood through marriage and beyond, relatives frequently impose rigid expectations about appearance. Whether a woman is considered "too thin" or "too fat," the commentary rarely stops. What may seem like casual remarks or "concern" can, in reality, carry deep psychological consequences.

Before marriage, body shaming often disguises itself as advice. Young women are told to lose weight to "look better" for prospective partners or to gain weight to appear "healthier" and more "attractive." Family gatherings can become spaces of comparison, where a woman's worth is subtly measured against beauty standards shaped by culture and tradition.

These repeated remarks, though normalised, gradually erode self-esteem. A woman may begin to internalise the belief that her value lies primarily in her physical appearance.

After marriage, the pressure does not disappear - it simply changes form.

Relatives may comment on post-marriage weight gain or loss, often linking it to assumptions about happiness, fertility, or domestic competence. Statements like "You've gained

weight, are you taking care of yourself?" or "You've become so thin, is everything okay in your marriage?" place women under constant surveillance.

Such remarks reinforce the idea that their bodies are indicators of their success as wives or daughters-in-law.

The psychological toll of this persistent scrutiny is significant. Body shaming can lead to anxiety, depression, and unhealthy relationships with food and self-image.

Women may develop disordered eating habits, avoid social interactions, or experience chronic stress. The fear of judgment can become so ingrained that even in the absence of comments, self-criticism continues internally. Over time, this affects not only mental health but also overall well-being and confidence.

What makes this issue particularly harmful is its normalisation. Many women are expected to tolerate these comments as part of family culture, making it difficult to speak out or set boundaries. When relatives dismiss concerns by saying "we're just saying it for your good," it invalidates the emotional impact of their words.

Addressing body shaming requires a shift in perspective. Families must recognise that unsolicited comments about appearance can be damaging, regardless of intent. Encouraging open conversations about mental health and respecting personal boundaries are essential steps. Women, too, need supportive environments where they are valued beyond their physical appearance.

Ultimately, a woman's worth cannot and should not be defined by her body. Until this understanding becomes widespread, the silent weight of words will continue to affect countless women, leaving lasting marks on their mental health and sense of self.

This can save a family an average of £8000 in childcare costs. To find out what you may be entitled to and how to apply, visit Best Start in Life.

Early year's childhood education expert, Rachna Joshi said: "It's really great to see the impact of the funded childcare available to families. I have seen children develop their language, social, emotional and play skills which are vital to learning. Nurseries, and childminders have inclusion at the heart of their practice, this means they are carefully thinking about how they respect and celebrate a wide range of cultures and religions, to help you and your child have a sense of belonging to the setting."

There are so many things that you can do that help your child to learn. Many schools recognise the role that the family plays in being the child's first teacher. The Best Start in Life Hub is the place to go for information about the simple everyday activities that you can do at home that will help.

Rachna adds: "Starting school is an exciting point in a child's life. Families can help by playing with their child, speaking to children about what they like and sharing songs and stories together. All these activities help children's language and communication skills. Songs and stories are a great

way to develop early literacy skills but it also develops your bond with your child too.

"There are so many everyday activities that you already do that can link to what they will be doing when they start school, such as sitting together during mealtimes, becoming independent when using the toilet, putting their coat and shoes on to go outside"

### Advice, all in one place

Parenting comes with plenty of questions and that's completely normal. Because when you're a parent, every question is a good one. Find out more at [beststartinlife.gov.uk](http://beststartinlife.gov.uk)



Early year's childhood education expert, Rachna Joshi



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# Sorted

## FIVE easy spring decluttering jobs you can do without breaking a sweat

### 1. Give your inbox a proper clear-out

Digital clutter can be just as draining as physical mess.

A crowded inbox full of promotions, newsletters and unread alerts can make it harder to spot the emails that actually matter - whether that is a school update, a bill reminder or an important work message.

Take 10-minutes to delete what you do not need, unsubscribe from mailing lists you never open, and create folders for anything you want to keep on hand.

Just be cautious with suspicious emails. If something looks like spam or a scam, do not click on any links - even if it says 'unsubscribe'. Suspicious emails can be forwarded to [report@phishing.gov.uk](mailto:report@phishing.gov.uk) before deleting.



### 2. Tackle the clutter hotspots around the house

Every home has them.

The hallway bowl overflowing with old keys. The coffee table corner stacked with loose change, receipts and hair grips. The bedroom tray where earrings, spare buttons and random bits go to disappear.

These little clutter hotspots may not look dramatic, but they can make a space feel instantly untidy.

Gather them up while you are watching TV and sort through what is actually worth keeping. Broken jewellery, expired receipts, dead batteries and bits you have been meaning to deal with for months can finally go.

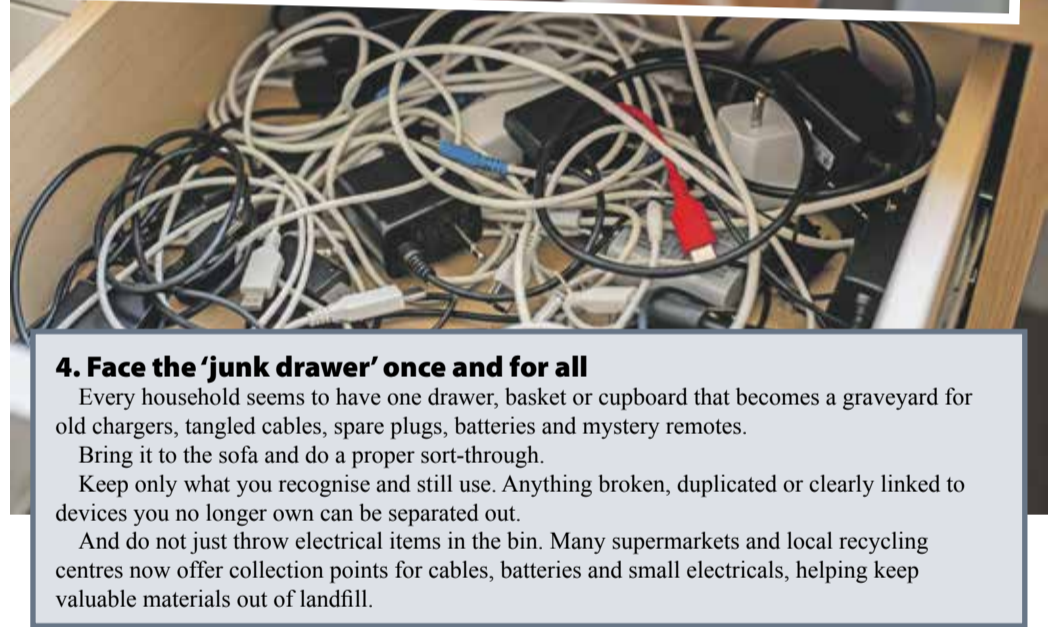
### 4. Face the 'junk drawer' once and for all

Every household seems to have one drawer, basket or cupboard that becomes a graveyard for old chargers, tangled cables, spare plugs, batteries and mystery remotes.

Bring it to the sofa and do a proper sort-through.

Keep only what you recognise and still use. Anything broken, duplicated or clearly linked to devices you no longer own can be separated out.

And do not just throw electrical items in the bin. Many supermarkets and local recycling centres now offer collection points for cables, batteries and small electricals, helping keep valuable materials out of landfill.



### 3. Declutter your phone while you scroll

If your phone is constantly flashing storage warnings, or you can never find the app you need, it is probably overdue a tidy-up.

Instead of mindless scrolling, use a few spare minutes to delete blurry photos, duplicate screenshots, old downloads and apps you have not opened in months.

You can also organise the apps you do use into folders - banking, travel, shopping, family, entertainment - so your screen feels less chaotic and more useful.

It is one of the quickest ways to feel instantly more in control, especially when so much of daily life now runs through your phone.



### 5. Sort the paperwork pile before it grows again

Loose paperwork has a habit of multiplying quietly.

Letters, leaflets, receipts, appointment slips and unopened post can quickly turn into a pile that feels bigger - and more annoying - every time you look at it.

A simple four-pile system works well:

- **Action** - anything that needs dealing with
- **Keep** - important documents, records or warranties
- **Recycle/bin** - anything no longer needed and not sensitive
- **Shred** - paperwork containing personal or financial details

# G L I T

## Entertainment

THE LATEST ENTERTAINMENT AND CELEBRITY NEWS FROM BOLLYWOOD & HOLLYWOOD



Umrao Jaan

### What stories still bind us together?

**UK Asian Film Festival** returns for its 28th edition announcing Pakistani film **'Ghost School'** as opener

UK Asian Film Festival – the world’s longest-running South Asian film festival outside the subcontinent, renowned for its bold, thought-provoking programming, has announced the Opening and Closing films and festival theme for its 28th edition.

Taking place across venues in London, Leicester, Warwick and Cumbernauld from Friday 1st to Sunday 10th May, UK Asian Film Festival is presented by Tongues on Fire and is supported by the BFI Audience Projects Fund, awarding National Lottery funding. The UK Asian Film Festival is powered by broadcast partner, Lyca Radio.

This year’s programme, “Stories That Bind Us”, explores how connection is forged, tested and reimagined across borders, generations and belief systems. Through bold, socially engaged cinema, the festival brings together political and social ideas with compelling storytelling, inviting audiences to connect, reflect and be entertained.

Continued on pages 34 & 35

Ghost School



**UK Asian Film Festival** returns for its 28th edition announcing Pakistani film **'Ghost School'** as opener



Director Seemab Gul

# What stories still bind us together?

## Continued from page 33

The Opening Film will be the UK Premiere of *Ghost School* (Pakistan, 2025; Dir: Seemab Gul; Language: Urdu with English subtitles), taking place at BFI Southbank, London on Friday 1st May.

This magical-realist tale follows 10-year-old Rabia in rural Pakistan as she sets out to uncover the mystery behind her village school's sudden closure,

revealing layers of corruption, superstition and the struggle for education through her determined perspective.

The screening will be followed by a Q&A with director, Seemab Gul, who says about the film: "Being part of the UK Asian Film Festival is truly meaningful to me, as it creates space for urgent, underrepresented stories to be seen and heard.

"Set against the reality of 'ghost schools' in rural Pakistan, the film shines a light on a system that fails its most vulnerable, while holding onto the hope

that even the smallest voice can challenge it. I'm honoured to share this story with UKAFF audiences, who continue to champion bold, socially conscious cinema."

The Closing Film will present the UK Premiere of *Shadowbox* (India, 2025; Dir's: Tanushree Das, Saumyananda Sahi; Language: Bengali with English subtitles) on Sunday 10th May at BFI Southbank, London, followed by a Q&A with lead actor, Tillotama Shome.

Marking the striking directorial debut of Das and Sahi, this intimate and



Shadow Box



Umrao Jaan



thought-provoking drama follows a woman as she navigates the complexities of domestic life; her husband's struggle with PTSD; and the shadow of suspicion surrounding a murder case.

Set within working-class India, the film offers a nuanced exploration of mental health, resilience and the quiet tensions that shape family life.

Directors, Das and Sahi say: "We are thrilled to screen our film 'Shadowbox' in UKAFF, the longest running South Asian film festival, under the theme of 'Stories that Bind Us'."

"While our film is rooted in Barrackpore, a suburban area of Kolkata where Tanushree grew up, we have been overwhelmed by how audiences around the world have responded personally to Maya and Sundar's story. At a time of war and genocide in the Middle East, we are

all feeling the distressing and tragic reverberations. In its own small way, our film talks of the residues of violence and the struggles of a family to heal."

A Special Screening will showcase the timeless classic *Umrao Jaan* (India, 1981; Dir: Muzaffar Ali; Language: Hindi with English subtitles), featuring Rekha's National Award-winning performance as the courtesan-poetess navigating love and loss in 19th-century Lucknow.

The film will be presented in its restored 4K version, restored by the NFDC-National Film Archive of India, offering audiences a rare opportunity to experience this iconic work with enhanced visual and sound quality on the big screen, followed by a Q&A with director, Muzaffar Ali, on Monday 4th May at BFI IMAX, London.

The UK Asian Film Festival presents a diverse programme of films each year, complemented by a dynamic line-up of lectures, audience workshops, live performances, visual arts exhibitions and masterclasses.

The festival also hosts its annual Short Film Competition, celebrating outstanding cinema connected to South Asia while spotlighting the depth and diversity of South Asian arts and culture.

UK Asian Film Festival Founder and Director, Dr Pushpinder Chowdhry MBE, says: "In these uncertain and often divided times, cinema reminds us that storytelling is our common language of connection and hope. With this year's theme 'The Stories That Bind Us', UK Asian Film Festival celebrates narratives that carry the South Asian diaspora's creativity, resilience, and courage across borders.

"We have curated films and spaces

that are both safe and challenging, where audiences can confront the realities of displacement and injustice while also discovering moments of solidarity and hope. We invite audiences to lean into discomfort, to listen, to be open to changing their minds, and to seek out films from our specially curated programme that will surprise, challenge, entertain - and stay with them long after the credits roll."

Find out more: [www.ukaff.com](http://www.ukaff.com)

# WHAT'S ON

in cinemas this month

## Michael

**Starring:** Jaafar Jackson, Nia Long, Laura Harrier, Juliano Krue Valdi, Miles Teller, Colman Domingo  
**Director:** Antoine Fuqua

**Cert:** TBC

**Genre:** Biography/  
 Drama/History

**Release Date:**  
 2/04/2026

Michael is shaping up to be one of 2026's biggest and most talked-about releases - a major-screen biopic charting the life, fame and legacy of the late King of Pop, Michael Jackson.

Directed by Antoine Fuqua and written by acclaimed screenwriter John Logan, the film promises an ambitious and emotionally charged portrait of the global superstar whose influence reshaped music, performance and pop culture.

Rather than focusing on a single chapter, Michael is expected to span key stages of Jackson's life - from his early years as the breakout child star of the 'The Jackson 5' through to the solo era that produced landmark albums such as 'Off the Wall', 'Thriller' and 'Bad'.

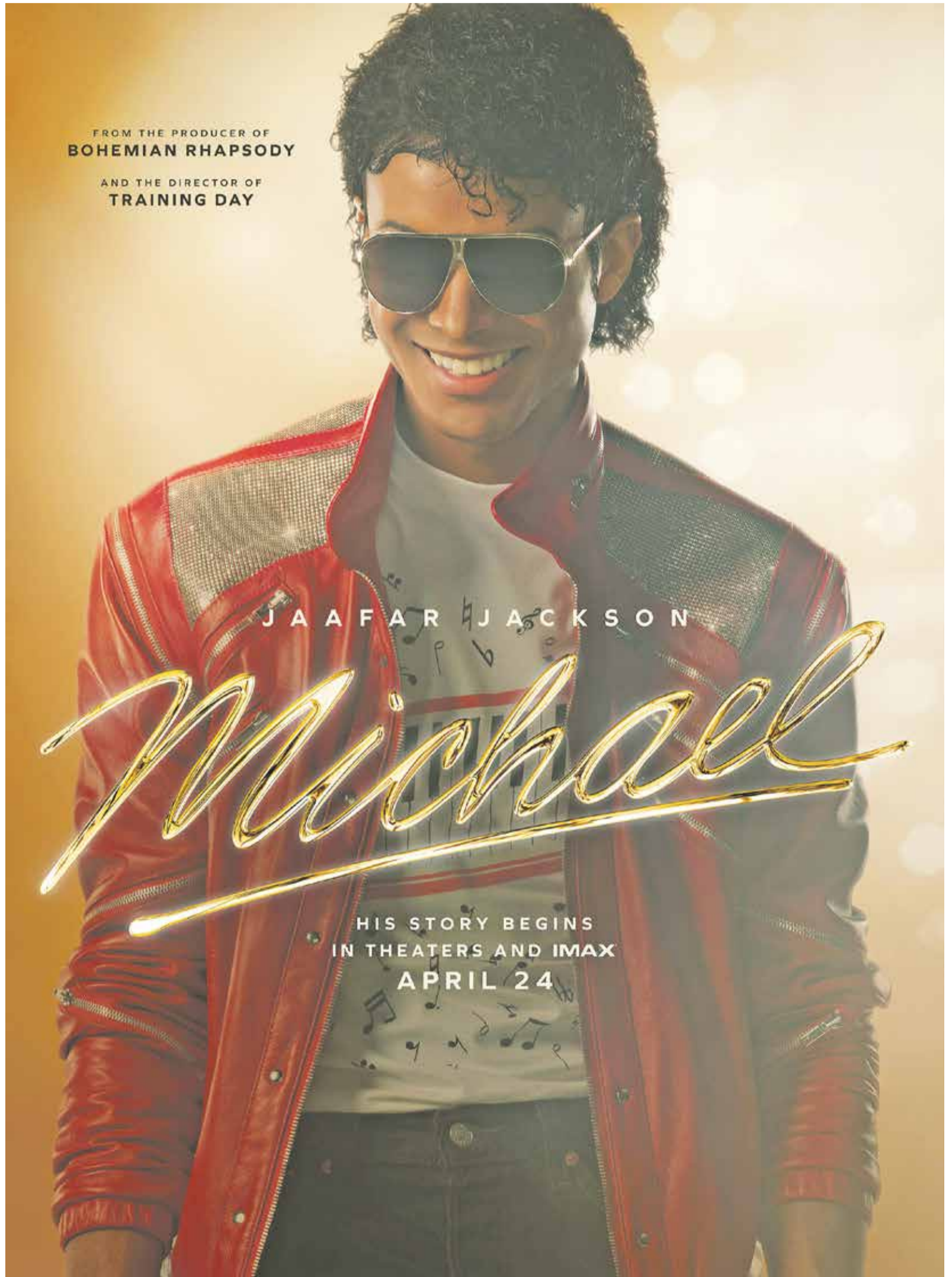
At the centre of the film is a performance from Jackson's real-life nephew, Jaafar Jackson, making his feature film debut in the title role - a casting choice that has already sparked huge curiosity among fans.

The supporting cast also adds weight, with Colman Domingo as Joe Jackson, Nia Long as Katherine Jackson and Miles Teller among the ensemble.

With a runtime of just over two hours, the film looks set to blend concert spectacle, behind-the-scenes drama and the personal pressures of unprecedented fame.

Expect lavish period detail, recreations of defining musical moments and a closer look at the machinery of superstardom that both elevated and consumed him.

More than just a greatest-hits retelling, Michael is being positioned as a big, glossy and emotionally loaded portrait of an artist whose brilliance, contradictions and cultural power still dominate conversation decades later - making this one of the year's standout event movies for music fans and biopic audiences alike.



## The Magic Faraway Tree

**Starring:** Andrew Garfield, Claire Foy, Nonso Anozie, Nicola Coughlan, Jessica Gunning, Jennifer Saunders, Rebecca Ferguson

**Director:** Ben Gregor **Cert:** U

**Genre:** Family/Fantasy **Release Date:** 27/03/2026

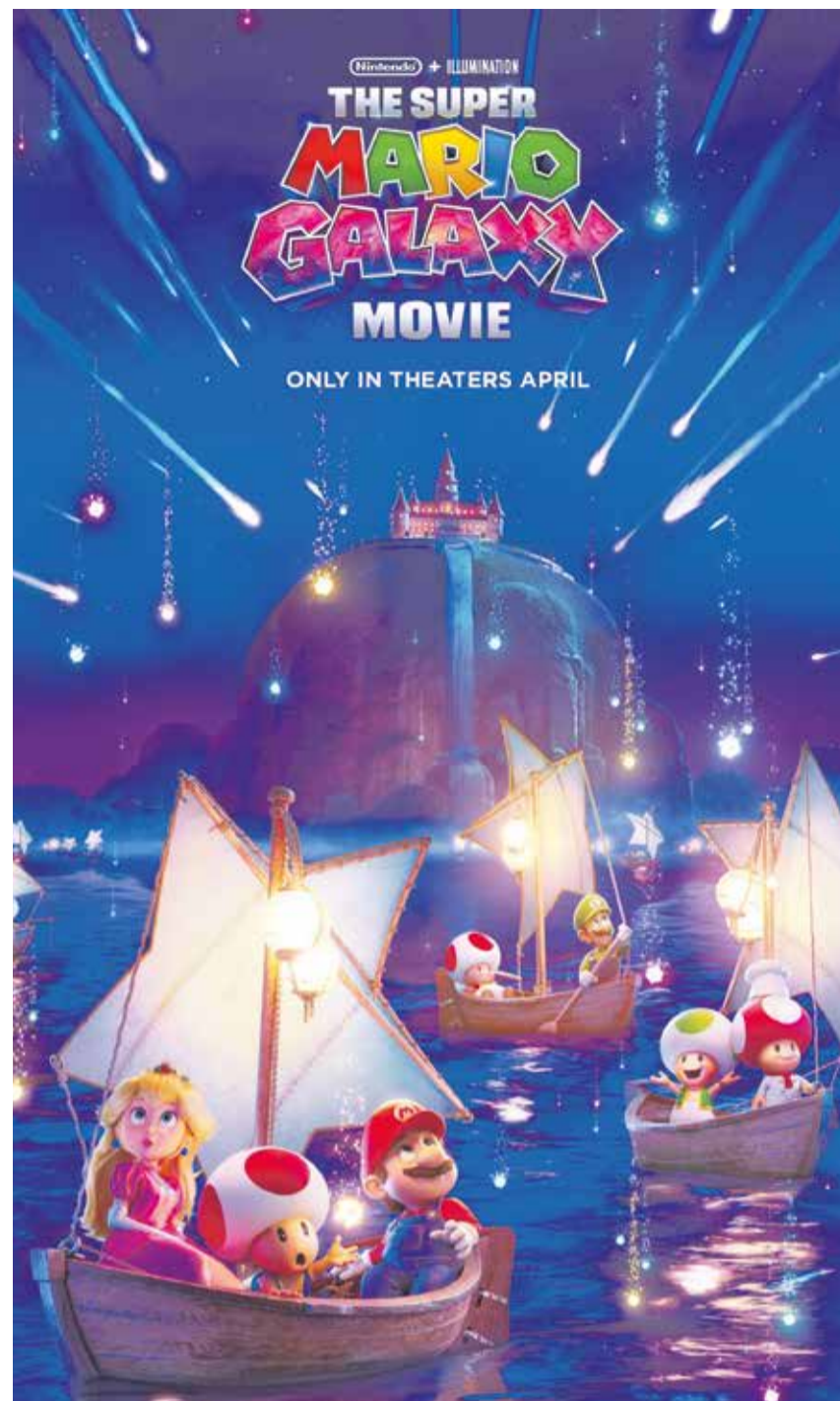
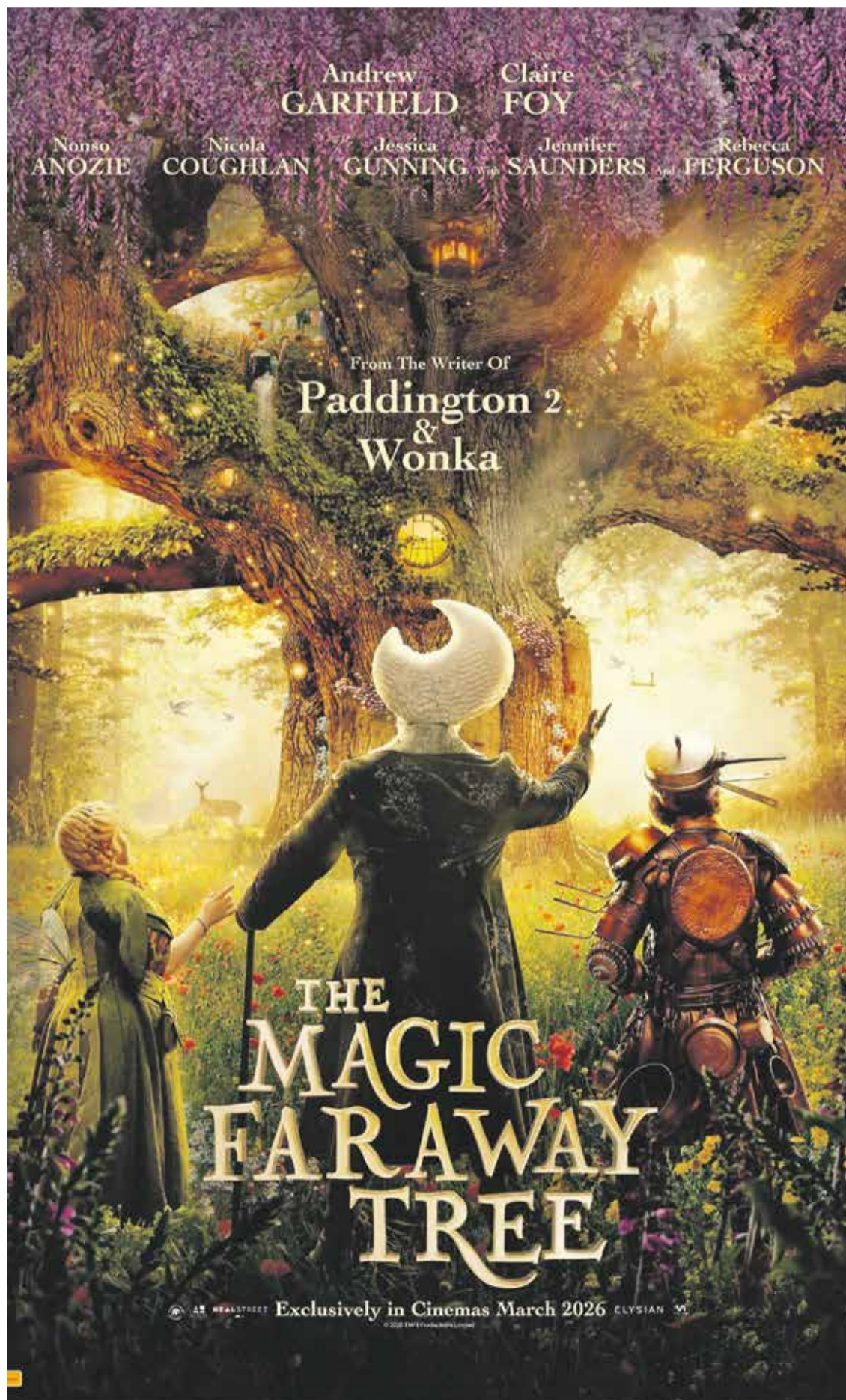
The Magic Faraway Tree brings Enid Blyton's much-loved fantasy classic to the big screen in a warm, whimsical family adventure packed with charm, chaos and imagination.

When Polly and Tim move with their three children to the English countryside, the family struggles to settle into unfamiliar surroundings and life away from the city.

But everything changes when the children stumble across the legendary Faraway Tree - home to a host of eccentric magical residents, including Moonface, Silky, Dame Washlot and Saucepan Man.

At the top of the enchanted tree, ever-changing lands appear, each one filled with strange surprises, colourful characters and fantastical adventures. As the children are swept into a series of magical journeys, the family begins to rediscover laughter, connection and the joy of being together.

Blending heart, humour and classic British fantasy, The Magic Faraway Tree is a nostalgic, feel-good cinematic escape for children, parents and anyone raised on Blyton's timeless stories.



## The Super Mario Galaxy Movie

**Starring:** Chris Pratt, Anya Taylor-Joy, Charlie Day, Jack Black, Keegan-Michael Key, Benny Safdie, Kevin Michael Richardson, Brie Larson

**Directors:** Michael Jelenic, Aaron Horvath

**Cert:** PG

**Genre:** Action/Animation/Comedy

**Release Date:** 1/4/2026

Join Mario, Luigi and a whole host of new friends as they venture into space, explore cosmic worlds and tackle new galactic challenges far from the familiar Mushroom Kingdom.

The Super Mario Galaxy Movie blasts Nintendo's beloved plumber brothers into their biggest adventure yet, swapping pipes and castles for planets, starships and intergalactic danger.

When a powerful new threat emerges far beyond the Mushroom Kingdom, Mario and Luigi are forced to team up with Princess Peach, Toad and a host of new cosmic allies to save entire worlds from collapse.

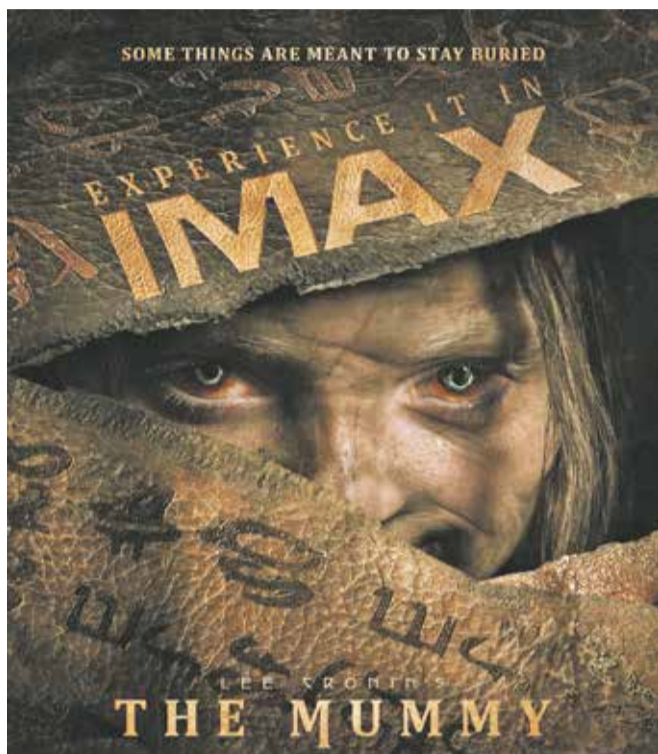
As they race across dazzling galaxies packed with gravity-defying obstacles, strange creatures and high-stakes battles, the brothers must rely on courage, teamwork and a little classic Mario chaos to survive.

Bursting with colourful animation, fast-paced action and plenty of nods for longtime fans, this family-friendly sequel expands the Mario universe on a much grander scale.

With familiar faces, fresh characters and plenty of laugh-out-loud moments, The Super Mario Galaxy Movie is a lively, space-hopping adventure built for younger audiences, nostalgic gamers and anyone after a fun-filled cinema trip.

# WHAT'S ON

in cinemas this month



## Lee Cronin's *The Mummy*

**Starring:** Jack Reynor, Laia Costa, May Calamawy, Natalie Grace, Veronica Falcón

**Director:** Lee Cronin **Cert:** TBC **Genre:** Fantasy/Horror

**Release Date:** 17/04/2026

Lee Cronin's *The Mummy* gives the classic monster tale a dark, unsettling overhaul, reimagining one of horror's most enduring legends for a new generation.

Fresh from the success of *Evil Dead Rise*, writer-director Lee Cronin swaps camp spectacle for psychological dread in a twisted desert-set nightmare.

The story begins when the young

daughter of a journalist vanishes without trace in the wilderness.

Eight years later, she is suddenly returned to her devastated family - but what should be a miracle reunion quickly turns into something far more terrifying. As buried trauma resurfaces and the truth behind her disappearance begins to emerge, the family is pulled into a chilling

spiral of supernatural horror and emotional collapse.

With Jack Reynor, Laia Costa and May Calamawy leading the cast, and horror heavyweights James Wan and Jason Blum producing, Lee Cronin's *The Mummy* looks set to be a darker, more disturbing and emotionally brutal reinvention of a familiar cinematic icon.



## Kiss of the Spider Woman

**Starring:** Jennifer Lopez,

Diego Luna, Tonatiuh

**Director:** Bill Condon

**Cert:** 15

**Genre:** Drama/Musical

**Release Date:** 17/04/2026

*Kiss of the Spider Woman* is a bold, emotionally charged musical drama that blends fantasy, politics and old-Hollywood glamour into one of the year's most distinctive cinema releases.

Directed by Dreamgirls and *Beauty and the Beast* filmmaker Bill Condon, the film follows Valentín, a political prisoner, and Molina, his flamboyant cellmate, who forms an unlikely friendship with him inside a brutal prison cell.

To escape the harsh reality around them, Molina retells the story of a dazzling screen musical starring his beloved silver-screen idol, Ingrid Luna, played by Jennifer Lopez.

As fantasy and reality begin to blur, the pair's bond deepens in ways that are moving, complex and dangerous.

Based on the acclaimed Tony Award-winning stage musical, *Kiss of the Spider Woman* promises striking visuals, strong performances and a darker emotional edge than the average movie musical - making it a compelling watch for fans of intelligent, character-led drama with theatrical flair.



## Surviving Earth

**Starring:** Stuart Martin, Slavko Sobin, Olive Gray, Ann Ogbomo, Arthur McBain, Brian Bogdanovic, Natalie Dunne, Rosa Escoda, Toni Gojanović

**Director:** Thea Gajic

**Cert:** 15 **Genre:** Drama/Music

**Release Date:** 24/04/2026

At the past refuses to stay buried. As old wounds resurface and the pressures of family, identity and survival begin to close in, Vlad is forced to confront the emotional cost of starting over.

Set in Bristol, the film follows Vlad, a man who fled military conscription during the Yugoslav conflict and is now trying to build a meaningful life far from the war he left behind.

Working as a drugs counsellor and fronting a chaotic, high-energy Balkan band, he appears to have created a new sense of purpose and community.

Directed by Thea Gajic, *Surviving Earth* blends music, memory and raw personal struggle into an intimate character-led story about resilience, displacement and the long shadow of conflict - offering a thoughtful, hard-hitting watch for audiences drawn to socially rooted, emotionally honest drama.

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# Pocket rocket



Honda's **Super-N** might be the first small EV in ages that actually looks like fun

**A retro-styled, sub-£20k electric hot hatch with fake gears, fake noise and a very real point to prove? Honda might just be onto something.**

For years, the small EV has largely been a joyless little box. Efficient? Yes. Sensible? Usually. Exciting? About as much as a beige kettle.

Then along comes Honda's new Super-N - a tiny, retro-charged electric terrier that looks like it's been designed by someone who remembers when hot hatches had

attitude, not just touchscreens.

And honestly? It might be one of the most interesting electric cars coming to the UK this year.

On sale from July, and expected to start at under £20,000, the Super-N is Honda's attempt to inject a bit of mischief back into the city car. Which, frankly, was overdue.

This isn't just another earnest EV designed to save the planet while boring you senseless on the school run. The Super-N is openly chasing something most modern electric cars seem embarrassed to admit they've

forgotten: fun.

And yes, that means gimmicks. But good gimmicks.

Honda says the Super-N takes its inspiration from the gloriously bonkers City Turbo II of the 1980s - a cult hero with boxy charm and just enough lunacy to become legend.

The new car borrows the stance, the attitude and the visual swagger, then throws in a modern electric drivetrain and a very un-Honda willingness to be playful.

**Continued on page 40**

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# Pocket rocket

Honda's **Super-N** might be the first small EV in ages that actually looks like fun

Continued from page 39

The headline party trick is BOOST Mode. Press the magic button and the compact e-Axle jumps from 47kW to 70kW, which in a lightweight little hatch should make the thing feel properly perky rather than merely polite.

But Honda hasn't stopped there. Because in a move that will either delight enthusiasts or make EV purists choke on their oat flat whites, the Super-N also gets a simulated seven-speed gearbox and a fake engine note pumped through Active Sound Control.

Normally, this sort of thing is automotive theatre of the worst kind - digital cosplay for people who miss piston noise. But here? It actually makes sense.

Because small cars have always been about character as much as numbers. Nobody bought an old-school pocket rocket because it was the rational choice. They bought it because it made a ten-minute trip to Tesco feel like qualifying at Brands Hatch.

That's the gap Honda seems to have spotted.

A lot of EV makers have spent years trying to convince us that silence equals sophistication. Honda, to its credit, appears to have realised that silence can also feel a bit... dead.

So instead of pretending emotion is obsolete, it's built a car that tries to put some back in.

And there's more substance here than just retro cosplay.

Honda says the chassis and suspension have been specifically tuned by engineers in both Japan and the UK, with testing carried out on British roads - which is encouraging, because if a car can survive our potholes, speed humps and cratered B-roads without losing a wheel, it deserves respect.

Range? A claimed 199 miles in city use, or 128 miles combined. Which means no, this isn't your motorway marathon machine. But that's not the point. This is a compact urban EV with enough battery to do what



most people actually do - commute, nip about, and occasionally go somewhere vaguely spontaneous.

The real question is whether the Super-N can pull off the hardest trick in modern motoring: being cheap, electric and desirable all at once.

Because under £20k matters. A lot.

At that price, Honda isn't just launching another niche lifestyle EV for design-conscious urbanites with artisan coffee subscriptions. It's making a play for the bit of the market everyone else keeps talking about but rarely delivers: an affordable electric car with personality.

If it drives half as cheekily as it looks, the Super-N could become something genuinely rare in 2026 - an EV people want not because they have to buy one, but because they actually fancy it.

**Press the magic button and the compact e-Axle jumps from 47kW to 70kW, which in a lightweight little hatch should make the thing feel properly perky rather than merely polite.**



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# STREET FIGHTER



**The Spanish brand's latest EV is small, sharp and loaded with attitude - but can it really make urban motoring exciting again?**

For years, the city car has been motoring's equivalent of a meal deal. Cheap, functional, and rarely something you'd ever brag about.

Then Cupra turned up, looked at the humble electric hatchback, and apparently decided what it really needed was more aggression, more theatre and just enough bad behaviour to make your insurance company nervous.

Meet the Cupra Raval - a compact electric city car named after one of Barcelona's most rebellious neighbourhoods, and wearing that inspiration like a leather jacket in a boardroom.

It arrives in the UK this summer from £23,785, and if nothing else, it might be the first urban EV in a while that doesn't look like it was designed by someone terrified of offending anyone.

Where most small EVs still lean into

## Cupra Raval wants to be the electric city car your sensible side should probably avoid

soft curves, polite eco vibes and all the charisma of a self-checkout machine, the Raval comes out swinging. It's sharp, angular, moody and deeply uninterested in being cute.

The Raval sits on the Volkswagen Group's new MEB+ platform, with battery and power options ranging from "nippy enough" to "unexpectedly spicy".

The entry-level Origin gets a 37kWh

battery and 115PS, which should be fine for urban duty and the occasional overconfident merge.

Step up to the V1 or V2 and you can choose either a 37kWh / 135PS setup or a much more interesting 52kWh / 210PS version, which offers up to 280 miles of range and a 10-80 per cent charge in 23 minutes.

Then there's the one you actually want: the Raval VZ.

That gets the larger 52kWh battery, around 250 miles of range, and 225PS - which in a compact front-driven EV should make it feel gloriously impatient. Better still, Cupra has thrown in an electronic limited-slip differential and Dynamic Chassis Control, which is the sort of hardware you don't usually see in a car supposedly built for city errands.

That's because the Raval isn't really

trying to be sensible.

Cupra knows there's a whole generation of drivers who like the idea of an EV but don't want one that feels like a rolling lecture on carbon footprints. They want something with edge. Something with a pulse.

Inside, the Raval gets a 10.25-inch digital cockpit, a 12.9-inch infotainment screen, and - praise be - physical buttons on the steering wheel. Actual buttons. In 2026. There are also satellite controls for drive modes and regenerative braking paddles, which suits the car's whole personality.

The real question is whether all this theatre translates into something genuinely fun, or whether the Raval is just another fashion-led EV with a spicy press release.

But the ingredients are promising. The power is healthy, the charging is quick, the styling is unapologetically bold, and the VZ in particular sounds like it could be one of those rare modern EVs that remembers small cars are supposed to be entertaining, not just efficient.

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<b>I23 YKP</b> £1,275 ONO TEL: 07852 290 229 TEL: 07971 827 913	<b>AKH773R</b> £2,995 TEL: 07865 861 193	<b>ASIIEMD</b> £8,000 (ASHOK M) TEL: 07985 455 057	<b>BAS33R</b> £13,000 (DR HOPE) TEL: 07879 230 103	<b>DRIIOPE</b> £8,000 (DR HOPE) TEL: 07985 455 057	<b>ETIHANR</b> £8,500 (ETHAN R) TEL: 07985 455 057	<b>GSIASN</b> £7,500 (G SUSAN) TEL: 07985 455 057	<b>JO55FYN</b> OFFERS T: 07740 784 983 TEL: 07985 455 057	<b>KHIAAN</b> £10,000 (KHIAAN) TEL: 07779 324 610	<b>MAIDAA</b> £15,000 (MAIDA) TEL: 07946 162 099	<b>MR 57NOH</b> £8,000 (MR SINGH) TEL: 07731 464002	<b>NCLARK</b> £9,000 (N CLARK) TEL: 07985 455 057	<b>PAIILSG</b> £11,000 (PAUL SG) TEL: 07985 455 057	<b>RGIIGGS</b> £29,000 (R GIGGS) TEL: 07985 455 057
<b>IBZ 786</b> OFFERS OVER £10,000 TEL: 07985 455 057	<b>AKR5M</b> £9,500 TEL: 07947 979 777	<b>ASIRAJ</b> £4,500 (ASH RAJ) TEL: 07985 455 057	<b>BCHARK</b> £9,000 (B CLARK) TEL: 07985 455 057	<b>DRIIORN</b> £8,000 (DR HORN) TEL: 07985 455 057	<b>ETIHANT</b> £8,500 (ETHAN T) TEL: 07985 455 057	<b>GUIDES</b> £15,000 (GUIDES) TEL: 07530 612 171	<b>JONBOSS</b> £6,995 TEL: 07530 612 171	<b>KHIAHN</b> £10,000 TEL: 01274 414141 TEL: 07985 455 057	<b>MAIDAH</b> £1,500 ONO (MAIDAH) TEL: 07946 162 099	<b>MR N4S</b> OFFERS TEL: 07877 334 567	<b>NDIEEP</b> £7,000 (N DILEEP) TEL: 07985 455 057	<b>PAIILSR</b> £11,000 (PAUL SR) TEL: 07985 455 057	<b>RJIIDGE</b> £15,000 (R JUDGE) TEL: 07985 455 057
<b>IKKY</b> OFFERS OVER £35,000 TEL: 07877 334 567	<b>ALII EEF</b> £1200 ONO TEL: 07884 115 115	<b>ASHRAP</b> £2,500 (ASHRAF) TEL: 07985 455 057	<b>BDIEEP</b> £7,000 (B DILEEP) TEL: 07985 455 057	<b>DRIIANS</b> £15,000 (DR IANS) TEL: 07985 455 057	<b>ETIHANW</b> £8,500 (ETHAN W) TEL: 07985 455 057	<b>GUIIFAM</b> £3,000 ONO (GULLFAM) TEL: 07946 162 099	<b>JIT7 OK</b> £900 ONO (JAT OK) TEL: 07581 423 143	<b>KHIANZ</b> £8,000 TEL: 07921 576 971	<b>MAIEKZ</b> £1,500 ONO (MALEK) TEL: 07946 162 099	<b>MSIHOPE</b> £9,500 (MS HOPE) TEL: 07985 455 057	<b>NASS55A</b> £4,500 TEL: 07867 861 193	<b>PAIIMAD</b> £10,000 (P AHMAD) TEL: 07985 455 057	<b>RSIIAUN</b> £15,000 (R SHAUN) TEL: 07985 455 057
<b>55ABR</b> £4,000 TEL: 07733 244 444	<b>ALII HSN</b> £3,000 ONO (ALI HASSAN) TEL: 07946 162 099	<b>ASIIZZZ</b> £2,500 (ASH ZZZ) TEL: 07985 455 057	<b>BD55 CAB</b> £2,995 ONO TEL: 07970 914 137	<b>DRIIARY</b> £12,000 (DR HARY) TEL: 07985 455 057	<b>EVIIJAY</b> £10,000 (E VIJAY) TEL: 07985 455 057	<b>GUILAM</b> OFFERS OVER £5,000 TEL: 07597 829 845	<b>JIT7 VEE</b> £1,500 ONO TEL: 07774 246 877	<b>KHII LAK</b> £1,000 TEL: 01274 414141 MON - FRI: 9-5.30	<b>MAIMAD</b> £20,000 (M AHMAD) TEL: 07985 455 057	<b>MSIALE</b> £9,500 (MS HALE) TEL: 07985 455 057	<b>NEIIFOX</b> £23,000 (NEIL FOX) TEL: 07985 455 057	<b>PAIISHA</b> £9,000 (P AISHA) TEL: 07985 455 057	<b>RVIJAY</b> £10,000 (R VIJAY) TEL: 07985 455 057
<b>786 KAM</b> £29,000 TEL: 07733 244 444	<b>AM03EAR</b> £3,000 ONO TEL: 07506 342 385	<b>ASIA NAK</b> £1,500 ONO TEL: 07985 455 057	<b>BD55TAN</b> £2,495 TEL: 07954 389 874	<b>DRIIAYS</b> £8,000 (DR HAYS) TEL: 07985 455 057	<b>EVIIKAR</b> £650 ONO (EVIL CAR) TEL: 07411 953 337	<b>GVIJAY</b> £10,000 (G VIJAY) TEL: 07985 455 057	<b>J4 NGS</b> TEL: 07815 114 201	<b>KHII NGZ</b> £13,000 TEL: 07921 576 971	<b>MAIMED</b> £29,000 (M AHMED) TEL: 07985 455 057	<b>MSIAHY</b> £9,500 (MS HALY) TEL: 07985 455 057	<b>NKIANZ</b> £1,500 ONO (NKIANZ) TEL: 07946 162 099	<b>PAIIVZ</b> £1,500 ONO (P IANZ) MON - FRI: 9-5.30	<b>RYIISAF</b> £15,000 (R YUSUF) TEL: 07985 455 057
<b>786 MAK</b> £10,000 ONO TEL: 07506 342 385	<b>AM04EAR</b> £3,000 ONO TEL: 07506 342 385	<b>ASIA NJT</b> £1,500 ONO TEL: 07985 455 057	<b>BEIOLD</b> £19,000 (BEHOLD) TEL: 07834 531 683	<b>DR SINGG</b> OFFERS TEL: 07720 376 861	<b>EYISAF</b> £15,000 (E YUSAF) TEL: 07985 455 057	<b>GYISAF</b> £15,000 (G YUSAF) TEL: 07985 455 057	<b>J4 UEO</b> £2,495 TEL: 07954 389 874	<b>KH59 LED</b> £3,000 TEL: 07877 334 567	<b>MAIMVD</b> £1500 (MAHMUD) TEL: 07985 455 057	<b>MSIAWK</b> £9,500 (MS HAWK) TEL: 07985 455 057	<b>NLIICAS</b> £7,000 (N LUCAS) TEL: 07985 455 057	<b>PAIIEEP</b> £7,000 (P DILEEP) TEL: 07985 455 057	<b>RYIISUF</b> £15,000 (R YUSUF) TEL: 07985 455 057
<b>82 GK</b> OFFERS TEL: 07787 334 567	<b>AMII AAD</b> £2,000 TEL: 01274 414141 MON - FRI: 9-5.30	<b>ASIANX</b> £15,000 ONO TEL: 07854 072 121	<b>BH04GUL</b> OFFERS (BHOGUL) TEL: 07970 026 653	<b>DRSISHA</b> £995 (DR. SHISHA / SHA) TEL: 07834 531 683	<b>EYIISUF</b> £15,000 (E YUSUF) TEL: 07985 455 057	<b>GYIISUF</b> £15,000 (G YUSUF) TEL: 07985 455 057	<b>JAIIALS</b> £15,000 (JAIIALS) TEL: 07985 455 057	<b>KKIMAR</b> £15,000 (K KUMAR) TEL: 07985 455 057	<b>MAI RYM</b> £1,500 TEL: 01274 414141 MON - FRI: 9-5.30	<b>MSIAYS</b> £9,500 (MS HAYS) TEL: 07985 455 057	<b>NOII SHN</b> £2,500 TEL: 01274 414141 MON - FRI: 9-5.30	<b>PD55ESS</b> £15,000 (P POSSESS) TEL: 07971 732 789	<b>SOIILJA</b> £10,000 (SOULJA) TEL: 07786 615 234
<b>A17JEO</b> £5,000 ONO (AMJED) TEL: 07971 732 789	<b>AMII EEN</b> £5,000 ONO (AMJED) TEL: 07971 732 789	<b>NADIIM</b> £10,000 TEL: 07969 914 041	<b>BH54RAT</b> OFFERS (BHARAT) TEL: 07970 026 653	<b>DR 5 500D</b> £8,000 T: 07740 784 983 TEL: 07985 455 057	<b>F1 GUJR</b> £2,500 (F1 GUJR) TEL: 07867 861 193	<b>HOOSAYN</b> £1,950 ONO (HOUSAIN) TEL: 07956 214 163	<b>JAIMAD</b> £10,000 (J AHMAD) TEL: 07985 455 057	<b>KSIAUN</b> £15,000 (K SHAUN) TEL: 07985 455 057	<b>MAITAB</b> £18,000 (M AHAB) TEL: 07985 455 057	<b>MSIUGH</b> £15,000 (MS HUGH) TEL: 07985 455 057	<b>NSIAUN</b> £15,000 (N SHAUN) TEL: 07985 455 057	<b>PHIIFOX</b> £29,000 (PHIL FOX) TEL: 07985 455 057	<b>SOC4R</b> OFFERS TEL: 07787 334 567
<b>A2SSM</b> £1,499 ONO TEL: 07785 337 224	<b>ANII JAM</b> £5,000 ONO (ANII JAM) TEL: 07985 455 057	<b>ASKI</b> £70,000 TEL: 07854 012 093	<b>BKIIMAR</b> £15,000 (B KUMAR) TEL: 07985 455 057	<b>DSIIAUN</b> £15,000 (D SHAUN) TEL: 07779 324 610	<b>F17 STX</b> £2,999 ONO TEL: 07904 018 063	<b>HOSSAYN</b> £8,995 ONO TEL: 07779 324 610	<b>JAIMED</b> £15,000 (J AHMED) TEL: 07985 455 057	<b>KUSS OOM</b> £2,000 TEL: 07588 326 444	<b>MA55 UDD</b> £4,000 TEL: 07588 326 444	<b>MSIISAN</b> £7,500 (M SUSAN) TEL: 07985 455 057	<b>NSIISAN</b> £7,500 (N SUSAN) TEL: 07985 455 057	<b>PKIINGS</b> £14,000 (P KINGS) TEL: 07985 455 057	<b>SII ETK</b> OFFERS (SHEIKH) TEL: 07815 114 201
<b>A212 JAN</b> OFFERS OVER £25,000 TEL: 07817 615 022	<b>ANII SAR</b> £2,500 TEL: 01274 414141 MON - FRI: 9-5.30	<b>ATT4H</b> £8,500 ONO (NO WITHHELD) TEL: 07786 424 251	<b>BSIIAUN</b> £15,000 (B SHAUN) TEL: 07985 455 057	<b>DSIIASN</b> £7,500 (D SUSAN) TEL: 07985 455 057	<b>F44EEM</b> £4,500 TEL: 07825 040 037	<b>HOIIVER</b> £7,500 (H OLIVER) TEL: 07985 455 057	<b>JAS5BYR</b> £8,995 TEL: 07779 324 610	<b>KVIJAY</b> £10,000 (K VIJAY) TEL: 07985 455 057	<b>MA55 UMM</b> £2,800 TEL: 07588 326 444	<b>MUIIAMD</b> £10,000 (MOHAMMAD) TEL: 07867 861 193	<b>NUII ZAT</b> £1,500 TEL: 01274 414141 MON - FRI: 9-5.30	<b>PMIILES</b> £7,500 (P MILES) TEL: 07985 455 057	<b>SII LYM</b> £5,000 TEL: 07908 895 552
<b>AII LAM</b> £1,500 TEL: 01274 414141 MON - FRI: 9-5.30	<b>ANII SER</b> £5,000 TEL: 01274 414141 MON - FRI: 9-5.30	<b>AVIIJAY</b> £10,000 (A VIJAY) TEL: 07971 732 789	<b>BT55MLA</b> £1,500 ONO (BISMAILA) TEL: 07971 732 789	<b>DVIIJAY</b> £10,000 (D VIJAY) TEL: 07985 455 057	<b>F44TMA</b> £7,500 TEL: 07825 040 037	<b>HII RAA</b> £7,500 TEL: 07825 040 037	<b>JAV333D</b> £5,500 TEL: 07867 861 193	<b>KYIISAF</b> £15,000 (K YUSAF) TEL: 07985 455 057	<b>M ALIIS</b> OFFERS TEL: 07787 334 567	<b>NUII SAH</b> £1,500 TEL: 01274 414141 MON - FRI: 9-5.30	<b>NVIJAY</b> £10,000 (N VIJAY) TEL: 07985 455 057	<b>PSIISAN</b> £7,500 (P SUSAN) TEL: 07985 455 057	<b>SII OHL</b> OFFERS TEL: 07785 455 057
<b>AAIIMAD</b> £15,000 (A AHMAD) TEL: 07985 455 057	<b>ANS4AR N</b> £1,500 ONO (ANSAAR) TEL: 07946 162 099	<b>ANSS50M</b> £10,000 (AWESOME) TEL: 07985 254 294	<b>BU55TEO</b> £5,000 ONO (BUSTED) TEL: 07985 455 057	<b>DYIISAF</b> £15,000 (D YUSAF) TEL: 07985 455 057	<b>FAI RYD</b> £1,000 ONO (FAH RYD) MON - FRI: 9-5.30	<b>H8 ABU</b> £950 ONO TEL: 07968 642 402	<b>JDIIEEP</b> £7,000 (J DILEEP) TEL: 07985 455 057	<b>KY55 HAN</b> £3,800 TEL: 07588 326 444	<b>MAR20F</b> £7,000 (M AR20F) TEL: 07990 116 644	<b>MVIIAMD</b> £15,000 (MOHAMMAD) TEL: 07867 861 193	<b>NYIISAF</b> £15,000 (N YUSAF) TEL: 07985 455 057	<b>PSIIISAN</b> £7,500 (P SUSAN) TEL: 07985 455 057	<b>SIIRGL</b> OFFERS TEL: 07919 583 618
<b>AAIIYAA</b> £20,000 (AAIIYAA) TEL: 07985 455 057	<b>AN55AR K</b> £1,000 TEL: 07985 480 777	<b>AYIINUS</b> £9,500 (A YUNUS) TEL: 07985 455 057	<b>BVIIJAY</b> £10,000 (B VIJAY) TEL: 07985 455 057	<b>DYIISUF</b> £15,000 (D YUSUF) TEL: 07985 455 057	<b>FAIISHA</b> £9,000 (F AISHA) TEL: 07985 455 057	<b>HAIIIEE X</b> £12,000 (HAILEE X) TEL: 07985 455 057	<b>JEIIOUS</b> £20,000 TEL: 0786 615 234	<b>KY55 HOR</b> £3,500 TEL: 07588 326 444	<b>MDO4WOD</b> £14,000 (M DAWOOD) TEL: 07987 861 193	<b>MVIIYAJ</b> £10,000 (M VIJAY) TEL: 07985 455 057	<b>NYIISUF</b> £15,000 (N YUSUF) TEL: 07985 455 057	<b>PSIIISAN</b> £7,500 (P SUSAN) TEL: 07985 455 057	<b>SI3AF X</b> OFFERS TEL: 07919 583 618
<b>AAI2JAN</b> £15,000 (ARJAN) TEL: 07777 612 479	<b>ANJ33M</b> £4,995 TEL: 07867 861 193	<b>ASISAF</b> £15,000 (A YUSAF) TEL: 07985 455 057	<b>BYIISAF</b> £15,000 (B YUSAF) TEL: 07985 455 057	<b>EAIIMAD</b> £10,000 (E AHMAD) TEL: 07985 455 057	<b>FAIIMED</b> £10,000 (F AHMED) TEL: 07985 455 057	<b>HAIIIEYX</b> £12,000 (HAILEY X) TEL: 07985 455 057	<b>JKII ANN</b> £2,500 (J KHAN) TEL: 07815 114 201	<b>LII KJY</b> £1,195 ONO TEL: 07867 770 940	<b>MDIIEEP</b> £7,000 (M DILEEP) TEL: 07985 455 057	<b>MVIIAMD</b> £15,000 (MOHAMMAD) TEL: 07867 861 193	<b>NYIISAF</b> £15,000 (N YUSAF) TEL: 07985 455 057	<b>PSIIISAN</b> £7,500 (P SUSAN) TEL: 07985 455 057	<b>SI3AF X</b> OFFERS TEL: 07919 583 618
<b>AAISIZAA</b> OFFERS TEL: 07777 612 479	<b>ANW444R</b> £10,000 ONO (ANWAAR) TEL: 07946 162 099	<b>AYIISUF</b> £15,000 (A YUSUF) TEL: 07985 455 057	<b>BYIISUF</b> £15,000 (B YUSUF) TEL: 07985 455 057	<b>EAIIMED</b> £15,000 (E AHMED) TEL: 07985 455 057	<b>FAIIMED</b> £15,000 (F AHMED) TEL: 07985 455 057	<b>HAIIIMAD</b> £10,000 (H AHMAD) TEL: 07985 455 057	<b>JKIIMAR</b> £15,000 (J KUMAR) TEL: 07985 455 057	<b>LI 4 USY</b> £3,000 (J 4 USY / LUSY) TEL: 07985 455 057	<b>MDIIAMD</b> £2,000 (MOHAMMAD) TEL: 07867 861 193	<b>MYIIPOD</b> £3,000 (MY IPOD) TEL: 07985 455 057	<b>NYIISAF</b> £15,000 (N YUSAF) TEL: 07985 455 057	<b>PSIIISAN</b> £7,500 (P SUSAN) TEL: 07985 455 057	<b>SI3AF X</b> OFFERS TEL: 07919 583 618
<b>AA55SHAK</b> £8,995 ONO TEL: 07779 324 610	<b>ANW444R</b> £10,000 ONO (ANWAAR) TEL: 07946 162 099	<b>AYII EBY</b> £2,000 TEL: 01274 414141 MON - FRI: 9-5.30	<b>CI1 EWY</b> £17,000 (C I EWY) TEL: 07764 656 667	<b>EAS5TAL</b> OFFERS T: 07740 784 983 TEL: 07985 455 057	<b>FAH44D</b> £9,995 TEL: 07530 612 171	<b>HAIIIMED</b> £15,000 (H AHMED) TEL: 07985 455 057	<b>JSISAN</b> £7,500 (J SUSAN) TEL: 07985 455 057	<b>L IMRN</b> £10,000 (L IMRAN) TEL: 07759 097 070	<b>MEIIBUB</b> £19,000 (MEHBUB) TEL: 07985 455 057	<b>MYSIISHA</b> £995 (MY SHISHA) TEL: 07834 531 683	<b>OOIIOYD</b> £20,000 (OO LLOYD) TEL: 07985 455 057	<b>PSIIISAN</b> £7,500 (P SUSAN) TEL: 07985 455 057	<b>SI3AF X</b> OFFERS TEL: 07919 583 618
<b>AA55RIT</b> £8,995 ONO TEL: 07779 324 610	<b>ASII AHS</b> £3,000 (A SHAH) TEL: 07815 114 201	<b>BO55 KHN</b> OFFERS TEL: 07985 455 057	<b>C14 SSE</b> £7,500 (CLASSY) TEL: 07815 114 201	<b>EAS5TLE</b> OFFERS T: 07740 784 983 TEL: 07985 455 057	<b>FAZ44L</b> £5,500 TEL: 07867 861 193	<b>HAIIIEE X</b> £12,000 (HAILEE X) TEL: 07985 455 057	<b>JKII ANN</b> £2,500 (J KHAN) TEL: 07815 114 201	<b>LII KJY</b> £1,195 ONO TEL: 07867 770 940	<b>MDIIEEP</b> £7,000 (M DILEEP) TEL: 07985 455 057	<b>MYIIPOD</b> £3,000 (MY IPOD) TEL: 07985 455 057	<b>NYIISAF</b> £15,000 (N YUSAF) TEL: 07985 455 057	<b>PSIIISAN</b> £7,500 (P SUSAN) TEL: 07985 455 057	<b>SI3AF X</b> OFFERS TEL: 07919 583 618
<b>AAALIS</b> £15,000 TEL: 07733 244 444	<b>ASII AKS</b> £1,500 TEL: 01274 414141 MON - FRI: 9-5.30	<b>BO55Y BO</b> £5,000 T: 07740 784 983 TEL: 07985 455 057	<b>C 5KY W</b> £999 ONO TEL: 07427 677 989	<b>EAS7S</b> REASONABLE OFFERS TEL: 07974 179 156	<b>FAZ 786</b> OVER £10,000 TEL: 07765 555 786	<b>HAIIIEE X</b> £8,000 ONO TEL: 07908 472 121	<b>JKIIMAR</b> £10,000 (J KUMAR) TEL: 07985 455 057	<b>LI 4 USY</b> £3,000 (J 4 USY / LUSY) TEL: 07985 455 057	<b>MDIIAMD</b> £2,000 (MOHAMMAD) TEL: 0				

<b>SH04 BEK</b> £1,995 ONO TEL: 07764 656 667	<b>SHA2D</b> £25,000 TEL: 07867 861 193	<b>TAIHAS</b> £3,000 ONO (TALHA) TEL: 07946 162 099	<b>TVIJAY</b> £10,000 (T VIJAY) TEL: 07985 455 057	<b>VY55 HAL</b> £3,500 TEL: 07588 326 444	<b>WDIIEEP</b> £7,000 (W DILEEP) TEL: 07985 455 057	<b>XX 56XY XX</b> £8,000 ONO TEL: 07908 472 121
<b>SHIOAEB</b> £4,000 ONO TEL: 07828 695 464	<b>SOII BYA</b> £2,000 TEL: 01274 414141 MON - FRI: 9-5.30	<b>TAIIMAD</b> £10,000 (T AHMAD) TEL: 07985 455 057	<b>TYIISAF</b> £15,000 (T YUSUF) TEL: 07985 455 057	<b>VY55 HNU</b> £3,500 TEL: 07588 326 444	<b>WGIPTA</b> £6,995 (W GUPTA) TEL: 07985 455 057	<b>XYIISAF</b> £15,400 (X YUSUF) TEL: 07985 455 057
<b>SHIOABY</b> £4,000 ONO TEL: 07828 695 464	<b>SPIIRTY</b> £15,000 (SPORTY) TEL: 07985 455 057	<b>TAIIYRS</b> £1,500 (TAHYRS) TEL: 07867 886 786	<b>TYIISUF</b> £15,000 (T YUSUF) TEL: 07985 455 057	<b>WOIVER</b> £6,500 (W OLIVER) TEL: 07985 455 057	<b>WKIIMAR</b> £15,000 (W KUMAR) TEL: 07985 455 057	<b>YIINES</b> £OFFERS (YOUNAS) TEL: 07834 016 393
<b>SHIOKET</b> £OFFERS T: 07754 852 402 no withheld numbers	<b>STIIGGG</b> £20,000 ONO TEL: 07796 510 000	<b>TAI3BYS</b> £1,600 ONO TEL: 07557 387 547	<b>UAIIMAD</b> £10,000 (U AHMAD) TEL: 07985 455 057	<b>W2I JAS</b> £1,200 ONO TEL: 07925 757 677	<b>WMIILES</b> £7,500 (W MILES) TEL: 07985 455 057	<b>Y5IILMA</b> £4,000 ONO (SALMA) TEL: 07909 598 969
<b>SHIOKUT</b> £OFFERS T: 07754 852 402 no withheld numbers	<b>SUR87IT</b> £1,500 (SURBJIT) TEL: 07985 589 631	<b>TA55LYM</b> £4,895 ONO TEL: 07779 324 610	<b>UDIIEEP</b> £7,000 (U DILEEP) TEL: 07985 455 057	<b>W33DDY</b> £5,000 ONO TEL: 07779 994 695	<b>W5IISAN</b> £7,500 (W SUSAN) TEL: 07985 455 057	<b>Y55ANA</b> £OFFERS TEL: 07835 316 786
<b>SHII AED</b> £1,000 TEL: 01274 414141 MON - FRI: 9-5.30	<b>SVIISAF</b> £15,400 (S YUSUF) TEL: 07985 455 057	<b>TA55TEE</b> £5,000 T: 0740 784 983 privateplates@hotmail.co.uk	<b>UKIIRD</b> £OFFERS TEL: 07522 199 997	<b>W33DY K</b> £5,000 ONO TEL: 07779 994 695	<b>WYIISAF</b> £15,400 (W YUSUF) TEL: 07985 455 057	<b>Y9 ALT</b> £30,000 TEL: 07525 817 453
<b>SHII AFS</b> £1,500 TEL: 01274 414141 MON - FRI: 9-5.30	<b>SVIISUF</b> £15,000 (S YUSUF) TEL: 07985 455 057	<b>TA55TYE</b> £5,000 T: 0740 784 983 privateplates@hotmail.co.uk	<b>UMM444R</b> £4,995 TEL: 07707 747 776	<b>W33NTD</b> £1,800 (WANTED) TEL: 01202 877 038	<b>WYIISUF</b> £15,000 (W YUSUF) TEL: 07985 455 057	<b>YAIIMAD</b> £10,000 (Y AHMAD) TEL: 07985 455 057
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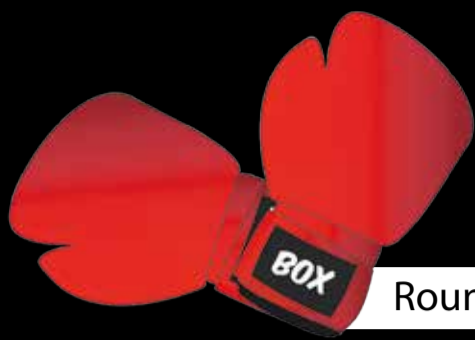
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Asian Express

# SPORT



Round up of all your local, national and international sporting news



## More than a game

### Fairbank United's Ramadan Charity League raises £18,752 for causes at home and abroad

By the time the final whistle blew in Bradford, the trophy had been lifted, the crowd had roared and another local football story had been written.

But the real victory of Fairbank United's fifth annual Ramadan Charity League could be counted elsewhere - in food parcels, Iftar

meals, rebuilt homes and support for vulnerable families thousands of miles beyond the pitch.

Grassroots football rarely gets the credit it deserves for what it can do when it moves beyond the result.

In Bradford, where community and identity so often meet on the touchline, Fairbank United has once

again turned a local tournament into something far greater.

They've raised an impressive £18,752 during this year's Ramadan Charity League and proving, for a fifth successive year, that football can still be one of the most powerful forces for collective good.

What began as a community-led

competition has grown into one of the city's most meaningful annual sporting fixtures - drawing together players, youth teams, families, volunteers and local businesses in a shared act of purpose during the holiest month of the Islamic calendar.

Finals night brought a large and passionate crowd, with

representatives from West Riding FA in attendance, including ED&I Lead Ashraf Wallace, alongside local councillor Kamran Hussain, as supporters packed in for two fiercely contested semi-finals and a lively final played in excellent spirit.

Continued on page 46

Asian Express

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## More than a game

**Fairbank United's Ramadan Charity League raises £18,752 for causes at home and abroad**

Continued from page 45

There was drama on the pitch, too.

Game Fight Bradford produced the run of the tournament to lift the trophy, first defeating Insane Air in the play-offs before overcoming Raising Explorers in the semi-finals.

Shake House booked their place in the final thanks to a last-gasp winner against Vision Care Services, only for Game Fight Bradford to complete their charge and seal the title in the showpiece finale.

Yet, as compelling as the football was, this competition has always been about something deeper.

Ramadan places charity at the centre of faith and daily life - a month defined not only by fasting, but by generosity, compassion and responsibility to others. That spirit was evident throughout the tournament, with funds set to support a wide range of humanitarian and local causes through partnerships with Unique Children's Charity (UC3) in Halifax and Green Crescent Aid UK in Keighley.

The money raised will help provide Iftar meals for families in poverty in Malawi, contribute to rebuilding a home for a disadvantaged family in Azad Kashmir, support vulnerable households in Syria, fund food parcels in Gaza, and assist a local neonatal unit in the UK - a striking reminder that the reach of a Bradford grassroots tournament can stretch far beyond West Yorkshire.

For Fairbank United, that is precisely the point.

"This was our fifth year running the Ramadan Charity League, and it continues to grow

year on year," said club secretary Akif Waseem.

"The generosity of the community has been incredible - not just in terms of fundraising, but also the support we receive from local businesses and families.

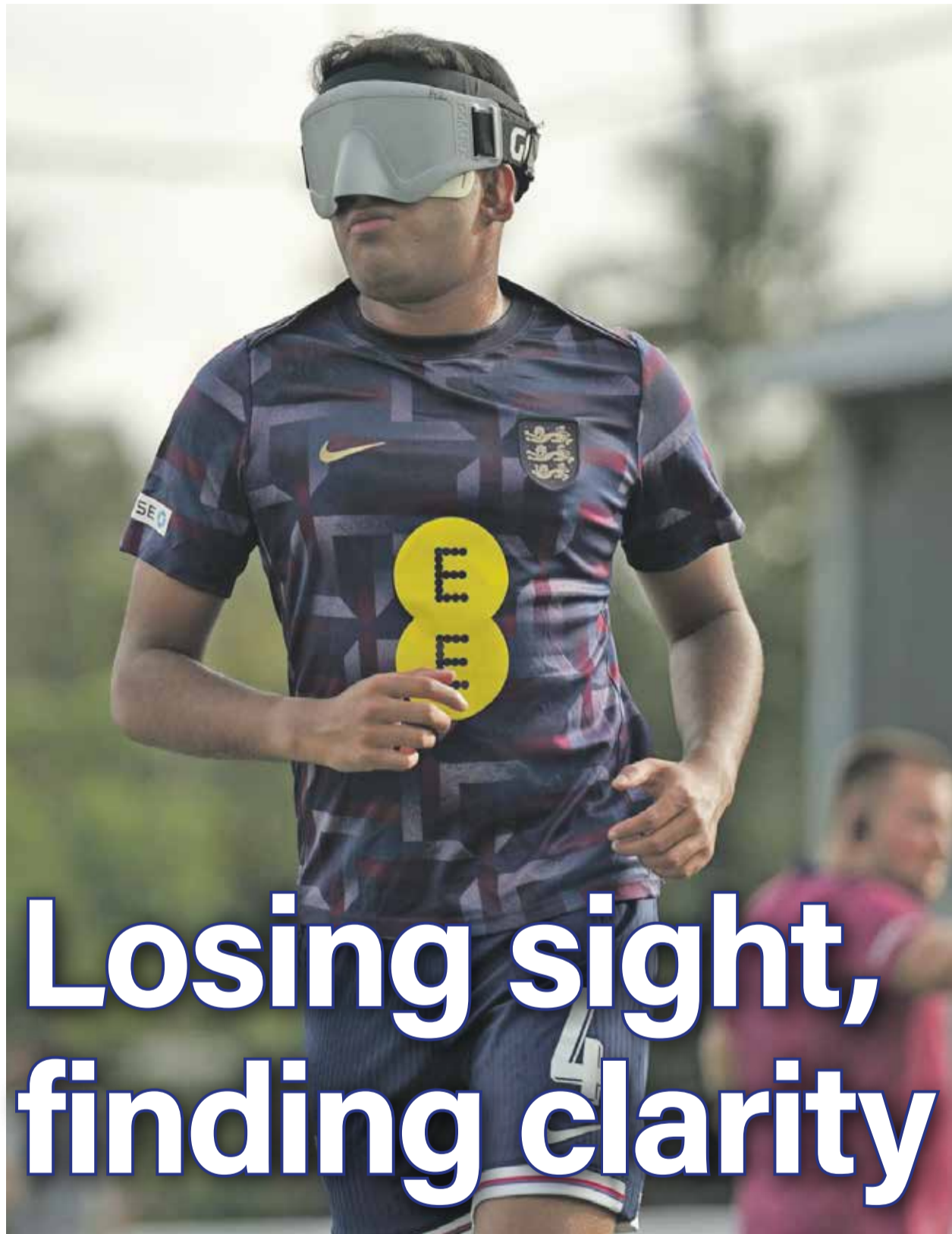
"Our junior players, representing our youth teams, and their families have been outstanding this year - their energy and commitment have been a real credit to the community. We're also grateful for the continued support from West Riding FA, whose backing means a great deal to everyone involved.

"Ramadan may have come to an end, but the need for support hasn't. We remain committed to continuing our charitable efforts both at home and abroad and hope the community will continue to support us as we work to make a lasting difference."

The organisers also paid tribute to the volunteers whose work behind the scenes ensured the competition ran smoothly - a reminder that tournaments like this are rarely sustained by headline names, but by quiet commitment, year after year.

In an era when football's top end is often dominated by billion-pound deals and sterile spectacle, the Ramadan Charity League offers something richer and more human: a vision of the game rooted in neighbourhoods, faith, generosity and belonging.

Five years in, Fairbank United's tournament is no longer just a community event. It is a Bradford institution - and a powerful case study in what grassroots football can still do when it remembers who it is for.



## Losing sight, finding clarity

**The mindset of England blind footballer Azeem Amir**

Continued from page 48

Football has always been central to Amir's life. "It was something to talk about on a Monday morning, even in primary school, we'd talk about the football over the weekend," he recalls.

"And inside or outside of school, you'd always find me with a ball at my feet."

Yet it was not until midway through high school that he discovered blind football, after a friend urged him to give it a try.

Initially sceptical about how the sport could function, he quickly came to understand its logic - and its fairness.

"It's the most fair and equal game there

is because apart from the goalkeeper, everyone's vision is equally limited and you're solely reliant on your listening skills."

Born with a condition called Ocular Auricular Syndrome, Amir has no vision in his right eye and only light perception in his left - meaning he can make out lights, shades and shadows only from within an arm's distance.

"When starting out in blind football, there was a long acclimatisation phase for me, because the little light perception I had was taken away, and I really had to hone in on my other senses," he recalls.

"But I persevered, and within a few years I was told that I had the ability

to play at a higher level. That's when opportunities that I was so fortunate to have at a young age, started to arrive."

Those opportunities came quickly. In 2018, aged 17, Amir was invited to senior England camps. A debut followed at a Grand Prix in Japan, opening the door to tournaments in Argentina, the United States, Brazil and across Europe. Before long, he had earned more than 40 senior caps for his country.

"I grew up watching Wayne Rooney, Frank Lampard, Steven Gerrard, and now I'm in a position where I'm singing the national anthem just like they used to," he said.

"There's a lot of challenges, dedication



Round up of all your local, national and international sporting news

Asian Express

**SPORT**

**Born with severe sight loss, Azeem Amir has gone on to win more than 40 England caps, build a social enterprise and challenge society's instinct to pity disability. For the 27-year-old blind footballer, adversity did not narrow life - it sharpened it.**



and a lot of time spent on the road, but it's all worth it - I'm in such a privileged position. I'm literally living out a dream."

#### **Beyond the idea of 'bachara'**

Amir is acutely aware of the assumptions that surround blind football and encourages sceptics to attend a match for themselves, arguing that its relentless, end-to-end pace makes it a compelling spectacle.

But it is not only the sport that is misunderstood. The 27-year-old also pushes back against the instinctive pity often directed towards disabled people. He points to the Punjabi term 'bachara' - a word used to describe someone seen as pitied or unfortunate.

"They think we are 'bachara', but have they spoken to any of us?" he says.

"People's first outlook is always negative but I live such an amazing life. I'm as far away from a 'bachara' as you could possibly imagine.

"A lot of this patronisation is based on a lack of education, which is why I'm so passionate about the work I'm doing."

That work extends well beyond the pitch. Amir sits on the board of Learn with ESS - short for Education, Sport and Speaking - a social enterprise designed to challenge individual and societal perceptions of disability.

"We deliver these workshops where people from various organisations and companies - not necessarily in sport - get to experience what it's like to live the life of someone with a disability," he explains.

"I started it myself but over the past three years, we're now a team of seven and we've worked with over 30,000 people."

Balancing that work alongside elite sport presents its own demands. Amir describes managing what he calls a "dual-career" as the hardest part of his routine.

"It's not easy. Far from it. But I love what I do and I'm very passionate about it."

#### **Perspective as a practice**

Blind football, he says, has changed more than his sporting life. It has reshaped the way he understands the world - and himself. "It's taught me so many life skills around self-advocacy, confidence and communication skills, and I'm so grateful for that," he says.

"I realised that I can either sit here and self-loathe, or I can tap into things like perspective, gratitude and empathy. There are people out there who have it worse than me - people who may not be able to walk, speak or communicate."

Of all the lessons he has learned, self-advocacy is the one he returns to most - particularly when speaking to younger people beginning to navigate life with a disability.

So when Amir says he has a better life than most, it is not bravado. It is gratitude, sharpened by adversity.

"If you can get to a point where you can comfortably speak about your condition and what help you need, all of a sudden you start to realise that the rest of the world starts to work around you rather than you working around the rest of the world."

Asian Express

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# Losing sight, finding clarity

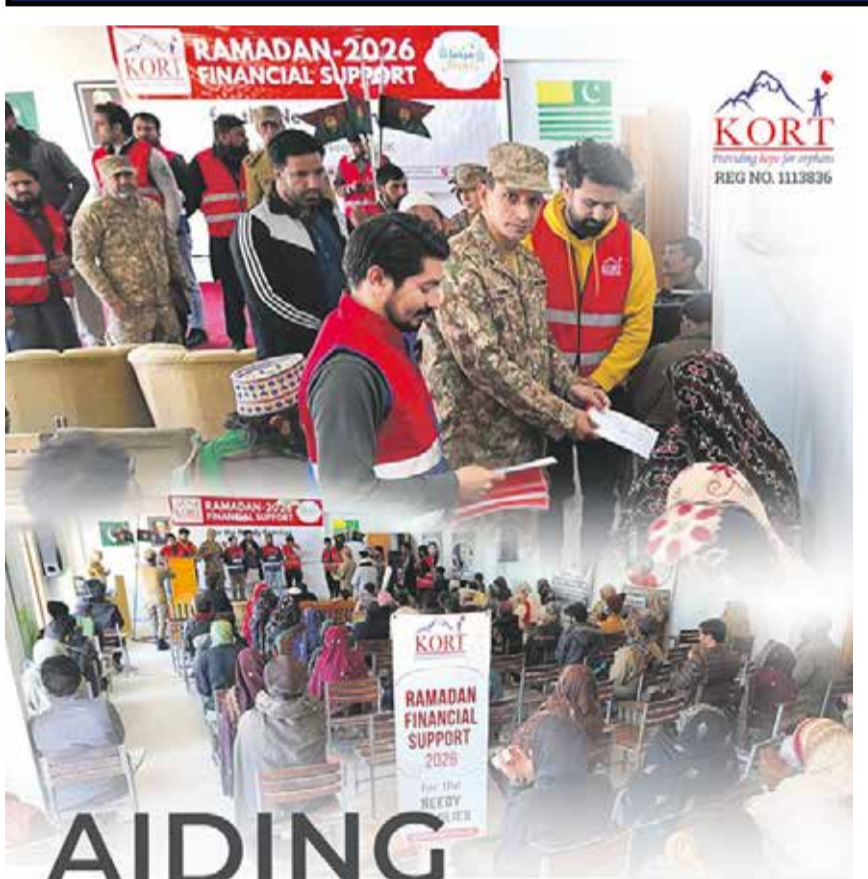
## The mindset of England blind footballer Azeem Amir

**“People have presumptions that our lives are bad and rubbish - but I genuinely believe I have a better life than 99% of people.”**

It is not the answer one might expect from a man who has lived with a visual impairment for most of his life.

But for England international Azeem Amir, adversity has never been a limitation. Instead, it has become the lens through which perspective, purpose and success have come sharply into focus.

**Continued on pages 46 & 47**



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