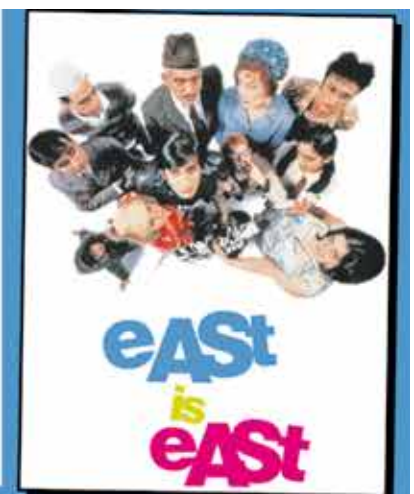




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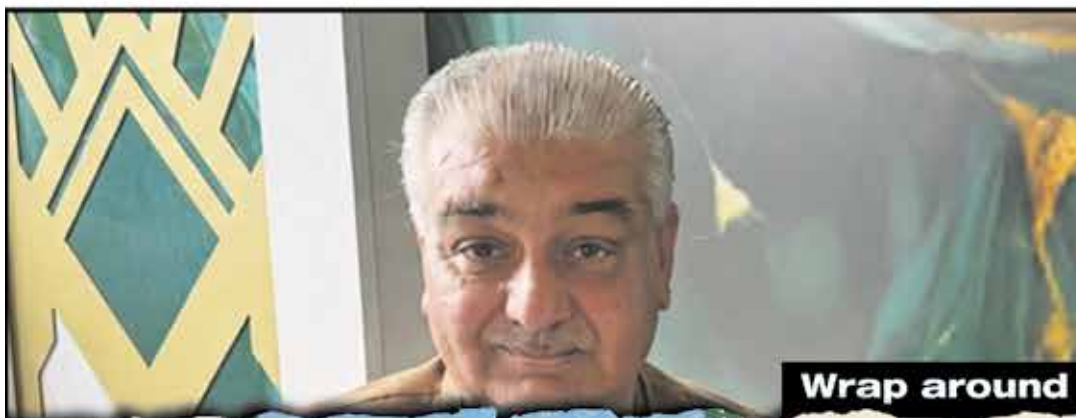
London's self-driving Ubers get green light for first passenger journeys



See pages 21 & 22

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One Man. One Road.

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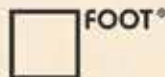
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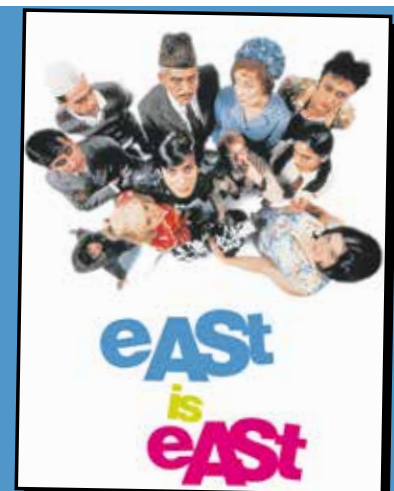
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OWNER OF JINNAH: Saleem Akhtar, entrepreneur, restaurateur and co-founder of the Leeds Road Festival

One Man. One Road. One Vision.

How Saleem Akhtar is rewriting the story of Leeds Road

For decades, Leeds Road has been one of Bradford's busiest commercial corridors. Home to some of Yorkshire's most recognisable South Asian businesses, it has generated millions of pounds for the local economy while feeding generations of families across the region.

Yet despite its commercial success, the area has rarely been recognised as the economic powerhouse it truly is.

Now one businessman is determined to change that.

Saleem Akhtar, entrepreneur, restaurateur and co-founder of the Leeds Road Festival, is leading what many are calling one of Bradford's most significant

grassroots business movements in recent years.

His ambition stretches far beyond staging a two-day festival. It is about creating a lasting legacy by uniting businesses, strengthening civic partnerships and repositioning Leeds Road as one of the city's flagship destinations for culture, commerce and community.

This vision has already attracted backing from Bradford Council, local MPs and dozens of businesses that have chosen to invest in something bigger than themselves.

More importantly, it is bringing together people who have rarely sat around the same table.

Continued on pages 4 & 5

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Leeds schoolboy, 10, reaches Children's Mayor final with bold mental health campaign



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Bahrawar's practical plans to improve support for young people have earned him a place among the city's final 12 candidates, with a vision built on one simple belief: every child deserves to be heard

While most 10-year-olds spend their summer thinking about football, holidays, or adventures with friends, Bahrawar has been busy campaigning to become the next Leeds Children's Mayor. He wants to make sure no child feels they have to struggle alone.

Bahrawar, a Year 5 student, is now one of 12 finalists in the 2026/27 Leeds Children's Mayor elections. Judges were impressed by his manifesto, which focuses on improving children's mental health and wellbeing.

Many children his age are still exploring the world, but Bahrawar is already thinking about how he can help improve it.

Bahrawar's determination comes from the values he has seen throughout his life.

He grew up watching his

grandfather, Haji Riaz Ahmad, spend decades serving the community. His parents and siblings have also followed this tradition, helping others whenever they can.

In his family, helping others was always seen as normal, not something special.

This everyday kindness has shaped how Bahrawar sees the world and those around him.

A campaign inspired by compassion

Bahrawar enjoys rugby, boxing, and adventure like many boys his age. But he also pays close attention to classmates who might be having a hard time. He notices when someone is quieter than usual, when a friend seems different, or when children are carrying worries that others might not see.

His empathy and determination to

help others led him to look into the Leeds Children's Mayor competition on his own.

When he learned that applicants needed to write a manifesto about improving life for young people in the city, he wrote his and gave it to his headteacher to submit.

In the weeks that followed, his ideas were reviewed along with entries from 40 other schools in Leeds. Panels from Leeds City Council and the Leeds Youth Council judged the entries, and he received exciting news: he was shortlisted as one of the final 12 candidates.

Putting children's mental health first

Instead of focusing on playgrounds or entertainment, Bahrawar decided to address what he sees as one of the biggest challenges

Bahrawar Ahmed with LCC Deputy
Leader councillor Salma Arif



for young people today.

His manifesto focuses on mental health and wellbeing. He says many children struggle in silence, not because help is unavailable, but because they do not know where to find it, how to ask for help, or even when they need it.

Rather than just pointing out the problem, he has suggested practical ideas that he believes could really help.

One idea is to create a website that lists all the mental health services available to children in Leeds. This would make it easier for young people and their families to see what support is out there and where to go for help.

He also suggests having trained wellbeing ambassadors in schools. These pupils would check in on classmates, encourage conversations about mental health, and help spot children who might be struggling.

He also proposes a city-wide "Your Mind Matters Day." This would give pupils a break from school pressures and let them join activities like sport, music, and art, all while focusing on their emotional wellbeing.

A young voice with a big vision

For Bahrawar, becoming Leeds Children's Mayor is about helping make Leeds a place where children feel safe to ask for help, confident to speak openly, and supported enough to enjoy being kids.

Making it to the final 12 is already a big achievement, but those close to Bahrawar think this is just the start. Whether he wins or not, his campaign has shown that leadership is about compassion, courage, and standing up for others, not age.

At only ten years old, Bahrawar has shown both adults and children that big ideas can come from young voices. For him, this campaign is not the end, but the first step toward a lifetime of serving the community that has always inspired him.



Voting for the Leeds Children's Mayor is now open.
Anyone aged 18 or under who lives in Leeds or goes to a Leeds school can take part.

Polls close at 5pm on Friday, 25 September.

To vote, visit:

www.surveys.leeds.gov.uk/s/LCMVoting2026/

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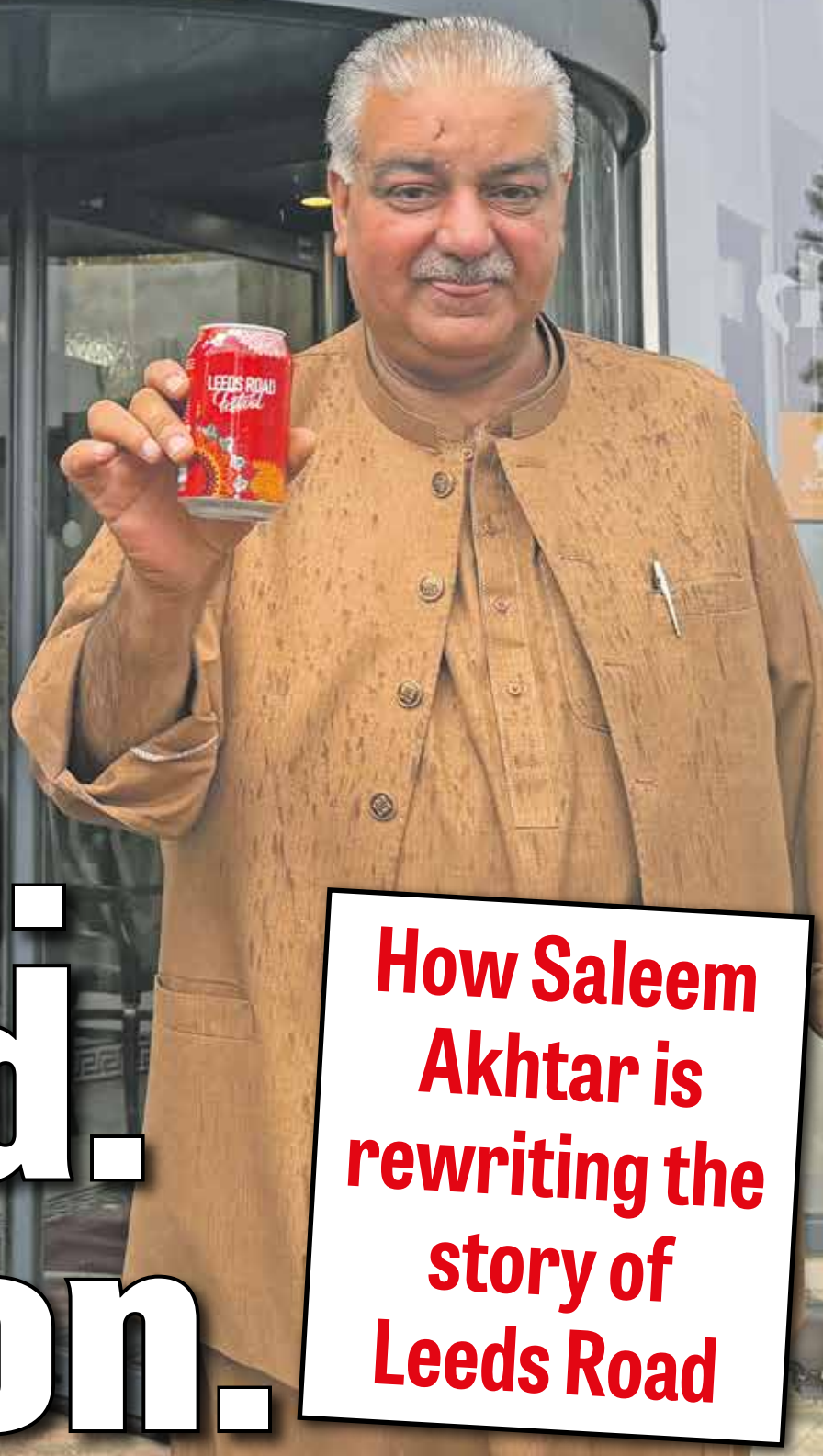
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One Man. One Road. One Vision.

**How Saleem
Akhtar is
rewriting the
story of
Leeds Road**



Front cover continued

“The business community and the community itself - we’ve brought everybody together,” says Saleem. “That’s what this has always been about.”

That simple statement may prove to be the festival’s greatest achievement.

From competition to collaboration

In most retail districts, neighbouring businesses compete. On Leeds Road, they are collaborating.

Some of the area’s biggest names - including Jinnah Restaurants, Akbar’s, Aagrah, Heera Foods, Al-Halal Worldwide and many more - have backed the initiative, recognising that a stronger Leeds Road benefits everyone.

Instead of asking what is good for one business, Saleem has persuaded them to consider what is good for the entire destination.

local businesses.

This year, Bradford Council has provided support, but most funding has again come from businesses determined to invest in their community.

While many events rely almost entirely on public funding, Leeds Road Festival has shown that when businesses believe in a shared vision, they are willing to invest their own money.

Saleem is quick to point out that the festival has never been about personal gain.

“Not a single penny is for me. Everything goes back into the festival and the community. That’s how it should be.”

The most important announcement is not this year’s festival. It is what comes next.

Saleem is now establishing a Leeds Road Business Forum that will eventually operate as a Community Interest Company (CIC), giving businesses a

The programme attracted major government backing alongside investment from Bradford Council, the West Yorkshire Combined Authority, Arts Council England and the National Lottery Heritage Fund. It helped generate an estimated £389 million in long-term economic growth, support almost 6,850 jobs by 2030 and create millions of additional visits to the district.

Interim evaluations have already shown stronger hotel occupancy, increased visitor spending and worldwide media exposure during the City of Culture year.

Leeds Road is now attempting to harness that momentum.

The Leeds Road festival is no longer simply an event. It is becoming part of Bradford’s wider economic story.

Last year’s festival attracted around 25,000 visitors. Organisers now believe attendance could exceed 50,000 across the weekend.

For local restaurants, retailers, cafés and independent businesses, which represents more than footfall. It means customers discovering businesses they may never have visited before. It means families returning long after the stages have disappeared. It means changing perceptions.

Changing Bradford’s narrative

Bradford has often found itself defined by headlines written elsewhere.

Crime:

Poverty:

Division:

Yet anyone who walks along Leeds Road sees another Bradford entirely - ambitious entrepreneurs, thriving family businesses, packed restaurants, and communities that continue to invest despite economic uncertainty.

Saleem believes the city’s greatest strength has always been its people.

His ambition is simply to bring them together. He adds: “If my broader vision succeeds, the lesson will extend far beyond one festival.

“It will demonstrate that regeneration does not always begin with cranes, government strategies or multimillion-pound developments. Sometimes it begins when local businesses decide they are stronger together than apart.”

Bradford is home to around 16,600 businesses, supporting approximately 198,000 jobs in a local economy worth more than £13 billion

The shift in mindset is significant. Bradford is home to around 16,600 businesses, supporting approximately 198,000 jobs in a local economy worth more than £13 billion. It is also one of Britain’s youngest and most diverse cities, with 165 languages spoken, and a population over 560,000.

Like many British cities, independent retail areas face growing pressure from online shopping, rising costs and changing consumer habits.

A festival with a bigger purpose

Last year’s inaugural Leeds Road Festival was supported through Bradford’s UK City of Culture programme alongside significant investment from

permanent collective voice.

Members will contribute annual fees that stay within the organisation to support projects benefiting the area. Discussions are already underway about securing additional public-sector investment.

Instead of businesses working independently, Leeds Road could soon have one organisation representing hundreds of employers, retailers and entrepreneurs.

It is the kind of place-based leadership increasingly encouraged across Britain.

The City of Culture effect

Bradford’s year as UK City of Culture showed what is possible when public bodies, businesses and communities work together.

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The parking sign mistake that could cost you hundreds

Millions of drivers are falling into Britain's growing parking trap, with motoring experts warning that one simple mistake could leave motorists facing a £100 parking charge - and, in some cases, a stressful legal battle.

Breakdown and road safety organisation GEM Motoring Assist says more than 14 million private parking charge notices were issued across Britain last year alone.

As families head to beaches, shopping centres, beauty spots and tourist attractions this summer, unfamiliar car parks are creating the perfect conditions for costly mistakes. From confusing signs and changing restrictions to fake QR code scams, experts say motorists face more pitfalls than ever before.

Many drivers assume parking rules are simple, but that is often far from the truth.

A single parking bay can be subject to different rules depending on the time of day, switching between residents' parking, pay-and-display, loading-only access, school street restrictions or bank holiday exemptions. Miss one sign - or fail to spot an additional notice tucked away elsewhere in the car park - and you could return to find a parking charge of £100 or more.

GEM is urging motorists to slow down before walking away from their vehicle and read every sign carefully instead of relying on memory or assuming the rules are the same as the last time they parked there.

Drivers are also being warned about a growing scam involving counterfeit parking payment QR codes. Fraudsters have been placing fake stickers over genuine payment notices, directing unsuspecting motorists to convincing clone websites designed to steal bank card details.

The organisation advises drivers to avoid scanning any QR code that looks damaged, altered or suspicious and instead pay using official parking apps, payment machines or trusted websites. Even something as simple as entering the wrong vehicle registration by one letter or number could invalidate a parking session and result in an unexpected parking charge.

For many motorists, the problems do not end when a ticket lands on the windscreen or arrives through the post. GEM says drivers often rush to challenge private parking charges without realising they may lose the chance to pay a discounted amount or become caught up in months of correspondence and legal action.

Instead, anyone receiving a private parking notice is advised to gather evidence immediately, photograph the signs and surrounding area, keep copies of any receipts or payment confirmations, and seek independent advice before deciding whether to pay or appeal.

A GEM spokesperson said too many motorists are being left "trapped and confused" by

increasingly complex parking rules, with honest mistakes escalating into stressful and expensive disputes.

One case has become a striking example of what campaigners describe as Britain's parking trap. Stanley Luckhurst, an 85-year-old pensioner from Buckinghamshire, spent 18 months fighting a legal claim after briefly parking in what turned out to be a poorly lit electric vehicle charging bay.

The retired motorist had stopped for around 20 minutes while visiting nearby shops before receiving a Parking Charge Notice from Sheffield-based Excel Parking. The dispute eventually reached court, where a judge dismissed the company's claim, criticising the way the case had been handled and ruling that the circumstances did not justify such aggressive enforcement.

Following his victory, Mr Luckhurst launched a petition calling on ministers to introduce tougher regulation of private parking firms and finally bring in the Government's long-delayed Parking Code of Practice. The code is intended to cap charges, improve the appeals process and curb aggressive debt recovery, but campaigners say drivers are still waiting for the promised reforms.

His experience, they argue, highlights how easily ordinary motorists can be caught out by confusing signs, unclear restrictions and disproportionate enforcement over what are often genuine mistakes.

Ticket trap Britain



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West Yorkshire's NHS prescription bill soars to almost £800m – among the highest in England

West Yorkshire is now one of England's biggest prescription hotspots. The NHS spent almost £800 million on medicines there in just one year, making it one of the most expensive areas for prescriptions in the country.

A new study shows that the NHS

West Yorkshire Integrated Care Board (ICB) is the third most expensive area in England for prescription spending per person. On average, each resident costs £292.42 a year in prescriptions.

Only Cambridgeshire and Peterborough (£379.82) and Herefordshire and Worcestershire

(£347.81) spend more per head.

The data also shows that West Yorkshire gave out more prescriptions per person than any other area in England.

A total of 96.2 million prescription items were given to 2.7 million people in West Yorkshire. That means each resident got an average of 35.5 prescriptions, the highest rate in the country.

That unprecedented demand pushed the region's annual medicines bill to a staggering £791.8 million – the largest overall prescription spend of any NHS Integrated Care Board in England.

These findings are based on an analysis by Cured Pharmacy, which looked at NHS Business Services Authority prescription data and compared spending across England's Integrated Care Boards.

West Yorkshire tops England for prescription volume

West Yorkshire ranked third for

spending per person, but no other NHS region gave out more prescription items.

Researchers say the high medicines bill in the region is mainly due to the large number of prescriptions, not because the drugs are unusually expensive.

The high number of prescriptions is putting additional pressure on NHS budgets, especially as demand for healthcare continues to rise. England's biggest spenders

Cambridgeshire and Peterborough spent the most in the country, at £379.82 per resident, even though they gave out far fewer prescriptions than West Yorkshire.

Their medicines were some of the most expensive in England, averaging £17.12 per item.

Herefordshire and Worcestershire were second, spending £347.81 per person. Prescription costs there were also high, at £17.11 per item.

London spends less than half as much

At the other end of the list, London had most of the lowest-spending areas.

North West London had the lowest prescription spend in England at just

£115.74 per person. That is less than half of what Cambridgeshire and Peterborough spent, and almost £177 less per resident than West Yorkshire.

South East London, South West London, North Central London, and North East London made up the rest of the five lowest-spending areas.

Tarun Kumar, Co-Founder and Superintendent Pharmacist at Cured Pharmacy, said the differences between regions are remarkable.

"What stands out is the enormous variation across England. Cambridgeshire and Peterborough spends more than three times per person what North West London does, and that gap is largely driven by the cost of individual prescriptions rather than the volume.

"This could reflect differences in the types of medications being prescribed, such as higher proportions of specialist or newer treatments in certain areas."

The figures highlight stark regional differences in prescribing across England, with West Yorkshire standing out not only for its enormous medicines bill but also for issuing the most prescriptions in the country.

West Yorkshire was third on the list, ahead of:

- Nottingham and Nottinghamshire – **£243.79**
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When kidney stones are more than just kidney stones:

Understanding Primary Hyperoxaluria Type 1

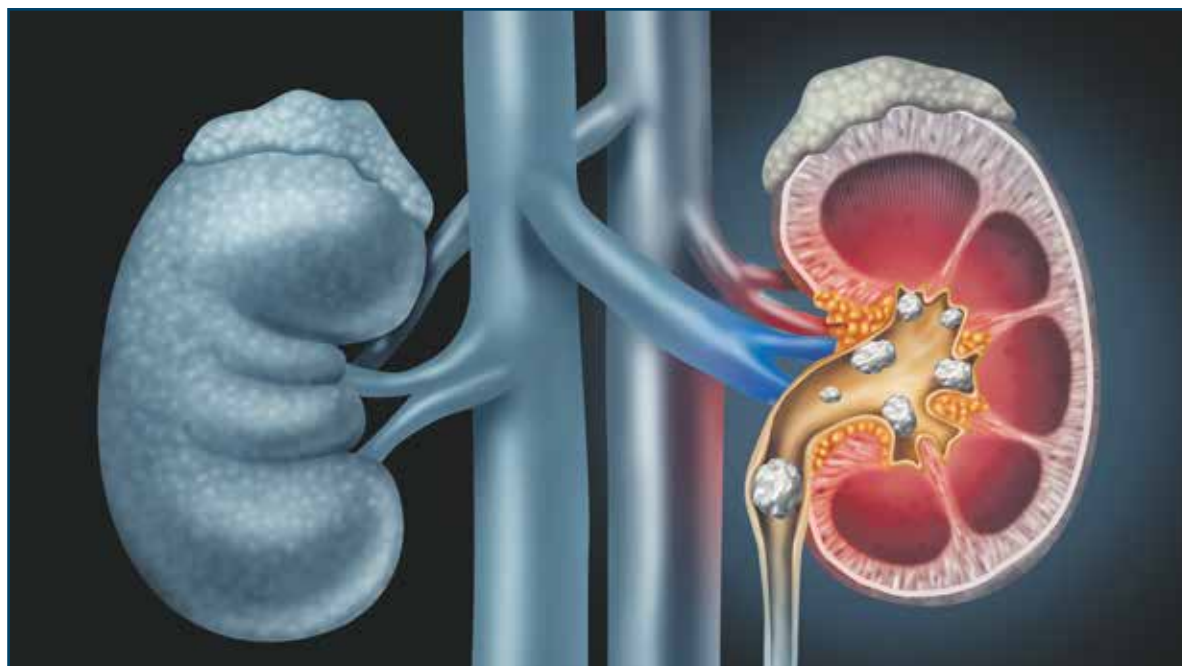
For most people, kidney stones are painful but treatable. However, when they occur repeatedly—especially in children, teenagers or young adults - they may be a sign of something much rarer: Primary Hyperoxaluria Type 1 (PH1), a genetic disease that often goes undiagnosed until significant kidney damage has already occurred.

Although PH1 affects only around one to three people per million worldwide, experts believe it is underdiagnosed because its symptoms resemble those of more common kidney conditions. Raising awareness is therefore essential to help people receive an earlier diagnosis and appropriate specialist care.

A rare disease that starts in the liver

Despite primarily affecting the kidneys, PH1 originates in the liver. The condition is caused by inherited changes in the AGXT gene. When the gene does not function properly, the liver produces excessive amounts of oxalate, a waste product that the body cannot break down.

The kidneys must filter this excess oxalate, which combines with calcium to form crystals. These crystals can lead to recurrent kidney stones,



calcium deposits in the kidneys (nephrocalcinosis) and progressive kidney damage. As kidney function declines, oxalate may also accumulate elsewhere in the body.

Recognising the signs

Recurrent kidney stones at a young age are one of the main warning

signs of PH1, although not everyone experiences the disease in the same way. Other symptoms may include blood in the urine, back or side pain, urinary tract infections and declining kidney function. Because PH1 is inherited, a confirmed diagnosis may also be relevant for other family

members, who could benefit from genetic testing.

Why diagnosis matters

PH1 is often mistaken for more common causes of kidney stones, meaning many patients experience years of investigations before the underlying condition is identified.

By the time PH1 is diagnosed, some people have already developed chronic kidney disease or kidney failure.

Earlier recognition allows patients to receive specialist assessment and management before irreversible kidney damage occurs.

Diagnosis and long-term care

Diagnosis usually involves reviewing a patient's medical and family history, alongside urine and blood tests to assess oxalate levels and kidney function. If PH1 is suspected, genetic testing can confirm the diagnosis, while imaging may identify kidney stones or calcium deposits.

Because PH1 is rare and complex, patients are often managed by multidisciplinary teams including nephrologists, urologists and genetic specialists.

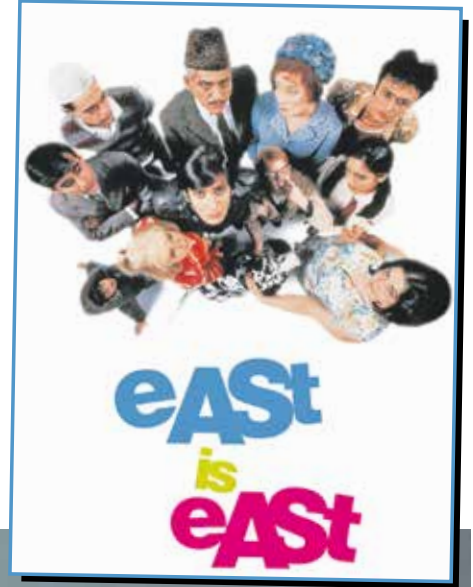
Living with PH1

PH1 requires lifelong monitoring and ongoing management to help preserve kidney function. Alongside the medical aspects, patients and families often face emotional and practical challenges. Access to specialist care, reliable information and appropriate support can make a meaningful difference throughout the disease journey.

For anyone seeking to learn more, the Living with PH1 website provides educational resources for patients, families and caregivers, including information on symptoms, diagnosis, disease management and specialist care. The website also includes practical resources and patient stories to help people better understand living with PH1.

'East Is East'

**heads back to its northern roots
this Autumn at the Octagon Theatre**



Samantha Power



Victoria Brazier



Thirty years after its acclaimed premiere, Ayub Khan Din's **East Is East** returns for a powerful anniversary production at the Octagon Theatre in Bolton, running from Friday 4th September – Saturday 3rd October.

Heartfelt, hilarious and deeply moving, **East Is East** is a timeless story about family, identity and belonging.

Set in 1970s Salford, this modern classic follows the Khan family living above a chip shop and on the fault line between two cultures. George Khan is determined to raise the family in his Pakistani way.

His English wife, Ella, just wants to keep the peace. Their seven children? They're busy discovering disco, denim, and defiance.

When George begins arranging marriages for his sons, rebellion erupts and loyalties are tested.

What follows is a hilarious and deeply moving battle between tradition and change.

Leading the cast is acclaimed stage and screen actor Bhasker Patel (*Oedipus*, *Broadway & West End*; *Emmerdale* ITV) as George alongside Stockport-born actor Samantha Power (*Brassic*, *Sky*; *Madame Blanc*, Channel 5) as Ella.

They're joined by a talented cast, including the return of Victoria Brazier to the Octagon stage and Rohan Macleod, who makes the exciting journey from the theatre's Kitchen & Bar team back to the main stage.

Director Kash Arshad said: "East Is East is my story.

"There are not many plays that speak to the experience of being brought up in a Muslim household, with a white British mother and a Pakistani father, who ran his own business, with kids who felt not British enough to be British nor Pakistani enough to be Pakistani.

"To get the opportunity to direct this play at the theatre where I started my directing journey and to be able to share it with audiences in Salisbury, Derby and the Citizens Theatre in Glasgow, my local theatre in my late teens/

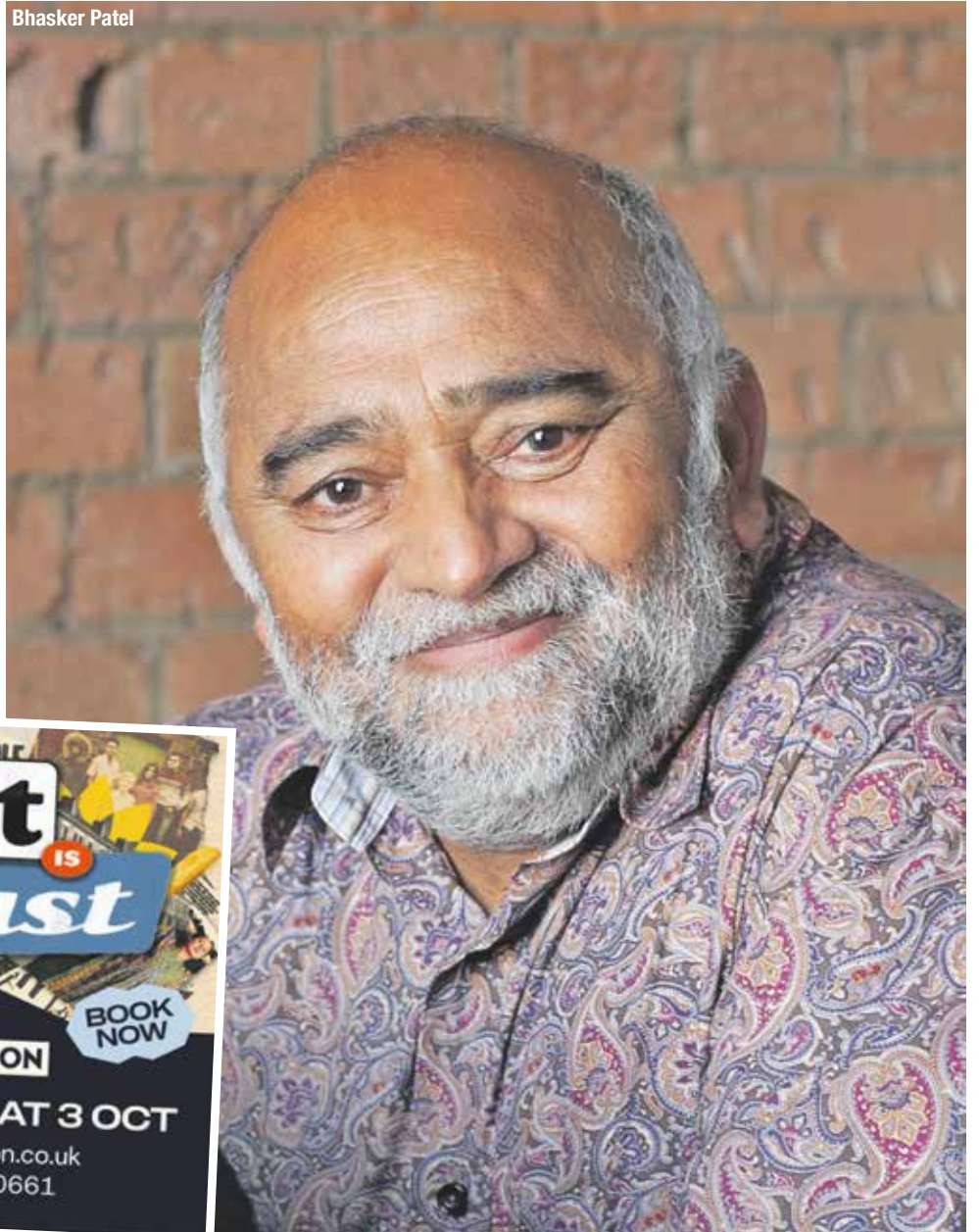
early twenties and where I first set foot on a professional stage, is a dream."

East Is East opens at Octagon Theatre from Friday 4th September till Saturday 3rd October before touring to Citizens Theatre, Derby Theatre Wiltshire Creative's Salisbury Playhouse.

Rohan Macleod



Bhasker Patel



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Academic honoured with UK's top teaching award for championing race equality

A Leeds Trinity University academic who has helped transform race equality in higher education has been recognised with one of the UK's highest honours for university teaching.

Dr Syra Shakir, Associate Professor of Learning and Teaching and Strategic Lead for Race Equity at Leeds Trinity University, has been awarded a prestigious National Teaching Fellowship (NTF) in recognition of her work tackling racism in education and improving outcomes for disadvantaged students.

The award, presented by Advance HE, celebrates educators who have made an outstanding and lasting contribution to teaching and the student experience across UK higher education.

Over the past two decades, Dr Shakir has become a leading voice on anti-racist education, helping to reshape policies, teaching practices and student support both at Leeds Trinity and across the higher education sector.

Her work has been credited

with dramatically narrowing the University's awarding gap between white and Global Majority students, reducing it from 13.1% in 2022 to just 2.3% in 2025 – significantly below the current UK sector average of 11.4%.

Dr Shakir also led Leeds Trinity's successful bid for the Race Equality Charter Silver Award in 2025, making it the first university in Yorkshire and only the seventh in the UK to achieve the recognition.

Alongside working with students to co-create more inclusive curricula, she has developed award-winning digital resources tackling racism, established coaching programmes to improve student success and advised universities and organisations across the country on creating meaningful and lasting change.

Her influence extends internationally through a network of more than 200 scholars and activists from 12 countries, all working to advance anti-racist education and practice.

Speaking after receiving the

Fellowship, Dr Shakir said the award recognised the belief that educational excellence and social justice go hand in hand.

She said universities should not only produce graduates but create communities where learning transforms lives, institutions continue to evolve and students leave believing they can help build a fairer society.

Leeds Trinity University Vice-Chancellor Professor Charles Egbu described the Fellowship as a well-deserved recognition of Dr Shakir's leadership and impact.

He said her pioneering work had helped establish the University as a national leader in race equity, while inspiring colleagues across the sector to challenge inequality and improve opportunities for disadvantaged students.

Dr Shakir is one of just 55 academics across the UK to receive a National Teaching Fellowship this year and becomes only the second member of staff from Leeds Trinity University to receive the honour, following Professor Leigh Hoath's award in 2024.



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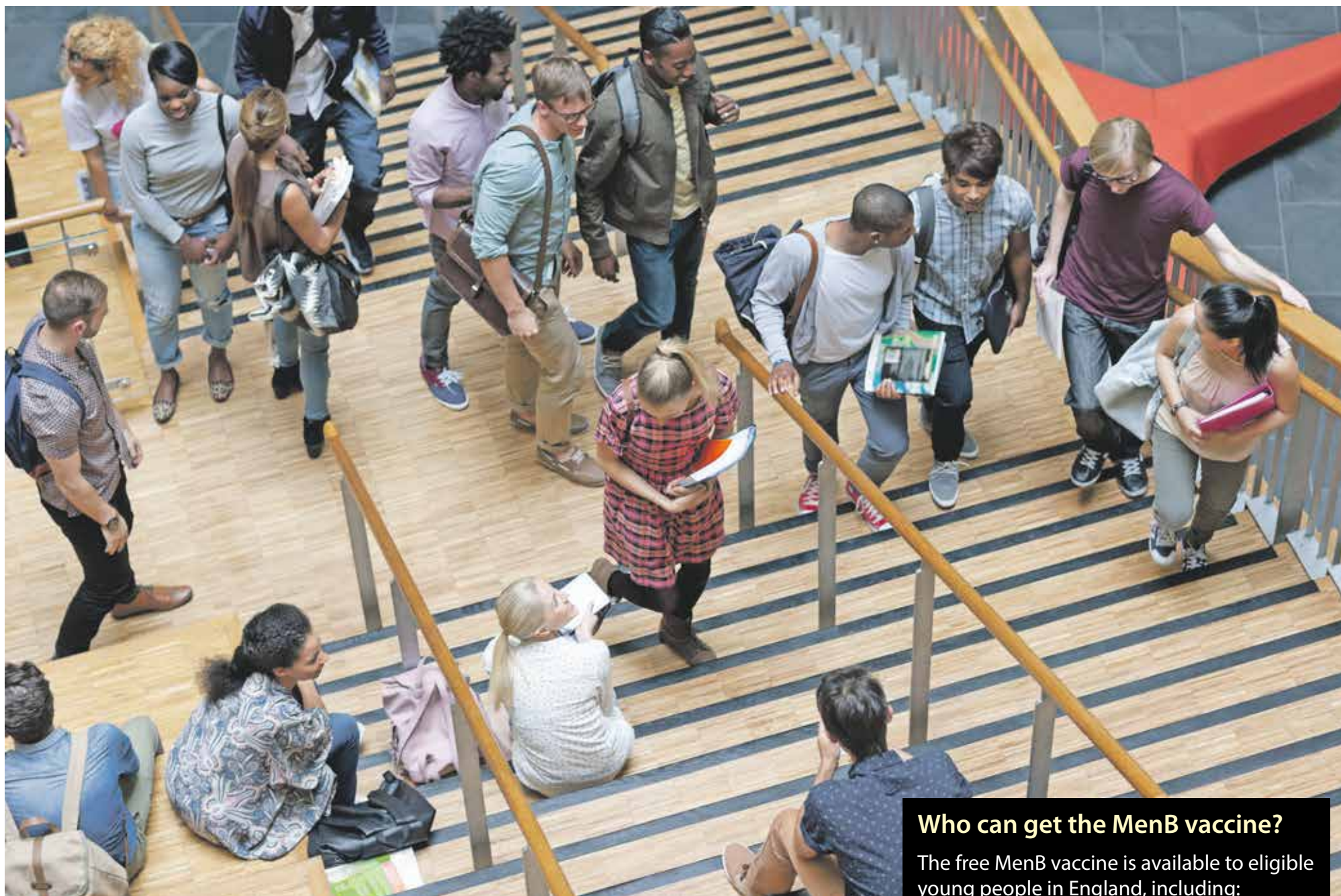
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Young people urged to get free MenB vaccine before university

Thousands of young people are being urged to get a free life-saving meningitis B (MenB) vaccine before heading to university, as health officials warn the disease can strike suddenly with devastating consequences.

More than 89,000 first doses have already been given since the NHS launched its biggest-ever MenB catch-up campaign on 20 July, while a further 135,000 appointments have been booked.

With hundreds of thousands of vaccination slots still available through community pharmacies, the NHS is urging everyone eligible to come forward before the new academic year begins.

Meningococcal B (MenB) infection can develop rapidly, causing meningitis and sepsis (blood poisoning). In the most serious cases, it can lead to brain damage, hearing loss, limb amputations or death.

The warning is particularly aimed at students, with those living in shared university accommodation around seven times more likely to catch the infection than young people of the same age who are

“This first-of-its-kind vaccination programme has made a great start, with tens of thousands of young people taking the first step towards vital protection in just under a fortnight.

not at university.

Around one million young people are eligible for the catch-up programme, including 17 and 18-year-olds and those starting university or residential further education colleges for the first time this autumn.

The vaccine requires two doses, given at least 28 days apart, to provide the strongest protection.

Caroline Temmink, the NHS's Director of Vaccination, said: “This first-of-its-kind

vaccination programme has made a great start, with tens of thousands of young people taking the first step towards vital protection in just under a fortnight.

“If you're eligible, please book as soon as possible. Two doses are needed for the best protection before the new university year begins.”

Health Minister Baroness Merron said it was encouraging to see so many young people coming forward but stressed that both doses are essential to ensure full protection.

Dr Shamez Ladhani, Consultant Epidemiologist at the UK Health Security Agency, said: “I can't stress enough how vital it is to get a second dose, as only then will you have strong protection against this devastating disease.”

Community pharmacies are delivering the vaccinations nationwide, with Janet Morrison OBE, Chief Executive of Community Pharmacy England, saying demand had been high and pharmacies had “leapt into action” to make the life-saving vaccine easily accessible.

Who can get the MenB vaccine?

The free MenB vaccine is available to eligible young people in England, including:

- Young people born between 1 September 2007 and 31 August 2008.
- Anyone born on or after 21 July 2001 who is starting university for the first time this autumn.
- Anyone born on or after 21 July 2001 who is starting a residential further education college for the first time this autumn.

What you need to know:

- ✓ Two doses are needed for the best protection.
- ✓ The second dose must be given at least 28 days after the first.
- ✓ 17 and 18-year-olds can book online via the NHS National Booking Service to receive their vaccine at participating community pharmacies.
- ✓ Other eligible young people should contact a participating pharmacy directly to arrange an appointment.

Why it matters

Meningitis B can cause meningitis and blood poisoning (sepsis), leading to serious complications including brain damage, hearing loss, limb amputations, and in some cases, death. First-year university students are around seven times more likely to contract the disease than young people of the same age who are not attending university.



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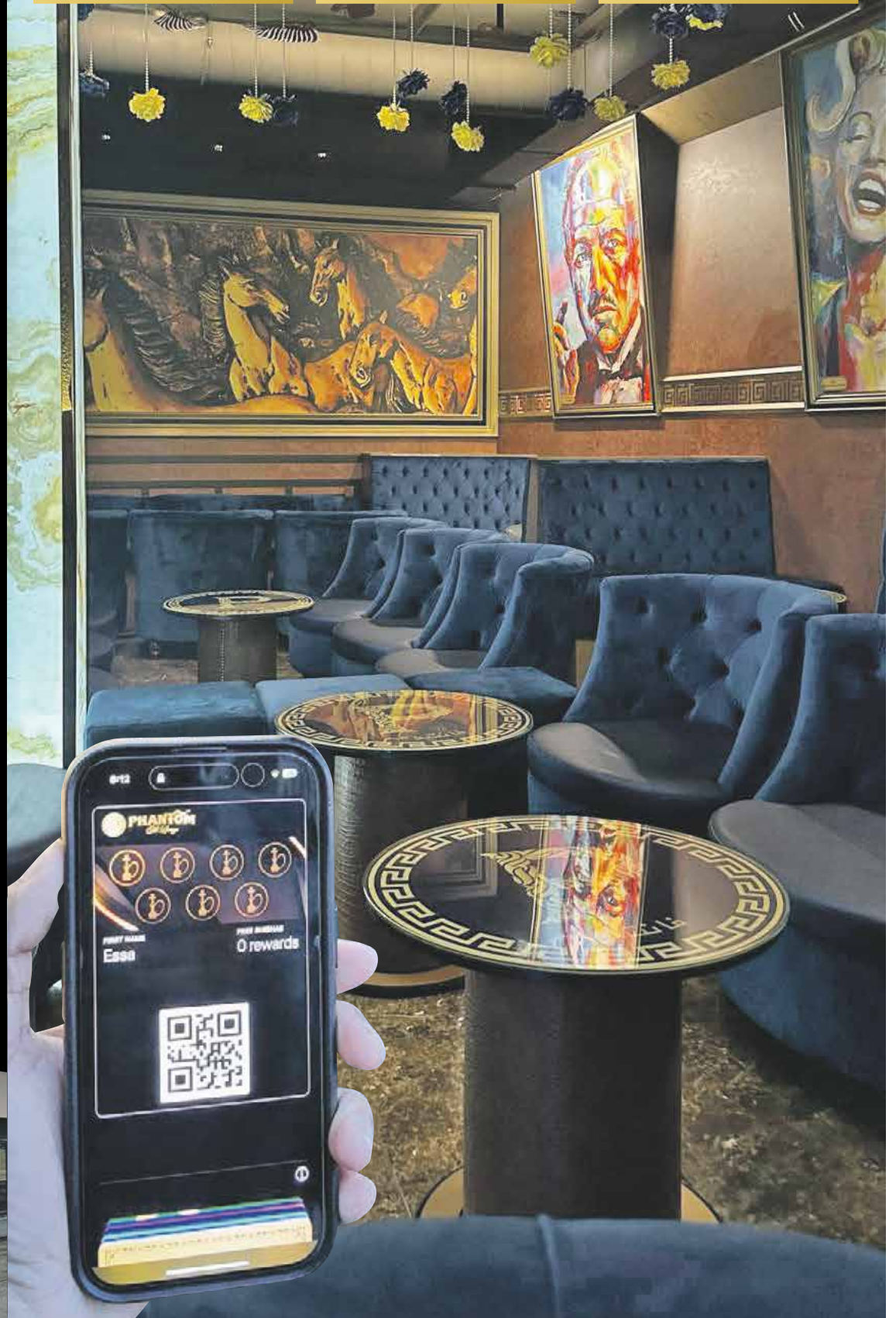
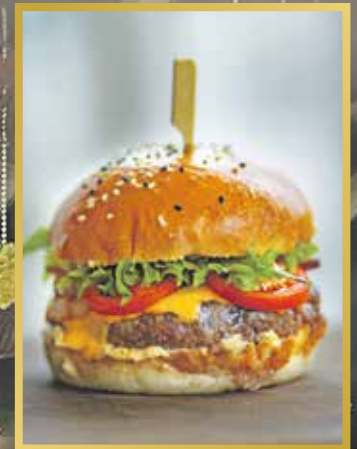
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IT'S BACK, & BIGGER THAN BEFORE!

Leeds Road Festival grows to become an important part of West Yorkshire's cultural calendar

**Expected
attendance:
Around
50,000
visitors**



Around 50,000 thousand people are expected as the Leeds Road Festival brings music, culture, business, and community pride to the heart of Bradford.

The festival started as an idea to celebrate one of Bradford's most well-known 'Leeds Road' corridor, which is a real economic powerhouse in Bradford, with hundreds of businesses driving the area's growth. The festival will showcase the diversity and vibrancy of this iconic road, renowned for its incredible offering of Asian food, fashion, and retail.

Samad Iqbal, General Manager of Akbar's:

"The Leeds Road Festival is a chance for our community to come together and celebrate everything that makes this area special – our people, our businesses and our community spirit."

"Our late founder, Shabir Hussain, had always believed in Leeds Road. By opening Akbar's here, he helped pave the way for other businesses to invest and thrive, creating the vibrant destination we see today."

"The festival not only showcases the incredible businesses on our doorstep, but also inspires young people by proving that success and opportunity can be built within their own community. By supporting the festival, you're investing in the next generation."

"Together, we can challenge outdated perceptions of Bradford, celebrate our achievements and continue building a stronger, more prosperous community. We'd be proud to have you join us in making the Leeds Road Festival a celebration of everything this community represents."

FESTIVAL AT A GLANCE

Dates: **Throughout August 2026**

Main Festival: **Saturday 15 & Sunday 16 August**

Venue: **Bradford Moor Park & Leeds Road**

Entry: **Free**

After a very successful first year in 2025 that brought in around 20,000 thousand visitors and lots of positive feedback, the Leeds Road Festival is returning in 2026. Organisers say this year's event will be even bigger, better and more exciting than before.

The festival runs all through August and ends with a free two-day event at Bradford Moor Park on 15th and 16th August.

For festival updates, follow on social media @LeedsRoadFest on TikTok & Instagram



LEEDS ROAD FESTIVAL 2026 SPONSORS

Over the weekend, famous performers from around the world will share the stage with international and local artists. Dozens of food stalls, craft sellers, and community groups will turn Bradford Moor Park into a lively celebration of culture.

Families can enjoy fairground rides, children's activities, exhibitions, fashion shows, heritage displays, and live performances during the two days, making it an event for all ages.

The festival is more than music and entertainment

For decades, Leeds Road has been known as the city's 'Curry Mile', and is one of the busiest commercial areas. It is home to independent businesses, award-winning restaurants, specialist shops, and communities with roots in South Asia, the Middle East, Eastern Europe, Africa, and more.

Last year's first event showed what can happen when businesses, charities, public groups, and local residents work together for one goal:

Nadim Hanif, CEO Asian Express Newspaper:

"Last year's atmosphere was unforgettable. You could feel the excitement throughout the whole weekend. The food, music and entertainment were fantastic, but what stood out most was seeing so many different communities celebrating together."

"It felt like the whole of Bradford came together in one place. This is exactly the kind of event Yorkshire needs more of."

Mani Bhatoa of Heera Foods:

"We're incredibly proud to be a sponsor of the Leeds Road Festival. Bradford is one of the UK's most diverse cities, and events like this bring people from all backgrounds together to celebrate, connect and enjoy everything our community has to offer."

"At Heera, being part of the community is about more than business. It's about giving back to the people and families who have supported us over the years and helping create opportunities for everyone to come together."

"We hope the festival brings families, friends and neighbours together to enjoy a fantastic weekend and celebrate the community spirit that makes Bradford such a special place."

celebrating the people who make Leeds Road special.

This year, that momentum has grown with the number of independent businesses supporting it. This level of support sends a strong message.

It shows that people now see Leeds Road Festival as more than just a local event - it has become an important part of West Yorkshire's cultural calendar.

Saleem Akhtar, co-founder of the Leeds Road Festival and owner of Jinnah Restaurants, said: "We're delighted to be bringing the Leeds Road Festival back for a second year after the incredible response to last year's event during Bradford's City of Culture celebrations."

"Thanks to the fantastic support of our local MP Imran Hussain, Bradford Council, Bradford Culture Company and businesses from across the city, we're looking forward to delivering another unforgettable festival for the whole community."

"Whether you're coming for the food, entertainment, shopping or family fun, there's something for everyone. We can't wait to welcome you to Leeds Road and celebrate everything that's great about our community."

2026 HIGHLIGHTS

- International music performances
- Headline performance Abrar-ul-Haq
- Celebrity artists
- Live cultural entertainment
- Family funfair
- Global street food
- Fashion shows
- Community market stalls
- Children's activities
- Heritage displays
- Arts and crafts
- Local business showcase
- Charity and community exhibitions

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Bradford to introduce ANPR traffic enforcement cameras at two city junctions

The first enforcement cameras have now been installed at the following junctions and will become operational on 17 August 2026:

- **Shipley Airedale Road / Leeds Road - enforcing the existing no-right-turn restriction**
- **Godwin Street / Sunbridge Road - enforcing correct use of the existing yellow box junction**

Drivers in Bradford will begin receiving warning notices from later this month as new traffic enforcement cameras are introduced at two busy city junctions.

Bradford Council said the cameras were designed to improve road safety and reduce congestion by targeting motorists who ignore existing traffic restrictions, including banned turns and yellow box junction rules.

The first cameras have been installed at the junction of Shipley Airedale Road and Leeds Road, where they will enforce a no-right-turn restriction, and at Godwin Street and Sunbridge Road, where they will monitor the yellow box junction.

The cameras will become operational on 17 August, although for the first six months first-time offenders will receive warning notices instead of fines.

The council said the cameras would only enforce existing traffic rules and would not introduce any new restrictions.

After the warning period ends, motorists

who fail to comply could receive a £70 Penalty Charge Notice, reduced to £35 if paid within 21 days.

The authority said the cameras would use Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) technology, similar to systems already used to enforce bus lanes and speed limits across the district.

Officials said enforcement would focus on locations where drivers repeatedly ignored traffic regulations, causing congestion and increasing the risk of collisions for motorists, cyclists and pedestrians.

The council also said cameras would be reviewed regularly and could be removed if compliance remained high for 12 months.

A public consultation has now opened on proposals to introduce enforcement at two further locations.

The sites are the Vicar Lane and Bridge Street junction, where a no-right-turn restriction would be enforced, and the Manchester Road and Croft Street junction,

where cameras would target banned turns and vehicles blocking the box junction.

The consultation runs from 5 August until 16 September.

Councillor Andrew Judson, Bradford Council's portfolio holder for economy, regeneration and planning, said the scheme was intended to improve safety rather than generate revenue.

"Moving traffic enforcement is about keeping people safe and keeping the Bradford district moving," he said.

"Dangerous and inconsiderate driving causes congestion, puts pedestrians and cyclists at risk, and disrupts public transport.

"Our aim is not to penalise drivers unnecessarily, but to improve compliance, reduce danger and make our roads safer and work better for everyone."

The council said further consultations would be held on additional camera locations in future as part of an annual programme focusing on areas with longstanding congestion or safety concerns.



business

power

ROBOTAXIS ARE COMING!

London's self-driving Ubers get green light for first passenger journeys



See page 22



SEKHON GROUP
OF COMPANIES



business power

Another Easy Defeat

EasyGroup Limited, the multi-national owner of all of the intellectual property rights to the “easy” brands is no stranger to the Intellectual Property Courts. It has been involved in numerous trade mark disputes, having initiated approximately 76 claims against opponents in various industries and sectors since 2015. Readers of this publication may recall that easyGroup lost a High Court claim against Premier Inn for the alleged infringement of its trade marks last year.

In the latest dispute, easyGroup brought a claim against Easyfeetstore, an Estonian company, for its use of the name “EASYFEET” and the “EASYFEET” logo on orthopaedic insoles. Easyfeetstore traded internationally, including in the United Kingdom, and held their own UK registration for the “EASYFEET” mark. EasyGroup argued that the branding infringed its rights and took unfair advantage of its reputation.

EasyGroup pursued claims for infringement under the Trade Marks Act 1994 as well as a claim for passing off. In addition to which easyGroup sought to have Easyfeetstore’s trade mark “EASYFEET” invalidated i.e. cancelled on the grounds that it should never have been granted in the first place.



All of easyGroup’s claims were dismissed by the Intellectual Property Enterprise Court. The Court found the absence of any real similarity between the parties’ goods and services. EasyGroup’s activities were in sectors such as transport, retail and brand licencing whereas Easyfeetstore operated in a niche area, selling specialist footwear products.

Further, any similarities between the marks were weak as there was no visual, phonetic or conceptual similarity. Accordingly, consumers were unlikely to be confused into thinking that Easyfeet insoles were connected with easyGroup. Consumers shopping for orthopaedic insoles were unlikely to see any connection with easyGroup’s businesses, despite the shared “easy” prefix.

The existence of a “family” of trade marks which share common features (for example, easyJet, easyHotel, easyStorage, easyMoney) can increase the likelihood of confusion where the offending sign uses one or more of those features, but in this instance, easyGroup’s attempts to rely on its “family” of “easy” marks did not succeed, largely because the shared element lacked distinctiveness and had not been shown to uniquely identify easyGroup in the minds of consumers.

This decision is another loss for easyGroup and illustrates the Court’s reluctance to extend broad protection to branding built around ordinary words which lack distinctive character. Simply sharing a common word is not enough to establish trade mark infringement, particularly where the businesses operate in completely different fields.

If you are involved in any intellectual property dispute or require advice and assistance with the registration of trade marks, then Blacks Solicitors can assist www.lawblacks.com. Please contact Luke Patel on 0113 227 9316 or by email at lpatel@lawblacks.com.

**Please contact Luke Patel on 0113 227 9316
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Transport for London has licensed a fleet of autonomous all-electric Ford Mustang Mach-E vehicles, with more than 100,000 people already signed up to experience the UK’s robotaxi revolution

ROBOTAXIS ARE COMING!

London’s self-driving Ubers get green light for first passenger journeys

The future of travel is about to arrive on London’s streets after the capital gave the green light to its first fleet of robotaxis, with more than 100,000 people already signing up for the chance to experience a journey driven by artificial intelligence.

Transport for London (TfL) has granted private hire vehicle licences to a number of autonomous, all-electric Ford Mustang Mach-E vehicles developed by British self-driving technology company Wayve and operated through Uber.

The landmark approval means selected passengers will be invited to take the first commercial autonomous rides later this summer, ahead of a wider public launch.

But before anyone imagines empty front seats gliding through the capital, there is one important catch.

Every vehicle will initially carry a fully licensed private hire driver behind the wheel, ready to take control if needed, while the technology is assessed in real-world conditions.

If the trials prove successful, Uber and Wayve will still need separate approval from the Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency before the vehicles can operate without a human driver.

The self-driving cars are based on Ford’s all-electric Mustang Mach-E SUV and have been fitted with Wayve’s British-built autonomous driving system, supported by an array of cameras and radar that continuously monitor the road around them.

TfL confirmed that the vehicles underwent extensive safety assessments before licences were granted, and that experts are satisfied that the modifications do not compromise passenger safety.

Unlike many autonomous systems that rely on highly detailed maps and fixed routes,

Wayve’s artificial intelligence has been trained to learn from experience, allowing it to adapt to unfamiliar roads, changing weather and the unpredictable nature of city driving, much like a human behind the wheel.

The company has been developing and testing its technology on London’s notoriously challenging streets since 2018, and says its AI has now demonstrated its capabilities in more than 500 cities worldwide.

The launch is a major milestone for Uber’s global autonomous ambitions. The ride-hailing giant now works with more than 30 autonomous vehicle partners worldwide and has already facilitated millions of autonomous journeys across its international network.

Sarah Gates, Wayve’s Vice President of Global Affairs and Assurance, described the approval as “an important step” towards enabling Londoners to experience autonomous driving, adding that the responsible deployment of the technology could create safer, cleaner and quieter streets.

Uber’s Global Head of Autonomous Mobility Operations, Annie Duvnjak, said the response from Londoners had been “incredible”, with huge demand from people eager to experience British-developed autonomous driving technology for themselves.

Not everyone is celebrating the arrival of robotaxis. The GMB Union, which represents thousands of private hire drivers, warned that the technology could have significant implications for the future of the profession.

GMB Union called for greater clarity on how drivers would be supported if autonomous vehicles eventually reduce demand for traditional taxi services, arguing that technology should not replace the experience, judgement and human connection offered by professional drivers.



**SEKHON GROUP
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business power

New tech sees Met quadruple number of shoplifters brought to justice

New technology being rolled out as part of the Met's crackdown on retail crime has quadrupled the number of shoplifters being brought to justice in the capital.

The system, which until now has been piloted in six London boroughs, will be in use in a further eight boroughs from today with more to follow in the coming months.

It lets retailers submit CCTV footage, witness statements and other evidence directly to officers, allowing them to track, arrest and build cases against offenders more quickly. Previously, officers might have had to wait up to 28 days or longer for CCTV and statements, now they get that evidence in minutes.

It is already being used by major high street chains including Tesco, Boots, M&S and Greggs.

New figures released today show that where shoplifting is reported using the new tech, there is a positive outcome (a caution, charge or other criminal disposal) in 29.4 per cent of cases.

The Met average prior to its introduction was just 7.3 per cent.

Chief Inspector Rav Pathania, the Met's lead for business crime, said: "The results speak for themselves. This crime reporting technology is helping us identify offenders faster and bring more shoplifters to justice. By receiving CCTV footage and evidence directly from retailers at

the point a crime is committed, we can build stronger cases and act more decisively.

"Tackling retail crime remains a top priority for the Met. Reported shoplifting offences across London are down by almost four per cent, but we're not taking our foot off the pedal as evidenced by this continued use of new tech.

"Shoplifters should be under no illusion – we are increasing our capability to catch you and put you before the courts."

The crime reporting platform is currently being used by subscribing retailers across Westminster, Kensington and Chelsea, Hammersmith and Fulham,

Lewisham, Greenwich, and Bexley.

Following the success of pilot, the Met is expanding its use from today, to retailers in Southwark, Lambeth, Sutton, Croydon, Bromley, Hillingdon, Ealing and Hounslow.

The Met remains committed to cracking down on shoplifters. In the last financial year, reported shoplifting offences across London fell by 3.7 per cent compared with the previous year, equivalent to around 3,500 fewer offences.

Over the same period, the Met made almost 50 per cent more arrests for retail crime, while the number of positive outcomes, more than doubled from 2,682 to 5,996.

Julie Murphy, Vice President

for London and Travel division, Boots, said: "Boots is committed to partnering with the Metropolitan Police to tackle retail crime in the capital. Harnessing retail crime technology - which is available in all Boots stores across London - enables our store teams to report incidents more quickly and effectively to the Police and focuses our collective resources on targeting high harm offenders.

"The results published by the Met show that we are making progress in bearing down on shop theft, and Boots is pleased to be supporting the roll-out of Direct to Police reporting via the platform to a further eight London boroughs."



The government has announced a £100 million investment to help more early-stage businesses secure funding, with ministers promising to expand access to venture capital beyond London and support economic growth across the UK.

The funding will be delivered through the British Business Bank's Investor Pathways Capital Initiative, which backs first-time venture capital fund managers investing in promising start-ups.

Ministers say the latest investment could help launch up to 10 new venture capital funds focused on businesses in towns and cities across the country.

The £100 million package forms the next phase of a wider £400 million programme designed to improve access to finance for innovative companies as they seek to grow, create jobs and attract private investment.

£100M venture capital boost to help start-ups grow across the UK

The Treasury said expanding venture capital outside the capital would help ensure businesses in every region have greater access to early-stage funding, which is often seen as one of the biggest barriers to growth.

Chancellor John Healey said wealth creation remained one of his priorities and that supporting businesses was essential to building stronger local economies.

He said the investment would provide "the fuel to drive new life into local economies up and down the country" at a time when many firms continue to face rising business costs.

The announcement follows the launch of the first Investor Pathways Capital cohort in June, when the British Business Bank committed up to £90 million to support 10 new microfunds. Applications for the next

round of funding are expected to open in autumn 2026.

Economic Secretary to the Treasury Lucy Rigby said businesses were "the backbone of our economy" and that improving access to finance would help firms grow, innovate and create jobs wherever they are based.

The announcement coincided with visits by Ms Rigby to Sheffield and Leeds, where she met business leaders, lenders and investors to

discuss improving access to finance for companies across Yorkshire.

The government said the move forms part of a wider strategy to strengthen business finance and encourage investment throughout the UK, rather than concentrating funding in London and the South East.

It also highlighted recent reforms to the Growth Guarantee Scheme, which are expected to increase lending capacity by £2 billion a year by 2028-29. Ministers estimate the changes could help a further 12,000 smaller businesses access finance annually through longer loan terms and broader eligibility criteria.

The British Business Bank said it would continue supporting businesses through a range of debt finance, venture capital and regional investment programmes aimed at helping firms develop from start-up to scale-up.



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Nervousness biggest cause of driving test failure



With learner drivers facing a wait of nearly six months at more than half of the UK's driving test centres*, it's no surprise that budding motorists are booking their driving tests as early as possible – even if they run the risk of not passing first time.

And according to research by Young Driver**, the UK's leading under-17s driver trainer, 73% of those pupils who fail their tests at first attempt will have done so due to nervousness, rather than a lack of technical skills.

“How frustrating it must be to wait half a year to take your test, and then be told that you've failed

and need to reapply?” said Ian Mulingani, MD of Young Driver.

“Having appropriate levels of confidence during your test is vital, and combined with the right technical skills, will give you the tools you need to pass first time. Early driver training, well before youngsters hit 17, boosts that confidence and ultimately creates safer drivers.”

Young Driver has provided nearly 1.7m ADI-accompanied lessons to under-17s during the last 16 years, operating from over 70 sites across the UK using its brand-new 170-strong fleet of Suzuki Swifts which can be driven by children

aged nine or over. Even children as young as four are catered for, with the organisation's purpose-built Firefly Sport EV teaching the basics of driving before kids move into the full-sized cars.

As well as a lack of preparedness for the driving test, Young Driver's research revealed that 89% of its ADIs (Approved Driving Instructors) had witnessed pupils who they knew would ‘fall to pieces’ and fail on the day due to a lack of confidence. Which was hardly surprising when 65% of instructors said that either pupils or their parents were pushing for a test booking before they were ready.

“Tellingly,” said Mulingani, “only two per cent of our instructors believed that over-confidence had contributed to their students failing; in a vast majority of cases it's the complete opposite.

“That's why making young people feel more relaxed and assured behind the wheel is key during their actual driving test. Our pre-17 training sessions do just that, and have contributed to 73% of Young Driver students passing their practical driving test first time, versus the national average of just 47%.”

But Young Driver's panacea has been to create safer drivers.

The organisation questioned 450 past pupils who had turned 17 in the previous three years about any accidents they'd had since passing their driving test.

The research revealed that, compared with a national average of 20%, just 3.3% of Young Driver's past pupils had crashed their car in the most dangerous six-month period immediately after passing their tests.

“Which is proof,” concluded Mulingani, “that teaching kids to drive in their earlier years is not only fun, but also creates safer drivers who are more likely to pass their tests first time.”

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5 DIY security upgrades every homeowner should tackle

From replacing an old cylinder lock to securing a side gate, simple DIY upgrades can help improve everyday home security – and many can be completed without calling in a professional.

Home security doesn't always require expensive alarm systems or major renovations. In many cases, a few practical upgrades can make a noticeable difference to everyday peace of mind, while giving homeowners greater confidence in the security of their property.

Smith & Locke has highlighted five straightforward DIY security improvements that

can typically be completed over the course of a weekend using readily available hardware and basic tools.

Many of these improvements require only basic DIY skills and can often be completed in under an hour, making them accessible projects for homeowners looking to improve security without taking on a major renovation.

Smith & Locke products are available from Screwfix, offering practical, durable and affordable security solutions designed to help homeowners tackle everyday security upgrades with confidence.

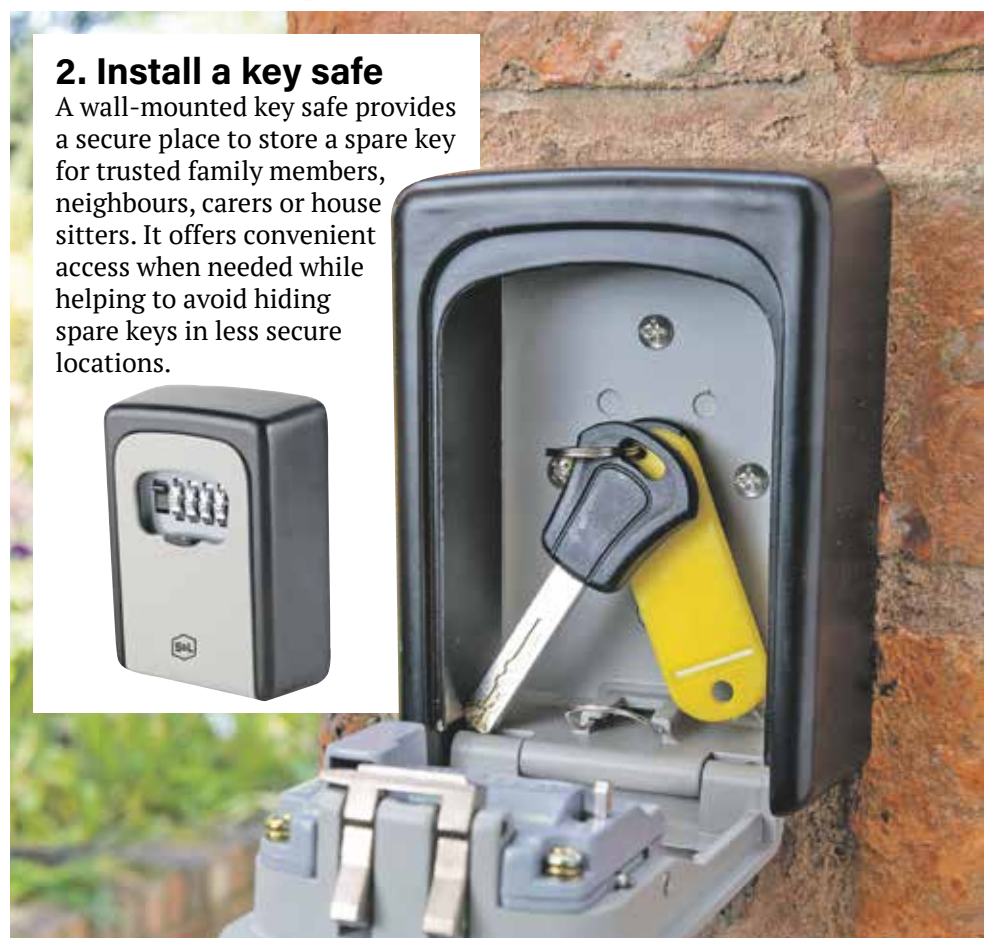
1. Replace an older cylinder lock

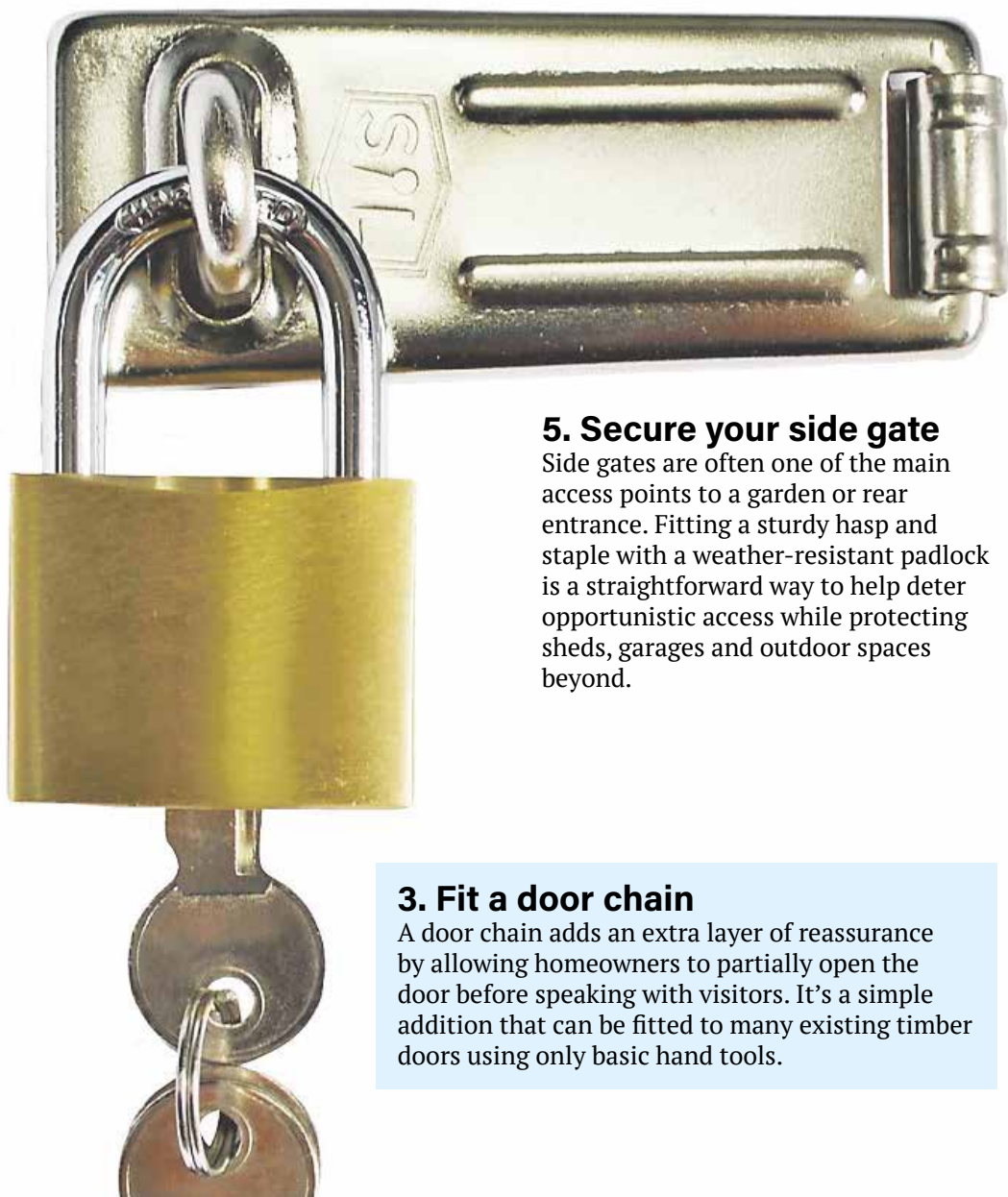
If your door lock has become worn, difficult to operate or you've recently moved home, replacing the cylinder is one of the simplest security upgrades you can make. Smith & Locke's 3 Star Euro Profile Cylinder Locks are designed for straightforward installation, making them an ideal choice for confident DIYers looking to upgrade front or back door security without the cost of a locksmith.



2. Install a key safe

A wall-mounted key safe provides a secure place to store a spare key for trusted family members, neighbours, carers or house sitters. It offers convenient access when needed while helping to avoid hiding spare keys in less secure locations.





5. Secure your side gate

Side gates are often one of the main access points to a garden or rear entrance. Fitting a sturdy hasp and staple with a weather-resistant padlock is a straightforward way to help deter opportunistic access while protecting sheds, garages and outdoor spaces beyond.

3. Fit a door chain

A door chain adds an extra layer of reassurance by allowing homeowners to partially open the door before speaking with visitors. It's a simple addition that can be fitted to many existing timber doors using only basic hand tools.



4. Fit a window restrictor

Window restrictors help improve both security and safety by allowing windows to remain partially open for ventilation while limiting how far they can be opened. They're particularly useful in family homes and on upper floors.



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Entertainment

THE **LATEST ENTERTAINMENT** AND CELEBRITY NEWS FROM BOLLYWOOD & HOLLYWOOD



Priyanka Chopra Jonas brings extraordinary 6,000-mile love story to UK cinemas with exclusive big-screen message



One of the year's most inspiring true stories is heading to cinemas this September, with global superstar Priyanka Chopra Jonas personally welcoming audiences as *The Cycle Of Love* arrives in UK and Irish theatres.

The actress and executive producer has recorded an exclusive introduction that will play before every UK cinema screening, giving audiences a special insight into the remarkable film when it opens nationwide on 18 September.

Dogwoof has also unveiled the film's striking new official

poster, building anticipation for a documentary that has already won praise from critics following its acclaimed festival run. Directed by Academy Award winner Orlando von Einsiedel (*Virunga*, *The White Helmets*), the film has been described as one of the most uplifting documentaries of the year.

Spanning Delhi to Sweden, *The Cycle Of Love* tells the astonishing true story of P.K. Mahanandia, a 23-year-old street artist from India who embarks on an incredible 6,000-mile bicycle journey across Europe and Asia to reunite with Lotta, the

Swedish woman who stole his heart.

Armed with little more than a second-hand bicycle, a handful of paintbrushes and unwavering belief, PK sets out after an astrologer's prophecy convinces him that destiny has brought them together. What follows is an extraordinary adventure that transcends borders, cultures and social barriers, becoming one of the most remarkable real-life love stories ever captured on film.

The documentary blends intimate interviews with cinematic recreations, starring British actor Chirag Benedict Lobo and Mina Dale as the younger

PK and Lotta, while the real-life couple share their own emotional memories of a romance that has endured for more than five decades.

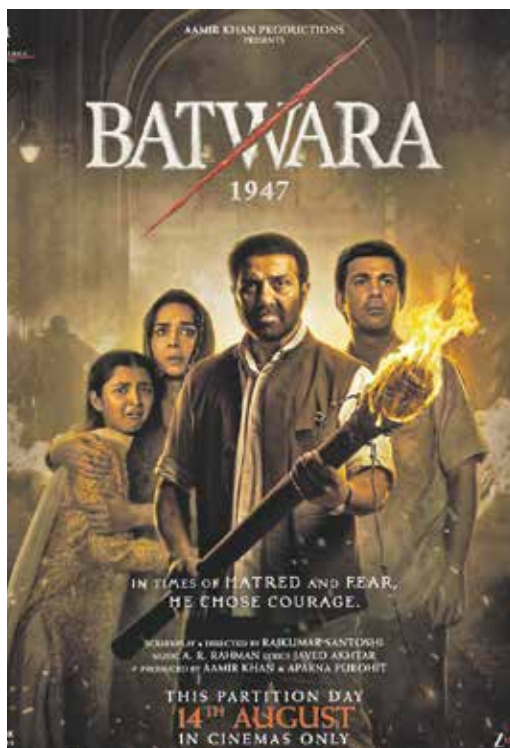
With unprecedented access to the couple's personal archives, including photographs, home videos and handwritten love letters, the Academy Award-winning filmmaking team crafts a deeply personal portrait of hope, destiny and the courage to risk everything for love.

The film is executive produced by Priyanka Chopra Jonas through her Purple Pebble Pictures banner and brings together an international

creative team from Grain Media, Kalabati Pictures, BD4, Tudip Entertainment, AMPL and the Artemis Rising Foundation.

Early reviews have been overwhelmingly positive, with critics calling it "one of the most romantic documentaries in years" and praising its heartfelt storytelling and emotional impact.

The Cycle Of Love opens in cinemas across the UK and Ireland on 18 September 2026, promising audiences an unforgettable celebration of love, hope and the extraordinary journeys that can change lives forever.



Batwara 1947 trailer leaves audiences stunned

One of the year's most eagerly awaited Bollywood releases has unveiled its most powerful look yet, with the official trailer for **Batwara 1947** delivering an emotional and hard-hitting glimpse into one of history's darkest chapters.

The trailer was launched in spectacular fashion at Jaipur's iconic Raj Mandir Cinema, where producer Aamir Khan joined director Rajkumar Santoshi and stars Sunny Deol, Shabana Azmi and Karan Deol to celebrate the film's latest milestone.

After generating huge buzz with its haunting motion poster, striking character reveals and gripping teaser, the full trailer raises expectations even further.

Opening with the celebrations surrounding India's Independence, the film quickly shifts to the devastating human cost of Partition as families are forced from their homes and communities are ripped apart by violence.

At the heart of the story is a family struggling to survive unimaginable loss, while one courageous man risks everything to protect those caught in the chaos.

Sweeping visuals, emotionally charged performances and powerful dialogue combine to create what promises to be one of the most moving historical dramas of recent years.

The film also marks a major Bollywood reunion, bringing together director Rajkumar Santoshi and action legend Sunny Deol for the first time in almost 30 years – a collaboration that has already fuelled excitement among fans.

Batwara 1947 boasts an impressive ensemble cast including Shabana Azmi, Sunny Deol, Preity Zinta, Karan Deol, Ali Fazal and Abhimanyu Singh.

Produced by Aamir Khan Productions, the film sees National Award-winning filmmaker Rajkumar Santoshi behind the camera, with Academy Award-winning composer A. R. Rahman providing the soundtrack and legendary lyricist Javed Akhtar writing the songs.

Produced by Aamir Khan and Aparna Purohit, **Batwara 1947** arrives in cinemas worldwide on 14 August 2026 – Partition Day – with the trailer suggesting audiences should prepare for an emotional cinematic experience that explores sacrifice, resilience and the enduring strength of humanity.

The countdown to **Mirzapur: The Movie** has shifted into high gear after the makers unleashed **Do Numbari**, the first song from the film – a gritty, high-octane anthem that gives fans their biggest taste yet of the crime saga's long-awaited leap to the big screen.

Released by Excel Entertainment and Amazon MGM Studios, the track is sung, written and composed by Haryanvi music sensation Dhanda Nyoliwala, marking his much-anticipated Bollywood debut and becoming the very first release under Excel Music, the production house's newly launched music label.

Packed with swagger, attitude and the raw energy that has made **Mirzapur** a cultural phenomenon, **Do Numbari** captures the brutal, lawless world that turned the original

Prime Video series into one of India's biggest streaming successes.

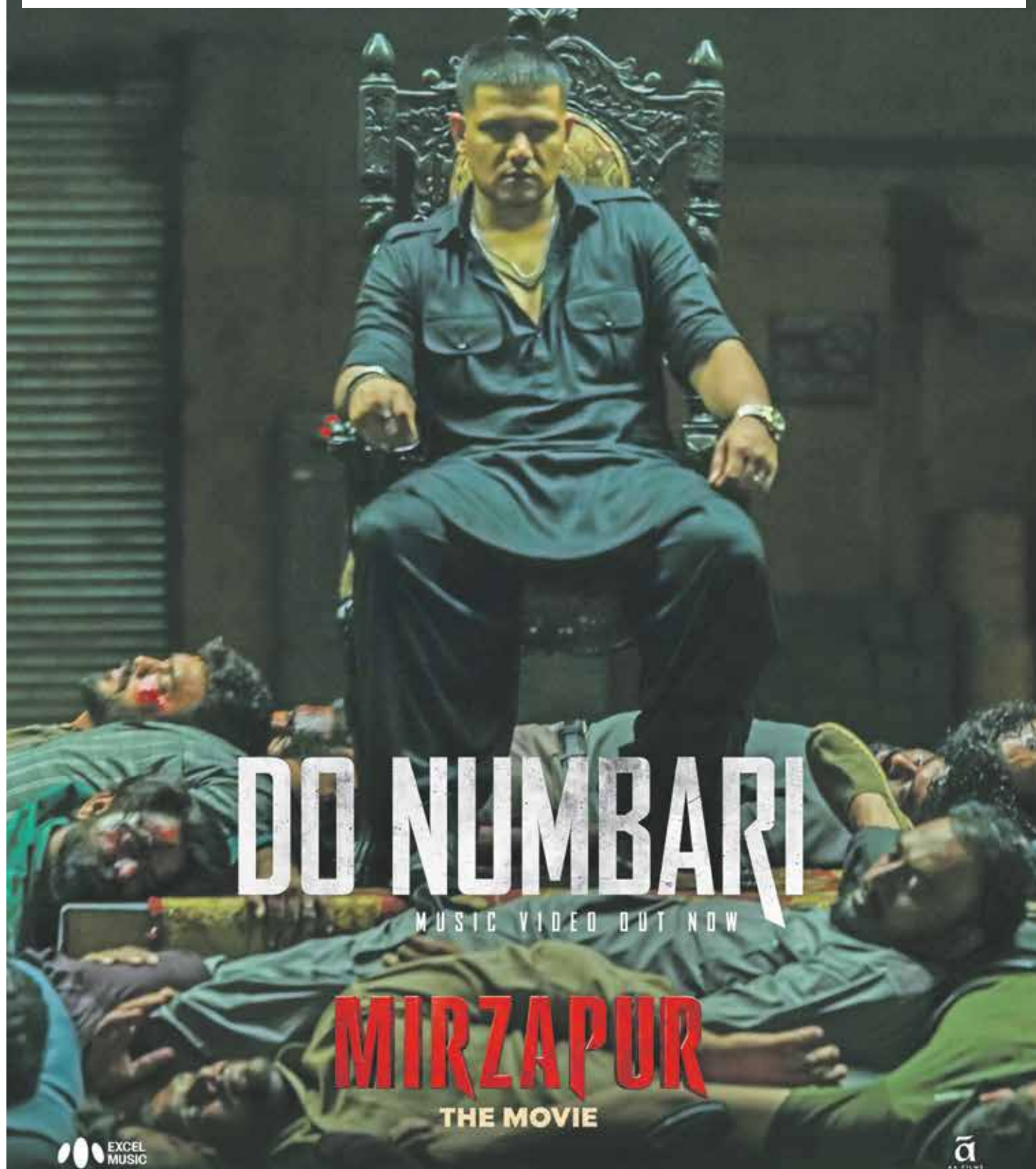
The song also signals a major milestone for Nyoliwala, whose chart-topping tracks and viral online following have transformed him into one of the biggest names in Haryanvi music. Known for his distinctive rap style and commanding stage presence, he now brings that same fearless energy to one of Indian entertainment's most successful franchises.

The film itself promises to reunite audiences with some of the franchise's most iconic characters, including Guddu Pandit (Ali Fazal), Kaleen Bhaiya (Pankaj Tripathi) and the fan-favourite Munna Bhaiya (Divyenndu), whose return has already sent social media into overdrive. It marks the first time the **Mirzapur** universe has been adapted for cinemas after becoming a streaming

phenomenon across three acclaimed seasons.

Joining the trio is an all-star ensemble cast featuring Jitendra Kumar, Ravi Kishan, Abhishek Banerjee, Rasika Dugal, Mohitt Maalik, Sheeba Chadha, Rajesh Tailang, Pramod Pathak, Shriya Pilgaonkar, Harshita Shekhar Gaur, Shweta Tripathi, Sonal S. Chauhan, Anangsha Biswas, Shaji Chaudhary, Satendra Soni, Kulbhushan Kharbanda and Sushant Singh.

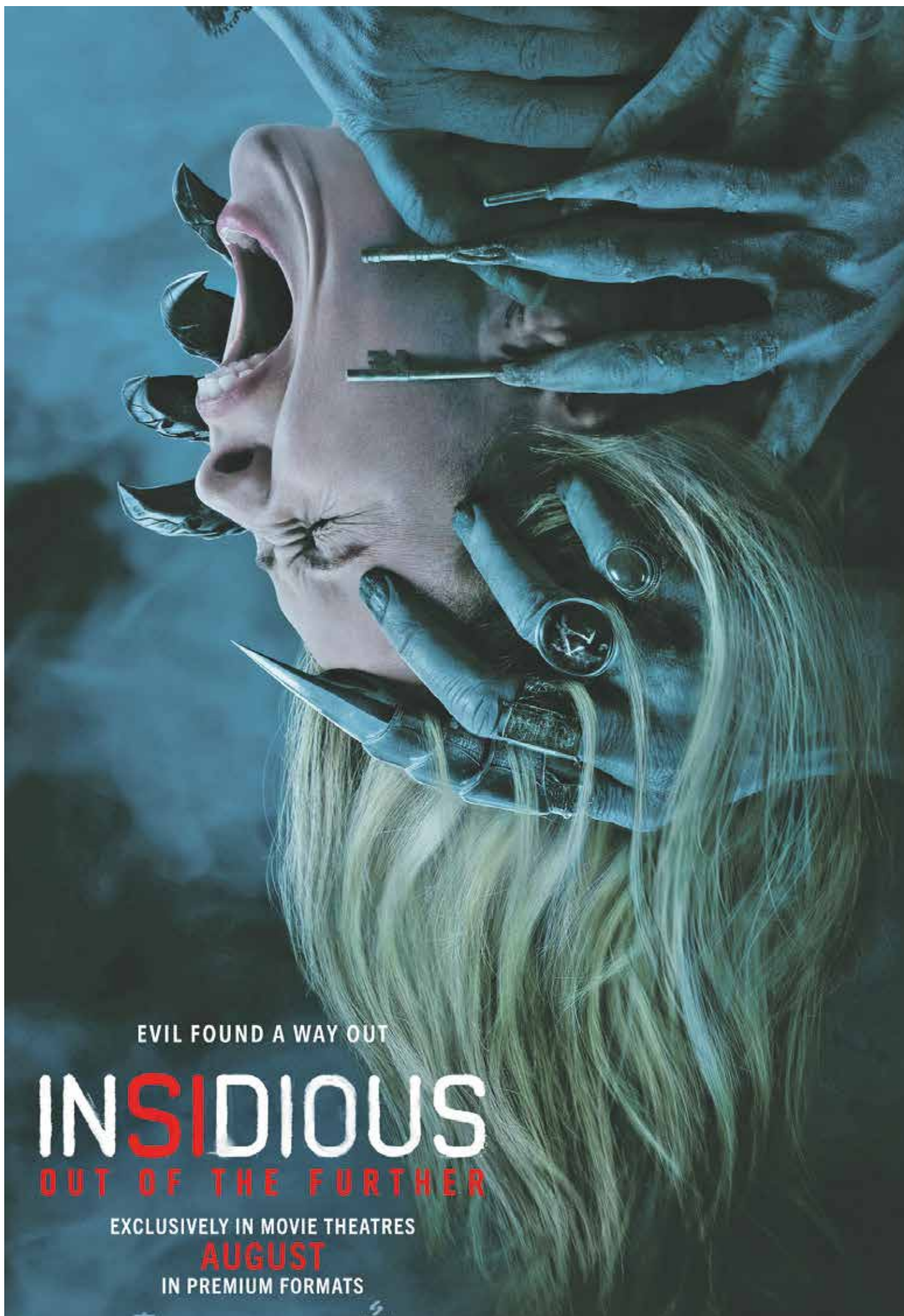
Presented by Amazon MGM Studios and Excel Entertainment, **Mirzapur: The Movie** is directed by Gurmmeet Singh from a screenplay by Puneet Krishna. Produced by Ritesh Sidhwani and Farhan Akhtar, alongside co-producers Kassim Jaggamia and Vishal Ramchandani, the film is set for a worldwide theatrical release on 4 September 2026.



Mirzapur: The Movie drops explosive first anthem as Dhanda Nyoliwala makes blockbuster Bollywood debut

WHAT'S ON

in cinemas this month



Insidious: Out of the Further

Starring:

Amelia Eve,
Brandon Perea,
Lin Shaye

Director:

Jacob Chase

**Genre: Horror/
Mystery/Thriller**

Cert: 18

Release Date:

21/08/2026

The Red-Faced Demon returns as Insidious unleashes its darkest nightmare yet

One of horror's most terrifying franchises is opening the door to The Further once again – and this time, the evil isn't waiting on the other side. It's coming back with you.

Insidious: Out of the Further marks the sixth instalment in the hugely successful supernatural horror series and introduces a terrifying new chapter that promises to expand the mythology of the ghostly realm that has haunted audiences for more than 15 years.

Directed by Jacob Chase (Come Play), the latest instalment follows Gemma, played by Amelia Eve, a young mother who returns to her childhood home to raise her daughter. But the familiar surroundings soon become the setting for unimaginable terror when she discovers she possesses an extraordinary ability unlike anything seen before in the Insidious universe.

Gemma can enter The Further – the eerie purgatorial dimension inhabited by tortured souls and malevolent entities. More frightening still, she discovers she can bring its terrifying inhabitants back into the real world.

Once the demons realise her unique gift, the boundary between the living and the dead begins to collapse. The haunting spreads beyond haunted houses and shadowy corridors as evil invades everyday life, turning the real world into a deadly playground where nowhere is safe.

Joining Amelia Eve is Brandon Perea, while franchise favourite Lin Shaye returns as the iconic paranormal investigator Elise Rainier, whose knowledge of The Further has made her one of modern horror's most beloved characters. Her return is expected to reconnect the new story with the chilling mythology established throughout the previous films.

Running for 106 minutes and carrying a UK 15 certificate for strong horror, threat, violence and injury detail, the film aims to deliver relentless supernatural scares, nerve-shredding suspense and the atmospheric dread that turned Insidious into one of the defining horror franchises of the 21st century.

With director Jacob Chase bringing his distinctive psychological horror style to the series, early anticipation is high among fans eager to discover what lies beyond the darkest corners of The Further. If the previous films taught audiences anything, it's that once the door is opened, closing it again may be impossible.

WHAT'S ON

in cinemas this month

Paw Patrol: The Dino Movie

Starring: Carter Young, McKenna Grace, Terry Crews, Meredith MacNeill, Ron Pardo, Jennifer Hudson, Hayden Chamberlen, Fortune Feimster, Jameela Jamil, Rain Janjua, Bill Nye, Paris Hilton, Lucien Duncan-Reid, William Desrosiers, Nylan Parthipan, Snoop Dogg, Henry Bolan

Director: Cal Brunker **Genre:** Action/Animation/Family
Cert: U **Release Date:** 4/8/2026

The world's favourite rescue pups are back – and this time they're entering a prehistoric world where dinosaurs roam free, volcanoes erupt without warning and one wrong move could wipe out an entire island.

PAW Patrol: The Dino Movie promises the franchise's biggest adventure to date, taking Ryder and his heroic team far beyond Adventure Bay after a mysterious storm sends them crashing onto a hidden tropical island lost in time.

Waiting for them is Rex, a courageous pup who has spent years stranded on the island and has become an expert on its incredible dinosaur inhabitants. But the peaceful paradise soon descends into chaos when long-time nemesis

Mayor Humdinger arrives with dreams of striking it rich.

His reckless mining operation awakens a gigantic dormant volcano, threatening the island's ancient ecosystem and putting every dinosaur in danger.

What follows is the biggest rescue mission in PAW Patrol history, with towering dinosaurs, explosive action and edge-of-your-seat adventures pushing the pups further than ever before. From daring escapes to spectacular rescues, the film raises the stakes while delivering the humour, teamwork and heart that have made the global phenomenon a family favourite.

Directed by Cal Brunker, the animated blockbuster boasts an

impressive voice cast including McKenna Grace, Terry Crews, Jennifer Hudson, Jameela Jamil, Fortune Feimster, Bill Nye, Paris Hilton and Snoop Dogg.

Running for 90 minutes, PAW Patrol: The Dino Movie blends action-packed spectacle with positive messages about courage, friendship and protecting the natural world, making it an ideal family outing during the school holidays.

Whether your children are lifelong PAW Patrol fans or dinosaur enthusiasts, this prehistoric adventure is set to deliver plenty of thrills, laughs and larger-than-life moments that prove no mission is too big – especially when dinosaurs are involved.



Ice Cream Man

Starring: Ari Millen, Benjamin Byron Davis, Karen Cliche, Dylan Hawco, Sarah Abbott, Shiloh O'Reilly, Kiori Mirza Waldman, Charlie Zeltzer, Charlie Storey, Eli Roth

Director: Eli Roth **Genre:** Horror
Cert: 18 **Release Date:** 7/8/2026

Sweet treats turn into nightmares in Eli Roth's most disturbing horror yet. Think twice before chasing the ice cream van this summer.

Horror mastermind returns with one of the year's most twisted big-screen nightmares as Ice Cream Man rolls into cinemas, transforming a familiar childhood treat into a blood-soaked tale of terror.

Set in the picture-perfect town of Bayleen Bay, the film begins with an ordinary summer before everything spirals into unimaginable horror. A mysterious ice cream vendor arrives in town, handing out frozen treats that unleash a terrifying epidemic, turning local children into violent killers and sending the once-peaceful community

into total chaos.

As panic spreads through the streets, survivors are forced into a desperate fight for survival against the very children they are trying to protect. What starts as an idyllic suburban summer quickly becomes a relentless nightmare packed with graphic violence, gruesome practical effects and the outrageous dark humour that has made Roth one of horror's most divisive filmmakers.

Starring Ari Millen, Benjamin Byron Davis, Karen Cliche, Dylan Hawco and Sarah Abbott, the 86-minute horror marks the first theatrical release from Roth's new horror label, The Horror Section. The filmmaker has described the concept

as an idea he has been developing for more than two decades, inspired by the unsettling sound of an ice cream van and classic genre favourites including The Birds and Halloween III.

Already generating headlines for its shocking violence, disturbing premise and fearless approach to horror, Ice Cream Man has become one of the most talked-about genre releases of the summer, with early reviews praising its outrageous gore even as critics remain sharply divided over its relentless excesses.

Fans of unapologetically graphic horror should prepare for one unforgettable – and deeply unsettling – scoop.



Momo & the Time Thieves

Starring: Maxwell Smith, Skylar Blu Copeland, Madeleine Akua, Simon Curcija, Charlie Mann, Araloyin Oshunremi, Alexa Goodall, Laura Haddock, Martin Freeman, Claes Bang, Kim Bodnia

Director: Christian Ditter **Genre:** Family/Fantasy

Cert: PG **Release Date:** 14/8/2026

A timeless fantasy classic returns as Momo & the Time Thieves races into cinemas

One of Europe's most beloved children's stories is heading back to the big screen, bringing with it a magical adventure that asks a question more relevant today than ever before: what if someone could steal your time?

Based on Michael Ende's internationally acclaimed fantasy novel, Momo & the Time Thieves is a spectacular new family adventure from director Christian Ditter, the filmmaker behind How to Be Single and Love, Rosie. The passion project has been years in the making, with Ditter revealing he first dreamed of adapting Momo after reading the novel as a child.

At the heart of the story is Momo, a kind-hearted orphan who lives among the ruins of an ancient Roman amphitheatre. Gifted with an

extraordinary ability to listen, she becomes the friend everyone turns to. But when a ruthless international corporation begins stealing people's time, life changes overnight. Families drift apart, friendships fade and even Momo's closest companion, Gino, no longer has a moment to spare.

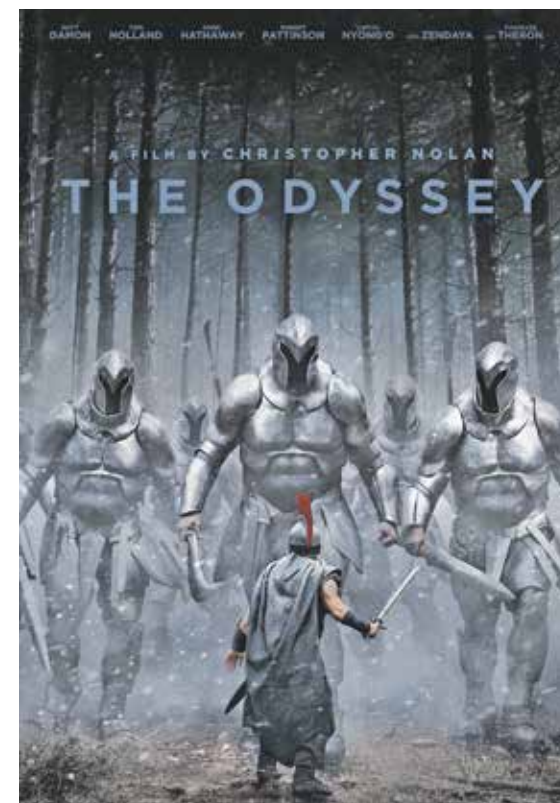
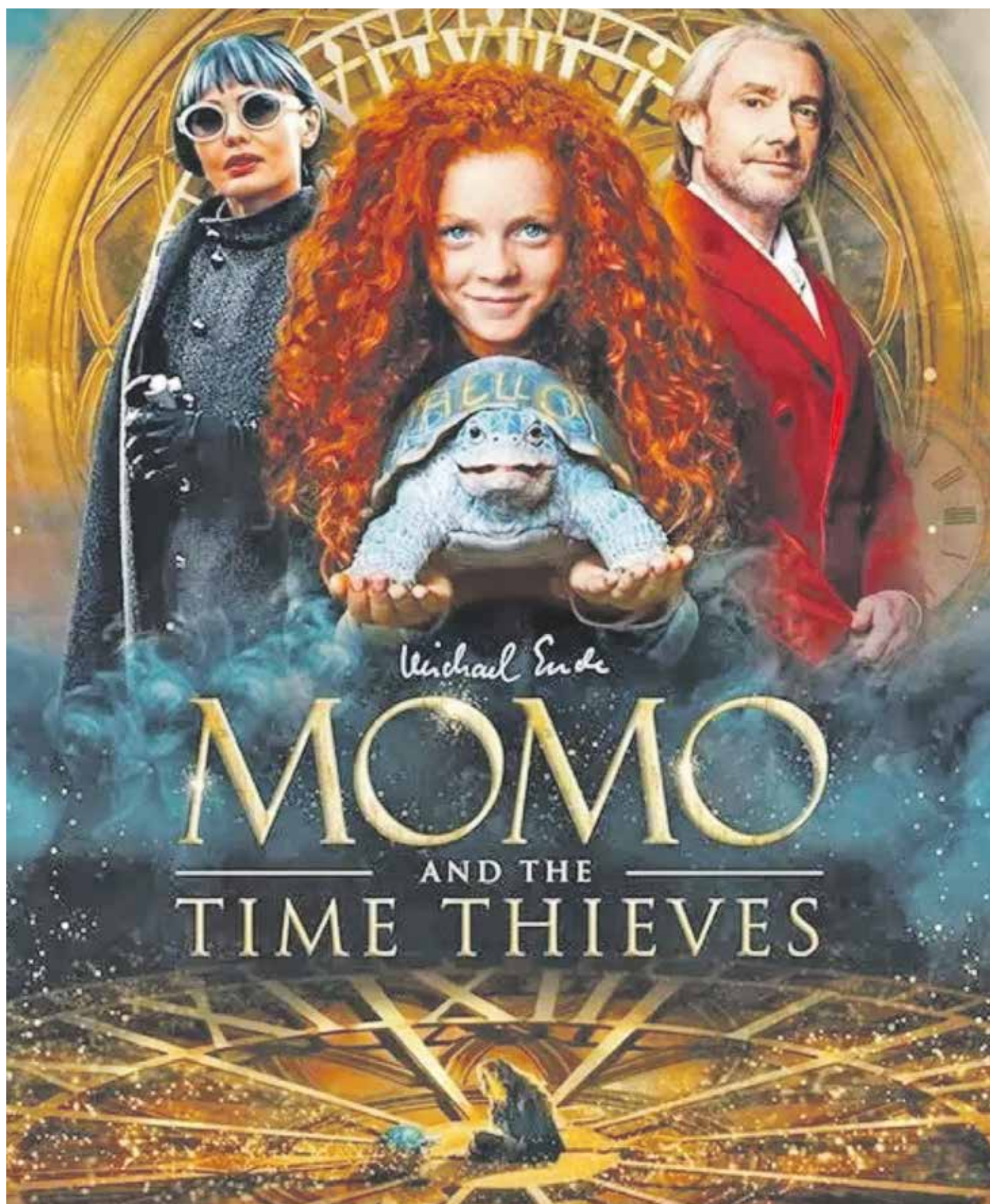
Just as hope seems lost, a mysterious tortoise leads Momo to the enigmatic Master Hora, the Guardian of Time. Together they embark on an unforgettable race against the sinister Time Thieves to reclaim humanity's most precious possession before it's gone forever.

The film stars Maxwell Smith alongside Skylar Blu Copeland, Laura Haddock, Claes Bang, Kim Bodnia and Martin Freeman, whose appearance adds further star power to this visually ambitious fantasy. Running for 92 minutes, the adventure blends breathtaking

world-building with an emotional message about slowing down, valuing relationships and making time for the people who matter most.

Originally published in 1973, Michael Ende's novel has sold millions of copies worldwide and has long been regarded as a modern fantasy masterpiece. Rather than simply retelling the classic tale, Christian Ditter reimagines the story for a new generation while preserving its timeless message about the pressures of modern life and the importance of human connection.

With its blend of magic, adventure, humour and heart, Momo & the Time Thieves looks set to become one of this summer's standout family films – reminding audiences young and old that time isn't something to spend, but something to treasure.



The Odyssey

Starring:

Matt Damon, Tom Holland, Anne Hathaway, Robert Pattinson, Lupita Nyong'o, Zendaya, Charlize Theron

Director: Christopher Nolan

Genre: Epic Drama/Adventure/Fantasy

Cert: TBC

Release Date: 17/7/2026

Christopher Nolan turns one of the greatest stories ever told into one of the year's most anticipated cinematic events.

The Odyssey reimagines Homer's timeless epic on an enormous scale, combining breathtaking practical filmmaking with Nolan's trademark emotional depth and spectacular storytelling.

Following the devastating Trojan War, the legendary Greek king Odysseus (Matt Damon) begins the long and perilous journey home to Ithaca.

What should be a straightforward voyage becomes a decade-long battle for survival as he encounters terrifying mythical creatures, vengeful gods, deadly temptresses and impossible trials that test both his courage and humanity.

Meanwhile, back home, his devoted wife Penelope (Anne Hathaway) struggles to hold the kingdom together while raising their son, Telemachus (Tom Holland), as rival suitors threaten to seize the throne.

As Odysseus fights to return to the family he left behind, father and son embark on parallel journeys that ultimately shape the fate of an entire kingdom.

Shot across breathtaking locations including Greece, Sicily, Morocco and Iceland using cutting-edge IMAX technology, The Odyssey marks Nolan's first venture into full-scale mythological storytelling. The all-star ensemble also features Zendaya, Robert Pattinson, Lupita Nyong'o, Charlize Theron, Jon Bernthal, Benny Safdie and Mia Goth, with each taking on key figures from Greek mythology. Nolan has promised a faithful yet cinematic adaptation that balances intimate human drama with awe-inspiring spectacle. (variety.com)

Although reviews remain under embargo ahead of release, anticipation is already sky-high following Nolan's Oscar-winning success with Oppenheimer.

Industry insiders are predicting another awards contender, praising the film's ambitious scope, practical effects and the director's determination to bring Homer's ancient masterpiece to modern audiences without relying heavily on CGI.

Verdict: ★★★★★ – Monumental in ambition and staggering in scale, The Odyssey looks set to be one of 2026's defining cinematic experiences.

WHAT'S ON

in cinemas this month



Moana

Starring: Rena Owen, Dwayne Johnson, Frankie Adams, John Tui, Catherine Laga'aia
Director: Thomas Kail
Genre: Family/Adventure/Fantasy
Cert: PG
Release Date: 10/7/2026

Disney brings one of its most beloved modern classics to life in a breathtaking live-action adaptation of Moana, combining spectacular visuals, stirring music and an inspiring coming-of-age story that honours Polynesian culture while introducing a new generation to the fearless wayfinder.

Newcomer Catherine Laga'aia takes on the iconic role of Moana, the spirited daughter of a village chief who is chosen by the Ocean to embark on a perilous voyage beyond the reef.

When a mysterious darkness threatens her island and its people, she sets sail in search of the legendary demigod Maui, played once again by Dwayne Johnson. Together, the unlikely duo battle fearsome sea

monsters, navigate treacherous waters and uncover ancient secrets as Moana discovers the courage and leadership needed to fulfil her destiny.

While remaining faithful to the much-loved 2016 animated film, the live-action version expands several characters and deepens the emotional bond between Moana, her family and her ancestors.

Directed by Tony Award-winning filmmaker Thomas Kail (Hamilton), the film blends sweeping ocean cinematography with cutting-edge visual effects to recreate the magic of the Pacific islands.

Dwayne Johnson effortlessly slips back into the role that became a fan favourite, while Catherine Laga'aia delivers

a confident and heartfelt performance that captures Moana's warmth, determination and adventurous spirit.

Early reactions have praised the film's stunning visuals, authentic cultural representation and emotional storytelling, with critics highlighting its family appeal and spectacular musical sequences. Although comparisons with the animated original are inevitable, Moana succeeds by offering a fresh interpretation rather than a scene-for-scene remake.

Verdict: ★★★★★ - Visually magnificent and emotionally uplifting, Moana is a joyous family adventure that proves Disney's live-action remakes can still find new horizons.

Spider-Man: Brand New Day

Starring: Tom Holland, Zendaya, Jon Bernthal, Mark Ruffalo, Sadie Sink, Jacob Batalon, Michael Mando, Tramell Tillman
Director: Destin Daniel Cretton
Genre: Action/Adventure/Sci-Fi
Cert: TBC
Release Date: 29/7/2026

Your friendly neighbourhood Spider-Man swings back onto the big screen in what promises to be the most personal chapter of Tom Holland's web-slinging journey.

Spider-Man: Brand New Day picks up after the emotional ending of Spider-Man: No Way Home, where the world has forgotten Peter Parker's existence, leaving him to rebuild his life from scratch.

Living alone in New York and fighting crime without the support of his closest friends, Peter embraces life as a full-time, street-level superhero. But isolation comes at a cost.

As MJ (Zendaya) and Ned (Jacob Batalon) move on with lives they no longer remember sharing with him, Peter struggles with loneliness while confronting a mysterious new enemy whose terrifying abilities make them virtually impossible to detect.

Forced to question everything he believes about heroism and identity, Spider-Man finds unlikely allies in Frank Castle, better known as the Punisher (Jon Bernthal), and Bruce Banner (Mark Ruffalo), as an invisible threat begins tearing the city apart from within.

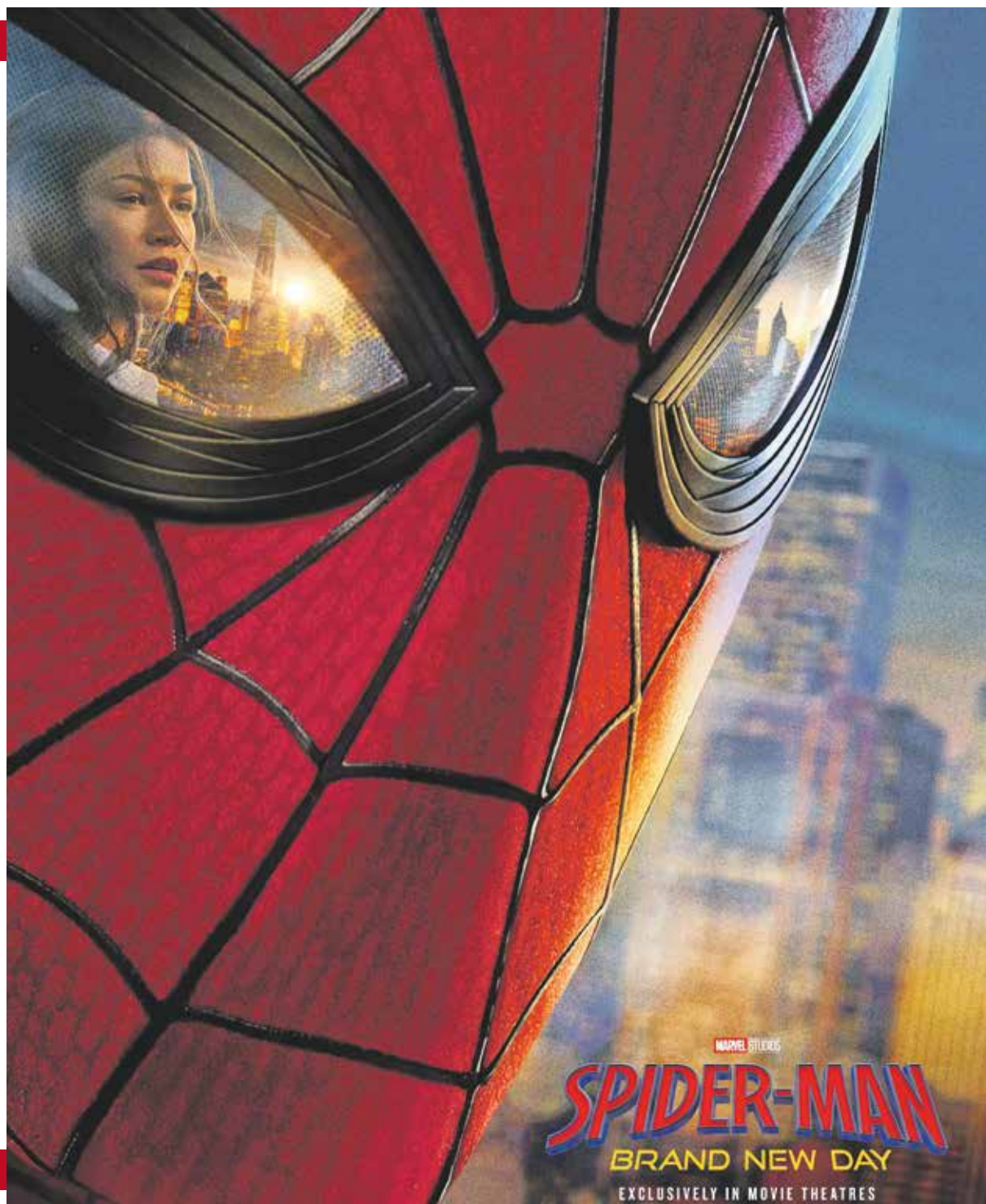
Directed by Destin Daniel Cretton

(Shang-Chi and the Legend of the Ten Rings), the film returns Spider-Man to his comic book roots, placing greater emphasis on neighbourhood crime-fighting while blending emotional storytelling with Marvel's trademark blockbuster action.

Newcomer Sadie Sink joins the cast in a closely guarded role that has already sparked widespread fan speculation, while Michael Mando reprises his role as Mac Gargan, fuelling rumours of another iconic Spider-Man villain making their long-awaited debut.

Although plot details remain tightly under wraps, expectations are sky-high following the record-breaking success of No Way Home. Fans are eagerly anticipating a fresh start for Peter Parker, one that promises a more grounded, emotionally mature superhero story while setting the stage for Spider-Man's next era in the Marvel Cinematic Universe.

Verdict: ★★★★★ - A fresh beginning packed with heart, mystery and spectacular action, Spider-Man: Brand New Day looks destined to become one of Marvel's biggest events of the year.



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Audi has pulled the covers off the all-new third-generation Q7, giving its flagship seven-seat SUV a comprehensive makeover that brings sharper styling, a futuristic digital cabin and more luxury than ever before.

More than 20 years after the original Q7 helped launch Audi's now hugely successful SUV line-up, the latest version aims to remind rivals exactly why it became the benchmark for premium family SUVs in the first place.

Priced from £81,665, and rising to £101,665 for the flagship Vorsprung model, the new Q7 goes on sale now, with the first UK deliveries expected in September.

Continued on page 36



NEW £101k Audi Q7 arrives... and Audi's flagship SUV has never looked more complete

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NEW £101k Audi Q7 arrives... and Audi's flagship SUV has never looked more complete



Audi Q7 SUV pricing (OTR)

Audi Q7 SUV S line:
£81,665

Audi Q7 SUV Edition: 1
£88,965

Audi Q7 SUV Vorsprung:
£101,665

Continued on page 36

Power comes from a 3.0-litre V6 turbo diesel paired with Audi's latest mild-hybrid (MHEV Plus) technology, producing 299bhp and a muscular 630Nm of torque. That is enough to propel the seven-seater from 0-62mph in just 6.2 seconds, while standard quattro all-wheel drive, adaptive air suspension and all-wheel steering promise the kind of effortless performance and refinement buyers in this class expect.

Inside, Audi has transformed the cabin into a high-tech lounge dominated by a trio of digital displays.

Drivers get an 11.9-inch virtual cockpit, a 14.5-inch central touchscreen and a 12.3-inch passenger display, all wrapped in premium materials, ambient lighting and the latest generation of Audi's intuitive infotainment system. A comprehensive suite of driver assistance features also comes as standard, including adaptive cruise control, surround-view cameras and advanced parking technology.

The range is offered in three trim levels, each adding progressively more luxury and visual drama.

The entry-level S line arrives well equipped with Matrix LED headlights, 20-inch alloy wheels, sports seats, privacy glass and Audi's full digital cockpit, making it far from an entry-level proposition.

Stepping up to Edition 1 adds a noticeably more aggressive look thanks to 22-inch Audi Sport alloy wheels, black exterior styling and red brake calipers, while the interior gains

Fine Nappa leather, illuminated sport seats and heated, ventilated and massage front seats. Even passengers in the second and third rows are treated to heated seats, underlining the Q7's focus on family comfort.

For buyers wanting the ultimate Q7, the Vorsprung pulls out all the stops. Riding on the largest wheels ever fitted to the SUV – enormous 23-inch Audi Sport alloys – it also introduces Audi's latest Digital Matrix LED headlights and third-generation OLED rear lights, complete with customisable lighting signatures and advanced safety projections. A panoramic smart glass roof, illuminated front grille, head-up display, four-zone climate control and a spectacular 22-speaker Bang & Olufsen 4D sound system complete the package.

The design itself is more evolution than revolution, but that's no criticism. Sharper lines, a bolder grille and more sophisticated lighting give the Q7 a stronger road presence while preserving the understated elegance that has always appealed to Audi buyers.

The Q7 was the SUV that started Audi's now vast Q family, and this latest generation shows the company has no intention of surrendering its place at the top of the premium SUV market. With genuine seven-seat practicality, impressive performance, cutting-edge technology and limousine levels of refinement, the new Q7 looks every inch a flagship.



BYD's 408PS Ti 7 lands in Britain with seven seats, 74-mile EV range and a fridge

BYD is coming for the big family SUV market, and it isn't arriving quietly.

Meet the Ti 7, the Chinese brand's first seven-seater for Britain and a chunky plug-in hybrid with 408PS, four-wheel drive and a starting price of £47,995.

That puts it directly into the firing line of established family SUVs, but the BYD arrives with a specification list that looks like someone ticked every box before breakfast.

Power comes from BYD's DM-p plug-in hybrid system, which combines a turbocharged 1.5-litre petrol engine with electric motors at the front and rear. Together, they produce 408PS, enough to launch this large seven-seater from 0-62mph in just 4.8 seconds.

That is properly quick for something designed to carry children, luggage and the contents of half a supermarket.

Despite the performance, BYD claims the Ti 7 can travel up to 74 miles using electric power alone, thanks to its 35.6kWh Blade Battery. The

petrol engine mainly works as a generator, adding flexibility for longer journeys.

Only one trim will be offered in Britain: Excellence AWD. Standard equipment includes a 15.6-inch touchscreen, a 10.25-inch driver display, leather seats, three-zone climate control and an 18-speaker audio system.

20-inch alloy wheels, while a panoramic glass roof, privacy glass and LED lighting add some showroom drama.

Practicality looks strong, too. Boot space stands at 126 litres with all seven seats raised, 970 litres with the third row folded and 1,830 litres with the rear two rows dropped.

BYD's first seven-seat SUV for the UK costs £47,995, hits 62mph in 4.8 seconds and arrives packed with enough kit to worry far pricier rivals.

There are also heated and ventilated seats in the first two rows, dual 50W wireless phone chargers and, brilliantly, a refrigerator that can also warm drinks and snacks.

The boxy exterior sits on

The Ti 7 is available to order now. Customers placing a £500 deposit will receive a matching £500 contribution from BYD.

Showroom cars arrive in November, with customer deliveries due in January 2027.

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Stand aside hybrid hypercars. Hennessey has just unveiled a V8-powered, stick-shift monster that ditches touchscreens, embraces old-school thrills and looks like it wants to break the sound barrier.

If you've spent the last few years wondering when someone would finally build a hypercar for drivers instead of software engineers, Hennessey thinks it has the answer.

Meet the Blackbird – a stunning, aerospace-inspired machine that throws the rulebook out of the window. There are no electric motors, no turbochargers, no giant infotainment screens and no paddle shifters. Instead, you get a screaming naturally aspirated V8, a six-speed gated manual gearbox and a physical ignition key. Imagine that.

Named after the legendary Lockheed SR-71 Blackbird spy plane,

Hennessey's latest creation is designed to stir the soul rather than chase lap records. Sure, it'll still hit 60mph in a claimed 2.5 seconds and storm on to 220mph, but the numbers almost feel secondary here.

The real headline is the way it promises to make you feel.

Power comes from an all-new 6.2-litre V8 developed with Ilmor Engineering. It is expected to produce between 800 and 850bhp while revving beyond a spine-tingling 9,000rpm. All that power goes exclusively to the rear wheels through a gloriously mechanical gated manual transmission.

Yes, in 2026, someone is launching a £2 million-plus hypercar with three pedals. We approve.

Hennessey says modern hypercars have become too heavy, too digital and too detached. The Blackbird is its rebellion. Inside, there isn't a

conventional infotainment screen in sight.

Instead, the dashboard is dominated by a huge analogue rev counter, while the cabin features physical switches, exposed gear linkage and a proper metal key. Apple CarPlay and Android Auto are still available, but they run discreetly through your own phone rather than a giant dashboard display.

The exterior is every bit as dramatic.

The long, low silhouette borrows heavily from the SR-71 aircraft, with razor-sharp body lines, gullwing doors and active vertical stabilisers that automatically deploy at 71mph and angle themselves to 71 degrees as a tribute to the famous spy plane. It is one of those rare cars that looks fast even when it's standing still.

Unlike many hypercars, though, the Blackbird isn't just meant for posing

outside five-star hotels.

Hennessey says it has been engineered as a genuine grand tourer, capable of covering more than 800 miles in a single day. There's space for two carry-on suitcases, adaptive suspension for long-distance comfort, improved cabin refinement and – wonderfully – four cup holders. Because even millionaire petrolheads need somewhere to put their coffee.

The engineering is equally serious. A bespoke carbon-fibre chassis, carbon bodywork and a target weight of under 3,000lb should give the Blackbird the agility to match its outrageous power, while Michelin Pilot Sport Cup 2 tyres, ABS and traction control keep everything pointing in roughly the right direction.

Production will be incredibly exclusive.

Just 71 examples will be built

worldwide, each carrying a starting price of \$2.5 million before taxes.

Despite customer deliveries not being scheduled until 2029, Hennessey says more than two-thirds of the production run has already been spoken for ahead of its public debut at The Quail in California.

Company founder John Hennessey describes the Blackbird as “the beginning of a new book”, insisting it is designed to create an emotional connection rather than simply dominate a specification sheet.

For once, that doesn't sound like marketing fluff.

In an age where hypercars are becoming rolling supercomputers, the Blackbird feels refreshingly rebellious. Three pedals. Eight cylinders. Zero compromise.

And frankly, we can't think of a better way to spend \$2.5 million.

Blackbird lands



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AA55R1T £8,995 ONO TEL: 07779 324 610	ANW444R £10,000 ONO (ANWAAR) TEL: 07946 162 099	AY11SUF £15,000 (A YUSUF) TEL: 07985 455 057	BV11JAY £10,000 (B VIJAY) TEL: 07985 455 057	DY11SUF £15,000 (D YUSAF) TEL: 07985 455 057	EY11SUF £15,000 (E YUSUF) TEL: 07985 455 057	GY11SUF £15,000 (G YUSUF) TEL: 07985 455 057	HO5SAYN £2,995 ONO (HUSAIN) TEL: 07779 324 610	KK11MAD £15,000 (K AHMAD) TEL: 07985 455 057	MA11TAB £18,000 (M AHMAD) TEL: 07985 455 057	MS11IGH £15,000 (MS HUGH) TEL: 07985 455 057	NS11AUN £15,000 (N SHAUN) TEL: 07985 455 057	PD55ESS £1,500 ONO (POSSESS) TEL: 07971 732 789	SO11LJA £10,000 (SOULJA) TEL: 07786 615 234
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Asian Express

SPORT



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

HYPERCAR HEROICS

Aston Martin's astonishing Valkyrie Hypercar produced one of its most remarkable comeback drives of the season after fighting back from race-ending penalties to claim a sensational top-five finish in one of the IMSA WeatherTech SportsCar Championship's most chaotic contests.

Just when it looked as though Aston Martin's hopes had disappeared down pit lane, the British manufacturer's breathtaking V12-powered Valkyrie mounted a dramatic late charge through the field to finish fifth overall at the legendary Road America circuit in Wisconsin.

Continued on page 42

Valkyrie roars back from disaster to storm into the top five in Road America thriller

Asian Express

SPORT

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

HYPERCAR
HEROICS

Valkyrie roars back from disaster to storm into the top five in Road America thriller

Continued from page 41

The result marks Valkyrie's strongest finish of the 2026 IMSA campaign and underlines the rapid progress being made by the Aston Martin THOR Team in North America's premier endurance racing series.

Works drivers Ross Gunn and Roman De Angelis refused to let adversity define their afternoon after two costly drive-through penalties dropped the #23 Valkyrie off the lead lap and seemingly out of contention.

But endurance racing is rarely predictable.

Through blistering pace, razor-sharp strategy and flawless execution, Aston Martin fought its way back onto the lead lap with 90 minutes remaining of the six-hour Motul SportsCar Endurance Grand Prix.

As rivals stumbled during a frantic closing spell packed with Full-Course

Yellow interruptions and incidents, De Angelis kept his composure, slicing through the field to secure a superb fifth-place finish.

At one stage, Aston Martin's Valkyrie was even running second on the road before the chequered flag eventually fell on an unforgettable afternoon.

Starting eighth on the grid in the fiercely competitive GTP category, Gunn delivered a strong opening stint before handing over to De Angelis. Although the penalties threatened to derail the team's ambitions, the Aston Martin THOR crew produced a tactical masterclass that transformed the race.

The performance continues Valkyrie's impressive rise in North America, with Aston Martin's flagship Hypercar now recording top-10 finishes in six of the seven IMSA races contested this season.

The remarkable machine is unlike anything else on the grid.

Valkyrie is the only road car-derived Hypercar competing in IMSA's premier GTP category and the only Hypercar in the world contesting both the IMSA WeatherTech SportsCar Championship and the FIA World Endurance Championship during the 2026 season.

Developed from Aston Martin's road-going Valkyrie, the competition

version features a race-bred carbon-fibre chassis and a screaming 6.5-litre naturally aspirated V12 capable of revving to an extraordinary 11,000rpm. While producing more than 1,000bhp in road-going specification, IMSA regulations cap output at 680bhp for competition.

With only two GTP races remaining this season before the Petit Le Mans finale, Aston Martin believes its momentum is building at exactly the right time.

Adam Carter, Aston Martin Head of Endurance Motorsport, said: "This was a promising weekend for the Aston Martin THOR Team. From opening practice onward, Valkyrie showed genuine potential, so it's extremely satisfying to see Ross and Roman finish in the top five for the first time this season.

"This result could potentially have been even stronger, which shows just how far the programme has progressed. Valkyrie is proving exceptionally well suited to the classic North American sportscar circuits, and when you combine this with our recent top-five finish in the FIA World Endurance Championship, it's clear we're moving in the right direction.

"We'll be aiming to take another significant step forward over the remainder of the season."



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

Asian Express

SPORT

Bradford charity hero collapses at 10K finish... as he smashes £1.6m fundraising milestone



Running in sweltering 23-degree heat, heavy humidity and with little shade along Blackpool's exposed promenade, Ali was already carrying a groin strain and a calf injury before his right hip began to seize up during the closing stages of the race.

Still, he refused to stop. On Sunday 12th July, he completed the 10K in 1 hour, 1 minute and 29 seconds, finishing beneath the shadow of the iconic Blackpool Tower before stumbling over the finish line.

"I just flew through the air," he laughed afterwards.

"Thankfully nothing was broken. I came away with grazed elbows and knees, but after everything that happened, I was just grateful to get across the finish line."

The route took runners from the Comedy Carpet towards Blackpool Pleasure Beach before looping back again, offering little escape from the relentless sunshine.

making the biggest possible difference."

The £1.6 million milestone is one Ali says he never imagined reaching.

"I never set out chasing numbers," he said. "I simply wanted to help people. Every pound raised represents someone's kindness and generosity."

His connection with Malawi stretches back years.

During his first self-funded visit in 2019, he met families living in remote villages without electricity, where many survive on one meal a day and nutritious food is scarce.

"I'll never forget the gratitude in people's eyes," he said. "Something as simple as a goat can completely change a family's future."

Away from his charity work, Ali works full-time as a careers adviser in three inner-city schools, taking annual leave for every overseas aid mission. Closer to home, he also runs the Nazim Ali Foundation Khidma



Nazim's first aid trip to Malawi was in 2019

"It was brutal," he admitted. "The heat simply drains your energy."

By the eight-kilometre mark, every stride had become a battle.

"My right hip was really starting to hurt. I had to dig deep."

Standing on the sidelines was close friend Mohammed Azeem, who had travelled to Blackpool simply to support him.

Nazim says he would not have finished without him.

"To borrow a football phrase, he was my '12th man'. His encouragement kept me going when my body wanted to stop."

The race itself lasted just over an hour, but the challenge had begun weeks earlier.

Training through Britain's heatwave was already difficult before injury struck. First came a groin strain. Then, just over a week before race day, he picked up a calf injury that left him wondering whether he would even make the starting line.

"But when people are relying on you, you don't look for excuses," he said. "You simply keep going."

Ali personally paid every penny of his race entry fee and travel costs, ensuring 100 per cent of every donation goes directly to the Malawi appeal through the Nazim Ali Foundation in partnership with Green Crescent Aid UK.

"I always cover my own costs because I want people to know their donations are

Community Kitchen, serving hot meals each week to homeless and vulnerable people across Bradford.

His dedication has earned national recognition. In 2025 he received the British Empire Medal in the King's New Year Honours, while the University of Bradford awarded him an Honorary Fellowship for his contribution to charity and community service.

Yet Ali insists the latest milestone is not the finish line.

"There are still families waiting for help," he said. "As long as people continue supporting me, I'll continue doing everything I can."

He also thanked long-standing supporters Saveco Cash & Carry, led by Haji Shiraz Ahmed, and Arome (King of Steaks) for once again backing his fundraising efforts.

"For me, the real heroes are the people who donate," he said.

"Without them, none of this would be possible. Every goat, every home we've built, every child we've helped- it all begins with someone choosing to care."

Donations remain open through JustGiving, with £40 providing one live goat for a family in Malawi. Supporters will receive video feedback showing exactly where their donation has made a difference. Visit : <https://www.justgiving.com/page/naz500> for more information.

Asian Express

SPORT

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



Bradford charity hero collapses at 10K finish... as he smashes £1.6m fundraising milestone

Bruised, exhausted and lying on the tarmac with grazed knees and elbows, Bradford charity fundraiser Nazim Ali BEM could finally smile.

Moments earlier he had thrown everything into a trademark sprint for the finish of the Blackpool 10K, only to trip spectacularly and crash across the line.

But despite the dramatic ending, the race had achieved something far bigger than a finishing time.

The Bradford humanitarian has now raised more than £6,365 through the challenge - enough to provide 159 live goats for families living in extreme poverty in Malawi; and, in doing so, has passed the extraordinary

milestone of £1.6 million raised for charity over the past 14 years.

Every painful step was for families who struggle to put food on the table.

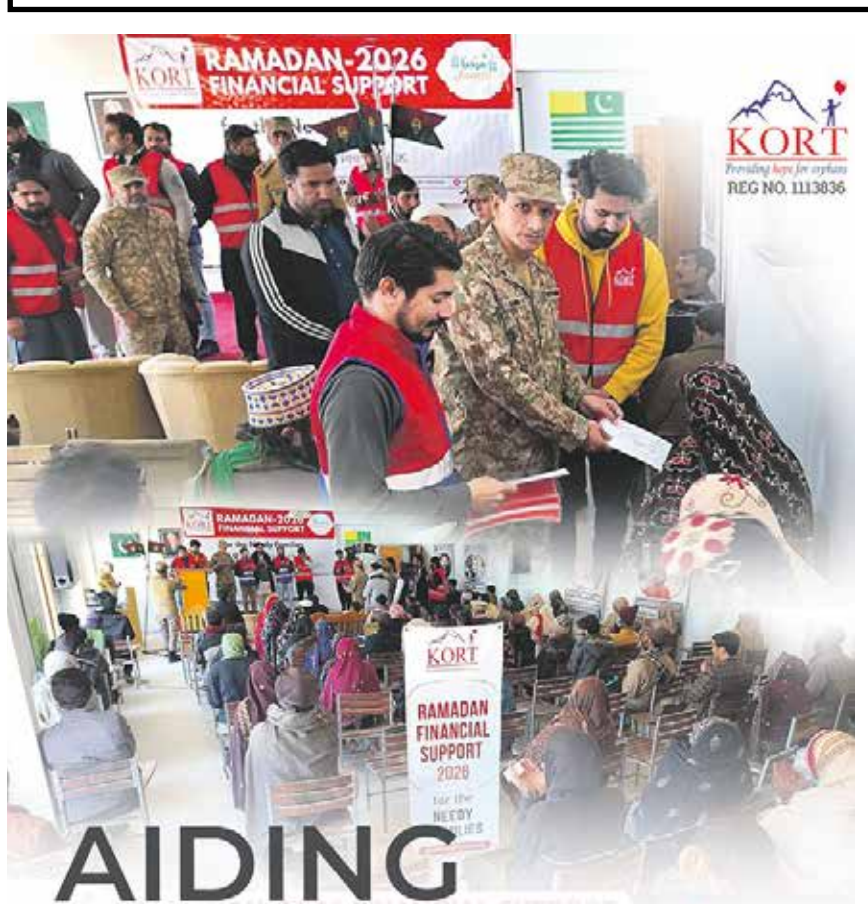
Each goat costs just £40, providing fresh milk for children, improving nutrition and giving families livestock that can breed, creating a sustainable source of food and

income.

Later this year, Ali will personally travel to Malawi on a self-funded humanitarian mission to distribute the goats himself.

Only then does the scale of Sunday's achievement become clear.

Continued on page 43



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LEEDS ROAD Festival

SATURDAY, 15TH AUGUST 2026

ARTIST NAME	GENRE	TIME
BOLLYTANZ	BOLLYWOOD HIGH ENERGY DANCE	13:00
TYM	AFROBEATS & ALTERNATIVE MUSIC ARTIST	13:15
IFFI KHAN	UK BHANGRA & POP	13:45
DARREN ELLIS	SINGER-SONGWRITER WITH FULL LIVE BAND	14:30
SIGNATURE	WORLD'S NO1 MJ DANCE ARTISE	15:00
KAY KAY & CO	BRITISH ASIAN FUSION BAND	15:30
OOJAMI	WORLD-FUSION ELECTRONIC MUSIC COLLECTIVE	16:30
WAJID ALI BAGHDADI	INTERNATIONAL FOLK ARTIST	17:15
TAYYBA KHAN	INTERNATIONAL SUFI & FOLK ARTIST	18:00
NAEEM HAZARVI	INTERNATIONAL ARTIST HEARTFELT FOLK HITS	19:00

SUNDAY, 16TH AUGUST 2026

ARTIST NAME	GENRE	TIME
NACHDE TAPDE	TRADITIONAL PUNJABI FOLK DANCE	13:00
THE PLUMBER DRUMMER	HIGH ENERGY DRAIN PIPE DRUMMING	13:15
STEELDRUMSBAND	CARRIBBEAN STEEL BAND	14:00
WILKO WILKES	AWARD WINNING ALTERNATIVE RAPPER	14:30
ABDULLAH SHAHID	PAKISTANI POP ARTIST	15:00
NATURAL RHYTHM	JAMAICAN SKA REGGAE BAND	15:30
THIRD FLOOR	BASS DRIVEN FUNK & SOUL	16:15
JENNA	VOICE OF HOLLAND SINGER -SONGWRITER	16:45
SHER YAR KHAN	PAKISTANI POP & URBAN	17:15
NADIA GUL	MODERN PASHTO POP & FOLK	18:00
ABRAR UL HAQ	GLOBAL ARTIST ICONIC BHANGRA & POP HITS	19:00

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SATURDAY
15TH AUGUST 2026

SUNDAY
16TH AUGUST 2026



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