

**Ramadan Mubarak**

**Belle Vue Girls' Academy delivers one of Yorkshire's strongest education success stories**



**SOARING**

Belle Vue Girls' Academy in Bradford has been praised by Ofsted for creating a school culture where inclusion, equality and personal development sit at the centre of daily life - with inspectors awarding the academy the coveted 'Strong' standard for 'Personal Development and Well-being'.  
 Continued on page 8

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# One moon, many mosques

## The academics behind a mission to end Britain's split Ramadans

Every year in Britain, a quiet fracture runs through Muslim life. In one home, a mother begins fasting. In another, a city away, her sister does not. Cousins celebrate Eid on different days. Even within the same family, some are still fasting while others are already feasting.

The cause is not disagreement over faith, but the sky.

The Islamic calendar depends on sighting the first crescent Moon. Different countries see it on different nights. For decades, many UK mosques have relied on announcements from abroad, leaving communities divided over when Ramadan begins and when Eid arrives.

For Imad Ahmed, that division became impossible to ignore.

Now a PhD researcher at the University of Cambridge, Ahmed grew up watching British Muslims argue each year over dates that were meant to unite them. "I saw families split at the most sacred moments," he said.

"People weren't disagreeing about God. They were disagreeing about geography."

That experience became the foundation of his academic work. Ahmed's research focuses on the Islamic lunar calendar in Britain - and how a community rooted in the UK can still end up governed by skies thousands of miles away.

"My dream is that Muslims across the UK can celebrate together," he said.

"Muslims once had a deep relationship with astronomy. I want

us to move from Moon-fighting to Moonsighting to Moon-uniting."

From that vision, the Moonsighters Academy was born.

### From divided skies to shared horizons

Led by the Universities of Leeds and Cambridge, the nine-month public engagement programme trains communities to carry out their own lunar observations in Britain. It blends online learning with in-person workshops and outdoor stargazing, equipping everyday people to host local "moon nights" in parks, school fields and mosque courtyards.

Its goal is both practical and symbolic - to give British Muslims the tools to sight the Moon at home, reduce confusion around religious dates and create a shared national rhythm for Ramadan and Eid.



Rochdale, Teesside and Bristol. The group is evenly split between men and women.

Some participants said their interest in the Moon began after having children, as they tried to explain the rhythms of Ramadan. Others traced it to the pandemic, when nightly walks made stargazing a quiet comfort. What unites them is a desire to bring others with them.

Astrophysicist Dr Emma Alexander, research fellow at Leeds and project co-lead, said the academy challenges who gets to “own” science.

“One of the joys of astronomy is sharing it,” she said. “This programme gives people the tools to connect their communities to the cosmos. It also shakes off stereotypes about who astronomers are.”

She added that she is especially excited by the number of young women involved. “They are part of our next generation of excellence in

British science.”

Naz Shah, MP for Bradford West, who took part in a leadership panel at the launch, said: “The work being done here is second to none. It’s inspiring.”

For Mohammed Attaur, founder of the Rochdale Science Initiative, the project speaks to a real community need. “It connects faith, science and culture,” he said. “By the end, I want to lead a moonsighting group in my town and build something that lasts.”

Shemanara Haq, a community activist from Teesside, described the academy as transformative. “It didn’t just share information. It built confidence and real connections. I’m taking this back to my community with purpose.”

Sofia Dawoodji, a grandmother who develops educational resources for schools, called the prospect of a unified calendar “groundbreaking”.

“This is a first for the UK,” she said.

As Ramadan approaches, Ahmed’s idea is moving from theory to practice.

Across rooftops, parks and playgrounds, families may soon gather together, eyes lifted, waiting for a thin curve of silver.

When the crescent appears, it will not only mark the start of Ramadan. It may also mark the beginning of a new chapter in British Muslim life - one written not in distant time zones, but in the night sky above home.

Earlier generations in the UK often lacked the resources to conduct regular observations, compounded by cloud cover and limited access to equipment. As a result, many communities outsourced their calendars. Over time, this produced a patchwork of practice, with mosques following different countries and families celebrating on different days.

The academy’s first cohort gathered this month for a two-day residential at the University of Leeds. Thirty-eight participants travelled from across the country, including imams, schoolteachers, scout leaders, parents and a grandmother. They came from Bradford, Birmingham,



PhD researcher at the University of Cambridge Imad Ahmed with Dr Emma Alexander

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# Nominations now open for BPA Empowering Women Awards 2026

**Nominations are now open for the BPA Empowering Women Awards 2026, with organisers urging entries from across all sectors and backgrounds. Nominees do not need formal titles or senior roles. Impact, influence and commitment remain the core criteria.**

The awards gala dinner event, which takes place on 25 June 2026 at the Cedar Court Hotel in Bradford, is an Asian Express Newspaper initiative, launched last year to mark the publication's 25th anniversary.



What began as a moment of celebration has since developed into a wider movement focused on visibility, leadership and long-term support for women across Yorkshire.

This year's nominations open against the backdrop of a growing legacy.

Since the 2025 ceremony, the awards have become directly linked to mentoring and peer support through the launch of BPA Lionesses - a network formed from last year's winners and finalists. The initiative is now delivering mentoring and networking sessions for women across the region, turning recognition into sustained action.

The Lionesses bring together women from business, health, education, culture, law, sport and the voluntary sector. Their focus is practical and forward-looking: sharing experience, widening access to networks and supporting women at different stages of their careers.

Organisers say the model reflects a clear shift away from one-off applause towards long-term investment in women's leadership.

The current cohort of BPA Lionesses includes Rizwana Mahmood MBE, Dr Saira Ali, Sarah Khan Bashir MBE, Rifhat Malik MBE, Noor Ali BEM, Aqsa Mushtaq, Fatima Khan Shah, Humma Nizami, Lois Monks, Naheed Akhtar, Nazreen Ahmed, Prity Farooq, Rukhsana Siddique, Dr Saghira Sharif, Samreen Akhtar, Shanaz Gulzar, Sobiya Jawaid, Usha Parmar and Wania Ahmed, led by Andleeb Hanif - chairperson of the Business Power Awards.

The 'BPA Empowering Women Awards' programme sits within the wider Business Power Awards framework and is coordinated by its founders, Nadim and Andleeb Hanif.



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**Know a woman who is leading, lifting others or changing lives?**  
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**Nominations for the BPA Empowering Women Awards 2026 are now open.**

Self-nominations are welcome, as are nominations for multiple categories.



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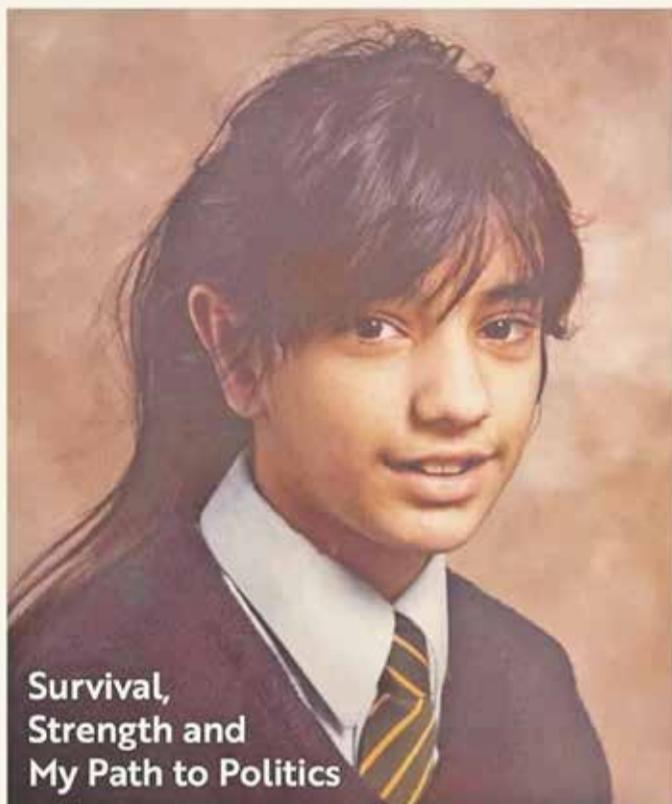
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## HONOURED NAZ SHAH



# EXILE, FORCED MARRIAGE, A MOTHER JAILED -

**the road  
that led MP  
Naz Shah to  
Westminster**



(l-r) Andleeb Hanif, Farkhanda Hussain-Butt, Nasreen Karim, MP Naz Shah and Raheela Khan

The room fell quiet as Naz Shah began to speak.

What followed was not a polished political address, nor a rehearsed speech. It was a life laid bare. An account of survival, faith and fierce resilience that left women across the room visibly moved - some in tears, many in recognition.

The gathering, hosted by DaWN CIC at KJA Accountants in Cleckheaton, was intended as an evening of connection. It became something deeper - a collective reckoning with the hidden stories women carry, and the strength it takes to rise from them.

Shah, the Labour MP for Bradford West, was sharing excerpts from her forthcoming memoir, 'Honoured: Survival, Strength and My Path to Politics', set to be released on 5th March.

Her story is one of almost unimaginable adversity. As a child she witnessed her father beat her mother before abandoning the family for a teenage neighbour. At 12, she was sent to Pakistan for safety, only to be forced into marriage at 15.

Within years, her mother would be imprisoned for killing the man who had subjected her to years of physical and sexual abuse. Naz and her two younger siblings were left to fend for themselves.

Against those odds, she became an activist, campaigning with Southall Black Sisters for her mother's release and helping secure a reduction in her life sentence. In 2015, she overturned George Galloway's majority to win back Bradford West, entering Parliament with a mandate shaped by lived experience rather than privilege.

At the event, those chapters were not delivered as headlines or soundbites, but as human truth. The effect was electric. Women listened in silence, nodding, absorbing, reflecting on their own journeys through leadership, business, motherhood and survival.

What emerged was not pity, but power. "This wasn't about trauma for its own sake," said one attendee. "It was about what we do with it. How we carry it. How we transform it."

That transformation is at the heart of 'Honoured', which will be published by W&N in hardback, e-book and audiobook.



on 5 March 2026. World English-language rights were acquired by Jenny Lord, executive publisher at W&N and Orion Literary. “In her singular voice, Naz Shah tells her extraordinarily moving and unforgettable coming-of-age story,” Lord said. “A stranger-than-fiction journey of survival, faith and political awakening, Honoured shows us the making of an

activist - and a truly inspiring woman.” Shah herself describes the book as an act of narrative reclamation. “Inspiration can spark a moment, but true transformation grows from the roots of community, belief and values that endure,” she said. “Our past doesn’t define our limits - it shapes our strength. When we write our own stories,

we don’t just rise. We shift the narrative for generations to come.” That ethos underpinned the evening. “We are creating spaces where women can share their journeys truly matters,” said Farkhanda Hussain Butt, director of DaWN CIC and organiser of the event. “Through open conversation and connection, perspectives are

broadened, confidence is built, and meaningful relationships are formed.” She thanked Andleeb Hanif of Asian Express for opening the evening “with words that set the tone for reflection and purpose”, and speakers Joanne Powell, Samantha Hutton and Naheed Effendi of KJA Accounting, who shared their own non-linear leadership paths.

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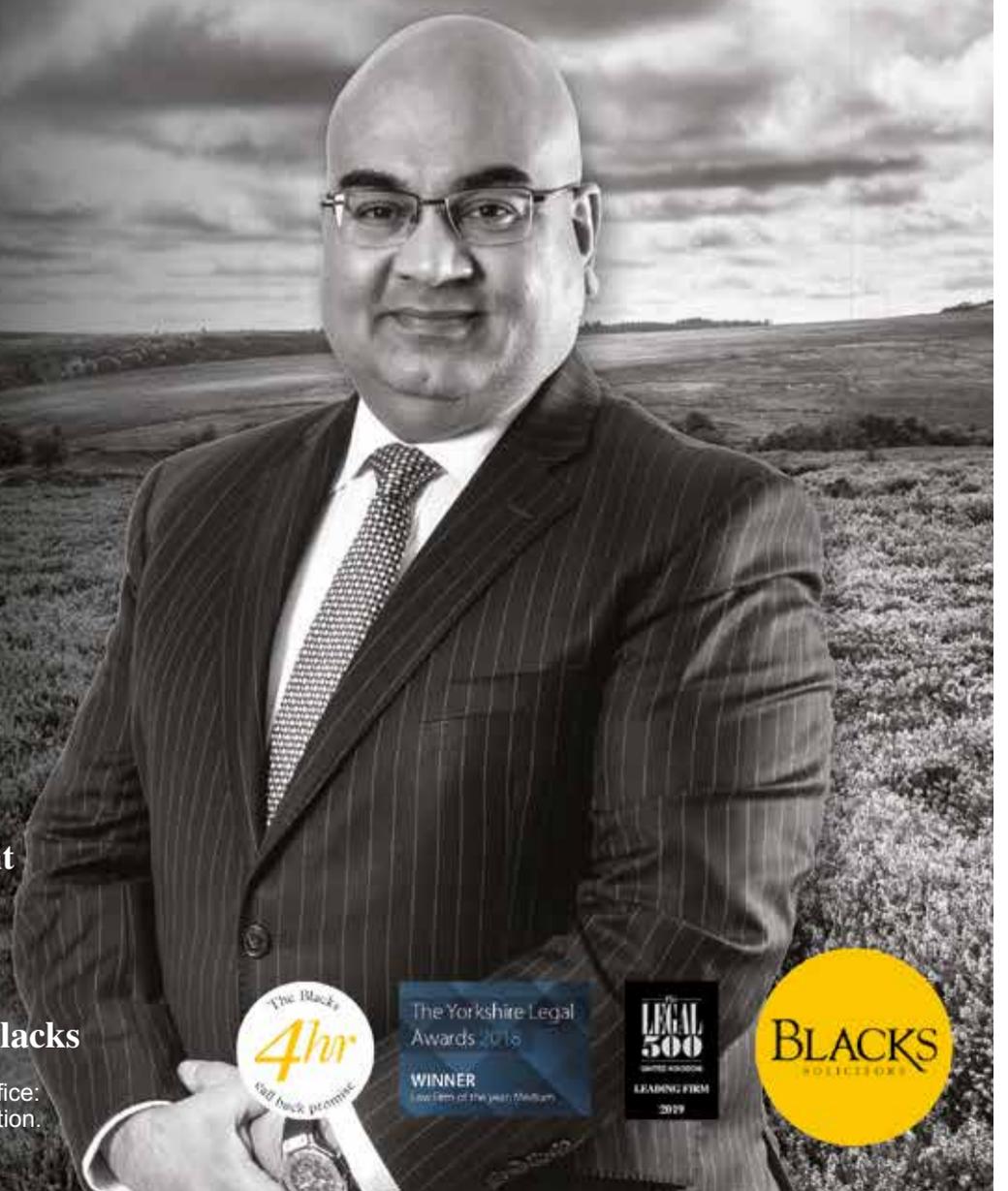
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# SOARING

## Belle Vue Girls' Academy delivers one of Yorkshire's strongest education success stories

### Cover story continued

The judgement, reserved for schools that go beyond expectations, recognises “excellent and consistent work that makes a real difference for children and learners”, placing Belle Vue Girls' among those delivering not only academic progress but a wider, deeply supportive experience for young people.

Inspectors said the Heaton-based secondary school was “committed to enriching pupils' lives”, highlighting an ethos where diversity is celebrated and respect shapes relationships throughout the school.

“A respect for equality spreads through all aspects of the school's work,” the report noted, praising high standards of behaviour and the way pupils support one another and engage positively with staff.

While Belle Vue Girls' was previously rated Good in all areas in 2021, the latest inspection also

confirmed that the academy securely met the ‘Expected’ standard across every other category, including Achievement, Curriculum and Teaching, Attendance and Behaviour, Leadership and Governance, Inclusion, and Post-16 Provision.

Inspectors described a calm and focused learning environment where pupils value both their education and the support they receive.

“Pupils achieve well... acquiring valuable knowledge and skills across many areas of the curriculum,” the report stated. “They secure foundations that prepare them effectively for GCSE study.”

Inclusion - a newly expanded focus in the 2025 Ofsted framework - was identified as a priority for school leaders, with inspectors noting that staff understand the barriers some pupils face and ensure vulnerable learners receive targeted support.

Safeguarding was also judged to be securely met, with Ofsted



describing an “open culture” in which responsibility is shared across the school community and pupils feel safe.

The inspection took place in November 2025, during the first week of Ofsted's revised national framework - a more demanding model introduced to raise expectations across England's schools. Belle Vue Girls' was one of only three schools in Yorkshire inspected in that opening week.

Deborah Anness, headteacher at Belle Vue Girls' Academy, said the outcome reflected years of dedication from staff and students.

“The new Ofsted framework sets very high standards,” she said. “To meet the expected standards in all areas, with personal development recognised as a significant strength,

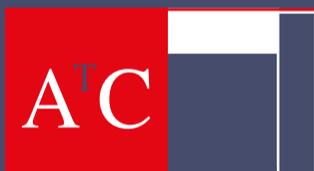
provides real assurance to parents that we are offering a high-quality education.”

Carol Dewhurst OBE, chief executive of Bradford Diocesan Academies Trust, said being among the first schools inspected under the new system added to the significance of the result.

“Ofsted has made clear this framework raises the bar,” she said. “I'm proud Belle Vue not only met these standards but did so in a way that reflects its essence as an ambitious, inclusive school.”

Belle Vue Girls' Academy is part of Bradford Diocesan Academies Trust, a regional family of 21 schools supporting pupils across Bradford and beyond, with a mission to ensure every child has the chance to flourish.

**“Ofsted has made clear this framework raises the bar. I'm proud Belle Vue not only met these standards but did so in a way that reflects its essence as an ambitious, inclusive school.”**



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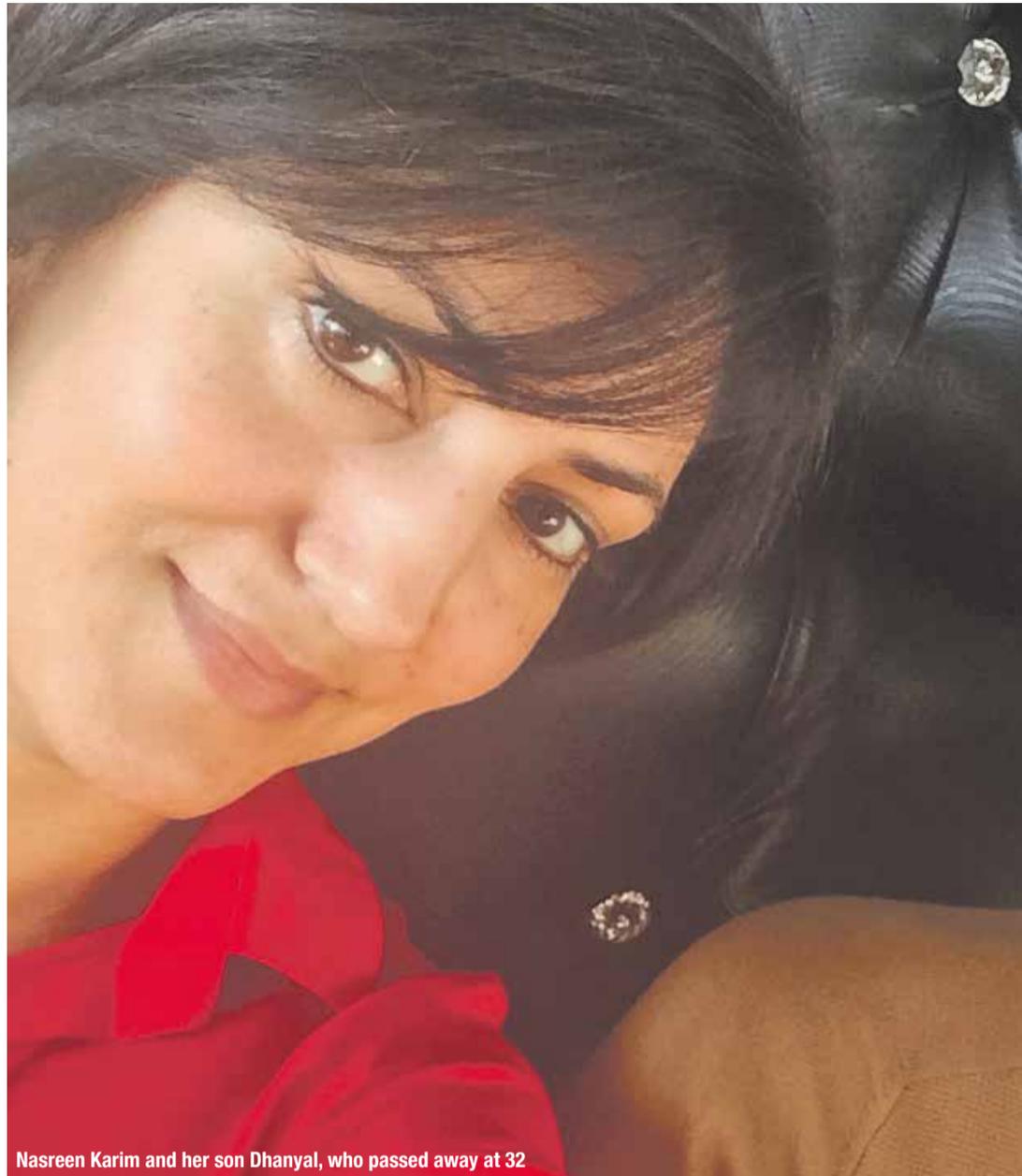


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Nasreen Karim and her son Dhanyal, who passed away at 32

## How one mother turned grief into a lifeline for the world's poorest families

**In the quiet moments, Nasreen Karim still wakes believing everything is normal. For a split second, the world feels intact. Then reality rushes back in.**

"The first few months were like Groundhog Day," she says.

"I would wake up thinking everything was normal and then realise that he was no longer here."

Her son, her only child, Dhanyal Karim, is gone. And with that loss, everything else fell away too. Sleep. Work. Appetite. Purpose.

"I couldn't sleep, work, eat. My friends and family stayed

with me 24 hours a day for several months just to ensure I was ok. But I wasn't. My heart hurt and my brain had exploded."

Dhanyal was 32. A physics student. A gentle, gifted soul with a mind that never stopped searching. "He was the kindest of souls," Nasreen says.

"Sensitive and gifted. He loved cats, nature, and had a real zest for science. He taught himself to play the guitar and the piano. He didn't say much, but he was an incredibly deep thinker."

He needed his intellect to be challenged. Small talk bored

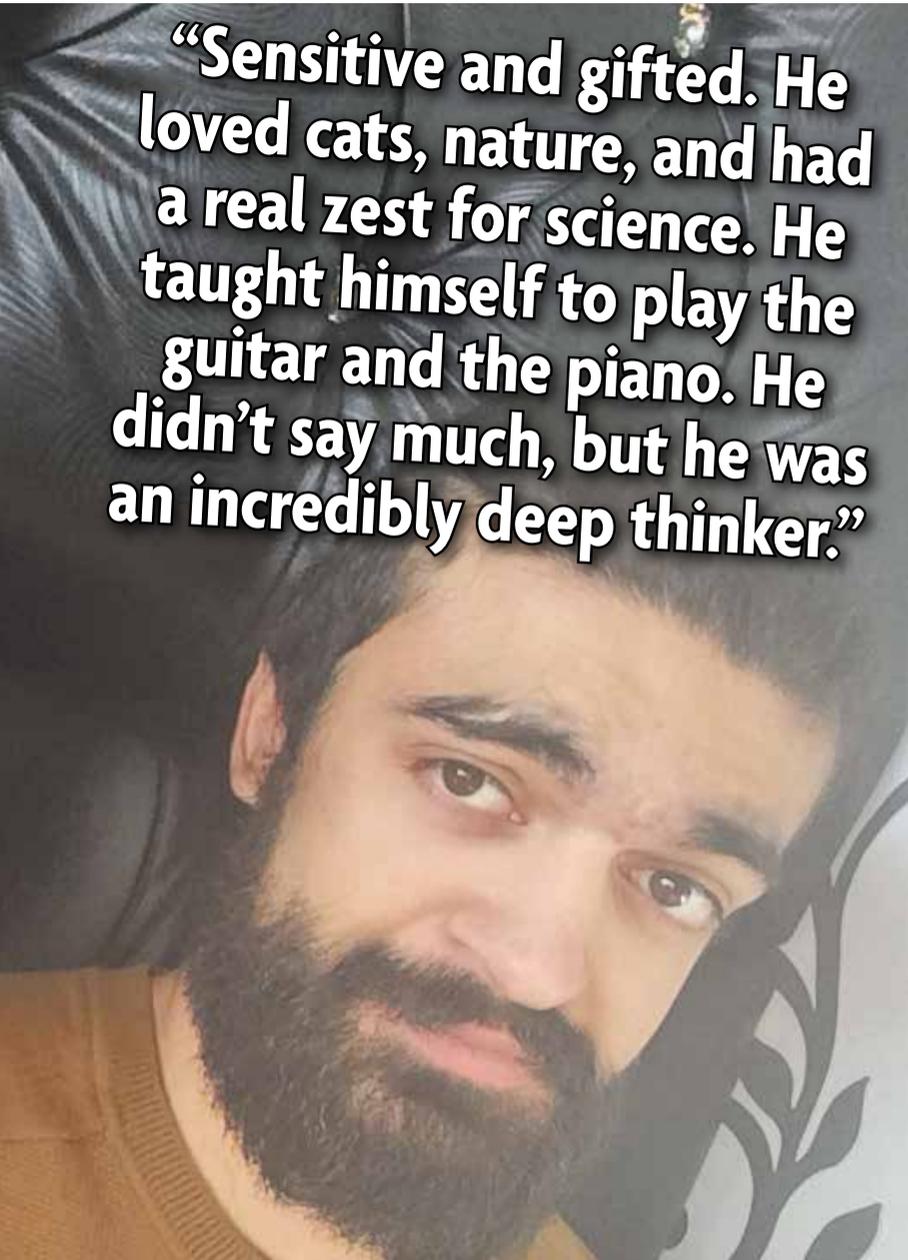
him. Most of his friends were older. He gravitated towards ideas, not noise. He had a passion for physics and was building a future shaped by curiosity.

When he died, her world collapsed. Nasreen, a lawyer, could not return to work. She felt restless, suspended between grief and survival. She knew she had to do something, anything, that would have made sense to him.

"I thought about planting trees," she says. "I wanted to build a garden where I could visualise him sitting."

Then a conversation changed

**“Sensitive and gifted. He loved cats, nature, and had a real zest for science. He taught himself to play the guitar and the piano. He didn’t say much, but he was an incredibly deep thinker.”**



**“They don’t want charity, they want a way to earn a living.”**

everything.

While speaking to HMD Charity, which works across West Africa, she was introduced to communities in The Gambia. Villages where homes are made from mud and straw. Where beds are broken frames or bare wooden planks. Where animals roam because there is no fenced land, no infrastructure, no stability.

What she saw there stunned her.

Nasreen decided to visit HMD in Gambia to see for herself, she booked her tickets and flew out on 4th January. “I couldn’t actually believe what I was witnessing. The poorest people I had ever seen - and despite this, the children were smiling.”

“These were families living in daily survival. Not a temporary crisis, but a permanent absence of opportunity. Yet there was warmth. Dignity. Humanity.

“They don’t want charity,” Nasreen says. “They want a way to earn a living.”

The solution emerged from the HMD charity: community farms. Shared land. Shared work. Shared futures.

With HMD Charity, Nasreen began raising funds to build animal farms owned by entire villages. Fenced land. Livestock. A way for families to feed themselves and earn an income.

“This is my ‘sadqa jaria’ (ongoing charity) project for Dhanyal,” she says. “The poorest of the poor will have farms that provide food and income.”

In Islam, sadqa jaria is a form of ongoing charity - a gift that continues to give long after the donor is gone. For Nasreen, it is a way to keep her son’s presence alive in the world.

“Dhanyal would have loved this,”

she says quietly. “I know he would be happy to see his memory honoured this way.”

“All the rewards for this project will be sent to him. That’s all I want.”

One farm can transform one village. Hundreds could change a region. Each fence erected, each animal purchased, becomes part of a legacy built not from wealth, but from love.

Nasreen did not choose this path. Grief forced her onto it. But in turning unbearable loss into something that feeds others, she has created a living bridge between her son and children who will never know his name, yet will grow because of it.

If you are moved by Nasreen’s story and would like to support her, please visit [www.justgiving.com](http://www.justgiving.com) and search for ‘Nasreen Karim HMD Empowerment Programme’.



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Nazim Ali BEM is preparing for his 20th overseas deployment, travelling to poverty-stricken Sindh, Pakistan this month to deliver hundreds of Ramadan food parcels to families facing extreme hardship.

Nazim will visit Sindh from 14th to 17th February 2026, on the eve of Ramadan, working in partnership with the UK registered charity - Hayaat Welfare Trust, which operates under a 100% donation policy.

The mission will focus on providing vital food support to vulnerable households who will be fasting through Ramadan with little or no access to basic supplies.

"In Ramadan many Muslims will be fasting with an abundance of food with our families," Nazim said. "However, families in Sindh will be struggling for food whilst fasting. Please help make their Ramadan that much easier."

Nazim initially aimed to raise £10,000 to fund 400 parcels, but has already surpassed that target, raising £15,630 so far - enough to provide approximately 625 food parcels, with more still expected as donations continue.

Each parcel weighs around 37kg, costs £25, and is Zakat applicable. Contents include flour, sugar, cooking oil, lentils, rice, potatoes, onions, dates, tea, spices and essential hygiene items such as soap.

Nazim last visited Sindh in March 2022, where he opened 35 newly built homes for families living in severe poverty. He says the scale of deprivation left a lasting impression and remains a key reason for returning.

Alongside the food distribution, he will also inspect the water pumps he has helped install across the region. Over the last 15 months, Nazim has supported the installation of more than 600 water pumps in poverty-stricken communities through Hayaat Welfare Trust, having previously travelled with them to Jordan in February 2025 and Egypt in August 2025.

Nazim's humanitarian work spans nearly three decades, with aid missions across the world. A planned trip to war-ravaged Sudan in December 2025 was delayed after his visa did not arrive in time.

He continues to self-fund his travel, taking annual leave from his job as a careers adviser in three inner-city schools, and has raised almost £1.3 million for charitable causes both in the UK and overseas.

In recognition of his service, Nazim was named in the King's New Year Honours List 2025, receiving a British Empire Medal, and was awarded an Honorary Fellowship from the University of Bradford in 2023.

Back in Bradford, his work remains just as hands-on. For the past two years, every Tuesday, he has run the Khidma Community Kitchen, sponsored by Saveco Cash, providing warm two-course meals to homeless and destitute people.

He also leads the long-running Creating Smiles Gifts Initiative, delivering thousands of pounds worth of gifts to children in hospital wards across Bradford Royal Infirmary and Airedale Hospital, with more than 50 visits over the last 13 years.

Much of this work is delivered through the Nazim Ali Foundation, which continues to support humanitarian initiatives locally and internationally, driven by a simple belief in service, dignity and community responsibility.

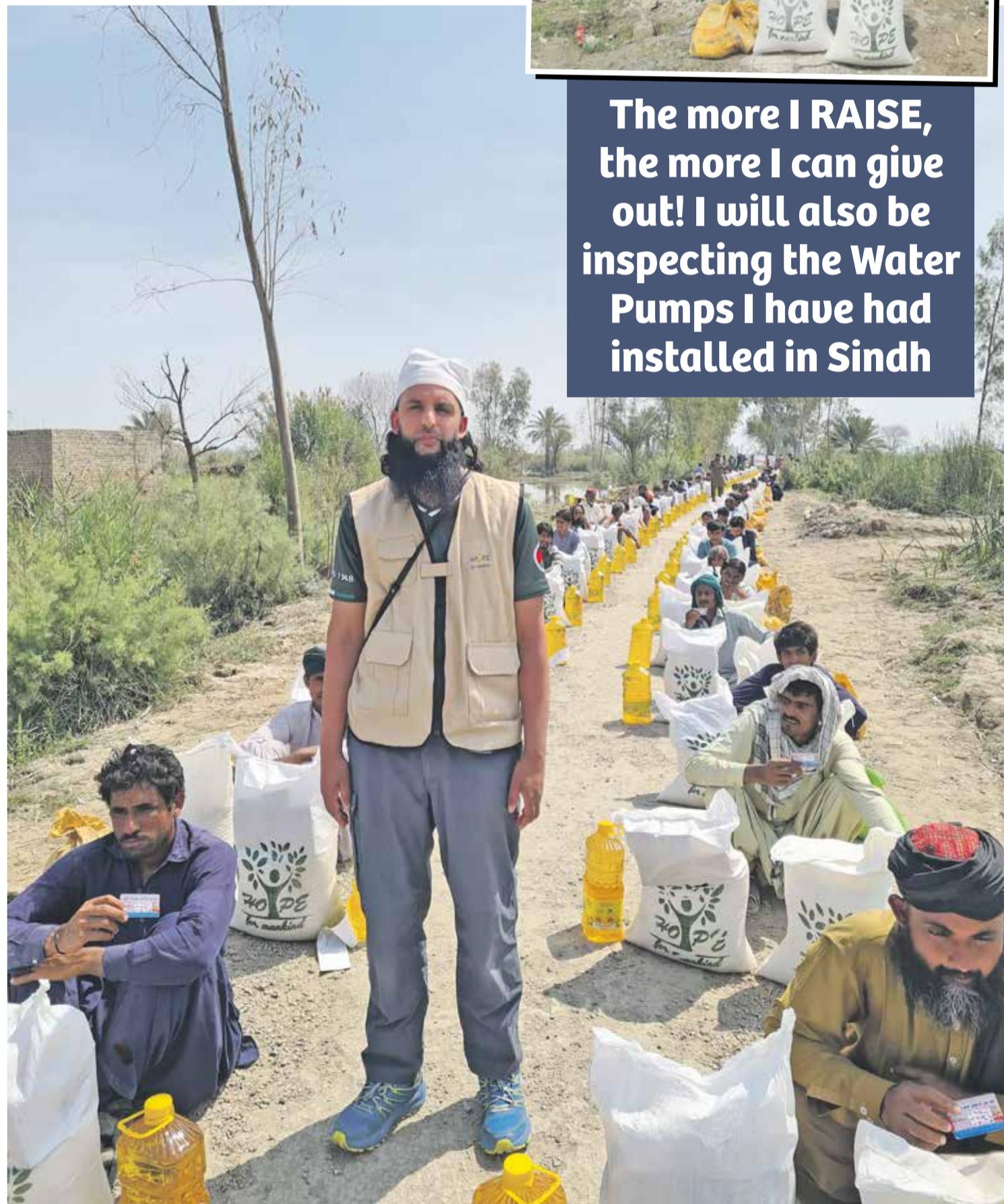
Nazim is urging the public to support the Sindh Ramadan appeal, stressing that every donation - no matter the size - directly helps families facing hunger during the holy month.

Donations can be made via JustGiving: [www.justgiving.com/page/naz300](http://www.justgiving.com/page/naz300)

# How Nazim Ali's 20th aid deployment is a Ramadan lifeline for families in need



**The more I RAISE, the more I can give out! I will also be inspecting the Water Pumps I have had installed in Sindh**



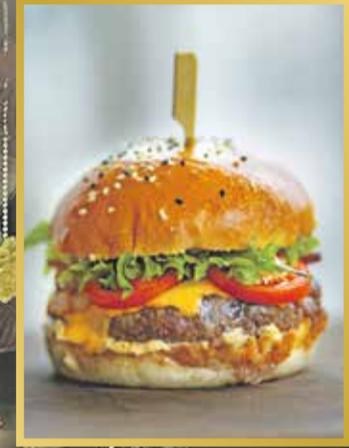
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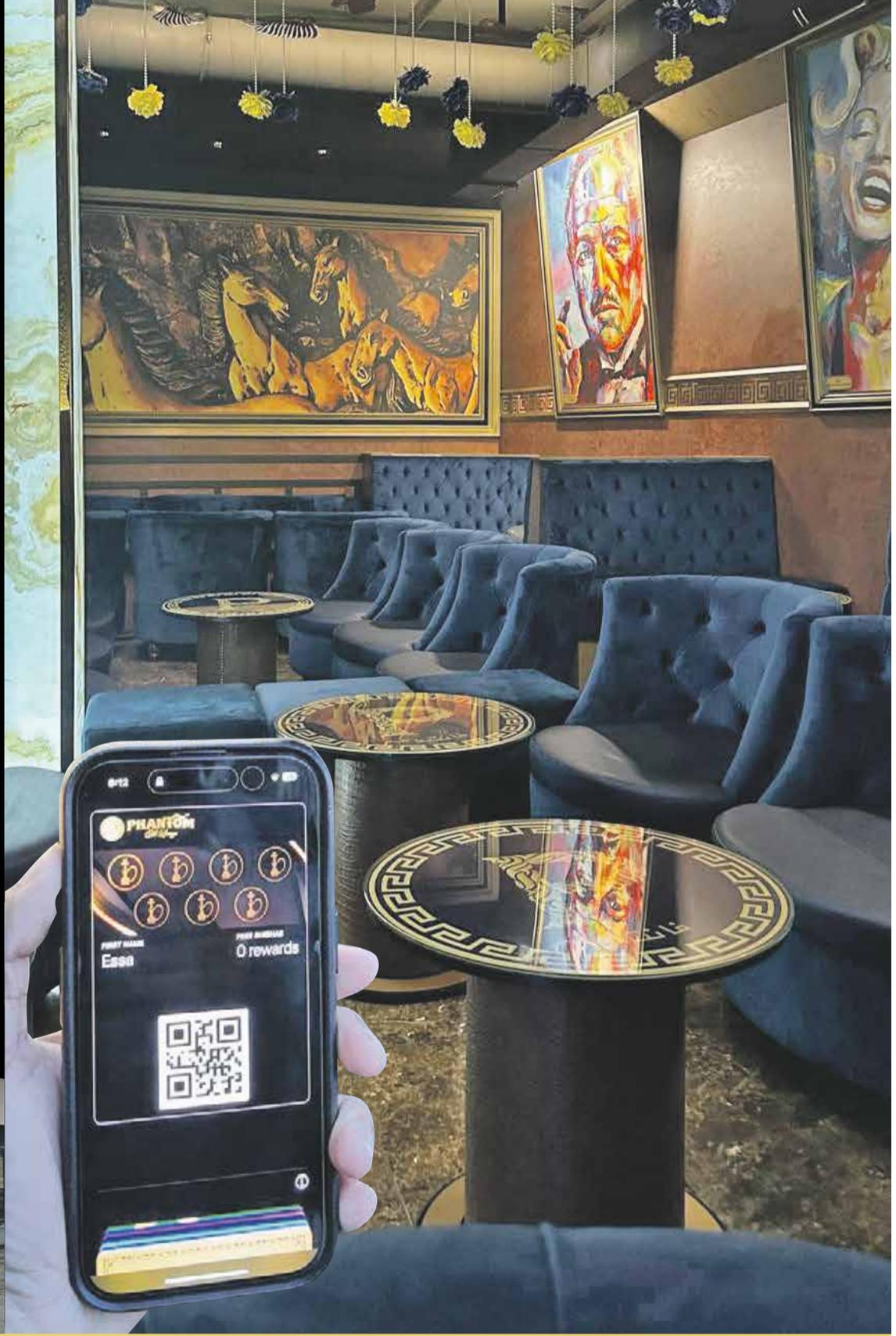
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**A student who tried to fleece desperate university applicants out of nearly £50,000 has been jailed after investigators uncovered a cold and calculated scam that preyed on young people chasing a better future.**

Sibtain Hussain, 32, from Bradford, targeted international students applying to UK universities - bombarding them with demands for money for fake "financial checks", "student services" and bogus "accommodation deposits".

Victims believed they were paying legitimate university fees.

Instead, they were being conned.

Hussain used stolen applicant data to launch what prosecutors described as a relentless fraud campaign, contacting more than 200 hopeful students by phone and email and demanding payments of up to £3,200 at a time.

In total, 23 students sent more than £48,000, although banks managed to block many transfers before the full scale of the scam was realised.

Investigators warned the plot had the potential to generate almost £500,000 in illegal profits.

The fraud stemmed from a serious breach at Lancaster University, where unauthorised access was gained to an internal computer system in 2018 and sensitive applicant information was

stolen.

Hussain, who began studying at the university in 2017, obtained access to the data and used it to target applicants with alarming persistence.

To avoid detection, he created multiple phone numbers, email addresses, aliases and bank accounts, leaving victims confused and fearful their applications - and futures - were at risk.

Lancaster University reported the breach to the National Crime Agency in July 2019 after receiving disturbing reports that applicants were being approached for suspicious payments.

The NCA launched an investigation, tracing the scam through bank accounts and victim testimony.

Officers arrested Hussain in Bradford in July 2019, seizing two mobile phones and a wallet containing evidence linking him directly to the crimes.

He initially denied wrongdoing, but later pleaded guilty at Leeds Crown Court in October 2025.

He was sentenced at the same court to four and a half years in prison for fraud, with a further 12 months for money laundering.

The case has prompted fresh warnings for students - particularly international applicants - to remain vigilant against criminals exploiting the pressures and anxieties of university admissions.

# STUDENT SCAMMER STOLE THEIR DREAMS

**Conman who targeted hundreds of overseas university hopefuls in £500,000 fraud plot is jailed**



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Channel 4 has just announced its partnership with Tesco on the social branded entertainment series, **Ultimate Ramadan Basket**.

Building on a strong history of the two brands collaborating, this series of social shorts marks the latest in a series of successful digital-first ventures between Channel 4 and Tesco.

Produced by the award-winning Gold Wala, audiences are invited to watch comedian Ola Labib, creator Smash Bengali and actor Dúaa Karim as they seek out the ultimate list of must-have Ramadan food staples, drawing on their own favourite ingredients and products from Tesco. Will they agree on the ultimate essentials and curate a definitive “Ultimate Ramadan Basket”?

Their journey promises to laughter, learning, and plenty of mouth-watering discoveries.

Hanz MacDonald, Digital Commissioning Executive, Channel 4 said: “We’re excited to bring the creativity, warmth and community spirit at the heart of Ramadan to our digital content. Working with such talented creators to spark inspiration for Suhoor and Iftar feels like a natural fit for Channel 4, and we’re proud to support Tesco’s first social media dedicated Ramadan campaign.

Alicia Southgate, Head of Marketing at Tesco said: “Everyone’s welcome at Tesco, and we want to serve and represent our customers by being inclusive in our advertising and marketing but also offering products they may want. We hope that this dedicated Ramadan social media campaign will be really engaging and resonate with our customers.”

Faraz Osman, Managing Director, Gold Wala said: “At Gold Wala we are passionate about telling stories that reflect real lives and diverse cultures, creating entertainment with warmth that audiences want to share. Ultimate Ramadan Basket is funny, welcoming and proudly rooted in lived experience, led by popular creators who bring their full selves to the screen.

“Partnering with Channel 4 and Tesco on this social-first series which celebrates Ramadan with confidence, humour and true mainstream visibility, has been a genuine joy.”

The digital shorts will drop on Channel 4’s Instagram, TikTok, Facebook and YouTube shorts starting from the 24 February 2026.

This is the latest project from Partner Lab, the in-house creative partnerships team built to help brands stand out, offering solutions across partnerships, sponsorship, creative strategy and production. The partnership, brokered and led by Essen

# Exploring the ultimate Ramadan essentials



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# RACIST TAXI TERROR:

## Elderly Sikh cabbies attacked in daylight



**Three men have been charged over a violent assault on two elderly Sikh taxi drivers outside Wolverhampton railway station, an incident that sent shockwaves through the Sikh community and reignited fears over racially motivated attacks.**

The attack, which took place in broad daylight in August last year, was captured on video and widely shared online. The footage showed two Sikh men, one in his 60s and the other in his 70s, being assaulted near the station, prompting immediate arrests by British Transport Police.

On Thursday, police confirmed that three suspects have now been formally charged and released on bail pending court proceedings.

Zackery Hall, 20, of Dudley, has been charged with grievous bodily harm (GBH), a racially aggravated public order offence, and three further public order offences.

Nathan Edwards, 25, of Darlaston, faces charges of GBH, actual bodily harm (ABH), two public order offences, criminal damage and resisting arrest.

Leon Willetts, 18, of Rowley Regis, has been charged with GBH and resisting arrest.

All three are due to appear at Dudley Magistrates' Court on Thursday 5 March.

The assault occurred at around 1.45pm on Friday 15 August 2025 outside Wolverhampton railway station. Officers were called to the scene, where the three men were arrested and taken into custody before being released on police bail while enquiries continued.

"We understand the concern this incident has caused to the victims and their families, as well as the local Sikh community and wider public," she said. "A thorough investigation has taken place, and three men have now been charged in connection.

"It is vital the judicial process

However, the length of time taken to bring charges has drawn criticism from Sikh leaders.

Dabinderjit Singh OBE, Lead Executive at the Sikh Federation (UK), said relief at the charges was tempered by frustration.

"We are pleased the three men

assault was witnessed, there was huge frustration that it has taken more than five months for the Crown Prosecution Service to be satisfied before laying charges.

"There was a clear racist element to the attack on the two elderly Sikh men, and we note that one of the three has

**"Given the men were arrested on the spot for this horrific attack, there was video evidence that went viral and the assault was witnessed, there was huge frustration that it has taken more than five months for the Crown Prosecution Service to be satisfied before laying charges.**

Both victims were taken to hospital for treatment and later discharged. Their families have now been formally informed of the charges.

BTP Superintendent Sue Peters said the case had caused deep distress far beyond the immediate victims.

is allowed to continue without interference, and that nothing is said or published which could prejudice ongoing court proceedings. We remain in close contact with the victims and continue to engage with the Sikh community and partner agencies."

have been charged and would like to thank British Transport Police for their investigation and local MPs for keeping up pressure," he said.

"Given the men were arrested on the spot for this horrific attack, there was video evidence that went viral and the

been charged with a racially aggravated public order offence."

For many in the community, the case has become a symbol of both vulnerability and resilience - and a test of whether justice will now be delivered in full view of the court.



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## A tidal wave of children starting school without even the most basic life skills



# The great British potty panic

**Four-year-olds in nappies. Teachers armed with wipes. Parents blamed. Social media furious.**

A tidal wave of children are now starting school without even the most basic life skills - and the fixation on whether they can use the potty is obscuring a far deeper breakdown in early childhood development across England.

New surveys of primary teachers reveal that around one in four children beginning reception this year were not toilet trained, a figure that rises to more than a third in some regions.

These youngsters are also arriving unable to eat and drink independently, dress themselves or interact with peers, forcing teachers to spend around two hours a day on basic care tasks rather than teaching.

But while the nation clutches its pearls over who can pull down their own pants, something far more serious is going wrong.

The stats are sobering:

One in four children begin reception not toilet trained

More than a third are judged "not ready for school"

Nearly one in three five-year-olds miss expected development targets

Many arrive unable to dress, eat or

socialise alone

**Broken support services**

Early years campaigners warn that the public's potty panic is masking a collapse of crucial community support.

Once-ubiquitous Sure Start centres and family hubs - vital hubs for parenting advice, health checks and child development support, have been decimated over the past decade, with some estimates suggesting more than a third have shut their doors since the early 2010s.

Jo Morris from Early Years Voice says: "This isn't about parents being careless. It's about support systems vanishing.

"We've lost children's centres, health visitors and early help teams. These were the places that guided parents through the basics.

"Families are tired, stretched and often alone. Blaming toilet training is easy. Fixing broken services is harder."

A major charity also reported that support services for struggling families have fallen sharply, with funding cuts and closures leaving parents with fewer places to turn for help on speech and language, behaviour, nutrition and emotional

wellbeing - all building blocks of early independence.

Primary school staff say they are witnessing first-hand how this systemic breakdown is playing out in their classrooms.

"We're spending more time changing nappies, feeding children and settling emotional meltdowns than teaching phonics," one headteacher told us.

"These children aren't naughty. They're unprepared."

The divide in developmental outcomes is also starkly linked to socio-economic disadvantage. Children eligible for free school meals are far less likely to achieve a good level of development by age five than better-off peers, underscoring that the problem isn't parenting alone but poverty and unequal access to early support.

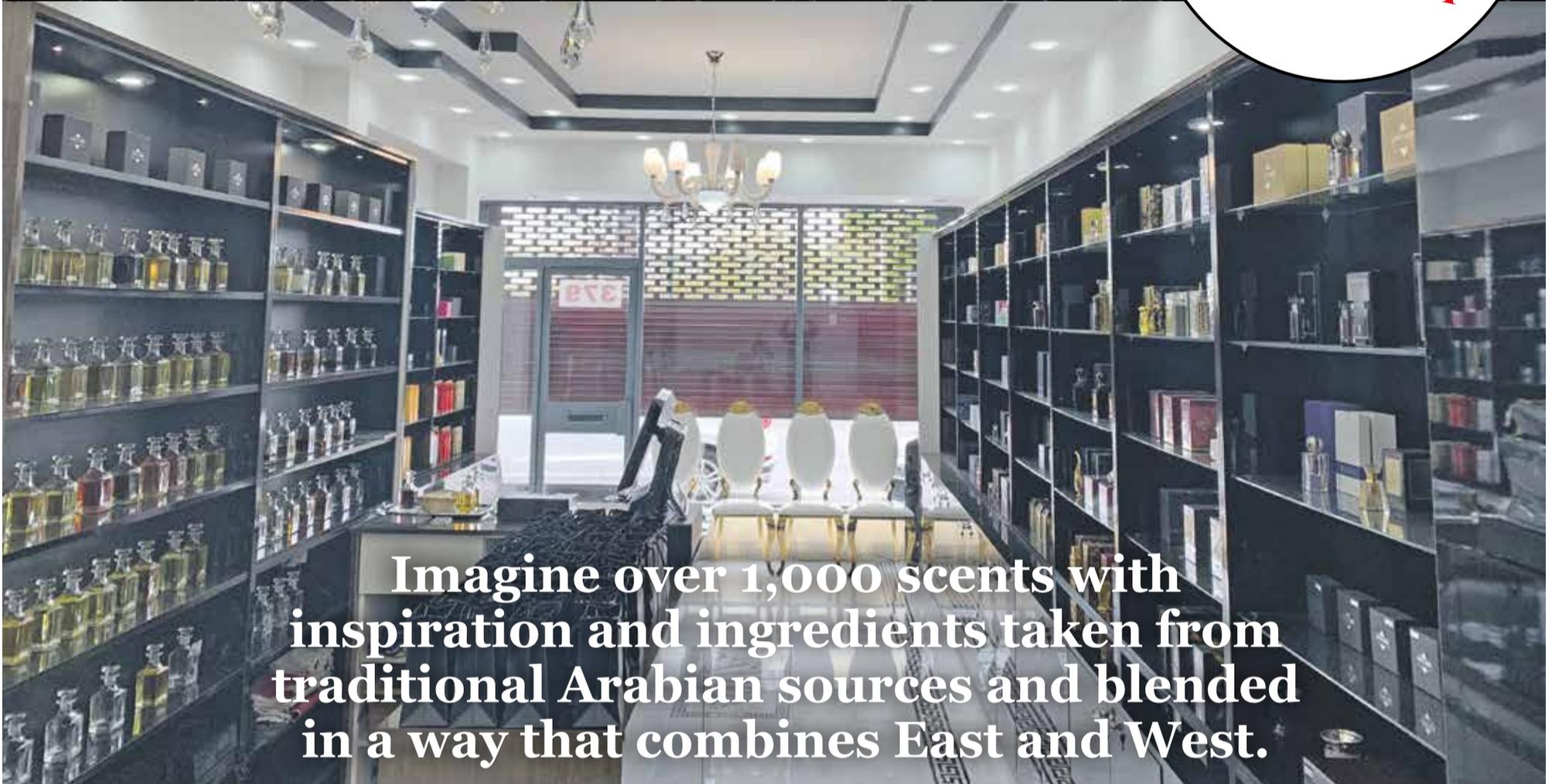
Campaign groups are urging the Government to restore, not retreat, from investment in early childhood services, warning that without real help for families and skilled early years professionals, more children will arrive at school ill-equipped to learn, causing long-term damage to education, wellbeing and social mobility.

In Bradford Just 52% of children in the city's most deprived neighbourhoods are school ready. "Nationally, for Bradford, the gap is not marginal - it's profound."

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# Bradford's culture boom



Bradford Culture Company has set out its plans for 2026, pledging to build on the momentum and national profile created by Bradford's landmark year as UK City of Culture.

After welcoming more than three million people to events across the district in 2025 – from city centre venues to towns, villages and greenspaces – the organisation says the programme helped reshape perceptions of Bradford, created tens of thousands of opportunities for local people, and strengthened pride in place.

Now, the independent charity established to deliver Bradford 2025 will continue as a smaller, more focused operation, working with partners to widen access to culture, support local artists and organisations, and reinstate its much-loved volunteering programme.

A major highlight of the year ahead will be the reopening of Loading Bay in May. The atmospheric multi-storey venue, transformed from a former warehouse during the City of Culture year, welcomed more than 40,000 visitors and became one of Bradford 2025's standout successes.

Spread across three floors, Loading Bay hosted everything from exhibitions and immersive theatre to international dance, live music, supper clubs, cabaret and comedy.

Its programme featured appearances from a RuPaul's Drag Race star, magician Steven Frayne, and an Extraordinary Portraits exhibition with Bill Bailey, alongside mixed-reality experiences exploring Bradford's heritage.

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Plans are also in place for the return of The Beacon in summer 2026, subject to planning permission. The temporary community-focused venue is expected to deliver a programme co-created with local people, including family takeovers, arts and crafts, live music, poetry, dance and community sessions.

The volunteer programme, supported by funding from Allwyn, will continue to offer opportunities for residents to welcome audiences, act as Bradford ambassadors and help deliver events behind the scenes.

Bradford Culture Company is also fundraising to expand its work further, embed its Bradford Made heritage resources into schools, and strengthen pathways for young people into the creative industries.

Executive Director Dan Bates and Creative Director Shanaz Gulzar said Bradford's year as City of Culture was "transformational", boosting investment, tourism and community pride.

Culture Secretary Lisa Nandy added that it was "fantastic" to see new venues continuing to delight audiences, ensuring the spirit



**Executive Director Dan Bates and Creative Director Shanaz Gulzar said Bradford's year as City of Culture was "transformational", boosting investment, tourism and community pride.**



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# business power



Cllr Alex Ross-Shaw Bradford Council's Executive Member for Regeneration at Solly's Fruit and Vegetables stall at Darley Street Market

**Bradford's Darley Street Market has been named Britain's Best Food Market, just six months after opening - and traders like Solly's Fruit and Vegetables are a big reason why it's thriving.**

The city centre venue scooped the top prize at the Great British Market Awards, with judges calling it "truly impressive" and praising the market as "a bold, modern food destination that blends culture, community and quality".

For many shoppers, it's businesses like Solly's that give the market its soul.

Solly's Fruit and Vegetables is a fourth-generation Bradford family business, which began life as a fruit, veg and halal meat shop on Oak Lane in the early 1970s. Now, its presence inside Darley Street Market reflects exactly what the venue has become - a modern space rooted in the city's independent trading heritage.

**Continued on page 26**

## Bradford's Darley Street Market crowned 'Britain's Best Food Market'



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# business power

## No Point In Crying Over Spilt Milk

**D**airy UK Ltd, the trade association for the UK dairy industry, has finally won its long running legal battle with Oatly AB, a Swedish company and well-known producer of oat based food and drink products as alternatives to dairy products, especially oat milk.

In April 2021, Oatly registered the UK trade mark "POST MILK GENERATION" for various products, including oat based food and drink products. However, in November 2021 Dairy UK applied for a declaration that the registration of the trade mark had been invalidly registered under the Trade Marks Act 1994 on the basis that the use of the term was prohibited by EU regulations (which continued to be effective in the UK post Brexit as retained EU law). The regulation in question strictly reserved the use of the term "milk" for products derived from animals.

In January 2023, the Intellectual Property Office (IPO) invalidated the trade mark for oat based food and drink products, agreeing with Dairy UK's contention that Oatly's mark could mislead consumers by associating its oat based beverages with traditional dairy products. However, the High Court overturned the IPO's decision and allowed the trade mark to stand for oat based products. Dairy UK appealed the decision, and the Court of Appeal subsequently reinstated the IPO's original decision in 2024, affirming that the use of "milk" in Oatly's trade mark contravened the EU regulation. Oatly then appealed to the Supreme Court.

The Supreme Court has now dismissed Oatly's appeal ruling that Oatly cannot trade mark or use the phrase "POST MILK GENERATION" as it fell within the scope of the EU regulation on the basis that it used the term "milk" as a designation. The Judges rejected Oatly's arguments that "POST MILK GENERATION" was simply describing a characteristic quality of the product and instead the Judges found that it was far from clear that the trade mark was describing any characteristic of the contested products, and if it did, it was not done in a "clear" way. The trade mark was, instead, focused on describing Oatly's target consumers (younger health-conscious consumers) and was not a characteristic of the product, namely oat milk.

This decision has significant implications for the UK plant-based industry and their use of terms such as "milk" and "cheese" for dairy-free products. In future, these manufacturers will need to be very careful about how they brand and market their products.

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



## Bradford's Darley Street Market crowned 'Britain's Best Food Market'

Continued from page 25

Since the three-floor Bradford Council flagship opened in July 2025, shoppers and diners have flocked to Darley Street Market as part of the wider regeneration of the city centre.

The market has already built a strong reputation, with visitors rating it 4.4 out of 5 stars on both TripAdvisor and Google Reviews.

It has also become one of Bradford's liveliest new cultural spaces, hosting live music, workshops, exhibitions and community events throughout the building and its Courtyard area.

Highlights over the last six months have included Bradford2025 City of Culture activity, the European Festival of Latvian Culture, BD: Festival, Courtyard Clash wrestling, crafting and cooking workshops, big-screen film nights, Halloween celebrations and monthly Real Markets pop-ups.

Many traders reported record sales over the festive period, including Roswitha's Deli, Taplin's Butchers and Priestley's Fishmongers, while Darley Street Kitchen also performed strongly with workplace bookings and parties.

Alongside the food and footfall, Darley Street Market has introduced weekly community initiatives such as the Tuesday Chatty Café, run with Age UK Bradford District to help reduce loneliness and social isolation.

A packed programme is already planned for 2026, with celebrations for Valentine's Day,



Priestleys Fishmongers

Chinese New Year, Pancake Day, International Women's Day, February half-term activities including the Yorkshire Games Festival, and events for Easter, Eid and the summer months.

Councillor Alex Ross-Shaw, Bradford's Executive Member for Regeneration, said the award was a proud moment for the city.

"Darley Street Market has been a phenomenal part of our regeneration plans for Bradford city centre, so we're delighted we've been named Britain's Best Food Market," he said.

"Along with being a great place for shopping and eating, we designed the market to be a space for music, art, heritage and culture."

Traders across the market say the move has helped businesses grow, with Taplin's Butchers describing it as a catalyst for expansion, and Caffè Brigante praising the collective effort behind the award win.

And with long-standing Bradford names like Solly's Fruit and Vegetables - serving local families since the 1970s - continuing to draw loyal customers into the city centre, Darley Street Market's success story is only just getting started.

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# business power



## £3.3bn in training cash goes unused as firms 'misunderstand' Skills Levy

**A new report has found that more than £3.3 billion in business training money has gone unused, as many UK employers fail to understand how the Skills Levy works.**

The study, published by digital training experts The Coders Guild, warns that billions of pounds meant to fund workforce development is being wasted - even as AI transforms the job market.

Between 2019 and 2022, unused Apprenticeship Levy funds were returned to the Treasury instead of being spent on staff skills.

The report says this is a major missed opportunity for businesses facing fast-changing technology and growing demand for AI-trained workers.

It also highlights a wider decline in employer support for learning.

Investment in training has fallen 18.5% in real terms since 2011, leaving workers to cover the cost themselves.

Nearly half of UK employees doing online training now pay for it out of their own pocket. Researchers say those workers are also more likely to leave if employers do not invest in their development.

Founder of The Coders Guild, Crispin Read, said many businesses are paying into a system designed to help them - but

then failing to use it.

"Too many employers still don't understand how the skills levy works," he said.

"We're seeing businesses let that money go to waste. That's a huge missed opportunity."

He added that some companies are asking individuals to pay for skills their jobs depend on.

"It's not just unfair - it's inefficient," he said. "The funding is there, but too many organisations don't take advantage of it."

The report comes as demand for AI skills rises sharply.

UK job adverts asking for AI literacy nearly tripled between mid-2023 and late 2024, yet many employers still treat apprenticeships as entry-level schemes rather than a serious route

to digital upskilling.

The whitepaper says the move from the Apprenticeship Levy to a broader Skills Levy has opened the door to more mid-career training.

More than half of apprenticeship starts are now taken up by people aged 25 and over, showing that apprenticeships are increasingly used for reskilling, not just school leavers.

The report also claims AI-trained apprentices can deliver an £18,000 net benefit to businesses through higher productivity and stronger retention.

The Coders Guild is urging employers to see the levy as a tool for growth, not paperwork, and to use it to build a workforce ready for the AI economy.



Crispin Read, Founder of The Coders Guild, says many employers still don't understand how the skills levy works

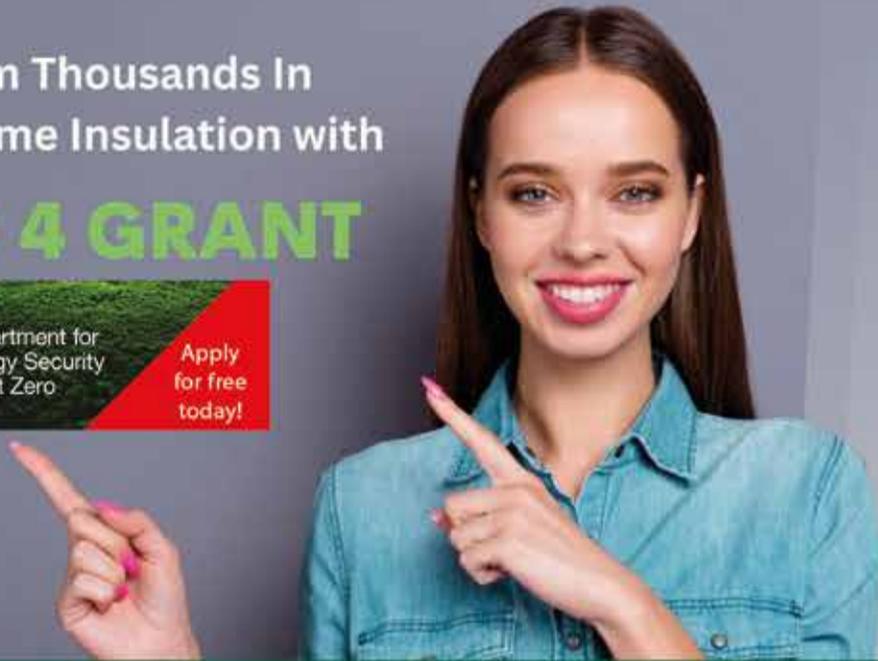
### KEY STATS

- £3.3bn in unused training levy funds returned to the Treasury (2019-2022)
- Employer investment in training down 18.5% since 2011
- AI skills demand in UK job ads nearly tripled (2023-2024)
- Nearly 50% of workers now pay for online training themselves
- 51% of apprenticeship starts are for people aged 25+
- AI-fluent apprentices can bring an estimated £18,000 net benefit per business



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# ...life & style

# The biggest hair mistake women make after 50

**There comes a point in life when your hair starts to feel... different.**

The style you've worn for years suddenly won't sit the same way. The shine isn't quite there. The texture feels unfamiliar. And what used to be "wash and go" becomes a daily battle with frizz, flatness or breakage.

If you've ever looked in the mirror and thought, why is my hair being so difficult now? - you're not alone.

According to celebrity hairstylist Edward James, whose clients include Dame Joanna Lumley and members of the royal circle, the biggest mistake women make after 50 is surprisingly simple: Trying to style your hair the way you always have.

Edward says midlife hair changes are completely natural, influenced by hormones, lifestyle, colouring, and ageing. "The biggest mistake is styling it like you did years ago

and feeling frustrated when it doesn't behave the same way," he explains.

Instead of fighting every strand, he encourages women to lean into softer, more modern texture. Sometimes, hair that looks slightly "undone" is actually healthier - and far more flattering.

Before spending a fortune on treatments and miracle products, Edward says the most powerful changes are often the simplest. Here are his top habits for healthier, more manageable hair after 50:

## 1. Brush better - not harder

Your scalp produces natural oils that condition the hair, and brushing helps distribute them. Edward recommends brushing gently every night before bed using a soft bristle mix brush.

Top tip: Always start from the ends and work upwards to avoid breakage.

## 2. Wash less often

As hair matures, the scalp often produces less oil. Over-washing can leave hair dry, frizzy and dull. Try spacing washes out by an extra day and refreshing in between instead of stripping hair back to zero.

## 3. Massage your scalp when shampooing

Healthy hair starts at the scalp. A one-minute fingertip massage boosts circulation, supports growth and removes build-up that can make hair feel heavy or lifeless.

Small circular movements - then rinse thoroughly.

## 4. Finish with a cool rinse

A final cool rinse after conditioning helps the cuticle lie flat, instantly improving shine and reducing frizz. It also means less reliance on straighteners.

## 5. Be extra gentle when hair is wet

Wet hair is fragile. Avoid rough towel-drying or aggressive brushing.

Instead: Squeeze out water gently. Use a wide-tooth comb. Detangle slowly.

## 6. Regular trims matter more than ever

Split ends don't stay at the bottom - they travel upwards. A light trim every 6-8 weeks keeps hair looking fresh, bouncy and healthy.

## 7. Air-dry whenever you can

Heat weakens hair over time. Letting hair dry naturally whenever possible preserves strength and softness. Even swapping one blow dry a week can make a difference.

## 8. Blow dry with lift, not flatness

Hair often becomes finer with age, so technique matters.

Top Tip: Lift sections away from the scalp as you dry the roots, then direct airflow down the hair shaft for smoothness and shine.

## 9. Let hair cool before touching it

This is a game-changer. Heat reshapes hair, but cooling is what sets it. Touching or brushing too soon makes styles drop faster - leading to more heat, more damage, more frustration. Style, pause, cool... then loosen gently with your fingers.

## 10. The real secret? Letting go a little

Edward's final advice is reassuring: "Midlife hair isn't about perfection. It's about working with your hair, not against it. Sometimes, the healthiest and most youthful look comes from softness, movement, and a little less control.

Because hair after 50 doesn't need to be "fixed". It just needs a new kind of care."



# “This gap is costing lives”

## Asian transplant waiting list has risen by more than 90% in four years

**“If you’re of Asian ethnicity then you’re half as likely to say yes to donation, but around twice as likely to need a transplant – and that’s the health inequality we are facing.”**

Mahmud Nawaz, chair of Sheffield Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, speaks with the force of lived grief. He became an organ donation ambassador after his wife’s donated organs saved four lives.

Now, as Sheffield prepares to host the Westfield Health British Transplant Games next summer, Mahmud says the latest figures expose a crisis that Britain can no longer afford to ignore.

New figures from NHS Blood and Transplant reveal a brutal surge: the number of Asian patients on the UK organ transplant waiting list has rocketed by 92% in just four years, from 759 in 2020-21 to 1,460 in 2024-25. The national waiting list has now crossed 8,000 for the first time.

The imbalance is stark. People of Asian ethnicity are far more likely to need a transplant, yet far less likely to become donors.

Only 3.9% of deceased organ donors in the UK are Asian. Family consent rates stand at 32.9%, compared with 63% among white donors.

Nearly two-thirds of Asian patients placed on the waiting list wait at least a year for a transplant.

Into this emergency steps Sheffield, which will host the British Transplant Games from 6th to 9th August 2026, welcoming more than 2,500 competitors, including over 1,000 transplant recipients, across 26 sports.

Organisers hope the multi-sport event will become a catalyst for change, particularly within Black, Asian and minority ethnic communities, where overall donation rates are estimated at just 7%.

“The Westfield Health British Transplant Games has a powerful



role to play in bringing together diverse communities,” Mahmud said.

“People can see the benefits of organ donation first-hand and be inspired to support it, regardless of faith.

“That support means signing the NHS Organ Donor Register and having the conversation with loved ones. If you were to die, the consent to donate your organs passes on to them. A simple conversation, or a quick signing of the register, could save up to nine lives.”

The Games will showcase the healthy, fulfilling lives that transplant recipients can lead, while also providing a moment to thank live donors and donor families for their life-changing generosity. At the official launch event in Sheffield, recipients and donors shared their own stories of survival, resilience and second chances.

Now in its 48th year, the British Transplant Games is the flagship event of Transplant Active, a charity

that promotes active recovery after transplantation and raises awareness of organ donation nationwide.

Dr Paul Harden, chair of Transplant Active, said the rising waiting list underlined the urgency of the message. “One person can save up to nine lives,” he said.

“That becomes real when you hear first-hand from recipients about how a transplant has allowed them to live healthy lives, and when you meet the donors and families who made that possible.

“We also face the heartbreaking reality that around 1,000 people die each year while waiting for a transplant. That’s why it’s vital people sign the NHS Organ Donor Register and follow it up with a conversation with loved ones.”

Many of the Games’ events will take place in and around Sheffield’s Olympic Legacy Park, with organisers hoping the city will become a national focal point for dialogue around

donation.

Steve Purdham, chairman of Westfield Health, said the Games were about more than sport.

“Next August, we’re not just hosting an event - we’re igniting a movement,” he said.

“The gift of life begins with a conversation. Telling your loved ones you want to be a donor is what turns intention into action.”

Councillor Mohammed Mahroof, chair of economic development, skills and culture at Sheffield City Council, said hosting the Games again, having last welcomed them in 2013, was both an honour and a responsibility.

“They are a celebration of life, resilience and community,” he said.

“We are looking forward to welcoming thousands of athletes and supporters from across the UK.”

For Mahmud, the message is simple and urgent. “This gap is costing lives,” he said. “And it can be closed by ordinary people taking one small, powerful step.”



### At a glance - the numbers behind the crisis

- **92%** rise in Asian patients on the UK transplant waiting list in four years
- **8,000+** people now waiting for an organ transplant in the UK
- Only **3.9%** of deceased organ donors are Asian
- Family consent rates: Asian families - **32.9%** - White families - **63%**
- Nearly **63%** of Asian patients wait at least one year for a transplant
- Donation rates among Black, Asian and minority ethnic communities - just **7%**
- Around **1,000** people die each year while waiting for a transplant
- One donor can save up to **nine** lives



## Bradford salon owner challenges stigma around men and skincare in South Asian Communities

**By Prity Farooq**  
Prity Beauty & Aesthetic, Bradford

A Bradford beauty salon owner has sparked an important conversation about masculinity and self-care after posting a video challenging the stigma men, particularly South Asian men, face when seeking skincare treatments.

Prity Farooq, who runs a beauty salon in Bradford, used her latest weekly video diary to address the uncomfortable reality that men are often questioned about their sexual identity simply for wanting facials or skincare treatments.

In the video, shared with her growing online audience, Prity speaks candidly about how some male clients feel embarrassed or hesitant to book treatments, fearing judgement from friends, family or the wider community. She highlights how outdated stereotypes continue to frame skincare as something “only for women”, leaving men — especially from South Asian backgrounds — reluctant to prioritise their skin health.

“Looking after your skin has nothing to do with your masculinity,” Prity says in the video. “Men shouldn’t be made to feel uncomfortable or questioned about who they are just because they want healthy skin.”

Prity’s comments have resonated widely, prompting discussion around how cultural expectations and rigid ideas of masculinity can discourage men from engaging in basic self-care.

She notes that while attitudes are slowly changing, many men still face subtle ridicule or invasive assumptions when they step into a beauty salon.

The salon owner has become known for using her platform to open up conversations that are often avoided. Her weekly video diary series regularly blends personal reflections with wider social issues, drawing on real experiences from her work and life.

Previous topics have included bullying and beauty standards, including a video about being teased for her eyebrows, a post that struck a chord with many followers who shared similar experiences of being judged for their appearance from a young age.

By addressing these issues openly, Prity says she hopes to normalise conversations around self-image and wellbeing, particularly within communities where such discussions are still seen as taboo.

Skin experts have long stressed that facials and skincare treatments are not cosmetic luxuries but can help manage issues such as acne, pigmentation, shaving irritation and premature ageing, concerns that affect men as much as women.

Prity believes that changing attitudes starts with visibility and honest dialogue. “If we don’t talk about it, nothing changes,” she says. “Men deserve the same freedom to look after themselves without shame.”

Her message has been welcomed by many viewers, with male followers thanking her for addressing an issue they say is rarely acknowledged publicly.

As conversations around mental health, masculinity and self-care continue to evolve, Prity Farooq’s voice is adding a local, grassroots perspective, one that challenges stereotypes and encourages a more inclusive understanding of wellbeing. She offers free Counselling for ladies on Wednesdays.



**Free Counselling Appointments – Every Wednesday**

Call **01274 307 040** to book your session

**Prity Beauty & Aesthetic,**  
4 Central Place, Clayton, Bradford, BD14 6AZ

# Cold weather warning for heart patients



With temperatures set to plummet across UK, the British Heart Foundation (BHF) is warning people with heart conditions of the potential dangers posed by the cold weather.

Cold weather can present specific risks for people with heart conditions because the heart has to work harder which can exacerbate existing health conditions. Each year in the UK there are thousands of additional deaths from heart and circulatory disease in the winter months.

Cold temperatures cause blood vessels to narrow in parts of the body, like the skin, fingers and toes, so that less body heat is lost and more blood and oxygen are re-routed to essential organs, like the heart and brain. But this response means the heart must work harder to pump blood around the body, increasing the heart rate and blood pressure.

The BHF is encouraging people with heart conditions to take precautions to minimise potential health risks

during the cold snap.

Ruth Goss, Senior Cardiac Nurse at the British Heart Foundation, said: "Cold temperatures can increase the risk of heart attacks and strokes, and people with cardiovascular disease are also more at risk of serious illness if they get seasonal respiratory infections like flu.

"It's especially important that people living with heart conditions are well prepared for the cold snap this winter by wrapping up warm and having their free flu jab."

Ruth Goss has also shared eight top tips for protecting your heart as the weather turns cold:

- **Keep Indoor Temperatures Comfortable:** If possible, keep the room where you spend most of your time heated to at least 18°C. Layer up with socks, jumpers and blankets. A hot water bottle or an electric blanket can help you to keep warm at night.
- **Stay Warm:** Wear lots of thin layers, rather than one thick layer. This will trap the heat in and keep you warmer. A hat, scarf and gloves will also help maintain your core heat.
- **Stay Active:** Keep moving while you're indoors, to build up your core temperature and boost your immune system.
- **Maintain a Healthy Diet:** Have warming meals and healthy hot drinks to give your body the energy it needs to keep you warm.
- **Wrap Up:** If you get angina (chest pain), wear a scarf wrapped loosely around your mouth and nose or wear a face mask, so you breathe in warmer air. This may help to improve your symptoms if they get worse in the winter.
- **Stay Informed:** Learn how to make your home more energy efficient, and receive any financial help that you're entitled to, such as the Cold Weather Payment, by contacting the Winter Fuel Payment helpline on 0800 731 0160. Citizens Advice also have useful advice on making your home energy efficient.
- **Get Vaccinated:** People with a heart or circulatory condition are more at risk of becoming seriously ill from flu and will be eligible for a free flu vaccination. If you want to book an appointment or find out if you are eligible, contact your GP or visit the NHS website to find your nearest pharmacy that offers a free flu vaccination.
- **Speak to a Nurse:** For any question big or small about cold weather and the heart, speak to an experienced BHF nurse on the BHF's Heart Helpline by phone, email or chatbot. The BHF website also has lots of information and advice on how to stay warm this winter, including money-saving tips and nourishing recipes.

# G L I T

**Entertainment**

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



## A new kind of “To Be or Not to Be”

Riz Ahmed doesn't just play Hamlet - he reshapes him, making him feel raw, real and ruthless

**Riz Ahmed has finally taken on one of the most intimidating roles in theatre history - and he's done it with a sharp modern edge.**

In a bold new screen adaptation of Hamlet, the Oscar-winning actor plays the Prince of Denmark as a contemporary man unraveling inside the high-pressure world of elite London wealth, family loyalty, and buried betrayal.

Directed by Aneil Karia (The Long Goodbye), this is not a traditional period retelling. It's a tense, modern psychological thriller - urgent, stripped back, and designed to feel immediate rather than reverential.

Ahmed has described the film as “visceral,” with the hope that it becomes the version shown to students today: less dusty classroom Shakespeare, more

emotional gut-punch.

The story is transplanted into the world of a wealthy British South Asian family, where grief is handled behind closed doors and reputation carries as much weight as truth. Hamlet's father is dead. His mother has remarried quickly. And his uncle Claudius - played by Art Malik - now sits at the head of the family.

What follows is a slow collapse: suspicion, rage, mourning, and the unbearable feeling that everyone else has moved on too fast.

One of the film's most talked-about moments is its reworking of “To be, or not to be.” Ahmed delivers the famous soliloquy not on a stage, but in motion - in a speeding car, as if Hamlet is trying to outrun his own thoughts.

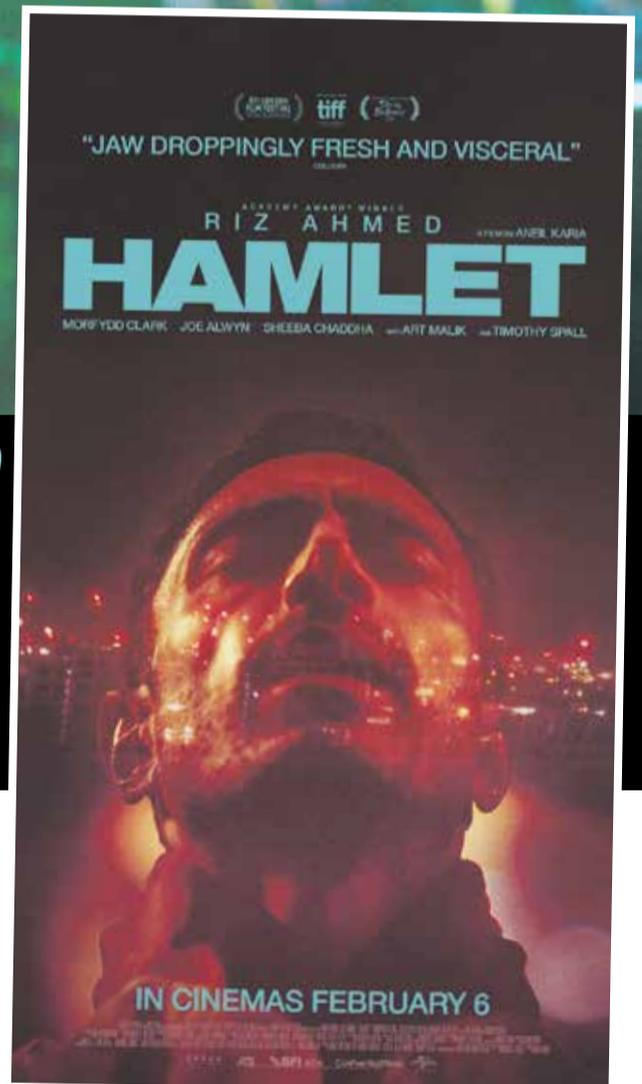
It's Shakespeare as modern anxiety:

masculine restraint cracking into something dangerous.

The cast around him is pure prestige: Morfydd Clark as Ophelia, Timothy Spall as Polonius, Joe Alwyn as Laertes, and Sheeba Chaddha as Gertrude. The result feels less like a literary exercise and more like a family implosion filmed in real time.

Ahmed has said it took more than a decade to bring this version of Hamlet to the screen - a 13-year journey through stalled development and shifting industry politics. That slow struggle mirrors the play itself: a story about waiting, doubt, and the paralysis of knowing too much.

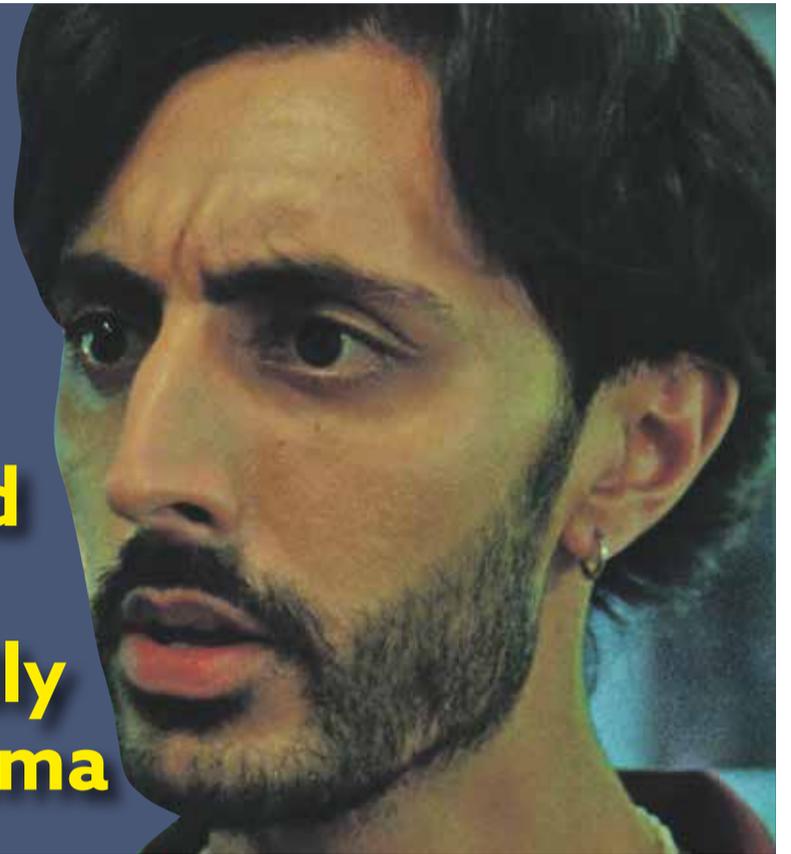
In Ahmed's hands, Hamlet feels less like a classic preserved for study and more like something urgent again - a story about grief, power and what happens when the truth won't stay buried.



**Title:** Hamlet (2025 film)  
**Starring:** Riz Ahmed, Art Malik, Morfydd Clark, Joe Alwyn, Sheeba Chaddha, Timothy Spall, Avijit Dutt  
**Director:** Aneil Karia  
**Release date:** 6/2/2026

# Breakout of British Cinema

**BIFA Winning, BAFTA nominated short emerges as a fearless, emotionally honest, and culturally specific new voice in British cinema**



'Magid / Zafar', the blistering short film from director Luis Hindman, has cemented its status as one of the most vital British shorts of the year, winning at the British Independent Film Awards and earning a nomination at the BAFTA.

The film has also secured high-profile official selections at the BFI London Film Festival and the Clermont-Ferrand International Short Film Festival, underlining its international critical impact.

Written by Sufiyaan Salam and Hindman, and produced by Aidan Robert Brooks for Lovechild Studios, 'Magid / Zafar' unfolds over the course

of one sweltering night inside a British Pakistani takeaway.

A childhood friendship looms over Magid as he navigates the heat and chaos of a professional kitchen, where long-suppressed tensions resurface and the weight of diverging futures becomes impossible to ignore.

As he confronts what has been left unsaid, the film interrogates authenticity, identity, and South Asian masculinity, offering a rare and incisive portrait of manhood shaped by cultural expectation and personal truth.

The film stars Eben Figueiredo and Gurjeet Singh, whose raw, deeply felt performances ground the film's

emotional intensity.

Their chemistry captures the weight of shared history, fractured ambition and the quiet grief embedded in male friendship, brought to life through naturalistic dialogue and tightly observed character work.

'Magid / Zafar' was developed and financed through Future Takes, the joint initiative between the British Film Institute (via National Lottery funding) and Film4, with creative and production support spanning the film's full lifecycle.

The project marks Brooks' narrative film debut following a career producing award-nominated music videos and

fashion films.

Reflecting on the film's origins, Hindman notes that the project grew from a desire to tell a story rooted firmly in a South Asian context.

Drawing on his own background and close collaboration with his co-writer, the film subverts familiar archetypes by presenting a brash, loud-mouthed British bad boy whose emotional interior slowly fractures.

Hindman's background in music video direction informs the film's distinctive sonic world, which fuses contemporary Asian hip hop with traditional Pakistani qawwali, allowing old and new cultural influences to

coexist throughout.

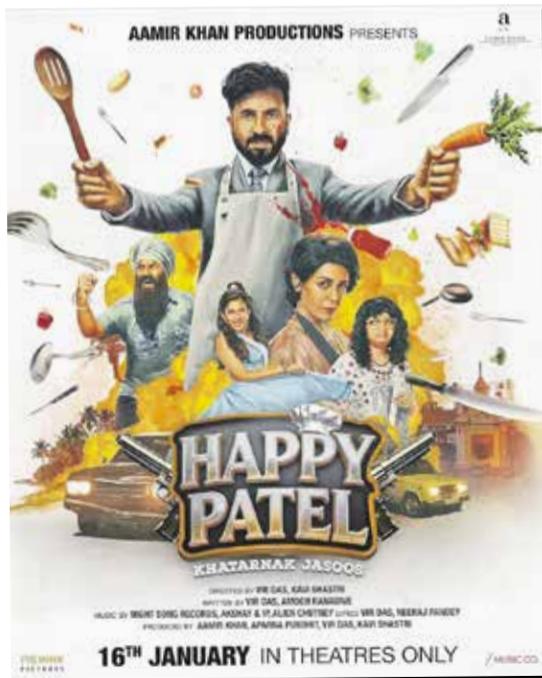
The film is shot by cinematographer Jaime Ackroyd, whose intimate, kinetic camerawork amplifies the claustrophobia of the takeaway setting and mirrors the mounting emotional pressure on screen.

With its fearless emotional honesty, culturally specific storytelling and standout performances, 'Magid / Zafar' announces a major new voice in British cinema and signals the arrival of an exciting creative team to watch

Salam's first novel, 'Wimmy Road Boyz', will also be published in May by Penguin, Random House and Merky Books.

## Aamir Khan or Sunil Grover? Vir Das can't tell the difference

# Double trouble



**Title:** Happy Patel: Khatarnak Jasoos  
**Banner:** Aamir Khan Productions  
**Director:** Vir Das  
**Producers:** Aamir Khan, Vir Das, Kavi Shastri, Aparna Purohit  
**Genre:** Spy Comedy

If laughter is the best teaser, **Happy Patel: Khatarnak Jasoos** has just delivered a knockout punch. In a newly dropped promotional video, Aamir Khan Productions brings together Aamir Khan, Vir Das, and a scene-stealing surprise appearance by Sunil Grover - with results that are nothing short of hilarious.

Grover leaves both Vir and Aamir in splits as he delivers a spot-on impersonation of the superstar, mirroring his mannerisms, expressions and even his outfit so convincingly that Vir Das jokingly seems unsure who he's actually talking to. The laugh-out-loud



exchange has quickly gone viral, perfectly capturing the playful, irreverent tone of the upcoming spy-comedy.

After entertaining audiences with several acclaimed hits, Aamir Khan Productions is ready to return to the big screen with yet another fresh, genre-bending story. **Happy Patel: Khatarnak Jasoos** stars Vir Das and also marks a major milestone in his career - his directorial debut.

The banner's legacy of impactful cinema - from *Lagaan* and *Taare Zameen Par* to *Dangal* and *Secret Superstar* - has set expectations sky-high. Adding to the excitement is the reunion

with Vir Das, whose cult-classic collaboration *Delhi Belly* still enjoys a devoted fan following.

Known globally for his stand-up specials and memorable performances in *Go Goa Gone*, *Badmaash Company* and *Delhi Belly*, Vir now steps behind the camera, promising a sharp, stylish comedy with mass appeal.

Produced by Aamir Khan Productions and directed by Vir Das, **Happy Patel: Khatarnak Jasoos** is all set for a theatrical release on 16 January 2026. With viral promos, catchy tracks and comedy royalty sharing the screen, this spy caper looks ready to kick off 2026 with a big laugh.

# WHAT'S ON

in cinemas this month



## Crime 101

### Starring:

Chris Hemsworth, Mark Ruffalo, Barry Keoghan, Monica Barbaro, Corey Hawkins, Jennifer Jason Leigh, Nick Nolte, Halle Berry, Tate Donovan

**Director:** Bart Layton

**Cert:** 15

**Genre:** Crime/Thriller

**Release Date:**

13/2/2026

Set against the sun-bleached grit of Los Angeles, *Crime 101* weaves the tale of an elusive jewel thief (Chris Hemsworth) whose string of daring heists along the 101 freeway have left police baffled and bruised.

Smooth, meticulous, and always one step ahead, he has built a reputation as a ghost in the city's criminal underworld.

But when he sets his sights on the score of a lifetime, his carefully controlled world begins to fracture. His path collides with that of a disillusioned insurance broker (Halle Berry), a woman standing at her own crossroads, drawn into the danger - and temptation - of reinvention.

Meanwhile, a relentless detective (Mark Ruffalo), convinced he's uncovered the thief's pattern, closes in with mounting obsession. As the net tightens and the heist approaches, the line between hunter and hunted begins to blur, pushing all three toward life-defining choices - and the chilling realisation that there can be no turning back.

Adapted from Don Winslow's acclaimed novella, the film is written and directed by Bart Layton (*American Animals*, *The Imposter*). Barry Keoghan, Monica Barbaro, Corey Hawkins, Jennifer Jason Leigh, and Nick Nolte round out a stellar cast in this slick, high-stakes crime thriller.

# WHAT'S ON

in cinemas this month



## Shelter

**Starring:** Jason Statham, Bodhi Rae Breathnach, Bill Nighy, Naomi Ackie, Daniel Mays

**Director:** Ric Roman Waugh **Cert:** 15

**Genre:** Thriller **Release Date:** 30/1/2026

Jason Statham is heading back into full-throttle survival mode in Shelter (2026), a gritty new action thriller that blends espionage, isolation and emotional stakes in classic Statham style.

The film casts Statham as Michael Mason, a former government assassin who has vanished from the world, choosing solitude on a remote Scottish island to escape the violence of his past.

Living quietly with only his dog for company, Mason believes he's finally found peace - until nature, and fate, intervene.

A brutal storm leaves a young girl, Jessie, stranded and injured. Mason rescues her from the wreckage and, reluctantly, becomes her protector. What begins as an act of humanity soon turns into something far more dangerous.

When Mason is accidentally spotted on the mainland, his disappearance triggers alarm bells inside MI6. Led by his former handler Manafort, the agency's covert unit mistakes his return for a threat - and orders him eliminated.

Suddenly, Mason is forced back into the world

he tried to leave behind, fighting not just for his own survival, but for Jessie's. As assassins close in, the pair form an unlikely bond, turning the thriller into something deeper: a story of redemption, protection, and the cost of a life lived in shadows.

Directed by Ric Roman Waugh, Shelter promises high-octane action, tense pursuit sequences and a surprisingly emotional core - proving once again that Statham's toughest battles aren't just physical... they're personal.

## One Battle After Another

### Starring:

Leonardo DiCaprio, Benicio Del Toro, Sean Penn, Wood Harris, Regina Hall, Alana Haim, Teyana Taylor

**Director:** Paul Thomas Anderson

**Cert:** 15

**Genre:** Drama

**Release Date:** 20/2/2026

Leonardo DiCaprio is back - and this time, the fight is personal.

One Battle After Another, the latest film from acclaimed director Paul Thomas Anderson, is shaping up to be one of the most talked-about releases of the year: a genre-bending black comedy action-thriller that blends political chaos, dark humour, and high-stakes emotion into one relentless cinematic ride.

Starring an all-star cast including DiCaprio, Sean Penn, Benicio del Toro, Regina Hall, Teyana Taylor and newcomer Chase Ininiti, the film marks a striking new chapter for Anderson, known for prestige dramas like There Will Be Blood and Licorice Pizza. Here, he pivots into sharper action territory - without losing his signature depth.

At the heart of the story is Bob (DiCaprio), a former revolutionary who has retreated from the world, living off-grid with his spirited daughter Willa. But the past, as always, has unfinished business.

When an old enemy resurfaces and Willa suddenly goes missing, Bob is forced back into the world he tried to leave behind. What follows is a tense and

unpredictable journey that propels him through violence, memory, and a reckoning with everything he once stood for.

The film's title isn't subtle: once the battle begins, it doesn't stop.

Set against a backdrop of political unrest and fractured loyalties, One Battle After Another explores themes of generational divide, the consequences of rebellion, and the fierce bond between parent and child.

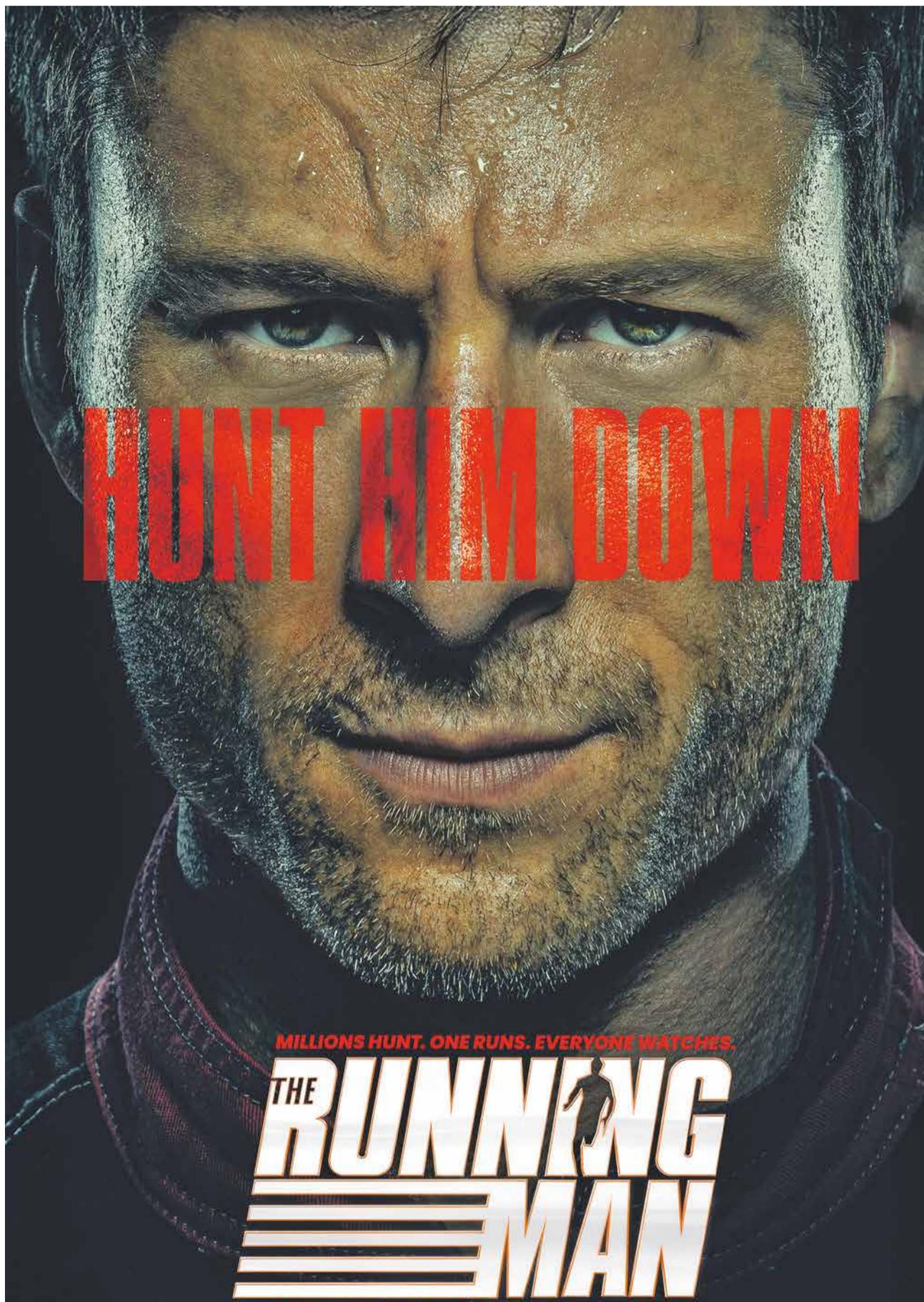
While there are action-packed set pieces and moments of biting humour, critics have noted that the emotional core lies in Bob's desperate attempt to save his daughter - and perhaps redeem himself along the way.

DiCaprio's performance has already been singled out as one of his most intense in years, while Chase Ininiti, in her film debut, is being praised as the film's beating heart.

With its combustible cast, daring tone, and Anderson's bold direction, One Battle After Another isn't just another action film - it's a cinematic collision of spectacle and soul.

One thing's certain: this is a battle audiences won't forget.





## The Running Man

**Starring:** Glen Powell, William H. Macy, Lee Pace, Emilia Jones, Michael Cera, Daniel Ezra, Colman Domingo, Josh Brolin

**Director:** Edgar Wright

**Cert:** 15 **Genre:** Action/Sci-Fi

**Release Date:** 27/2/2026

In a near-future society where entertainment has turned brutally real, *The Running Man* is the most watched show on television - a deadly, high-stakes competition in which contestants, known as Runners, must survive for 30 days while being hunted by professional assassins. Every step, every breath, every moment of fear is broadcast live to a bloodthirsty audience, with cash rewards rising each day the Runner stays alive.

For working-class Ben Richards (Glen Powell), the decision to

enter isn't about fame - it's about desperation. With his daughter gravely ill and no other way out, Ben is persuaded by the show's charming but merciless producer, Dan Killian (Josh Brolin), to join the game as a last, impossible resort.

But Ben is no ordinary contestant. His defiance, sharp instincts, and sheer grit quickly turn him into an unexpected fan favourite - and something far more dangerous: a symbol of resistance. As ratings soar, so does the violence, and the

system begins to panic.

Now Ben must outwit not only the relentless Hunters sent to kill him, but an entire nation addicted to watching him fall. In a world where survival is spectacle, *The Running Man* becomes a pulse-pounding fight for life - and a showdown that could bring the whole machine crashing down.

A slick, adrenaline-fuelled thriller with bite, this is dystopian blockbuster entertainment at full speed.

## Goat

**Starring:** Caleb McLaughlin, Gabrielle Union, Stephen Curry, Nicola Coughlan, Nick Kroll, David Harbour, Jenifer Lewis, Aaron Pierre, Patton Oswalt, Andrew Santino, Bobby Lee, Eduardo Franco, Sherry Cola, Jelly Roll, Jennifer Hudson

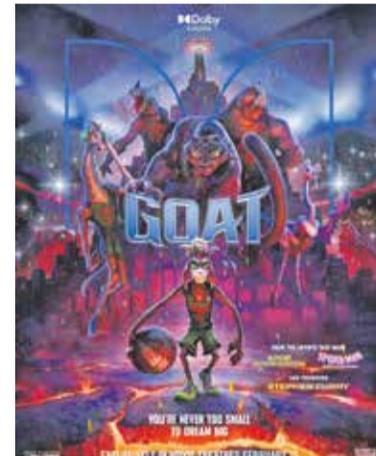
**Directors:** Tyree Dillihay, Adam Rosette

**Cert:** PG

**Genre:** Animation/Comedy/Family

**Release Date:** 13/2/2026

From Sony Pictures Animation, the studio behind *Spider-Man TM: Across the Spider-Verse* and the artists that made *KPop Demon Hunters*, comes *Goat*, an original action-comedy set in an all-animal world. The story follows Will, a small goat with big dreams who gets a once-in-a-lifetime shot to join the pros and play roarball - a high-intensity, co-ed, full-contact sport dominated by the fastest, fiercest animals in the world. Will's new teammates aren't thrilled about having a little goat on their roster, but Will is determined to revolutionize the sport and prove once and for all that "smalls can ball!"



## Goat

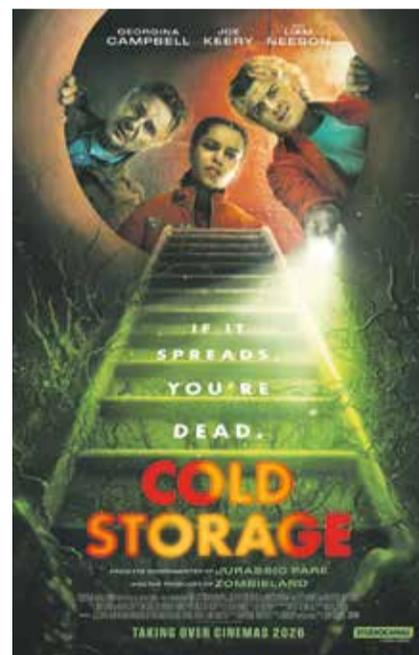
**Starring:** Joe Keery, Georgina Campbell, Sosie Bacon, Vanessa Redgrave, Lesley Manville, Liam Neeson

**Directors:** Jonny Campbell

**Cert:** 15

**Genre:** Action/Comedy/Thriller

**Release Date:** 20/2/2026



at unstoppable speed, consuming everything in its path.

As panic builds and the walls begin to close in, survival becomes a race against time - not just to escape, but to stop a global catastrophe before it's too late. Every corridor hides danger, every breath feels risky, and the infection evolves faster than anyone can control.

Starring Joe Keery (*Stranger Things*), Georgina Campbell (*Barbarian*), and Liam Neeson, *Cold*

Storage is a slick, high-stakes survival thriller packed with tension, dark humour, and explosive action.

From the producers of *Zombieland* and the writers behind *Jurassic Park*, *Spider-Man*, and *Mission: Impossible* - this is pure popcorn panic at its best.

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# Hello Twingo!

## Renault's pocket rocket goes electric



**Renault has decided that February in London needs a bit more fizz. So it's wheeling out the new all-electric Twingo and plonking it slap bang inside Battersea Power Station. Because if you're going to reintroduce a cult city car for the electric age, you may**

as well do it somewhere loud, shiny and full of people holding flat whites.

From 7-15 February, the Renault Twingo E-Tech electric will make its UK debut at rnl London Battersea - Renault's first UK concept store and a sort of electric playground for grown-ups. And yes, this is the only Twingo

in the country for now. One car. One city. No pressure.

If you remember the original Twingo - cheerful, compact, and faintly ridiculous in the best possible way - you'll understand why this matters. That car accidentally became a cult hero. This one is trying very

hard to do it on purpose.

The setting is equally on brand. rnl London Battersea sits on Electric Boulevard at Battersea Power Station, and it's less "car showroom" and more "design-led lifestyle space". Think electric cars, merch, culture, and the vague sense that Renault is

having quite a lot of fun right now. And Twingo fits right in.

According to David Isherwood, the logic is simple: Twingo is a city car, London is a city, Battersea is cool.

**Continued on page 41**

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# Volkswagen just knocked nearly a grand off its plug-in hybrids

## **Tiguan eHybrid** (up to 75 miles electric range)

Life 204 PS - £42,870 (-£810)

Match 204 PS - £43,025 (-£800)

Style 204 PS - £43,860 (-£815)

R-Line 204 PS - £45,470 (-£810)

R-Line 272 PS - £48,190 (-£810)

Black Edition 204 PS - £46,585 (-£810)

Black Edition 272 PS - £49,300 (-£810)

## **Tayron eHybrid** (up to 74 miles electric range)

Match 204 PS - £44,915 (-£835)

Style 204 PS - £45,355 (-£830)

R-Line 204 PS - £46,350 (-£830)

R-Line 272 PS - £49,200 (-£830)

Volkswagen has done something quietly clever. Instead of adding more power, bigger wheels or a suspiciously expensive “Performance Pack”, it’s simply knocked up to £950 off some of its most sensible cars.

And... that’s quite exciting.

From 4 February 2026, the Volkswagen Passat, Tiguan and Tayron eHybrid models all get price cuts, making plug-in life a bit easier to justify without selling a kidney or pretending you’ll “definitely charge it every night”.

This applies to new factory orders, not dealer stock, and the savings land right where they should - on cars people actually buy.

Volkswagen has done something quietly clever. Instead of adding fake vents, bigger wheels or a “Launch Edition” nobody asked for, it’s simply made some of its most popular plug-in hybrids cheaper. Up to £950 cheaper,

in fact. And in 2026, that’s the sort of news that actually lands.

From 4 February, customers placing new factory orders for the Passat, Tiguan or Tayron eHybrid will see reductions across the range. This isn’t end-of-line stock or dealer-specific wizardry either - these are straight-up recommended retail price cuts on cars people genuinely buy.

What makes this more than just a spreadsheet win is the hardware. These aren’t mild hybrids with optimistic marketing. Volkswagen’s latest eHybrid setup delivers more than 70 miles of electric-only range, proper DC rapid charging that can take the battery from five to 80 per cent in around 26 minutes, and enough combined power to keep things brisk when the petrol engine joins the party.

For many owners, that means weekday driving done almost entirely

on electricity, with the freedom to head further afield at the weekend without charger anxiety.

The Passat remains the quiet achiever of the group. Now in its ninth generation, it’s aerodynamically slippery, impressively refined and still one of the most useful estates on sale, with a boot that laughs in the face of flat-pack furniture. Even in plug-in form, it doesn’t forget its roots as a long-distance, no-nonsense cruiser - just one that happens to sip electrons most of the time.

The Tiguan continues its reign as Volkswagen’s global best-seller, and it’s easy to see why. It fits into almost any life scenario, from school runs to motorway slogs, and now does most of that silently. Standard-fit adaptive suspension with motorsport-inspired tech is an unexpected bonus in a family SUV, but a welcome one.

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# Hello Twingo!

Continued from page 39

Done. More importantly, visitors can poke around the car properly - not just stare at press photos and pretend they understand WLTP figures.

This little EV joins the new electric revival squad already on show, including the Renault 5 E-Tech electric and the Renault 4 E-Tech electric - both of which lean heavily on nostalgia, but with actual modern tech underneath. Renault, it seems, has decided that the future should

## Renault's pocket rocket goes electric

look familiar. And fun.

Now for the important bits.

The new Twingo E-Tech electric is aiming for a starting price below £20,000. That's proper "city EV for normal humans" money. It's targeting up to 163 miles of WLTP range from its LFP battery, driven by a 60kW motor that should be more than lively enough for urban chaos, tight parking

spaces and last-minute U-turns.

You also get stuff that used to be reserved for bigger, pricier cars. One Pedal driving? Yep. Google built-in via OpenR Link? Also yes. In other words, it's small, but it's not basic.

If you're the impatient type (this is a Top Gear-style launch, after all), Renault is offering a skip-the-queue option. It's called the Twingo R Pass,

costs £100, and gets you priority access when orders open later this year. You'll also receive a miniature Twingo, a green Renault key cover and a concierge service - which is an oddly luxurious sentence to write about a small city car, but here we are.

So no, you can't drive it yet. But you can go and see it, up close,

in one of London's most iconic locations, before anyone else in the UK. And if the original Twingo was about being cheerful, clever and just a bit different, this electric reboot looks very keen to pick up exactly where that left off.

Small car. Big personality. Plug socket required.



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<b>SHIOAEB</b> £4,000 ONO TEL: 07828 695 464	<b>SOII BYA</b> £2,000 TEL: 01274 414141 MON - FRI: 9-5.30	<b>TAIIMAD</b> £10,000 (T AHMAD) TEL: 07985 455 057	<b>TYIISAF</b> £15,000 (T YUSUF) TEL: 07985 455 057	<b>VY55 HNU</b> £3,500 TEL: 07588 326 444	<b>WGIPTA</b> £6,995 (W GUPTA) TEL: 07985 455 057	<b>XYIISAF</b> £15,400 (X YUSUF) TEL: 07985 455 057
<b>SHIOABY</b> £4,000 ONO TEL: 07828 695 464	<b>SPIIRTY</b> £15,000 (SPORTY) TEL: 07985 455 057	<b>TAIYRS</b> £1,500 (TAHYRS) TEL: 07867 886 786	<b>TYIISUF</b> £15,000 (T YUSUF) TEL: 07985 455 057	<b>WOIVER</b> £6,500 (W OLIVER) TEL: 07985 455 057	<b>WKIIMAR</b> £15,000 (W KUMAR) TEL: 07985 455 057	<b>YIINES</b> £OFFERS (YOUNAS) TEL: 07834 016 393
<b>SHIOKET</b> £OFFERS T: 07754 852 402 no withheld numbers	<b>STIIGGG</b> £20,000 ONO TEL: 07796 510 000	<b>TAI3BYS</b> £1,600 ONO TEL: 07557 387 547	<b>UAIIMAD</b> £10,000 (U AHMAD) TEL: 07985 455 057	<b>W2I JAS</b> £1,200 ONO TEL: 07925 757 677	<b>WMIILES</b> £7,500 (W MILES) TEL: 07985 455 057	<b>Y5IILMA</b> £4,000 ONO (SALMA) TEL: 07969 598 969
<b>SHIOKUT</b> £OFFERS T: 07754 852 402 no withheld numbers	<b>SUR87IT</b> £1,500 (SURBJIT) TEL: 07985 589 631	<b>TA55LYM</b> £4,895 ONO TEL: 07779 324 610	<b>UDIIEEP</b> £7,000 (U DILEEP) TEL: 07985 455 057	<b>W33DDY</b> £5,000 ONO TEL: 07779 994 695	<b>W5IISAN</b> £7,500 (W SUSAN) TEL: 07985 455 057	<b>Y55ANA</b> £OFFERS TEL: 07835 316 786
<b>SHII AED</b> £1,000 TEL: 01274 414141 MON - FRI: 9-5.30	<b>SVIISAF</b> £15,400 (S YUSUF) TEL: 07985 455 057	<b>TA55TEE</b> £5,000 T: 0740 784 983 privateplates@hotmail.co.uk	<b>UKIIRD</b> £OFFERS TEL: 07522 199 997	<b>W33DY K</b> £5,000 ONO TEL: 07779 994 695	<b>WYIISAF</b> £15,400 (W YUSUF) TEL: 07985 455 057	<b>Y9 ALT</b> £30,000 TEL: 07525 817 453
<b>SHII AFS</b> £1,500 TEL: 01274 414141 MON - FRI: 9-5.30	<b>SVIISUF</b> £15,000 (S YUSUF) TEL: 07985 455 057	<b>TA55TYE</b> £5,000 T: 0740 784 983 privateplates@hotmail.co.uk	<b>UMM444R</b> £4,995 TEL: 07707 747 776	<b>W33NTD</b> £1,800 (WANTED) TEL: 01202 877 038	<b>WYIISUF</b> £15,000 (W YUSUF) TEL: 07985 455 057	<b>YAIIMAD</b> £10,000 (Y AHMAD) TEL: 07985 455 057
<b>SHIAHZ</b> £5,000 TEL: 07921 576 971	<b>TOYSR</b> £15,000 ONO TEL: 07973 787 934	<b>TA67 ETS</b> £5,000 ONO TEL: 07908 472 121	<b>UYIISAF</b> £15,400 (U YUSUF) TEL: 07985 455 057	<b>W4JLD</b> £1,995 TEL: 07954 389 874	<b>X3 SINGS</b> £3,500 (SINGHS) TEL: 07833 333 870	<b>YAIYAA</b> £15,000 (YAYAA) TEL: 07985 455 057
<b>SHII ANY</b> £2,000 TEL: 01274 414141 MON - FRI: 9-5.30	<b>TIUUCS</b> £OFFERS TEL: 07581 169 231	<b>TAHIR</b> £100,000 (TAHIR) TEL: 07403 302 725	<b>VOIIRAS</b> £2,000 (VOHRA) TEL: 07867 886 786	<b>W4KY R</b> £10,000 TEL: 07786 615 234	<b>X 7BY X</b> £1,500 TEL: 07767 778 798	<b>YEIICOM</b> £49,000 (YELL COM) TEL: 07985 455 057
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<b>SHII OBY</b> £1,000 TEL: 01274 414141 MON - FRI: 9-5.30	<b>TI9 ARX</b> £OFFERS (TIGER X) TEL: 07837 780 981	<b>TDIIEEP</b> £7,000 (T DILEEP) TEL: 07967 193 033	<b>V 4RFN</b> £1,000 TEL: 07967 193 033	<b>WAIIEEM</b> £15,000 (WAIIEEM) TEL: 07985 455 057	<b>X BAIG</b> £50,000 TEL: 07947 979 777	<b>YKIIMAR</b> £15,000 (Y KUMAR) TEL: 07985 455 057
<b>SHIIPER</b> £15,000 (SHIIPER) TEL: 07985 455 057	<b>TILI 786</b> £1,500 ONO TEL: 07974 179 156	<b>TERIK</b> £OFFERS AT OVER £60K TEL: 07793 113 695	<b>V 44MJD</b> £850 ONO TEL: 07839 012 253	<b>WAIISHA</b> £5,000 (W AISHA) TEL: 07985 455 057	<b>X K04SER</b> £OFFERS TEL: 07811 146 312	<b>YUIONES</b> £OFFERS T: 07754 852 402 no withheld numbers
<b>SHIYLA</b> £1,000,000 TEL: 07969 914 041	<b>T44 RKK</b> £2,200 ONO TEL: 07926 095 168	<b>TJIDGE</b> £15,500 (T JUDGE) TEL: 07985 455 057	<b>VAIIMAD</b> £10,000 (V AHMAD) TEL: 07985 455 057	<b>WAIITAD</b> £10,000 (WANTED) TEL: 07778 881 126	<b>X KIIAN X</b> £2,700 TEL: 07786 087 155	<b>YVIJAY</b> £10,000 (Y VIJAY) TEL: 07985 455 057
<b>SHI2ADH</b> £3,000 ONO TEL: 07870 993 553	<b>T444BYS</b> £995 ONO TEL: 07886 606 431	<b>TKINGS</b> £14,000 (T KINGS) TEL: 07985 455 057	<b>VBIATT</b> £7,000 (V BHATT) TEL: 07985 455 057	<b>WAH330K</b> £2,500 (WAHEED K) TEL: 07973 199 979	<b>XKIIMAR</b> £15,000 (X KUMAR) TEL: 07985 455 057	<b>Y44SCR</b> £22,500 ONO TEL: 07828 159 318
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<b>5 NAS</b> £30,000 TEL: 07540 176 854	<b>CHIEFS</b> £20,000 ONO TEL: 07786 615 234	<b>PIINEM</b> £2,995 ONO (PUNEM) TEL: 07305 700 800
<b>ATT4H</b> £8,500 ONO TEL: 07786 424 251	<b>K7 PPA</b> £3,995 ONO TEL: 07890 201 854	<b>UK I IORD</b> £OFFERS TEL: 07522 199 997
<b>H4 SSB</b> £12,995 ONO TEL: 07440 766 843	<b>L99HOR</b> £OFFERS TEL: 07850 706 930	<b>YA55EEM</b> £75,000 ONO TEL: 07887 837 553
<b>J4 MEL</b> £15,000 ONO TEL: 07870 496 535	<b>NOO2HAT</b> £2,000 ONO (NUZHAT) TEL: 07813 011 702	

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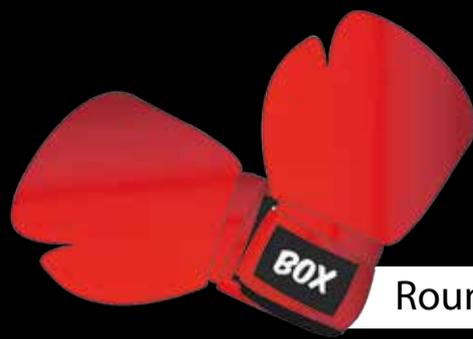
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## Blueprint for future of Elland Road land set to move forward



**An ambitious vision to guide the transformation of land around Leeds United's iconic Elland Road stadium is set to go before senior councillors in Leeds.**

Members of Leeds City Council's executive board will be updated on the proposed final draft of the Elland Road planning statement,

which sets out principles for what the future may hold for around 30 acres of land surrounding the club's famous ground.

The statement aims to provide design and planning guidance on any future proposals that may be brought forward by landowners and developers in the area.

It's one of the most significant

development opportunities in the country with the potential to deliver a multi-billion-pound boost to the city's economy and provide around 2,000 new homes for the city as well as creating a series of innovate leisure, education, public realm and commercial opportunities.

The final draft of the planning statement is the first time planning

guidance for the area has been refreshed since 2007, and follows a comprehensive public consultation last summer, which gathered the views of the local community and key stakeholders.

Those views have played an important role in informing the final draft, with a number of changes made in response to local residents'

comments, including more clarity over how match day operations would work alongside any potential regeneration and how transport impacts would be considered and mitigated in future planning applications at the site.

**Continued on page 46**

Asian Express

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## Blueprint for future of Elland Road land set to move forward



Elland Road neighbourhood visualisation

Continued from page 45

The statement also comes after a planning application to expand the capacity of Elland Road to around 53,000 made further progress earlier this month, with the application deferred to the chief planning officer for approval.

A report to the executive board details some of the uses which could be acceptable for the land around the stadium under the new planning statement.

They include examples such as a new community sports arena, hotel accommodation and workspaces, as well as educational facilities linked to sport, health and wellbeing.

Any future development proposals brought forward would be subject to planning applications from landowners and developers and any specific proposals would be subject to further public consultation.

The refreshed statement also outlines the future relocation of the existing interim park and ride currently operating at the site and how, subject to demand being evidenced, one or more multi-storey car parks could be permitted which could serve as matchday parking or other uses.

Any changes to parking provision would be phased to ensure the local highway network can function on matchdays and minimise any adverse impact on neighbouring communities.

As part of the proposals, connectivity between Elland Road and the city would also be improved, making it easier for people to choose active and sustainable modes of travel.

Councillor Jonathan Pryor, Leeds City Council's deputy leader and executive member for economy, transport and sustainable development, said: "The land around Elland Road represents one of the most exciting development opportunities the city has seen for a generation, with the vast potential to completely transform and revitalise an area of Leeds steeped in local history and sporting heritage.

"This refreshed planning statement will act as both a guide and a catalyst for future proposals on the site, putting crucial elements in place that can enable the Elland Road area to be a year-round destination whilst also enhancing the existing neighbourhood and putting important new infrastructure in place.

"Combined with the club's plans for the stadium, we believe this will see Elland Road become a standard bearer for sports and transport-led regeneration that the whole city can be proud of."

Subject to approval, long-term options for park and ride provision for South Leeds will also be explored on the basis that the current site will be subject to redevelopment at a future point in time.



## BATON DREAMS

Glasgow schools go 'All In' as bespoke Batons launch citywide relay ahead of Commonwealth Games 2026



Glasgow's countdown to the 2026 Commonwealth Games has stepped up a gear - and this time, it's the city's young people leading the way.

More than 330 nurseries and schools across Glasgow have joined a brand-new Schools' Baton Relay, giving all 70,000 children and young people the chance to see, hold and celebrate their very own handcrafted Baton as excitement builds towards a home Games next summer.

The initiative is a flagship part of Glasgow 2026's All In programme - a nationwide movement encouraging communities, schools, sports clubs and organisations across Scotland to mark the Games in their own "altogether brilliant" way.

Inspired by the official King's Baton Relay currently travelling through every Commonwealth nation and territory, Glasgow's Schools' Baton Relay features 34 bespoke Batons - one for each learning community across the city.

And there's a special link to the real thing.

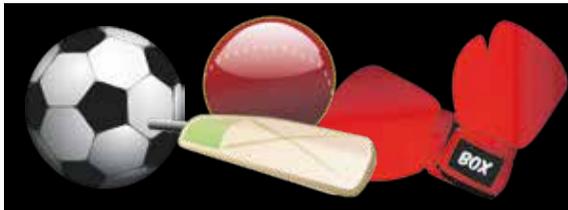
Each Baton has been carved from the same Pollok Park ash tree used to create the King's Batons, handcrafted by GalGael's Tim Norman, the maker behind the official relay symbol.

Every learning community has been challenged to develop its own artistic identity for their Baton before sending it on a sustainable journey through local schools and nurseries - blending sport, creativity and culture in the build-up to the Games.

**'The Games aren't just about athletes - they're about the whole city'**

The relay's journey began in Glasgow's City Chambers, where pupils created a powerful moment of celebration during a vibrant opening ceremony.

Seventy-four young flag bearers paraded the



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colours of every Commonwealth nation and territory through the Banqueting Hall - setting the tone for a relay rooted in unity, diversity and global connection.

Glasgow's Lord Provost Jacqueline McLaren welcomed more than 250 children to the launch, calling it a unique opportunity to inspire the next generation.

"This is the perfect opportunity for pupils to build excitement ahead of the 2026 Commonwealth Games," she said.

"Not only are they going to be able to hold a piece of history in their hands - schools will also have the chance to turn this into a learning opportunity, while encouraging increased sports participation."

Glasgow 2026 Chief Executive Phil

Batty OBE says the relay is about more than sport - it's about community.

"The Schools' Baton Relay gives children and young people the opportunity to bring the Games to life in their own creative way," he said.

"By placing these handcrafted Batons into the hands of school pupils, we've created an opportunity to connect them to a global Commonwealth journey, while celebrating what makes Glasgow special."

Scottish netball star Lexy Gillies - the youngest Scottish Thistle - attended the launch and spoke of how important it is for young people to feel part of the Games story.

"Events like this are so important because the Commonwealth Games aren't just about the athletes - they're

about the whole city," she said.

"It's really exciting to meet young people who are in the same position I was not too long ago and to have the chance to inspire them."

The Glasgow 2026 Commonwealth Games will take place from 23 July to 2 August, bringing 3,000 athletes from 74 nations and territories to compete across 10 sports and six Para sports, staged in four iconic venues along an eight-mile corridor through the city.

While the Schools' Baton Relay is unique to Glasgow, organisers have also developed a national digital resource pack, allowing schools across Scotland to join the build-up in their own way.

For more information, visit the Glasgow 2026 Schools' Baton Relay page.

*"It's really exciting to meet young people who are in the same position I was not too long ago and to have the chance to inspire them."*

Lexy Gillies

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**A Rochdale footballer with roots in Lancashire's youth football system has taken a major step in his career after competing at professional level in Pakistan's national cup competition.**

Muhammad Abdur Rahman, 24, a former Burnley FC youth talent, travelled to Karachi to feature in the PFF 2026 National Challenge Cup - one of the country's most prestigious tournaments, hosted by the Pakistan Football Federation.

Representing Pakistan Railways FC, the defender utilised his Pakistani heritage to take part in the competition, marking a significant milestone in his journey from grassroots football in the North West to the professional stage abroad.

Born and raised in Rochdale, Rahman is a former student of Nelson and Colne College and has steadily built his experience through English non-league football.

Before heading overseas, he played for Coppull United, where he made 38 appearances and scored one goal - earning recognition for his consistency and defensive strength.

Alongside his sporting ambitions, Rahman is also completing a BA (Hons) in Business and Management at the University of Essex, balancing academic success with his progress in the game.

Reflecting on the opportunity, Rahman said: "Being part of such a prestigious event was a privilege. It was a positive experience, and I am looking forward to building on those lessons as I move forward."

His appearance in the National Challenge Cup highlights the growing pathways available for British Asian footballers seeking to connect heritage with opportunity - and signals an exciting next chapter for a local player making his mark internationally.



# Footballer Rahman steps onto professional stage in Pakistan

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