



ANTI-MUSLIM HATE IN NHS HAS ALMOST DOUBLED IN A YEAR See page 10

BUSINESS POWER AWARDS See pages 2 & 3

Putting entrepreneurs, independent businesses and change makers in focus

From no coding experience to global banking - Aliya lands dream role

SHE CRACKED THE CODE

Aliya Iqbal graduated from the University of Bradford's BEng (Hons) Software Engineering programme this year, and has since started a graduate role with HSBC (Image credit: Aliya Iqbal/University of Bradford)

She once thought her future was in medicine. Now, just a few years after writing her first lines of code, 23-year-old Aliya Iqbal has graduated with first-class honours and secured a role with one of the world's biggest banks.

Aliya Iqbal had no background in computer science when she made the daunting decision to swap medicine for software engineering.

Today, the University of Bradford graduate is beginning a career with HSBC Group, working on technology that helps businesses move money around the world.

Continued on page 4

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Putting entrepreneurs, independent businesses and change makers in focus

Nominations for the 2026 awards are under way, with organisers looking beyond the biggest companies to recognise family firms, start-ups, professionals and businesses rooted in their communities

For every business success story that attracts attention, there are many more that develop largely out of sight.

They are the family firms that have traded through changing high streets and difficult economic cycles, entrepreneurs who began with little more than an idea, and small businesses whose contribution is measured not only in turnover, but in the jobs and opportunities they create.

It is this broader picture of enterprise that the Business Power Awards 2026 is seeking to capture as nominations continue ahead of the 11th October deadline.

The awards return to Bradford in November, bringing together businesses and professionals from across the region at a time when

smaller firms continue to navigate rising costs, changing consumer habits and an increasingly competitive trading environment.

While large companies tend to dominate business headlines, much of regional economies are built around smaller enterprises, independent operators and family-owned firms.

Their stories can be less visible.

For some, progress means moving from a home-based operation into their first premises. For others, it is taking on staff, building a recognisable brand, surviving difficult trading periods or successfully handing a business from one generation to the next.

The Business Power Awards were established to give greater visibility to those different forms of achievement.

Business Power Awards CEO Nadim Hanif said: "Across our region there are incredible businesses and individuals achieving remarkable things, but many simply don't shout about

what they do.

"The Business Power Awards are about finding those stories, putting them in the spotlight and recognising the hard work and determination it takes to build something successful.

"You don't have to run a huge company or have a household name. If somebody is doing something exceptional, we want to hear about them."

The inclusion of both Start Up of the Year and Lifetime Achievement illustrates the breadth of experience the awards are attempting to recognise - from businesses less than two years old to people whose careers span decades.

Family businesses also remain a significant part of that picture.

Often built over many years, they can carry histories closely connected to the towns and communities in which they operate. Their longevity can depend on an ability to change without losing the identity that

Entrepreneur of the Year

2026

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About the Business Power Awards

The Business Power Awards are an extension of the community and business storytelling that has been at the heart of Asian Express for more than 26 years.

'Business Power' has long existed as a dedicated supplement within the newspaper, documenting the entrepreneurs, family businesses, professionals and emerging enterprises contributing to UK'S economic and community life.

For founders Nadim and Andleeb Hanif, taking 'Business Power' from the pages of Asian Express to a live awards platform was a natural progression.

The concept was brought to life as Asian Express marked its 25th anniversary last year - transforming more than two decades of business storytelling and recognition into an awards platform that could celebrate those achievements on a larger stage.

Today, the Business Power Awards, and the BPA Empowering Women Awards continue that editorial legacy, recognising enterprise, leadership, innovation and impact while giving greater visibility to the people and businesses helping shape the region's economic landscape.

made them successful in the first place.

At the other end of the spectrum are start-ups operating in a markedly different environment, where businesses can build audiences online, develop brands through social media and reach customers far beyond their immediate location.

Between the two sits the broad SME sector - companies that may rarely become household names but provide employment, services and investment across the region.

Recognition beyond the balance sheet

The presence of Social Enterprise of the Year also reflects a wider understanding of what business success can look like.

Commercial performance remains important, but businesses

are increasingly judged by their impact beyond their balance sheets - whether through employment, training, community investment or the way they respond to social needs.

The Professional of the Year and CEO of the Year categories similarly shift some of the attention from organisations to the individuals behind them.

That distinction matters in smaller businesses, where the decisions of a founder or senior leader can shape not only commercial performance but workplace culture and the opportunities available to employees.

Not every potential nominee will necessarily regard themselves as an obvious awards candidate.

That is partly why nominations

are open beyond businesses themselves. Entrepreneurs and organisations can put themselves forward, while employees, customers, colleagues, friends and members of the public can nominate businesses or individuals whose work they believe merits recognition.

It creates the possibility of uncovering achievements that might otherwise remain within a company, profession or local community.

Those selected will form part of the Business Power Awards Night & Gala Dinner at Cedar Court Hotel, Bradford, on Wednesday 25th November 2026.

Nominations can be submitted at businesspowerawards.co.uk/nominate. Deadline 11th October 2026.

A changing business landscape

The range of categories for 2026 offers its own snapshot of the modern business landscape. Traditional sectors including restaurants, retail, fashion, accountancy and law sit alongside awards recognising entrepreneurs, start-ups, social enterprises, brands and individual business leaders.

16 Categories of Excellence

- Entrepreneur of the Year
- Start Up of the Year - for businesses under two years old
- SME of the Year
- Restaurant of the Year
- Fashion Retailer of the Year
- Family Business of the Year
- Brand of the Year
- Beauty & Aesthetics Business of the Year
- Retail Business of the Year
- Social Enterprise of the Year
- Accountancy Firm of the Year
- Law Firm of the Year
- Professional of the Year
- CEO of the Year
- Special Recognition
- Lifetime Achievement



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From no coding experience to global banking - Aliya lands dream role

SHE CRACKED THE CODE

Cover story continued

It is a remarkable turnaround for the 23-year-old, who initially enrolled on a Clinical Sciences degree with plans to pursue medicine.

But during her A-level years and the pandemic, a growing fascination with technology and memories of taking computers apart with her dad as a child made her question if she was on the right path.

"As a kid, I used to take apart computers with my dad and put them back together," Aliya said.

"Eventually, I had to admit to myself that engineering was what I truly enjoyed. As much as I respected medicine, technology was where my future was."

She switched to Software Engineering at the University of Bradford despite having none of the coding experience some of her classmates already possessed.

"At first, I worried I'd struggle against students who had been coding for years, but

the lecturers at Bradford were incredible," she said.

"They made sure I had everything I needed to succeed."

Those fears proved unfounded.

Aliya graduated in July with first-class honours in BEng (Hons) Software Engineering and has started a graduate position with HSBC, earning a base salary of more than £34,000 plus performance-related bonuses and benefits.

From catching fraudsters to global payments

Her relationship with HSBC began a year earlier when she secured an internship working in financial crime prevention.

There, Aliya helped build and maintain database tools used to identify fraudulent activity - giving her first-hand experience of how technology is being deployed to tackle financial crime.

"During my internship, a large part of the process was mapping out how HSBC Group is structured globally because it's such a massive

organisation," she said.

Now splitting her time between HSBC's Canary Wharf and Sheffield sites, Aliya works within Corporate and Investment Banking Technology.

Her focus is on global payment solutions - the technology and banking platforms that allow businesses to send, receive and manage money across international borders.

"Moving into global payment solutions in CIB Tech, I look forward to building on that experience and taking on new challenges," she said.

For Aliya, the achievement is also proof that choosing a completely different direction does not mean starting too late.

"Bradford gave me the skills and confidence to build a career in something I love.

"I grew so much during my time at Bradford. The University backed me in every aspect of my life, and looking at where I am now, this was definitely the path I was meant to take."



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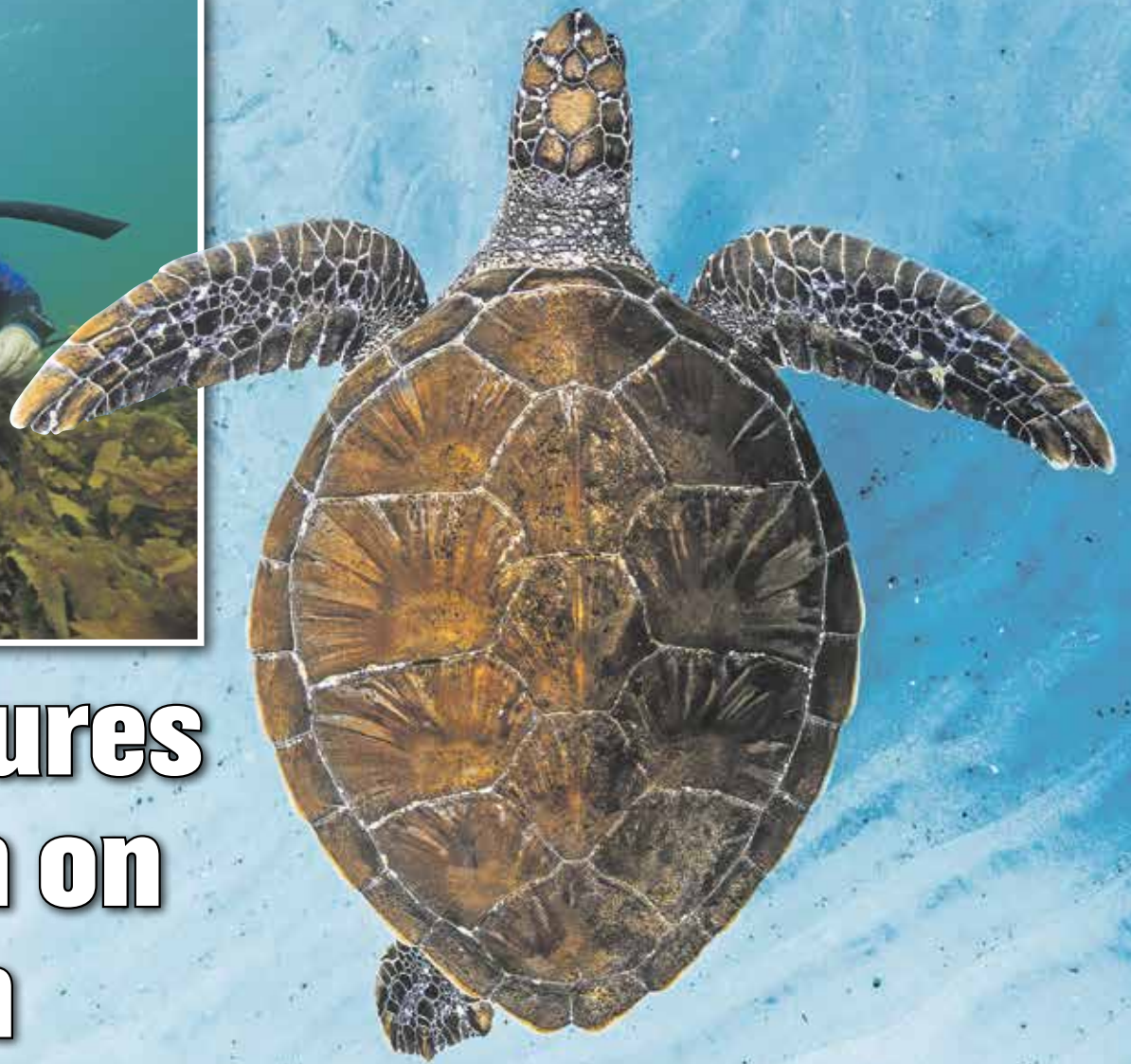


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Kelp Collector - photo by Jack Breedon

Ocean adventures make a splash on the big screen



From a six-month Pacific crossing on handmade rafts to surfers in their 80s and a remarkable marine rescue mission, the Ocean Film Festival is returning to cinemas across the UK this autumn

Storms, sharks, starvation and six months adrift on the Pacific Ocean feature in an extraordinary collection of true stories heading to the big screen this autumn.

The Ocean Film Festival World Tour is returning to venues across the UK from September to November, bringing audiences face-to-face with some of the planet's most remarkable ocean adventures.

Now in its 13th year, the festival

combines breathtaking marine life with stories of human endurance, conservation and people whose lives revolve around the sea.

Leading this year's programme is *The Raftsmen*, the astonishing story of 12 adventurers from seven countries who set out to cross the Pacific Ocean aboard three handmade wooden rafts.

With little experience and guided only by the sun and stars, the crew battled storms, hunger and the psychological strain of being at sea for months.

Their epic six-month voyage became the longest raft expedition ever completed.

Half a century later, original 16mm

footage of the journey has been restored in 4K, giving audiences the chance to experience the scale of the expedition on the big screen.

The 43-minute film also features previously unseen footage and testimony from survivors of the adventure, which began in 1973 and saw the crew contend with storms, sharks and increasingly frayed nerves.

But high-seas drama is only part of this year's line-up.

Granny Grommets follows an inspiring group of older women who refuse to let age keep them out of the surf.

Some are in their 80s, yet they take to the waves every week – despite the

concerns of their grown-up children. The nine-minute film takes its name from the surfing term 'grommet', traditionally used for a young surfing newcomer.

Meanwhile, *Tides of Life* travels to Uruguay, where entrepreneur Richard Tesore established the country's first rescue and rehabilitation centre for marine mammals.

The 16-minute film follows his work caring for injured penguins, sea lions, otters and other wildlife while protecting the fragile marine ecosystem along Uruguay's coastline.

UK tour director

Nell Teasdale said: "Each film in the 2026 programme will offer something special, whether it's extraordinary adventure, breathtaking marine life or people dedicating their lives to protecting the sea."

She added: "The ocean connects all of us, and this event is a chance to celebrate that connection on the big screen."

The Ocean Film Festival World Tour runs at venues across the UK from September to November 2026. For dates and tickets, visit www.oceanfilmfestival.co.uk



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- Father lived for years knowing abnormal blood vessels deep inside his brain could rupture at any moment

- Leeds doctors turned to pioneering treatment after conventional options ran out - and the dangerous mass is now completely closed

Zehair Ayub photographed in Radiology Theatres, Leeds General Infirmary

UK FIRST: Bradford man's deadly brain condition cured after 15-year battle

A Bradford man who spent 15 years living with the threat of a potentially catastrophic brain haemorrhage has become the first patient in the UK to receive a groundbreaking treatment for a rare and life-threatening abnormality deep inside his brain.

Zehair Ayub had been living with an arteriovenous malformation (AVM) - a dangerous tangle of abnormal blood vessels where arteries and veins connect directly instead of allowing blood to flow normally through the brain.

His condition was particularly serious.

The AVM was buried deep inside his brain and had developed a large aneurysm, which was pressing against the nerves responsible for his sight.

His vision was deteriorating. He suffered seizures and weakness on the right side of his body. He also lived with the knowledge that the fragile blood vessels could rupture, causing a devastating or fatal brain bleed.

After years of failed treatments and being told conventional surgery was simply too dangerous, doctors at Leeds Teaching Hospitals offered him one final option.

It would make medical history in Britain.

"Everything changed almost overnight"

Zehair was first diagnosed in 2011. Until then, he had been fit, healthy and active, playing football and cricket and regularly going to the gym.

"When I was diagnosed, I was fit and healthy," he said. "I played football and cricket, went to the gym, and was always active. Then almost overnight, everything changed."

"I had gone from never hearing of an AVM to being told I had this rare condition that could cause a catastrophic bleed."

"I had a young family and my own business. I just wanted to get back to

normal and carry on with my life."

He underwent Gamma Knife therapy in Sheffield, a highly targeted form of radiation treatment, but it failed to eliminate the AVM.

Over the following years, other possibilities were explored.

None offered a good enough chance of success.

Because of the AVM's position deep inside Zehair's brain, conventional surgery was considered too risky.

So he was left living with it.

15 years with a 'ticking time bomb'

As the years passed, Zehair's symptoms became increasingly severe.

He experienced seizures, weakness on his right side and worsening problems with his sight and coordination.

At the same time, the risk of a major haemorrhage remained.

"For 15 years I lived with the AVM, but I was eventually told there were no treatment options left," he said.

Everything was worsening

quickly. My eyesight was failing, my coordination declining, and I knew I needed help.

After exhausting all viable treatment options over 15 years, Zehair Ayub was offered hope after meeting Consultant Interventional Neuroradiologist Dr Fathallah Islim, at Leeds Teaching Hospitals.

Dr Islim had completed a fellowship at a German centre involved in the European trial of an innovative treatment that offered a potential new way to tackle complex AVMs.

The treatment was not being trialled in the UK.

But given the severity of Zehair's condition and the lack of viable alternatives, Dr Islim secured special approval to use it on compassionate grounds.

The treatment that changed everything

At the centre of the breakthrough is ihtObtura, a new liquid embolic agent. The material is injected through



blood vessels leading to the AVM, helping close them and stop abnormal blood flow through the dangerous tangle.

But it has an important difference from existing embolic materials.

After a short period, ihtObtura is no longer visible on medical scans.

This means doctors can see the blood vessels more clearly during subsequent procedures, potentially allowing large and complex AVMs to be treated safely over several stages.

International experts involved in the trial travelled to Leeds General Infirmary to work alongside the Leeds team.

Between September 2025 and May 2026, Zehair underwent four rounds of treatment.

The outcome was remarkable: his AVM is now completely closed.

The aneurysm has disappeared, and his physical symptoms have significantly improved.

"I knew I was taking a chance"

For Zehair, agreeing to undergo a treatment never before used on a patient in Britain meant stepping into the unknown.

"I knew I was taking a chance on a new treatment, but I had complete confidence in the team," he said.

“Having experts from Leeds working alongside colleagues from Germany and Spain gave me real reassurance that I was in the best possible hands.”

Dr Islim said treating brain AVMs from inside the blood vessels can carry significant risks, particularly in cases previously considered untreatable.

"Endovascular treatment of brain AVMs is often reserved for untreatable AVMs," he said.

"The risks are high and daunting for both the clinician and patient.

"Obtura is a new, innovative material

A photograph of two men in a clinical setting. On the left is Dr. Fathallah Islim, an older man with a grey beard and mustache, wearing a white lab coat. On the right is Zehair Ayub, a younger man with a dark beard and mustache, wearing blue scrubs. He has his right arm around Dr. Islim's shoulder. In the background, there is a large medical machine, likely a CT scanner, and a computer monitor displaying some data. The caption at the bottom left reads "Zehair Ayub with Dr Fathallah Islim".

Zehair Ayub with Dr Fathallah Islim

that has helped cure Zehair's AVM and help him get his life back, which made us very happy for him and his family.

"We are eager to get European and UK approval for use and help other patients in the near future."

For Zehair, the UK-first procedure has ended a medical ordeal stretching back to 2011.

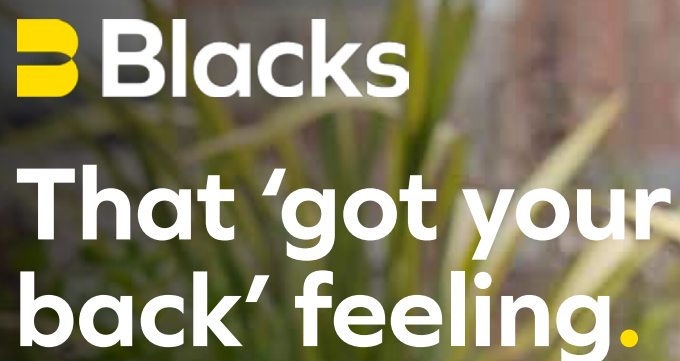
"I'm incredibly grateful to everyone involved," he said.

“Dr Fathallah and the whole team

gave me hope when I thought I'd run out of options.

"Thanks to this treatment, not only has my own life changed, but I know other patients will benefit from it in the future too."

The Leeds team is now hoping the treatment will secure European and UK approval so it can potentially be offered to other patients with complex brain AVMs.



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Muslim doctor tells how patient pointed at her hijab and branded her a 'terrorist' in front of a packed NHS waiting room

Anti-Muslim hate in NHS settings nearly **DOUBLES** in a year

- **Reported cases in healthcare settings rise by 92% from 2024 to 2025**

- **Muslim NHS doctor says patient pointed at her hijab and called her a 'terrorist' in crowded waiting room**

- **Charity calls for urgent action to protect Muslim patients and NHS Staff**

Anti-Muslim hate in NHS hospitals and GP surgeries has surged by a staggering 92 per cent in just one year, with Muslim doctors, patients and families subjected to abuse and harassment in places meant to keep them safe.

Shocking new figures from Tell MAMA reveal 71 verified incidents were recorded in healthcare settings during 2025 - almost double the 37 cases reported in 2024.

And the hostility appears to be continuing.

Another 29 verified incidents were recorded between January and June this year, prompting warnings that elevated levels of anti-Muslim hate are persisting across healthcare settings.

Among those targeted was a Muslim NHS doctor who says she was branded a "terrorist" by a patient in front of a crowded waiting room.

The doctor said she had simply called the patient's name when the abuse began.

"I chose medicine to protect and care for people when they need it most," she said.

"When I called his name, my only thought was how to help him.

"Having my faith weaponised against me in front of a crowded room was deeply degrading.

"At that moment he pointed at my headscarf and called me a 'terrorist' and the entire waiting area fell silent. Everyone stared.

"Suddenly, the years of studying and exhausting shifts meant nothing; I wasn't

seen as a doctor, but as a threat."

She said the incident destroyed her sense of safety within seconds.

"The raw hatred in his voice, suggesting that my headscarf somehow made me dangerous to the very patients I am dedicated to serving, stripped away my sense of safety and professional identity in seconds."

HATE IN PLACES OF CARE

Tell MAMA says incidents have taken place across the NHS - from local GP surgeries and outpatient clinics to hospital wards and emergency departments.

And it is not only healthcare workers being targeted.

Muslim patients and visiting family members have also been caught up in incidents involving verbal abuse, discrimination and targeted harassment.

The monitoring organisation says its figures reveal a troubling year-on-year rise. There were 37 verified incidents in 2024.

That jumped to 71 in 2025 - a 92 per cent increase.

A further 29 were recorded in the first six months of 2026.

Tell MAMA says the mid-year figures suggest the heightened level of incidents seen during 2025 has not disappeared.

'THIS IS UNACCEPTABLE'

Iman Atta OBE, Director of Tell MAMA, said anti-Muslim prejudice was reaching people during some of the most vulnerable moments of their lives.

She said: "Hospitals and GP surgeries



Iman Atta OBE

should be places of safety and care for everyone, regardless of faith.

"These figures show that anti-Muslim prejudice is following people into some of the most vulnerable moments of their lives, and that is unacceptable.

"We are calling on NHS trusts to take this data seriously and to strengthen reporting pathways and staff training so that both patients and healthcare workers are properly protected."

TELL MAMA'S CALLS FOR ACTION

1

Strengthen safeguarding pathways

NHS trusts and ICBs must audit and reinforce incident-reporting frameworks to better support affected staff and patients.

2

Increase reporting visibility

Integrate direct reporting routes to Tell MAMA within NHS complaints, PALS and safeguarding procedures.

3

Mandate targeted training

Introduce mandatory cultural competency and hate-crime awareness modules for all frontline and public-facing NHS staff.

4

Institutional data-sharing

Establish formal data-sharing protocols between NHS bodies and independent monitoring networks to uncover the true scale of underreporting.

Tell MAMA continues to work with police, NHS leaders and community partners to support victims and press for long-term change across the public sector.

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NHS worker jailed over fake Covid vaccine records

More than 2,600 suspicious vaccination entries were linked to a Luton health centre during the pandemic

sold for up to £150

Waqas Hanif was sentenced to three years in prison



Touqir Nasir was handed a 10-month sentence, suspended for a year, and will be subject to a six-month curfew



An NHS worker who created thousands of suspicious Covid vaccination records for unvaccinated people has been jailed.

Waqas Hanif, 28, and Touqir Nasir, 31, were caught after a joint investigation by the National Crime Agency (NCA) and NHS England into fake vaccine records sold during the pandemic.

Waqas, who worked as a vaccination programme care co-ordinator at Kingsway Health Centre in Luton, was sentenced to three years in prison at Luton Crown Court.

Touqir was handed a 10-month sentence, suspended for a year, and will be subject to a six-month curfew.

The investigation uncovered more than 2,000 fraudulent vaccination records created between June and October 2021.

People who had not received a Covid vaccine paid for official records showing they had been vaccinated, allowing them to bypass restrictions on activities like foreign travel and large gatherings.

The records were sold through social media platforms including Telegram, with Waqas charging between £80 and £150 for two supposed vaccine 'doses'.

Investigators identified 2,663 suspicious entries linked to Kingsway Health Centre.

Of these, 1,875 were connected to five IP addresses at Waqas's home.



Waqas had administrator access to Pinnacle, the NHS system used at the time to generate and record vaccinations.

When NCA officers arrested him at his home in January 2022, they found his NHS ID card, NHS documents, and £7,000 in cash.

The investigation also led officers to

a safe deposit box Waqas had rented in Luton, where they seized £136,405 in cash.

CCTV footage showed him visiting the box several times, and officers later found his fingerprints on some banknotes.

Investigators also found around 250 images on Waqas's mobile phone

containing personal information about approximately 340 patients.

Waqas admitted creating false vaccination records but claimed he acted under duress from local criminals who paid for the certificates.

Investigators also discovered more than £56,000 had been deposited into a bank account opened by Touqir under

the name Adam Parker, which he had legally adopted by deed poll.

Many payments were small deposits between £100 and £400, suspected to be for fraudulent records. Investigators found some depositors later had false vaccination records created.

Bank statements also revealed a £1,000 transfer to Waqas, which investigators linked to the fraudulent records.

Waqas pleaded guilty to offences under the Computer Misuse Act, Fraud Act and Proceeds of Crime Act in March 2025.

Touqir pleaded guilty to a Fraud Act offence in December 2025 and later admitted a Proceeds of Crime Act offence.

Paul Foster, deputy director and head of the NCA's National Cyber Crime Unit, said: "These men cynically abused our healthcare system for financial gain, at a time when the country was going through the turmoil and pain of the Covid 19 pandemic."

"Although receiving the vaccine is a matter of personal choice, such exploitation of our healthcare system to allow unvaccinated individuals to bypass restrictions that are in place to protect the British public is illegal."

He said the joint investigation with NHS England had prevented organised criminals from continuing to undermine the national pandemic response and profit from the scheme.

The investigation also led officers to a safe deposit box Waqas had rented in Luton, where they seized £136,405 in cash.



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Zara Ishfaq and husband Omair

Zara Ishfaq, a 31-year-old accountant is campaigning for improved maternity care

Mum left with life-changing injuries after childbirth tear went undiagnosed for two years

A mum is campaigning for improved maternity care after suffering a life-changing birth injury that went undetected - and was diagnosed two years later.

Zara Ishfaq, a 31-year-old accountant suffered the serious perineal tear while giving birth to her first child at Whipps Cross Hospital in East London.

But despite repeatedly seeking medical help in the days and months that followed, the severity of her injury went unrecognised.

Today, despite undergoing repair surgery, she continues to live with serious bowel complications and has a stoma, where an opening in her abdomen allows waste to pass into a bag.

Now Zara, is sharing her story in the hope that other women - particularly those from South Asian backgrounds - do not have to endure the same experience.

Research suggests women of Asian heritage can face a significantly greater risk of serious childbirth tears, yet Zara believes too many women still struggle to have their concerns heard.

A traumatic three-day labour

As a first-time mum, Zara gave birth to her son Aariz on 21 December 2021 following a

prolonged labour lasting three days.

During the delivery, Aariz's head became stuck and forceps were used. Zara also underwent an episiotomy.

Her son, who weighed 7lb 7oz, was not injured.

Zara, however, suffered a serious bleed after delivery, losing around two litres of blood. "The only way to describe my prolonged labour was traumatic," she said.

"Even as a first-time mum I felt something wasn't right. It was terrifying when Aariz's head became stuck and I was just hoping he would be okay."

She was discharged from hospital two days later. But within days, Zara was seeking medical help.

On Boxing Day, she attended a post-natal appointment reporting pain, swelling and a suspected infection. Two days later, she sought further help after her pain increased and she developed a fever, alongside concerns about how her wound was healing.

Despite those concerns, Zara said she was reassured following another post-natal check in January 2022 that her condition appeared to be improving.

Studies found women of South Asian heritage are at up to six times greater risk than white women to suffer a serious tear during their first natural birth

Her problems did not go away. **Nobody seemed to think there was anything to worry about**

Over the following months, Zara began experiencing changes to her bowel habits.

By June 2022, she was reporting more frequent and loose bowel movements as well as leakage. She was advised to carry out pelvic floor exercises.

Six months later, she was still experiencing symptoms and told clinicians she needed to wear an incontinence pad.

"In the days after giving birth I didn't feel right," Zara said. "I was in pain and developed a fever."

"But each time I sought medical advice I was given the impression that nobody seemed to think there was anything to worry about."

"That started what felt like a constant back and forth trying to get to the root of my issues."

The impact extended far beyond her physical health.

"While my friends were meeting in the park and attending baby groups, I was barely able to leave the house," she said.

More than two years waiting for answers

Zara was eventually referred for specialist assessment and was seen in July 2023.

Further investigations followed.

In May 2024, more than two years after Aariz was born, she received confirmation that the severity of the perineal tear she suffered during

childbirth had been underestimated.

She was told she would require major surgery to try to repair the damage.

"In some ways I was pleased to finally get a diagnosis," Zara said. "It felt like a vindication that what I'd been through was genuine. I started to get a sense of understanding as to why my symptoms were so severe and debilitating."

Zara underwent repair surgery in May 2025, but continues to experience bowel problems and now lives with a stoma.

She instructed medical negligence lawyers at Irwin Mitchell to investigate her care and help secure access to specialist treatment, therapy and rehabilitation.

Barts Health NHS Trust, which runs Whipps Cross Hospital, has admitted a breach of duty in relation to Zara's care.

Following legal submissions, the Trust admitted Zara suffered a tear during delivery and that its severity had been underestimated.

It also accepted that, had the injury been detected earlier, it would have been repaired sooner and, on the balance of probabilities, the serious complications Zara subsequently experienced would have been avoided.

What should have been a joyous time ended in years of pain

Madeleine Nugent, the medical negligence lawyer at Irwin Mitchell representing Zara, said her experience demonstrated how devastating an unrecognised birth injury could



Zara with her firstborn Aariz

become.

"Zara's traumatic experience not only highlights how serious birth injuries can go unrecognised but the devastating impact they have," she said.

"What should have been such a joyous time for Zara welcoming her child into the world ended up in years of worsening pain and complications, many of which we feel could have been avoided."

She added that Zara had been left trying to navigate a complex medical system while searching for both a diagnosis and answers.

Lawyers are now working towards a settlement intended to provide Zara with access to the specialist support

she requires.

"It's vital that lessons are learned to improve maternity safety for other mums," Ms Nugent said.

South Asian women face greater risk

Zara has since begun researching birth trauma and obstetric anal sphincter injuries, known as OASI.

These are serious tears occurring during vaginal childbirth that extend into the muscles controlling the anus.

Research cited by birth injury charity The MASIC Foundation suggests around one in 20 first-time mothers experiences an OASI during childbirth.

Other studies have found women of Asian heritage may be at up to six times greater risk of suffering an OASI during their first vaginal delivery compared with white women.

For Zara, those figures raise important questions about awareness, communication and the maternity care offered to women from different ethnic backgrounds.

She wants women to feel able to ask questions about their individual risks and delivery options - and, crucially, to feel that concerns about their bodies are taken seriously.

It's not just the physical injuries

Zara has since welcomed a second child, daughter Elayna, now one. But the injuries from her first birth affected her second pregnancy too.

She suffered hyperemesis, or severe pregnancy sickness, alongside complications related to her existing injuries. She experienced infections and, at one stage, developed sepsis.

"After giving birth I went from a strong, independent and resilient woman to someone reliant on others," Zara said.

She said learning more about childbirth injuries afterwards left her questioning whether different discussions around delivery options could have changed what happened.

"I wasn't offered a caesarean but knowing what I know now, if I'd have been offered one, I definitely would have chosen that delivery method," she said.

Despite everything she has endured, Zara describes herself as blessed to have her two children.

But she believes the impact of birth trauma - particularly its psychological consequences - needs to be discussed much more openly.

"It's not just the physical injuries that affect you, it's the psychological toll of having a reduced quality of life," she said.

"Too many women are suffering unnecessarily and more needs to be done to improve maternity care but also break the taboo around birth injuries to mums."

Her campaign is now about turning an intensely personal experience into something that might protect another mother.

"My story isn't just about what happened to me," Zara said.

"It's about trying to make sure it doesn't happen to the next woman and empowering mums to know their bodies and make sure they're involved in their maternity care."

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50,000 NAMES, STITCHED BY HAND

Women spend hundreds of hours embroidering Gaza casualties for vast international memorial

THE MEMORIAL IN NUMBERS

- 50,000+** names embroidered by hand
- 400+** stitchers
- 30+** countries
- 182** names on every panel
- 100-200** hours to stitch one panel
- Green** - children
- Red** - women
- Black** - men

Thousands of names, each carefully stitched by hand, will fill Leeds Minster this month as a powerful memorial to people killed in Gaza comes to the city.

Women from Leeds and Sheffield have spent the past year embroidering hundreds of names onto large fabric panels.

Their work is now part of 'Stitch Their Names Together', a global project involving more than 400 stitchers in over 30 countries.

Together, they have embroidered more than 50,000 names.

Each panel carries 182 names. Children are stitched in green thread, women in red and men in black.

One panel can take between 100 and 200 hours to complete, with volunteers carefully copying and stitching every name by hand.

Leeds resident Viv Anderson stitched more than 220 names across two panels from her home in Gledhow.

"Sitting in Gledhow, slowly stitching over 220 individual names across two panels, was a deeply affecting process," she said.

"With the reported death toll now surpassing 73,000, I felt I could not simply watch the news. I had a personal responsibility to bear witness to this unimaginable loss.

"Every single stitch I made was a

reminder that these are human lives, not just distant statistics."

The project was started in March 2024 by textile artist and activist Mary Evers in response to the rising death toll in Gaza.

What began as a textile project has since grown into an international memorial, with hundreds of people contributing panels from around the world.

This month, many of those panels will come together inside Leeds Minster, alongside work produced by women in Yorkshire.

For visitors, the scale of the installation will turn casualty figures often seen in news reports into

something physical - name after name, stitched into fabric.

"Every single stitch in this memorial represents a human life, and standing in front of it is a profoundly confronting experience," said Evers.

"I want the people of West Yorkshire to walk through these doors this September and realise that these are not just distant statistics. They are names of people that we have a duty to remember."

For the Leeds and Sheffield volunteers, the exhibition marks the end of months of painstaking work.

Every name must first be carefully copied before the embroidery begins. With 182 names on each panel and up

to 200 hours needed to complete one, the finished memorial represents tens of thousands of hours of work.

MEMORIAL COMES TO LEEDS

The exhibition, co-hosted by Leeds Palestinian Film Festival, opens at 3.30pm on Thursday 10 September. A poetry and reflection event will also take place at noon on Saturday 12 September, with readings from six Leeds Palestinian Film Festival volunteers. The main exhibition is free and runs until Sunday 20 September at Leeds Minster, Kirkgate, Leeds LS2 7DJ. It is open daily from 11am to 2pm, except Monday 14 September.

Bradford Council updates on plans for hundreds of new SEND places

Bradford Council is working to create hundreds of new specialist education places to help meet growing demand for support for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

A report due to be considered by councillors next month provides an update on plans to create more SEND places across the district, while making sure there are enough school and childcare places for local families in the years ahead.

The number of children and young people needing SEND support continues to rise. In July 2026, there

were 9,064 children and young people aged 0-25 in Bradford district with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP), a 21 per cent increase in just 18 months.

To help meet this demand, Bradford Council is creating more specialist places in schools across the district. Since 2025, 236 specialist and alternative provision places have been created, with another 296 planned by 2028.

The work forms part of a £25.2 million government-funded programme to increase SEND provision across the district. The programme includes expanding

specialist provision in mainstream schools, creating more resourced provision places and developing new facilities linked to existing special schools.

Former council-owned buildings are also being converted into specialist learning facilities. This will help more children get the support they need closer to home and reduce the need for placements outside the district.

The report also highlights work to make sure there are enough school and childcare places across Bradford.

Since the introduction of expanded

government-funded childcare support in 2024, around 1,000 more childcare places have been taken up across the district. This has helped families access an extra 650,000 hours of funded early education.

More than 2,000 wraparound childcare places for primary school-aged children have also been created through government funding, helping working families with childcare before and after the school day.

In addition, the report looks at changing population trends. Births across the district have fallen by around 1,000 a year since 2015, meaning fewer primary school places

are needed. The council is working closely with schools and academy trusts to manage these changes while making sure there are still enough places for local children.

Councillor Sally Birch, Bradford Council's Executive Member for Children and Families, said: "Every child deserves the chance to do well. "We're creating hundreds of new SEND places so more children can get the support they need closer to home."

"We're also planning ahead to make sure there are enough school and childcare places for local families in the years to come."



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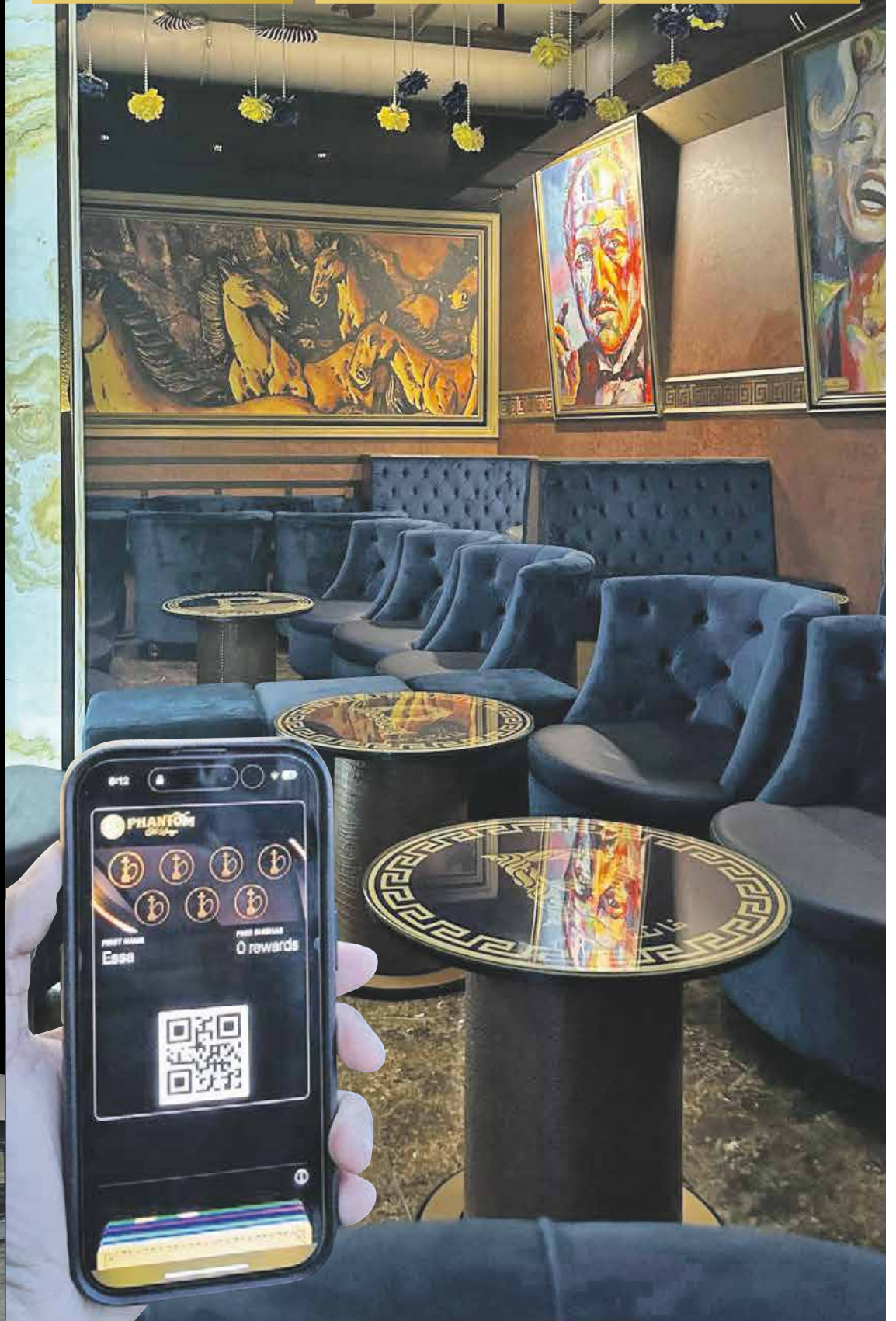
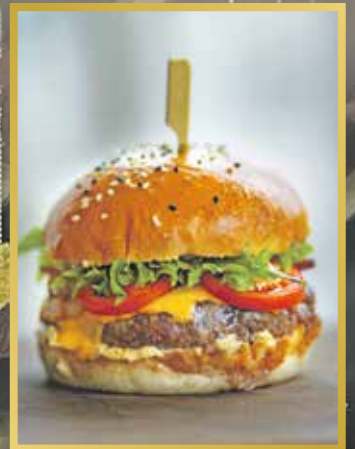
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West Yorkshire is now one of England’s biggest prescription hotspots. The NHS spent almost £800 million on medicines there in just one year, making it one of the most expensive areas for prescriptions in the country.

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

Only Cambridgeshire and Peterborough (£379.82) and Herefordshire and Worcestershire (£347.81) spend more per head.

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

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

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

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

West Yorkshire tops England for prescription volume

West Yorkshire ranked third for spending per person, but no other NHS region gave out more prescription items.

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

The high number of prescriptions is putting additional pressure on NHS budgets, especially as demand for

healthcare continues to rise. England’s biggest spenders

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

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

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

London spends less than half as much

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

North West London had the lowest prescription spend in England at just £115.74 per person. That is less than half of what Cambridgeshire and Peterborough spent, and almost £177 less per resident than West Yorkshire.

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

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

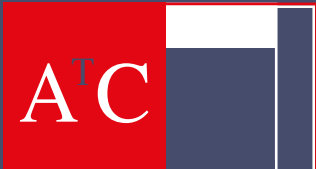
“What stands out is the enormous variation across England. Cambridgeshire and Peterborough spends more than three times per person what North West London does, and that gap is largely driven by the cost of individual prescriptions rather than the volume.

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

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

West Yorkshire was third on the list, ahead of:

- Nottingham and Nottinghamshire – **£243.79**
- Cheshire and Merseyside – **£218.32**
- Lincolnshire – **£210.93**
- Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent – **£210.82**
- Lancashire and South Cumbria – **£201.80**
- Sussex – **£201.72**
- Black Country – **£200.21**



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Britain is building new homes in the **WRONG** places

BUILD, BUILD, BUILD?
Researchers say the real issue is where new homes are being constructed



Housing construction rises where properties are already plentiful while overcrowded areas miss out

Britain is building new homes in the places that need them least while some of the country's most overcrowded communities are missing out, according to new research.

A major study tracking housing across England and Wales over three decades has found a growing mismatch between where homes are being constructed and where people actually need them.

Researchers at the University of St Andrews analysed every local

authority district through four censuses between 1991 and 2021.

They found that by 2021, most local authorities had their largest surplus of homes over households for 30 years.

In London, the number of homes exceeded the number of households by 8.7 per cent at the latest census - despite property prices in the capital reaching record levels.

But the researchers say the problem is not simply how many homes Britain has. It is where those homes are located and how they are being

used.

Until 2001, areas experiencing population growth and housing shortages generally saw more homes being built.

Since then, researchers found that pattern has reversed.

New housing has increasingly been constructed in places where a surplus of properties already exists, while areas facing the greatest housing pressure have attracted comparatively less development.

The study describes the

phenomenon as a 'Concentric Mismatch', with housing pressures spreading outwards from major cities.

Researchers identified a core of second and empty homes in some of London's wealthiest boroughs, including Kensington and Chelsea, Westminster and Camden.

Around major cities, meanwhile, areas including Barking and Dagenham, Birmingham and Oldham have experienced increasing overcrowding.

Further out, commuter areas are

increasingly using up spare capacity in their existing homes.

The findings raise questions over the Government's drive to dramatically increase housebuilding across the country.

Ministers have pledged to deliver 1.5 million new homes by the end of the current Parliament, alongside what the Government has described as the biggest council housebuilding programme since the post-war era.

But researchers warn that simply setting a national construction target risks failing to address the underlying problem if new properties continue to be built in the wrong places.

Gauthier Dulout, from the School of Geography and Sustainable Development at the University of St Andrews, who led the research, said: "The answer should be about addressing mal-distribution, not more housebuilding targets."

"1.5 million homes is 300,000 a year - similar to Harold Macmillan's ambitious 1953 figure - but with little control over where they are actually built."

"We should be asking where and for whom should this housing go. How is this problem solved?"

"We should be more ambitious and bring forward new systems-thinking to tax, to tenure, to new housing delivery, in order to address this increasing inequality and better use the existing housing stock."

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

him.

A campaign inspired by compassion

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

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

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

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

Putting children's mental health first

Instead of focusing on playgrounds or entertainment, Bahrawar decided to

address what he sees as one of the biggest challenges for young people today.

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

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

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

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

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

A young voice with a big vision

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

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

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



Bahrawar Ahmed with LCC Deputy Leader councillor Salma Arif



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

Polls close at 5pm on Friday, 25 September.

To vote, visit:

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

business power



Race equity leader Shaheen Myers brings REND to Bradford

Business and community leaders from across Yorkshire are being brought together for an evening aimed at turning conversations around race equity, representation and allyship into meaningful connections and action.

Shaheen Myers, Executive Director of Balance-Ed, and winner of the BPA Empowering Women Awards, is hosting and organising REND Leeds Bradford – the Racial Equity Networking Dinner – at The Madisson,

Bradford, on Friday 23 October.

The event brings the national REND movement to the region, with Shaheen, widening the conversation beyond education by bringing together figures from business, politics, public services and local communities.

“Race equity cannot be a conversation that global majority communities continue to have with themselves,” Shaheen said.

“We need leaders from business, education, politics, public services and our communities, and

critically, we need allies who are prepared not simply to agree with the need for change, but to be part of it.”

Speakers will include Bradford West MP Naz Shah; Humma Nizami - CEO of the Race Equality Network; Andleeb Hanif - Co-founder and Editor of Asian Express; and Sufian Sadiq - Chief Talent and Transformation Officer at Chiltern Learning Trust and founder of the national REND movement.

Rather than following a

traditional networking format, the event combines dinner with speakers and conversation, allowing guests to discuss race, representation, leadership and belonging while building connections across different sectors.

“You don’t have to work in race equity to have a role in race equity,” Shaheen said.

“If you are a business leader, employer, educator, public servant or community leader, this conversation belongs to you too.

“I particularly want to see more white allies joining us. Progress cannot depend solely on the people who experience inequity doing the work to change it.”

The not-for-profit event has attracted backing from Yorkshire businesses, with SBL Group becoming Exclusive Headline Sponsor and Official Transport Partner. Asian Express is Official Print Partner and Sunrise Radio Official Media Partner, while Janan and Al-Murad Tiles are also supporting the event.

To attend REND, book tickets: www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/rend-leedsbradford-tickets-1987808461619, or for further information, email: info@balance-ed.co.uk.



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business power

Unreasonable Behaviour in Small Claims Track Cases

In civil proceedings, the successful party is usually awarded their costs against the unsuccessful party. However, this rule does not apply to claims which are allocated to the Small Claims Track (cases where the financial value of the claim is not more than £10,000). The purpose of this “no costs” rule is to discourage the involvement of lawyers in low value claims. However, there is an exception to this rule; the Court may award costs where a party has behaved unreasonably. However, what constitutes unreasonable behaviour? This was the issue that the Court of Appeal had to decide in the case of *Orton v Barclays Bank UK Plc*.

In that case Mr Orton issued proceedings against Barclays Bank seeking damages arising from the alleged mis-selling of payment protection insurance (“PPI”) and for the non-disclosure of commission payments in respect of a credit agreement. The claim was valued at £2,750 plus interest and therefore it was allocated to the Small Claims Track. During the proceedings, the Bank repeatedly invited Mr Orton to discontinue his claim and imposed deadlines for doing so, warning that should he not discontinue then an application to strike out the claim would be made and costs would be sought against him. Twelve days before the trial, and seven days after the deadline set by the Bank, Mr Orton discontinued his claim on the basis that instructing Counsel to represent him at the trial would cost more than the value

of the claim itself if he was successful. The Bank applied for an order for costs against Mr Orton on the grounds that the late discontinuance of the claim amounted to unreasonable behaviour on his part, particularly in light of their earlier warnings to him.

At first instance, the District Judge agreed and found that Mr Orton’s decision to discontinue was taken too late and without any new evidential development prompting the discontinuance it amounted to unreasonable behaviour, and the Bank was awarded costs of £2,132.88. Mr Orton appealed this decision, but his appeal was dismissed by the Circuit Judge.

Mr Orton then appealed to the Court of Appeal where his appeal was allowed. The Appeal Judges were critical of the Bank’s correspondence demanding Mr Orton discontinue his claim and threatening to seek costs orders, given that the Small Claims Track was a costs neutral regime. The Court of Appeal found that the District Judge had been wrong to proceed on the basis that the Bank’s letters constituted offers and Mr Orton’s rejection amounted to unreasonable behaviour. Instead, the Bank’s offers were no more than an invitation for Mr Orton to discontinue rather than an offer of settlement.

The Court held that Mr Orton’s decision to discontinue shortly before trial could not be considered unreasonable behaviour. His claim was arguable but had become economically unviable. The Court observed that a party operating within a costs neutral regime should not be left worse off for deciding to discontinue an arguable claim than if they had proceeded to trial and lost.

This is clearly a policy decision on the part of the Appeal Court Judges as they warned that had the decision below been upheld then well-resourced parties could potentially use repeated demands and threats of costs to make otherwise arguable low value claims commercially unfeasible for litigants and to circumvent the costs regime of the Small Claims Track.

If you are involved in any civil or commercial dispute, then Blacks Solicitors can assist. Please contact Luke Patel on 0113 227 9316 or email him at lpatel@lawblacks.com.”



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Janan secures planning approval for Bradford flagship expansion



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Bradford-based fashion retailer Janan has secured planning permission for a major two-storey extension to its flagship store and headquarters on Shearbridge Road.

The approval follows a revised planning application after Janan's previous proposal was refused in 2025. Since then, the company has worked with its professional team to address the matters raised and provide the additional information and technical detail required by Bradford Council.

Asif Khan, CEO of Janan Group, said: "We are delighted to have secured planning approval. Following the previous decision, we worked closely with our professional team to address all the queries raised and provide the information and technical detail that were key to the Council being able to make this decision."

"This extension is an important investment not only for Janan, but for Bradford. It will allow us to grow our flagship operation, create more jobs and generate further economic activity locally."

"We also want to attract more visitors from across the UK and overseas to Bradford and help strengthen the city as a shopping destination."

"Bradford is our home and has been at the heart of Janan since we started."

"As we continue to grow nationally and internationally, we want that growth to translate into further investment and opportunity here in the city."

The scheme has been led by Bradford-based Morf Architecture, working alongside Empace Civil & Structural Engineers and Consult North on quantity surveying and project management. The team

worked collaboratively with Janan throughout the revised planning process and will continue to support the project as it moves towards delivery.

Ayaz Khan, Principal Architect at Morf Architecture, said: "From the outset, our aim has been to reflect Janan's brand identity through the architecture, with a strong emphasis on elegance, carefully considered façade hierarchy and a distinctive sense of arrival."

"The façade has been conceived as a layered composition, drawing inspiration from fashion, fabric and couture to create depth and a refined visual identity. It is particularly rewarding to be delivering a major investment for an established Bradford business, and we now look forward to progressing the scheme through detailed design and into delivery."

Professor Ummer Daraz, Managing Director of Empace Civil & Structural Engineers and Visiting Professor at the University of Bradford, added: "This is a technically complex project, particularly because the existing store needs to remain operational throughout the development."

"The structural and construction approach has been carefully planned around that requirement, allowing the extension to progress while minimising disruption to the existing business."

"It will also make an interesting engineering case study, and I look forward to sharing aspects of the project with students at the University of Bradford."

Janan will now work with its professional team to progress the development through detailed design and towards construction.



About Janan

Founded in Bradford in 2011, Janan is a British fashion retailer with a growing retail, online and international presence. The company remains headquartered in Bradford, with its Shearbridge Road site serving as its flagship store and operational base.





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...life & style

NEW FIGURES REVEAL CARD FRAUD IS BRITAIN'S BIGGEST IDENTITY THEFT THREAT

BRITAIN'S IDENTITY FRAUD CRISIS

Card fraud accounts for more than one in three cases



■ **ALMOST 88,000**
CARD FRAUD CASES
RECORDED IN 2025

■ **CARD AND BANK
ACCOUNT FRAUD**
MAKE UP MORE
THAN 62% OF CASES

■ **EXPERTS WARN**
DON'T IGNORE
SMALL TRANSACTIONS

■ **CHECK YOUR**
BANK STATEMENTS
AND CREDIT REPORT
REGULARLY

A small card payment you do not recognise, correspondence about a bank account you never opened, an unexpected mobile phone contract or changes to an insurance policy could all signal that somebody is using your identity.

Card fraud has emerged as Britain's biggest identity theft threat, with almost 88,000 cases recorded in a single year - accounting for more than one in three incidents across the UK.

New figures reveal criminals are overwhelmingly targeting the financial accounts Britons rely on every day, with card and bank account fraud together responsible for almost two-thirds of recorded identity fraud.

There were 87,818 cases involving plastic cards in 2025, representing 36.29% of the 242,003 identity fraud cases analysed.

Bank account fraud was the second biggest threat, with 63,678 cases, or 26.31% of the total.

Together, the two categories accounted for more than 62% of all cases, highlighting the scale of the threat facing consumers.

Cyber security experts are now warning people not to dismiss small or unfamiliar payments, as these could be the first indication that personal information has fallen into the hands of criminals.

The research, carried out by cyber security specialists Inflection Point using the latest Cifas data, examined

how stolen identities are being exploited across Britain.

Fraudsters target phones and shopping accounts

Communications fraud was the third biggest category, with 27,659 cases, accounting for 11.43% of the total.

The category can include identity fraud involving mobile phone accounts - particularly concerning as phone numbers are increasingly used to access banking apps, email accounts and security verification systems.

Continued on page 30

NEW FIGURES REVEAL CARD FRAUD IS BRITAIN'S BIGGEST IDENTITY THEFT THREAT

BRITAIN'S IDENTITY FRAUD CRISIS

Card fraud accounts for more than one in three cases

**ALMOST 88,000**
CARD FRAUD CASES
RECORDED IN 2025



Online retail fraud accounted for another 17,794 cases, while insurance-related identity fraud was responsible for 16,461.

A further 14,220 cases involved loans.

Asset finance accounted for 1,236 cases, while mortgage identity fraud was comparatively rare, with just 43 cases recorded.

The warning signs you should not ignore

Experts say identity fraud does not necessarily begin with thousands of pounds suddenly disappearing from a bank account.

A small card payment you do not recognise, correspondence about a bank account you never opened, an unexpected mobile phone contract or changes to an insurance policy could all signal that somebody is using your identity.

Criminals also do not need to physically steal a bank card.

Personal information including a name, address, date of birth, telephone number and financial details can potentially be pieced together and exploited.

Iain Godding, founder of Inflection Point, said: "Card and bank account fraud stand out because between them they make up such a large proportion of the identity fraud being recorded."

He warned that people should not assume they would immediately realise they had become a victim.

"An unfamiliar payment is an obvious warning sign, but identity fraud does not always start with somebody taking a large amount of money," he said.

"Sometimes the first clue can be a small transaction, a letter about an account you never opened, a new phone contract you do not recognise or an unexpected change to an insurance policy."

Consumers are being urged to regularly examine bank and card statements and periodically check their credit reports for accounts or applications they do not recognise.

Godding also warned people to be wary of unexpected calls, emails and text messages requesting personal or financial information.

Rather than clicking a supplied link or calling a number contained in a suspicious message, consumers should contact the bank or organisation independently using contact details they know to be genuine.

"If something looks unfamiliar, even if the amount is small, it is better to investigate it than ignore it," Godding said.

IDENTITY FRAUD

THE NUMBERS AT A GLANCE

242,003
TOTAL IDENTITY FRAUD CASES
RECORDED IN 2025

Card and bank account fraud together account for more than 62% of all cases



RANK	TYPE OF IDENTITY FRAUD	CASES	SHARE
1	 Plastic card	87,818	36.29%
2	 Bank account	63,678	26.31%
3	 Communications	27,659	11.43%
4	 Online retail	17,794	7.35%
5	 Insurance	16,461	6.80%
6	 Loans	14,220	5.88%
7	 Other	13,022	5.38%
8	 Asset finance	1,236	0.51%
9	 Mortgage	43	0.02%
TOTAL		242,003	100%

**87,818**
Plastic card fraud cases
The UK's biggest identity fraud threat

**36.29%**
More than one in three identity fraud cases involved plastic cards

**63,678**
Bank account fraud cases

**62.6%**
Of all cases involved either plastic cards or bank accounts

WATCH OUT FOR:

 Small card payments you don't recognise

 Letters about accounts you never opened

 Unexpected mobile phone contracts

 Unexplained changes to insurance policies

 Credit applications you didn't make

DON'T IGNORE SMALL TRANSACTIONS



They could be the first warning that your personal details have been compromised.



As summer fades and cold and flu season approaches, some of the most ordinary things we do every day could be making it easier for bugs to spread.

From constantly touching your face to sharing a friend's drink, seemingly harmless habits can increase our exposure to viruses and other germs.

Rachel Louise Jones, Pharmacy Superintendent at Superdrug Online Doctor, has highlighted four common behaviours that people may want to rethink as autumn and winter approach.

4 everyday habits that could leave you more vulnerable to winter bugs


1
Touching your face too often

1. Touching your face too often

Most of us touch our faces far more frequently than we realise.

Whether it is scratching an itch, rubbing tired eyes or resting your cheek on your hand, the habit can provide germs with an easy route into the body.

Our hands regularly come into contact with phones, door handles, toilets, shopping trolleys and other frequently touched surfaces.

Viruses picked up from contaminated surfaces can then be transferred to the mucous membranes around the eyes, nose and mouth.

Breaking the habit of frequently touching the face may therefore help reduce exposure. Keeping hand sanitiser nearby can also be useful when soap and water are not readily available.

Continued on page 32



2. Not washing your hands enough

Handwashing should not be reserved for mealtimes.

The NHS advises people to wash their hands after using the toilet, blowing their nose, sneezing or coughing, as well as before eating or preparing food. Hands should also be cleaned after touching animals and before and after treating a cut or wound.

Another important time is immediately after arriving home.

People can pick up germs while at work, school, shopping or travelling on public transport and then transfer them onto surfaces around the house.

Because hygiene habits can become more relaxed at home, those germs may also be passed between family members.

2

Not washing hands regularly

3. Sharing everyday items

Offering someone a sip of your drink may seem harmless, but sharing objects that come into contact with saliva can help viruses spread.

Water bottles, drinking glasses, cutlery and lip balm are among the everyday items that can potentially transfer germs between friends, relatives and colleagues.

Vaping devices can pose a similar issue when they are shared.

Avoiding sharing personal items that regularly touch the mouth can help reduce unnecessary exposure.



3

Sharing everyday items

4. Waiting too long to treat symptoms

Many people simply carry on when the first signs of a cold appear and only reach for treatment when they begin to feel significantly worse.

There is no cure for the common cold, but dealing with symptoms early can make illness more manageable and allow the body to get the rest it needs.

Pharmacists can recommend appropriate treatments for symptoms including a blocked nose, sore throat, aches and fever.

They can also advise when symptoms are unusual, persistent or severe enough to require further medical assessment.

With colder weather approaching and people spending more time indoors, paying attention to these simple everyday habits could help limit the spread of seasonal bugs.



4

Waiting too long to treat symptoms

GLIT

Entertainment

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



The guns are loaded, the Gaddi is up for grabs and some of Mirzapur's most notorious characters are back - this time on the big screen.

The trailer for Mirzapur: The Movie has landed, offering fans their biggest look yet at the cult crime franchise's move from streaming television to cinemas.

Bringing back Pankaj Tripathi as the formidable Kaleen Bhaiya, Divyenndu as fan-favourite Munna Bhaiya and Ali Fazal as Guddu Pandit, the film returns to the brutal battle for power that made Mirzapur one of India's most talked-about streaming shows.

And judging by the trailer, the makers have no intention of toning things down for cinema.

Dark humour, violence, swagger and the franchise's trademark dialogue are all back as old enemies and new contenders enter the fight for the Gaddi.

The story continues from the world established in the first season, but the scale has been dramatically expanded for its theatrical outing.

This time, the action stretches beyond the familiar streets of Purvanchal, with desert landscapes and new locations providing the backdrop for an increasingly fierce struggle for control.

Several familiar faces return alongside a formidable ensemble cast.

The line-up includes Jitendra Kumar, Ravi Kishan, Abhishek Banerjee, Rasika Dugal, Mohitt Maalik, Sheeba Chadha, Rajesh Tailang, Pramod Pathak, Shriya Pilgaonkar, Harshita Shekhar Gaur and Shweta Tripathi.

Sonal S. Chauhan, Anangsha Biswas, Shaji Chaudhary, Satendra Soni, Kulbhushan Kharbada and Sushant Singh also feature in pivotal roles.

For longtime fans, however, the return of Munna Bhaiya is likely to generate some of the biggest excitement.

The character became one of the defining figures of the original series, while Tripathi's quietly menacing Kaleen Bhaiya and Fazal's increasingly ruthless Guddu helped turn the battle for Mirzapur into a streaming phenomenon.

Presented by Amazon MGM Studios and Excel Entertainment, Mirzapur: The Movie is directed by Gurmmeet Singh and written by Puneet Krishna.

Excel Entertainment founders Ritesh Sidhwani and Farhan Akhtar produce the film, with Kassim Jaggama and Vishal Ramchandani serving as co-producers.

The move into cinemas marks a major new chapter for the franchise, taking a story built through streaming into a full-scale theatrical production.

'East Is East'

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

Victoria Brazier



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

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

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

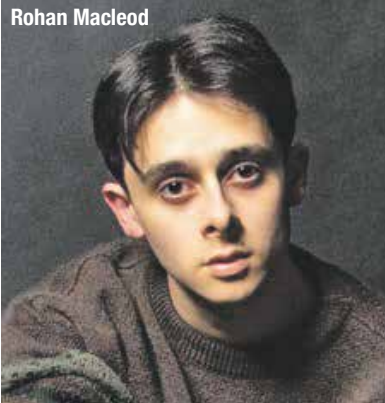
His English wife, Ella, just wants to keep the peace. Their seven children? They're busy discovering disco, denim, and defiance.

When George begins arranging marriages for his sons, rebellion erupts and loyalties are tested. What follows is a hilarious and deeply moving battle between tradition and change.

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

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

Rohan Macleod



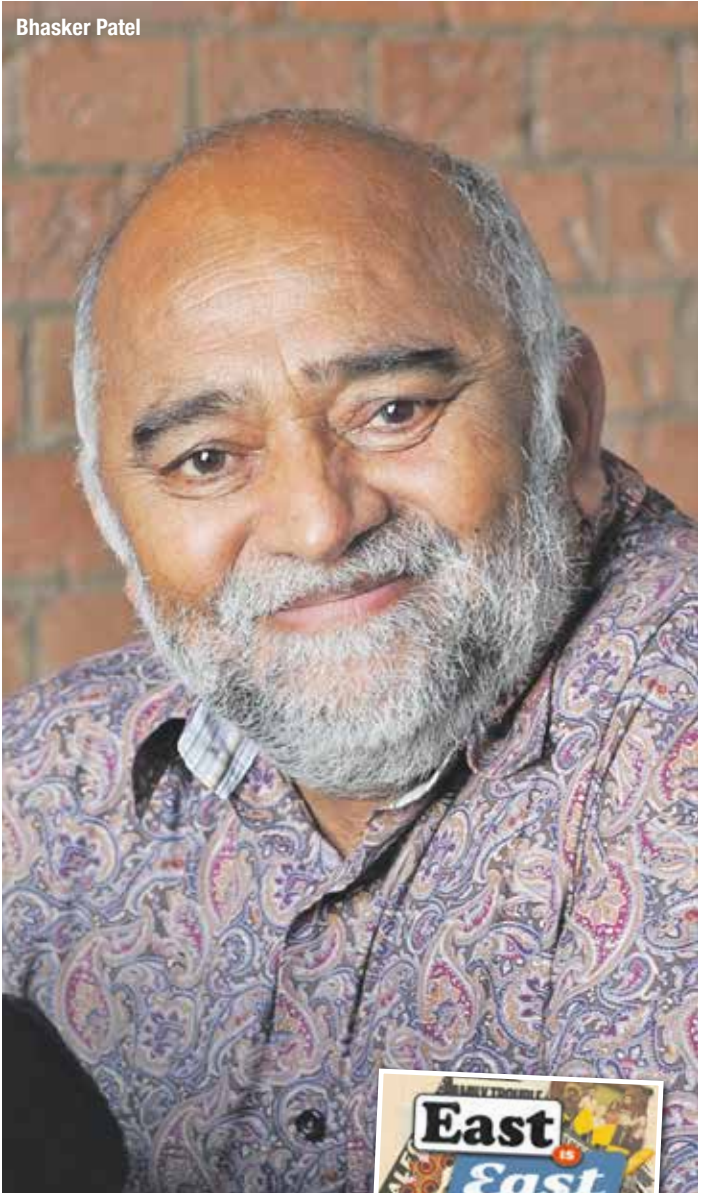
Director Kash Arshad said: "**East Is East** is my story.

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

"To get the opportunity to direct this play at the theatre where I started my directing journey and to be able to share it with audiences in Salisbury, Derby and the Citizens Theatre in Glasgow, my local theatre in my late teens/early twenties and where I first set foot on a professional stage, is a dream."

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

Bhasker Patel



Tickets are selling fast! Book now at

octagonbolton.co.uk/events/east-is-east



Samantha Power



Spreading her wings

Rashmeet Kaur's album releases ahead of UK tour

Punjabi music's genre-bending star drops eight-track album exploring love, longing and freedom - before hitting London, Birmingham, Manchester, Edinburgh and Dublin

Rashmeet Kaur is spreading her wings - and this time, she's flying straight towards the UK. Fresh from a successful North American tour, the Indian singer-songwriter has released 'Parinda', an ambitious new eight-track album that throws Punjabi folk into a melting pot of R&B, jazz, Sufi, rock and experimental sounds. And British fans will not have long to wait to hear it live.

Rashmeet is heading to the UK and Ireland in September for her debut headline tour, with shows lined up in London, Birmingham, Manchester, Edinburgh and Dublin.

Best known for tracks including Nadiyon Paar, Bajre Da Sitta, Thumkeshwari, Jee Karda and Ishq Naachawe, Rashmeet has carved out a sound that refuses to sit neatly in one musical box.

With 'Parinda', she pushes that formula further.

Sung across Punjabi and Hindi, the album takes listeners through the highs, uncertainties

and heartbreaks of love before ultimately landing on freedom and self-love.

The record opens softly with R&B-influenced ballads Jogi Naal and Ve Sajjna, capturing the excitement and vulnerability of new love. From there, Rashmeet moves into flirtation, companionship and uncertainty with Naal Rehja Mere, Banere, Kaise Kahoon and Sahiba.

But the mood shifts dramatically towards the album's finale.

Cinematic dance track Malang turns up the energy before the title song 'Parinda' brings together rock and qawwali influences for a powerful conclusion centred on freedom and finding yourself.

It is an album where romantic love, spirituality and identity deliberately collide.

Drawing inspiration from some of South Asian music and poetry's most celebrated names - including Bulleh Shah, Surinder Kaur, Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan, Noor Jehan and Reshma - Rashmeet leaves the meaning of her songs deliberately open.

A lover can be another person - or yourself. Longing can become devotion. And freedom can mean finally being comfortable with who

you are.

The album arrives during a breakthrough period for the singer.

Earlier this summer, Rashmeet became the first artist to perform in both Hindi and Punjabi on Berlin-based global music platform COLORS, where she debuted album single Ve Sajjna.

The appearance followed a major run across North America, including headline performances at two Canadian festivals and shows across four US cities.

Her increasingly international career has already taken her to stages across Australia, Canada, the UK and United States, with appearances at SummerStage, JUNOSFEST, SXSW and Luminato Festival.

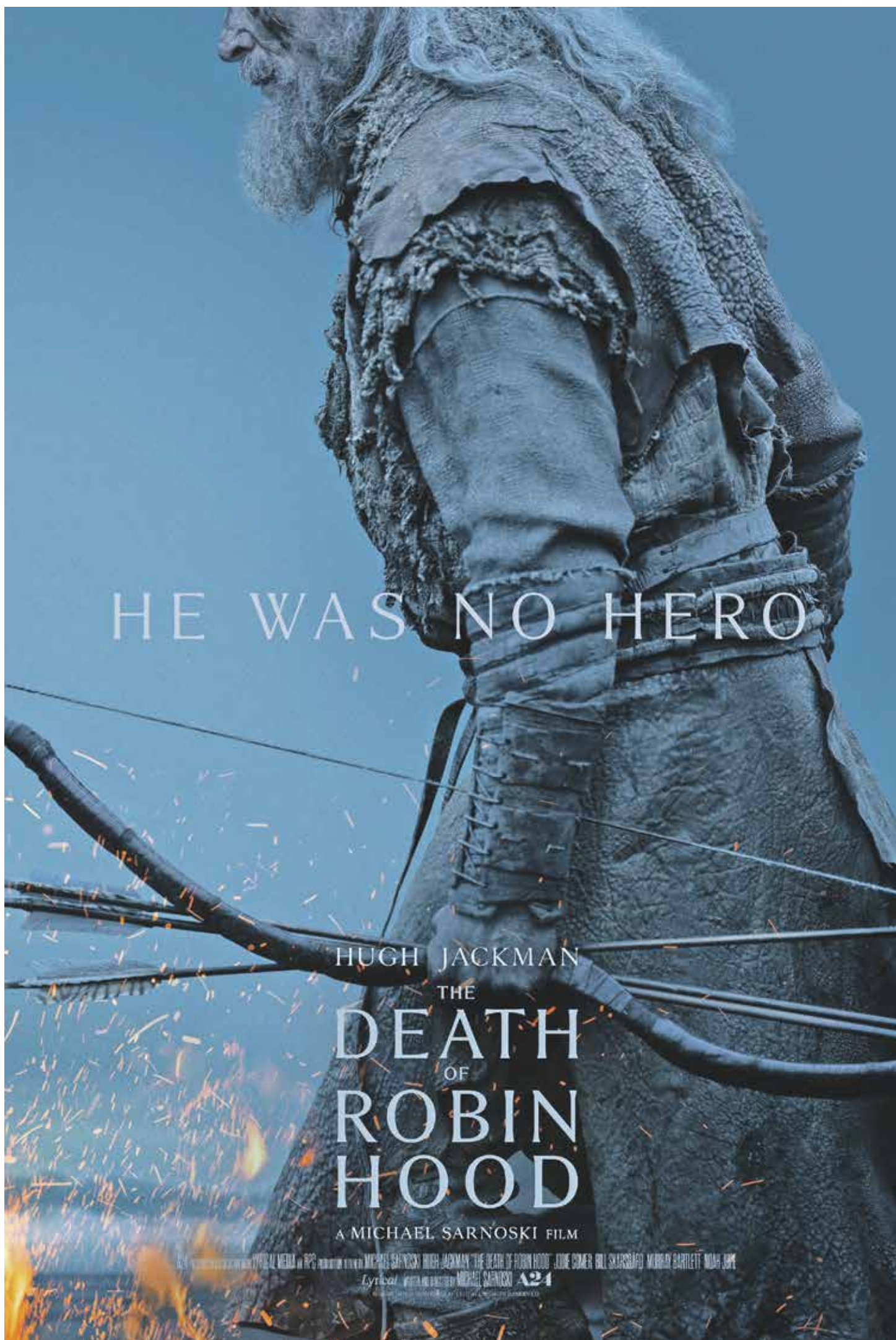
Before returning to Britain, Rashmeet is also playing her first headline shows in India, with Delhi on August 22 followed by Mumbai on August 28. Then comes the UK and Ireland.

With 'Parinda' now out and a catalogue stretching from Bollywood favourites to experimental Punjabi folk, September will see Rashmeet bring her increasingly global sound to audiences in London, Birmingham, Manchester, Edinburgh and Dublin.



WHAT'S ON

in cinemas this month



The Death of Robin Hood

Starring: Hugh Jackman, Bill Skarsgård, Jodie Comer, Murray Bartlett, Noah Jupe

Director: Michael Sarnoski

Genre: Action/Drama

Cert: 15

Release Date: 2/9/2026

Forget the merry men and heroic outlaw – Hugh Jackman's Robin Hood is older, bloodier and haunted by a lifetime of killing.

Robin Hood has been reinvented countless times on screen, but you've probably never seen the legendary outlaw quite like this.

The Death of Robin Hood strips away the swashbuckling heroics for a brutal, grown-up reimagining starring Hugh Jackman as an ageing and battle-scarred Robin forced to confront the bloodshed of his past.

This is no cheerful romp through Sherwood Forest. Robin is now a loner who has spent his life committing crimes and killing in the name of his cause. After being gravely wounded in a battle he believes will be his last, he finds himself facing death – and questioning the man he became.

His fate changes when he falls into the care of the mysterious Sister Brigid, played by Killing Eve star Jodie Comer, who offers the dying outlaw something he may never have expected: the possibility of salvation.

Bill Skarsgård, Murray Bartlett and Noah Jupe complete an impressive supporting cast, with Bartlett playing the mysterious Leper and Jupe appearing as Arthur/Godwyn.

Behind the camera is writer-director Michael Sarnoski, the filmmaker responsible for Nicolas Cage drama Pig and A Quiet Place: Day One. Sarnoski has taken inspiration from the old ballad surrounding the death of Robin Hood rather than simply retelling the familiar adventures of the outlaw and his Merry Men.

The result promises something much darker: part medieval action movie, part character study and part reckoning with the mythology surrounding one of Britain's most famous folk heroes.

Jackman is also among the film's producers, while A24 – the studio behind Everything Everywhere All at Once, Midsommar and Uncut Gems – is distributing the movie.

And don't expect the violence to be hidden away. The UK release carries a 15 certificate for strong bloody violence and injury detail, fitting a film determined to show the physical consequences of Robin's violent life.

Much of the production was filmed in Northern Ireland, giving the movie a bleak, windswept medieval landscape far removed from the colourful Sherwood Forest adventures audiences may associate with the character.

For Jackman, it's another striking change of pace following his return as Wolverine, swapping superhero claws for an older outlaw confronting mortality, guilt and the possibility of redemption.

WHAT'S ON

in cinemas this month



Ice Cream Man

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

Director: Eli Roth **Genre:** Horror

Cert: 18 **Release Date:** 7/8/2026

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

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

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

into total chaos.

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

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

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

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

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

Momo & the Time Thieves

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

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

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

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

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

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

At the heart of the story is Momo, a kind-hearted orphan who lives among the ruins of an ancient

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

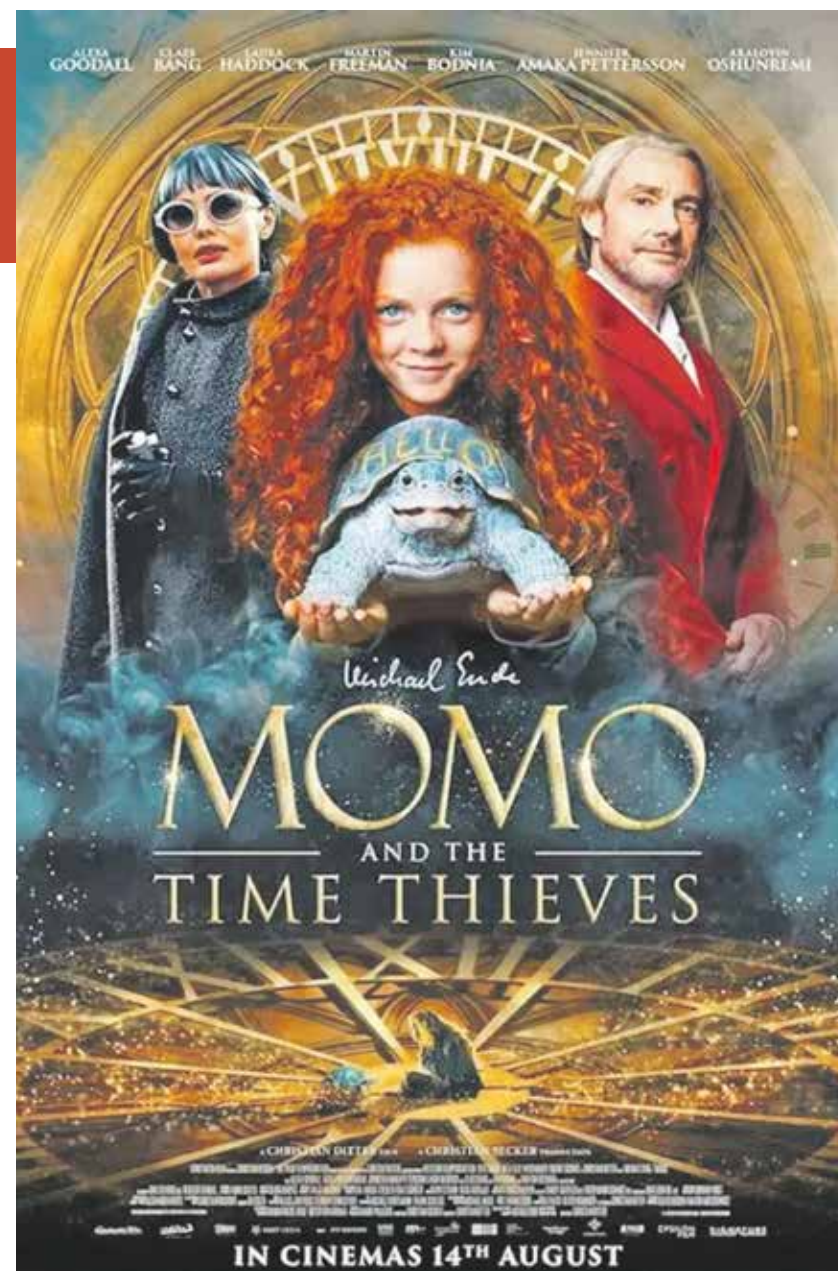
Just as hope seems lost, a mysterious tortoise leads Momo to the enigmatic Master Hora, the Guardian of Time. Together they embark on an unforgettable race against the sinister Time Thieves to reclaim humanity's most precious possession before it's gone forever.

The film stars Maxwell Smith alongside Skylar Blu Copeland, Laura Haddock, Claes Bang, Kim Bodnia and Martin Freeman, whose appearance adds further star power to this visually ambitious

fantasy. Running for 92 minutes, the adventure blends breathtaking world-building with an emotional message about slowing down, valuing relationships and making time for the people who matter most.

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

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



Insidious: Out of the Further

Starring: Amelia Eve, Brandon Perea, Lin Shaye

Director: Jacob Chase

Genre: Horror/Mystery/Thriller

Cert: 18 Release Date: 21/08/2026

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

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

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

Directed by Jacob Chase (*Come Play*), the latest instalment follows Gemma, played by Amelia Eve, a young mother who returns to her childhood home to raise her daughter. But the familiar surroundings soon become the setting for unimaginable terror when she discovers she

possesses an extraordinary ability unlike anything seen before in the *Insidious* universe.

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

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

Joining Amelia Eve is Brandon Perea, while franchise favourite Lin Shaye returns as the iconic paranormal investigator Elise Rainier, whose knowledge of *The*

Further has made her one of modern horror's most beloved characters. Her return is expected to reconnect the new story with the chilling mythology established throughout the previous films.

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

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



The End of Oak Street

Starring: Anne Hathaway, Ewan McGregor, Christian Convery, Maisy Stella

Director: David Robert Mitchell

Genre: Action/Family/Fantasy

Cert: 12A Release Date: 14/8/2026

Forget nightmare neighbours – the residents of Oak Street have much bigger problems when their entire suburban neighbourhood is suddenly ripped from the world they know and dumped somewhere very, very different.

Anne Hathaway and Ewan McGregor lead this big-screen sci-fi adventure as Denise and Greg Platt, parents desperately trying to keep their family together after a mysterious cosmic event transforms their quiet 1980s existence into a fight for survival.

Alongside them are Nashville star Maisy Stella as daughter Audrey and Sweet Tooth actor Christian

Convery as son Brian, as the Platts discover their familiar streets are now surrounded by a dangerous prehistoric world populated by some very unfriendly creatures.

At its heart is a family already dealing with tensions of its own before its world is literally turned upside down. Now the only way home – and perhaps the only way to stay alive – is to stick together.

With dinosaurs on the loose, suburbia in chaos and Hathaway and McGregor heading up the family under siege, *The End of Oak Street* looks set to deliver a hefty dose of old-school blockbuster adventure.

WHAT'S ON

in cinemas this month



Fall 2

Starring: Virginia Gardner, Grace Caroline Currey, Harriet Slater, Arsema Thomas, Tom Brittney
Directors: Michael Spierig, Peter Spierig
Genre: Action/Drama/Thriller
Cert: 12A
Release Date: 9/9/2026

Scared of heights? Look away now – the nerve-shredding survival thriller is back, and this time the drop is 3,000 feet.

If 2022 survival hit *Fall* left your palms sweating, its sequel is preparing to take the fear of heights to another terrifying level.

Fall 2 swaps the original film's isolated 2,000-foot radio tower for a precarious plank high above the landscape of Thailand – and this time there's a 3,000-foot drop waiting underneath.

The story follows Jax, played by *Outlander* and *Belgravia* star Harriet Slater, who is struggling with the death of her sister Hunter.

Searching for a way to deal

with her grief, Jax connects with Hunter's fearless friend Luce, played by Arsema Thomas, best known for *Queen Charlotte: A Bridgerton Story*.

Together, the pair decide to honour Hunter by attempting the infamous plank walk of Mount Kwan in Thailand. What begins as an extreme adventure quickly turns into a nightmare when a sudden rockslide leaves them stranded on a fragile plank thousands of feet in the air.

With seemingly nowhere to go, Jax must overcome her fear, keep her nerve and find a way down before their precarious refuge gives way.

Runner

Starring: Owen Wilson, Alan Ritchson, Adriana Barraza, Rodrigo Santoro, Leila George
Director: Scott Waugh **Genre:** Action/Comedy/Thriller
Cert: 15 **Release Date:** 11/9/2026

Three hours. One life-saving organ. And a ruthless cartel determined to steal it. Alan Ritchson and Owen Wilson are about to have one seriously bad day.

Starring: Alan Ritchson, Owen Wilson, Rodrigo Santoro, Leila George, Adriana Barraza

Reacher star Alan Ritchson swaps military investigations for a frantic race against the clock in *Runner*, a high-speed action thriller that pairs him with an unlikely partner – Owen Wilson.

Ritchson plays Hank Malone, a former soldier who now works as a high-end courier. His latest job should be straightforward: transport a vital organ across the city so it can reach a seven-year-old girl desperately awaiting a transplant.

There's just one rather large problem.

A ruthless criminal organisation wants the organ too – and suddenly Hank's delivery run becomes a deadly manhunt involving gunfire, betrayal and seemingly no shortage of people trying to stop him reaching the hospital.

Making the mission even more complicated is Ben Bishop, played by Owen Wilson, the medical courier Hank is reluctantly forced to transport and protect. The mismatched pair have just three hours to complete their delivery before time runs out for the young patient.

With Ritchson providing the muscle, Wilson supplying the laughs and a life-or-death deadline driving everything forward, *Runner* looks designed as a fast, uncomplicated blast of action-comedy.



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£6M LaFerrari leads hypercar invasion in Zürich

Barely driven McLaren Senna, ultra-rare Ferrari and Lamborghini Superleggera headline a spectacular line-up of performance icons heading under the hammer

Some of the world's most desirable supercars are heading to Zürich – including a Ferrari LaFerrari valued at up to CHF 7.5 million and showing just 92km on the clock.

Broad Arrow Auctions is assembling an extraordinary collection of modern performance machinery for its second annual Zürich Auction, taking place at the historic Dolder Grand on 7 November.

Around 60 collector cars are expected to cross the block, but three headline machines already promise to make this one of the most exciting

European supercar sales of the year: a Ferrari LaFerrari, McLaren Senna and Lamborghini Gallardo LP570-4 Superleggera.

And the star attraction comes with an added twist – the LaFerrari is being offered without reserve.

The 2015 Ferrari, estimated at CHF 5.5million to CHF 7.5million, represents one of

Maranello's greatest technological leaps.

Unveiled in 2013, LaFerrari became the manufacturer's first hybrid hypercar, pairing a ferocious 6.3-litre naturally aspirated V12 with HY-KERS electric technology derived from Formula One.

Continued on page 41

**“ LIVING
THE DREAM,
DRIVING
THE DREAM ”**

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

Audi Q7 SUV pricing (OTR)

Audi Q7 SUV S line: £81,665

Audi Q7 SUV Edition: 1 £88,965

Audi Q7 SUV Vorsprung: £101,665



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Stepping up to Edition 1 adds a noticeably more aggressive look thanks to 22-inch Audi Sport alloy wheels, black exterior styling and red brake calipers, while the interior gains Fine Nappa leather, illuminated sport seats and heated, ventilated and massage front seats. Even passengers in the second and third rows are treated to heated seats, underlining the Q7's focus on family comfort.

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

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

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

Blackbird lands

Hennessey builds the 220mph manual hypercar we've been crying out for

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

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

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

Named after the legendary Lockheed SR-71 Blackbird spy plane, Hennessey's latest creation is designed to stir the soul rather than chase lap records. Sure, it'll still hit 60mph in a claimed 2.5 seconds and storm on to 220mph, but the numbers almost feel secondary here.

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

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

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

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

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

The exterior is every bit as dramatic.

The long, low silhouette borrows heavily from

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

Unlike many hypercars, though, the Blackbird isn't just meant for posing outside five-star hotels.

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

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

Production will be incredibly exclusive.

Just 71 examples will be built worldwide, each carrying a starting price of \$2.5 million before taxes. Despite customer deliveries not being scheduled until 2029, Hennessey says more than two-thirds of the production run has already been spoken for ahead of its public debut at The Quail in California.

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

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

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

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



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



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

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

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

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

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

Despite the performance, BYD claims the Ti 7 can travel up to 74 miles using electric power alone, thanks to its 35.6kWh Blade Battery. The petrol engine mainly works as a generator, adding flexibility for longer journeys.

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

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

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

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

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

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

Continued on page 39

This particular car is finished in rare Bianco Fuji with a Bianchi/Neri leather interior and Giallo Modena yellow brake callipers.

More remarkable still is its mileage: just 92km at the time it was catalogued.

Its high-voltage battery was replaced by official Ferrari dealer Rossocorsa in Milan following an inspection, as part of extensive servicing carrying a total invoice of more than €200,000.

Senna: 800hp and just 131km

Sharing the spotlight is a car carrying one of motorsport's most famous names.

The 2019 McLaren Senna was created as an uncompromising celebration of three-time

Formula One world champion Ayrton Senna and McLaren's pursuit of extreme performance.

Finished in dramatic Volcano Orange, its 4.0-litre twin-turbocharged V8 produces 800hp and 800Nm of torque, launching the car from 0-100km/h in just 2.8 seconds before reaching a top speed of 340km/h.

Only 500 were hand-built.

The Zürich car is number 181 and has travelled just 131km from new. It also carries more than CHF 40,000 of options and is estimated at CHF 1.1million to CHF 1.4million.

Weighing only 1,198kg, the Senna was McLaren's lightest road car since the legendary F1. Its extraordinary aerodynamics

can generate as much as 800kg of downforce at 250km/h.

Paul Gaucher, Head of Consignments, Switzerland at Broad Arrow Auctions, said: "The LaFerrari is one of the hottest collectables in today's market, and the Senna is a car that pushed the boundaries of performance as part of McLaren's Ultimate Series and which carries the spirit of one of the greatest Formula One drivers of all time, Ayrton Senna."

Lamborghini joins the party

Completing the headline trio is a bright yellow 2011 Lamborghini Gallardo LP570-4 Superleggera, estimated at CHF 135,000 to CHF 155,000.

Powered by Lamborghini's 5.2-litre V10, the

lightweight, more track-focused Superleggera took the hugely successful Gallardo formula and turned up the aggression.

The Swiss-delivered example is finished in Giallo Midas over Nero Alcantara with contrasting yellow stitching. It has had only three owners and comes with a fully stamped service history.

Karsten Le Blanc, SVP, Head of EMEA Region and Broad Arrow Capital, said: "These cars are true performance icons and we are very excited to present them to international buyers at our upcoming Zürich Auction."

The Broad Arrow Zürich Auction takes place on 7 November 2026 at The Dolder Grand, overlooking Lake Zürich, in partnership with Auto Zürich.



£6M LaFerrari leads hypercar invasion in Zürich

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EVEREST KING GOES FOR 33

Climbing legend Kami Rita Sherpa to take on world's highest mountain again in 2027 as he bids to smash his own extraordinary record

Mount Everest legend Kami Rita Sherpa is preparing to make history all over again – by attempting an astonishing 33rd successful ascent of the world's highest mountain.

The Nepalese mountaineering great is set to return to Everest in spring 2027, when he will try to extend his own world record and further cement his status as one of the greatest high-altitude climbers of all time.

Kami Rita, who is Head Guide in Nepal for True Summit Adventures, has spent much of his life on the Himalayan giants and has become synonymous with Everest.

His latest challenge will see him once again tackle the 8,849-metre peak, where extreme cold, unpredictable weather, avalanches and the effects of high altitude make every expedition potentially deadly.

But this time, a limited number of adventure travellers will be able to join him for part of the journey.

True Summit Adventures has announced plans for guests to trek to Everest Base Camp alongside Kami Rita as preparations build for his latest record attempt.

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Asian Express

SPORT

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



EVEREST KING GOES FOR 33

Climbing legend Kami Rita Sherpa to take on world's highest mountain again in 2027 as he bids to smash his own extraordinary record

Continued from page 45

They will not accompany him to the summit, but will experience the Everest region with one of its most celebrated climbers and be at Base Camp during the build-up to the attempt.

For those taking part, the expedition promises a rare glimpse into the world behind one of sport and adventure's most remarkable records.

Kami Rita's career has been built in an environment where experience can be the difference between life and death.

The trek will explore Sherpa culture and life in the Himalayas, while giving guests the chance to hear first-hand about climbing Everest, managing risk and the physical and mental resilience needed to repeatedly operate at extreme altitude.

The expedition forms part of True Summit Adventures' expanding "Icon-Led Adventures" programme, which pairs travellers with leading figures from mountaineering, sport, conservation, photography and culture.

Founder Oliver Browne said the idea was to take adventure travel beyond luxury accommodation and logistics by giving guests access to people who have spent their lives

mastering their disciplines.

"If you are heli-skiing in Antarctica from a superyacht, we want to make sure you're doing it alongside two living legends from the worlds of skiing and adventure," he said.

Adventure's biggest names

Kami Rita is joined in the company's line-up by some formidable names from the climbing world.

They include elite German alpinist David Goettler and American mountaineer Ed Viesturs, who became the first American to climb all 14 of the world's 8,000-metre peaks without supplemental oxygen.

Mountain endurance athlete Karl Egloff, renowned for his speed records at altitude, is also part of the collection.

True Summit Adventures says it now plans to expand the concept beyond mountaineering, with collaborations involving internationally recognised names from golf, skiing, ocean exploration, photography, conservation and culture expected to be announced.

For Kami Rita, however, attention will increasingly turn towards one mountain.

Come spring 2027, the Everest veteran will once again head towards the summit – with a 33rd successful ascent and another place in mountaineering history in his sights.

ONE IN THREE YOGA TEACHERS MAY BE UNINSURED

New concerns over insurance gap as instructors are warned injury claims and legal costs could run into tens of thousands of pounds



Thousands of yoga teachers could be putting themselves at financial risk by teaching without dedicated insurance, according to a new survey.

Research cited by the British Wheel of Yoga (BWY) suggests around one in three UK yoga teachers may not have their own insurance cover for their teaching practice.

The organisation is now urging instructors to check their policies amid warnings that an accident during a class could potentially leave an uninsured teacher facing compensation claims and legal costs running into tens of thousands of pounds.

While the survey by Insure4Sport involved a relatively small sample, BWY says the findings highlight an important issue for people earning money from teaching yoga.

Claims can arise from students suffering injuries during classes, slips and falls, or allegations that an instructor has been negligent.

Without suitable insurance, a teacher could be personally responsible for compensation and associated legal costs.

Insurance may not be compulsory – but venues want it

Dedicated insurance is not generally a legal requirement for yoga teachers in the UK.

However, studios, councils, landlords and event organisers may require instructors to show proof of cover before allowing them to teach on their premises.

Two of the key forms of protection are public liability insurance, which can cover claims involving injury or property damage, and professional indemnity insurance, which can offer protection against claims linked to professional advice or instruction.

BWY is also highlighting the importance of first aid training.

The organisation says insurance policies may impose conditions relating to first aid provision, meaning teachers should understand exactly what their individual policy requires.

Having an up-to-date First Aid certificate can also form an important part of good risk management when running classes.

Teachers urged to check the small print

The British Wheel of Yoga is encouraging instructors to check that their insurance remains valid and provides suitable protection for the type of teaching they actually do.

It is also promoting its Associate Teaching Membership for instructors with more than 300 hours of training through a reputable school.

Priced at £108 a year, membership includes teaching insurance covering public liability and professional indemnity, alongside continuing professional development resources, guidance, templates and teaching support.

The warning applies not only to established instructors, but also people returning to yoga teaching or preparing to run their first classes.

Teachers are being advised to check what their existing policy covers, whether their qualifications and first aid arrangements meet its conditions, and whether additional activities they offer are included before stepping in front of their next class.



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

Asian Express

SPORT

Continued from page 48

She called the campaign an “absolute affront” to Palestinians who have lost loved ones and limbs.

Oscar-winning actor Javier Bardem also backed calls to boycott Adidas, sharing material attacking the company’s decision.

Pakistani author Fatima Bhutto said she would never buy Adidas again and accused the company of supporting genocide.

Palestinian-American writer Susan Abulhawa also condemned the campaign, highlighting the plight of Palestinian children who have lost limbs.

Perhaps the most powerful response has come from Gaza.

Omar Haliwa, 14, lost a leg in an Israeli strike and is still waiting for a prosthetic limb. After seeing the Adidas campaign, he questioned why the company had chosen an Israeli soldier for the promotion.

“It is painful for us to see a soldier with a prosthetic limb while we are still searching for one,” he said.

The teenager’s words expose the grim contrast at the centre of the row.

Adidas is promoting a service designed to help amputees. Yet thousands of Palestinians face life-changing injuries while access to prosthetics and rehabilitation in Gaza remains severely limited.

WHO IS SHALEV BITON?

One fact is important - Biton did not lose his leg during the Gaza war that followed 7 October 2023. He was serving with the IDF’s Nahal Brigade in May 2021.

On 12 May 2021, an anti-tank missile fired from Gaza struck his military vehicle on the Israeli side of the border.

Biton was seriously wounded and fellow soldier Staff Sgt Omer Tabib was killed.

Biton’s left leg was later amputated. He went on to return to running with a prosthetic limb.

ADIDAS APOLOGISES

As the backlash spread, Adidas moved to contain the damage.

The company described the Israeli campaign as a “local activation by the local team” and said: “It was never our intent to cause offence and we apologise for anyone affected.”

Adidas said it would “listen, learn” and ensure its actions reflected its values.

The company insists the ‘Single Shoe’ scheme is about accessibility, not politics.

The service launched across 23 European countries in January and is being expanded into the Middle East, including Palestine.

The row also revives questions about Adidas’s handling of Israel and Palestine.

In 2024, Palestinian-American supermodel Bella Hadid was removed from an Adidas SL72 campaign after criticism over her involvement.

The trainers were first released for the 1972 Munich Olympics, where 11 Israeli athletes and coaches were killed by the Palestinian militant group Black September.

Hadid had no connection to the attack but is a vocal supporter of Palestinian rights. Adidas later apologised.

Two years later, critics are asking why a Palestinian-American model became too politically sensitive for an Adidas campaign, while a former IDF soldier was considered suitable for an amputee promotion.

ADIDAS SHAMED OVER EX-IDF SOLDIER AMPUTEE CAMPAIGN

Sports giant apologises after backlash over Israeli advert - as more than 5,000 Palestinians in Gaza live with traumatic amputations

FOOTBALL FEVER INSPIRING KIDS TO GET ACTIVE

England’s World Cup this summer did more more than grip the nation.

New research suggests football’s biggest stars are inspiring children to get off the sofa, head outdoors and move.

Football fever swept through Britain, and parents say some of the game’s biggest names are helping inspire a new generation to become more active.

New research commissioned by the Youth Sport Trust found footballers dominate the sporting role models parents believe encourage children to exercise, play and develop healthy habits.

Former England captain David Beckham topped the list of inspiring British male athletes, followed by Marcus Rashford, four-time Olympic champion Sir Mo Farah, England skipper Harry Kane and former heavyweight boxing world champion Anthony Joshua.

Among female sporting stars, England Lioness Chloe Kelly came out on top, ahead of Leah Williamson, Olympic champion Jessica Ennis-Hill, middle-distance star Keely Hodgkinson and Lioness Lucy Bronze.

Current England stars Bukayo Saka, Jude Bellingham and Declan Rice were also among those named by parents.

The findings come during a huge summer of sport and highlight the influence elite athletes have beyond packed stadiums and television screens.

From youngsters recreating goals in playgrounds to families watching major tournaments together, the Youth Sport Trust says sporting success can spark children to get moving.

The survey was carried out ahead of National School Sports Week, which aims to encourage more young people to experience sport, PE and play.

Youth Sport Trust CEO Ali Oliver MBE said England’s World Cup campaign had again demonstrated sport’s extraordinary ability to capture imaginations.

“When children see players like Harry Kane and Jude Bellingham performing on the biggest stage or hear parents and friends talking about the tournament, it can spark a powerful sense of possibility,” she said.

“But the power of sport is not only found in stadiums.”

She said schools taking part in National School Sports Week showed how children can “connect through play, develop skills, build confidence and experience the togetherness that comes from moving with others”.

More than 2,600 schools took part in this year’s campaign, encouraging youngsters to meet the UK Chief Medical Officers’ recommendation that children and young people average at least 60 minutes of physical activity a day.

“Sport has given me so much” - Sir Mo Farah

Sir Mo Farah, who was named the third most inspiring British male athlete in the survey, said being recognised by parents meant a great deal.

“Sport has given me so much throughout my life, including the belief that you can achieve more than you think,” he said.

Farah, who has spoken about his love of football, added that major sporting moments can have an impact beyond the result.

“I have always loved football too, and moments like England’s World



Cup run show how powerful sport can be in bringing people together.”

Schools across the country have also welcomed visits from athletes and para-athletes, giving pupils the chance to hear first-hand how sport can build confidence, resilience and ambition.

With football, cricket, tennis

and the Commonwealth Games all providing major sporting moments this summer, the Youth Sport Trust says the opportunity is there to turn sporting excitement into something lasting — getting more children playing, moving and enjoying sport.

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ADIDAS SHAMED OVER EX-IDF SOLDIER AMPUTEE CAMPAIGN

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Sports giant apologises after backlash over Israeli advert - as more than 5,000 Palestinians in Gaza live with traumatic amputations

Adidas has apologised after its decision to feature a former Israeli soldier in an advertising campaign for amputees sparked global anger and boycott calls.

Former Israel Defence Forces (IDF) soldier Shalev Biton appeared in an Israeli promotion for Adidas's "Single Shoe" service.

The scheme lets amputees and people with limb differences buy one shoe for half the price of a pair.

But critics say Adidas made a shocking error of judgement by

featuring a former IDF soldier while thousands of Palestinians in Gaza are living with limb loss.

World Health Organization figures show more than 5,000 traumatic amputations in Gaza since October 2023. There have also been more than 22,000 major limb injuries.

Biton was one of 11 disabled athletes featured on posters displayed in Adidas stores across Israel. The posters were part of a local Israeli promotion, not the company's global campaign.

The anger is focused on Adidas's decision to use a former IDF soldier in an amputee campaign at this moment in the conflict.

'AN ABSOLUTE AFFRONT'

The campaign has drawn fierce criticism.

Stephanie Westbrook, a sports boycott campaigner with the Palestinian Campaign for the Academic and Cultural Boycott of Israel, said it went far beyond poor taste.

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