



What Propaganda's  
Closure Says About Night-  
life Today

Page 3



Concrete Investigates  
UEA's Plan to Meet  
Net Zero

Page 16



Style and Sustainability: The  
Realities of Fast Fashion

VENUE Page 20



# RECLAIM THE NIGHT RETURNS

**Milla Cartwright**  
Deputy News Editor

On March 8th, Liv Hunt and Alicia Khuttan led the Reclaim the Night March, taking to the streets to stress the importance of women's safety in public spaces.

Liv, the Activities and Opportunities Officer, explained how within cheer-leading she organised many team socials and she realised how widespread street harassment and safety concerns were: "There's an issue of safety on campus, on and off campus actually, and not just at night, but even during the day," she said.

The SU's survey regarding night safety showed that one-third of respondents had been harassed on campus. Meanwhile, two-thirds of respondents had experienced harassment in the city.

Liv joined forces with Alicia, the Women's Officer, to bring awareness by organising Reclaim the Night. Alicia shared: "Knowing that

I have a position of influence, means that I have the opportunity to do something about this."

Reclaim the Night was first held in 1977, after women were instructed by police to stay in after dark, following attacks from the Yorkshire Ripper. It has since been held throughout the UK to advocate for societal change in terms of public safety and violence against women.

The UEA(SU) held its first Reclaim the Night March in 2016, though there hadn't been one held since 2019.

The main hope for bringing it back was to start a conversation about harassment and safety. "We also hope that it will help with reassuring people: people care, this is not going unnoticed, and we actually follow through with what we say," said Alicia. One message within the movement concerned holding behaviours accountable. Liv highlighted

Men's Football for demonstrating that it was possible to fix a "difficult culture" through open discussions and bystander training. "Football gets banned [from the LCR] every year and all it took was, what, ten people to say 'no' and the whole thing has changed."

At seven o'clock, the March started with a gathering outside the Forum and opening speech which is read aloud at every Reclaim the Night event. During this came the first wave of disruption in the form of a group of teenage boys.

A six-foot Reclaim the Night banner led the way, followed by drumming band XR Drummers who set the beat throughout the entire March. The crowd was a mix of women and men, with over 70 people in attendance, with 100 at its highest point. The March remained passionate and upbeat despite its message, waving around glow sticks and holding up signs calling for women's safety at night.

Along the March several bystanders joined the route to show their support, one older woman shared: "These marches have been going on for a long time and we need them to keep going because things have just gotten so bad." There were many women out drinking who cheered on the March with their whooping and clapping, including a particularly passionate hen-do decked out in pink.

Several negative disruptions throughout the March were instigated by teenage boys and men, highlighting the importance of the March's message. One attendee commented: "It really shows you which areas in town to avoid at night."

The areas where more street harassment was experienced were: Norwich Market, Red Lion Street (by The Bell Hotel), Wensum Street (by Glass House), St Andrew's Street and Prince of Wales Road.

The March ended outside City Hall where the crowd gathered around for some final speeches and cheers, which were performed by those who felt impassioned by the movement. During which, a group of motorcyclists deliberately disrupted the speech-

**"There's an issue of safety on campus [...]and not just at night but even during the day"**

es with repeated races and engine-revving next to the event. The crowd remained focused on the speeches which highlighted attendees' frustration regarding such antisocial behaviours.

Having successfully organised this event and seen its effect, they hope to repeat it next year as well.

## What to Expect from your 2025/2026 Full-Time Officers...



**Olivia Hunt**  
Activities and  
Opportunities  
Officer



**Amjad Daher**  
Communities  
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**Bhaskar Shrivanna**  
Postgraduate  
Officer



**Turaiya Lemard**  
Undergraduate  
Officer

Continued on page 21...

# Editorial



Meanwhile in the Concrete Office...

## Is it April Yet?

I know that everyone's been saying it, but I'm glad for the sun. It's felt like a very long and dark sort of winter, the type that encourages you to forget the Spring and all that it brings. But I'm happy to have been reminded again (and I'm proud of UEA's resolve to sit on steps in the square even if the sunlight is only fleeting).

It is with this dogged optimism that I keep pointing out the lake to my friends. They're probably a little tired of hearing my theory that if we just get past March then we can sit on the bank and have wine and snacks (and somehow because of this, everything will be perfect). I think you could say that I've fallen into the trap of wishing time away. But there are lots of things in March that are worth being grateful for. The crocuses on the way to uni, the fact that more and more people seem to understand that lemon

and brown sugar is the best way to eat pancakes on Pancake Day and, of course, my half birthday. However, more significant than any of these is my gratitude this month towards Sofia Royal and Emily (Milli) Pitt-Shaw. This month Sofia has very kindly taken on the role of Co-Editor-In-Chief. I know how demanding being an EiC is and so I'm incredibly impressed at how naturally and calmly she's taken to it! Milli has also been an absolute lifesaver, with her taking up the position of Senior Current Affairs Editor- her enthusiasm and ability to multitask are pretty inspiring.

As ever, I'm grateful also to the whole team at Concrete. Looking over the paper this month, I'm taken aback by their hard work and dedication. You might notice that there's a bit of an environmental/wildlife theme going on and, although this wasn't intentional,

it's lined up remarkably well with Climate Week, running from the 17th-21st of March. Brought to the UEA by Youth Climate Solutions (a social enterprise run by one of our environmental correspondents Jaz Brook), the week is jam-packed with lots of interesting and important events. I really strongly encourage you to head to the SU website in order to get involved!

Despite my resolution to enjoy the rest of March, I am going to allow myself to be a little excited for April! A few weeks ago Concrete was shortlisted for three national awards by the Student Publication Association. With the conference and awards ceremony taking place in Exeter this year, quite a few of us from Concrete will be making the journey down to the city to hear the results! I have so many lovely memories from the conference at Bristol last year and so I can't wait

to make more with this year's team!

And with that, I would like to leave you with both a 'Happy March' and a short passage of my all-time favourite book and one that I've always found to be deeply attached to the start of Spring and the longing for times ahead.

*"There's quite a bit of softness in it, isn't there?" I said. "I shall think of this as spring rain – or am I cheating? You know I always try to begin the spring too soon."*  
*He leaned out and took a deep sniff. "It's beginning all right, Miss Cassandra," he said.*  
*"Maybe we'll get some setbacks but it's beginning."*

- Dodie Smith, *I Capture the Castle*

**Fiona Hill (she/her)**  
**Co-Editor-In-Chief**

## A Spring In Your Step...

About a month ago, Fiona and Jamie sat me down for a meeting. I didn't know what to expect- but as always- my mind turned to the worst possible scenario. I was surprised and even more flattered when I was asked to come in as a Co-Editor-in-Chief for this issue of Concrete. Having given two years of my life to this paper, it has been an honour to work with the entire team on a closer level. From reading through the incredible articles that have been produced, to seeing each Editor's visions come life to their lay-up's, it's truly a wonderful sight to see how com-

mitted our team is to this paper. March celebrates Women's History Month, and I can safely say that this month has been one for the history books. We've took on our own bit of "Girl Power" and working alongside Fiona and Milli (Emily) has been such a great experience. I'm sure they would agree in the fact that we're so proud of the work that has been achieved for this issue.

It's been a busy month, but especially a busy week. When I made a list of all the things I needed to get done for this issue, I immediately felt a pit in my stomach. What's got

me through this week? The weather. I came to the realisation over the weekend that, like many, I'd been suffering from a spell of 'seasonal depression'. But as the sun has started to make its spring appearance and the days are getting longer, I've found myself in a second wind. I find it crazy how much the weather can impact one's emotions, but I'm thankful- more than ever- that the sun decided to shine on a stressful week. It has been the calm in a Concrete storm and a huge motivator.

As I'm writing this, our editing week nearly done. Once again, the sun is shining and my time as Co-Editor-

in-Chief is gradually coming to an end. As with every issue, there are highs and lows, but the highs have most definitely outweighed the lows this month. It's been an absolute pleasure, and I've loved every moment. What was the best part? I would say the ending. Knowing that within the next few days we'll get to see the results of all our work and finally get to enjoy some of this gorgeous sunshine.

**Sofia Royal (she/her)**  
**Co-Editor-In-Chief**

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# Learning to be Nice, One Challenge at a Time

This month, amongst new challenges, lessons and responsibilities, I've been thinking a lot about what it means to be nice.

We all know the famous phrase, "in a world where you can be anything, be nice", but I think I've come to hate it.

I wasn't sure why for a long time - it's one of those things that you always hear parents telling their children; or see on in cursive with a sunset background on Pinterest.

But I think I've realised that it's what it implies. It suggests that kindness is an exclusivity - an either or to other feelings. I don't think it should be. For the past four weeks, I've

worked alongside Fiona and Sofia under what I'm sure we can all agree have been some of the most challenging circumstances a student newspaper could undergo. As a team of three women - which, may I add, has been a privilege to be a part of during International Women's Month - we've risen above any injustices we've faced.

And that's exactly why we must be everything, and nice.

Through moments of anger, we offer each other coffee and treats. During disagreements, we pause to check in how one another are feeling. When we are at our worst, we still make sure each other can be at their best.

We have not just survived, but blossomed as a trio by allowing ourselves to feel so deeply while still considering the feelings of those around us.

So, if there's one thing I can feed forward to those of you that will read this editorial, it's this:

In a world where you can be anything, be, anything. Even in pain, you can still choose kindness.

**Emily Pitt-Shaw (she/her)**  
**Senior Current Affairs Editor**



## News

### Nine Students Investigated by the Students Union

**Emily Pitt-Shaw**  
Senior Current Affairs Editor

The SU has concluded investigations into nine students following alleged breaches of the union's code of conduct.

The individuals, who we have not named due to welfare concerns, were investigated after evidence was received by Concrete that showed behaviour that broke SU policy.

In a statement, the Chair of Board, Yinbo Yu

said: "Whilst we cannot comment on any confidential student matters, as a Board our main priority and focus is to ensure the SU continues to operate for its members from a strategic perspective."

Five of the students are reported to have been removed from any society positions with immediate effect, three of whom are also alleged to have received indefinite suspensions from the Students' Union.

The remaining four were handed four-week

suspensions from Student Union run activities and events alongside a formal warning.

The students, aged between 18 and 22, were individually investigated in February.

Jumara Stone, Chief Executive Officer of the Students' Union, said: "I want to take this time to say that I am grateful to all the students who have shared with us their insights, thoughts and ideas on how we can continue to improve the organisation. We have a wonderful student community here

at the University of East Anglia who continue to make this SU a brilliant place to be a part of; who are kind, respectful of others, and ambitious. It's everything UEA and the SU want to see thrive, and it is a great privilege to be able to see our students be such inspirational role models for others."

Any further updates will follow online as more details emerge.

### What Propaganda's Closure Says about Nightlife Today

**Josephine North**

Propaganda will come to an end this month marking the closure of a significant chapter in Norwich's club scene. For the past 14 years, this event has been a staple for students and indie music lovers alike. Its closure reflects shifting trends in student culture and the decline of nightlife.

There had been a noticeable decline in attendance at the event, with a significant decrease in the last year. While the Adrian Flux Waterfront has a capacity of 1000, Propaganda has struggled to break 300 attendees a night in recent months.

One member of the bar staff

recalls their first shift working propaganda: "The dance floors were packed, there was so much energy in the room. Back then, the nights were busy. Fast forward to today...the contrast is striking."

UEA SU Assistant Operations Duty Manager Elise Gedge notes a shift in student attitudes to clubbing that started with the COVID-19 lockdowns back in 2020.

"Whether that will change in a couple of years... who knows?"

She explains that "with the cost of living, people are saving up to go to that one event, every two months now, rather than every week... it's a lot to ask of people to spend £50 quid on a night out."

In their 2024 report, the Night-

time Industries Association found due to the cost-of-living crises, current trends in UK nightlife are shifting. Younger people's habits have changed.

Nightclubs, as some of the last venues to reopen, left young people unfamiliar with traditional clubbing. This allowed for alternative events, such as online club streaming and house parties to grow in popularity.

Lando Simao has been a Propaganda representative since 2022. He reflected on hearing the news from his manager.

"It was very upsetting since the job market in Norwich is quite scarce. But mainly sad, because props had so much history."

Propaganda's closure represents

not only the end of something that had been a weekly ritual for many over the last 14 years, but a wider concern about job security for those who work in the industry.

One UEA Student Regina Stabulniece noted their experiences with Propaganda, "It's a sad thing, but

it's probably a good time to leave. The last night was a great send-off." For those who were part of it, whether on the dance floor or behind the scenes, it truly is the end of an era.

Image credit: Unsplash



# International Students' Visas at Risk to New Limitations

**Milla Cartwright**  
Deputy News Editor

Graduate visas could be at risk of changes that would limit employment opportunities for international students. These alleged changes will be announced in the government's upcoming white paper.

The graduate visa enables international students to remain in the UK for employment after having completed their university degree. It is valid for up to two years, or three years if their achieved qualification is a PhD or other doctoral degree. During this time visa-holders may work within the UK without the requirement of having a sponsor.

A source told The Times that the government is considering implementing a graduate salary threshold for visa-holders. Brian Bell, the chairman of the Migration Advisory Committee (MAC), has suggested that the graduate salary level could be defined as between £36,000 and £40,000 a year. However a government source has since stated that the threshold would not be set as high as that. According to a report by MAC, the current Graduate Visa scheme would need to be amended to push students who "may be working at a level below their experience and training."

One student who recently went through the application process who wishes to remain anonymous shared their experience on the matter having been successful. They explained that the process was difficult with

endless "lingo and links." However, they saw the programme as a great way for students to stay in the country and "enjoy life, maybe even carve out a spot for yourself." The work scheme enables people to work, requiring them to pay tax and towards healthcare, however without accessing benefits: "so we aren't getting anything in return financially."

Their advice for students looking to apply for a Graduate Visa was: "Read carefully through the government website for information about the application and trust what you're reading. It's important to take it exactly how you're reading it and to not overthink it." They also encouraged students to start saving for it as it is a "costly experience," comprised of an application fee of £822 and an annual follow-up fee of £1,035 as medical surcharge expenses.

In 2023, 114 000 Graduate Visas were issued, with an additional 30 000 for dependents. However, last year restrictions were introduced to limit dependents' applications. According to the latest figures from the Home Office, there were 417 000 grants of an extension for work to main applicants, primarily driven by the 'Graduate', 'Health and Care Worker', and the 'Skilled Worker' visa programmes. These programmes make up the majority of employment-based immigration to the UK.

In response to the proposed policy the general secretary of University and College Union (UCU), Jo Grady has said: "This threat to further restrict international students' ability to live and work in the UK when higher education is already on its knees, is bad for the sector, bad for the economy, and bad for our standing in the world."

UCU has urged the Labour government to protect international students.

**"International students make a huge contribution to our rich and diverse University community"**

The UEA offered a comment on the matter: "We work with other members of the Universities UK (UUK) to help international students thrive at UK Universities and to inform government when they are shaping policy or review-

ing visas. An example of this is when the government instigated a rapid re-

view of the Graduate visa in 2024. The conclusion was that it should remain and that the governments International Education Strategy remains extremely important. International students make a huge contribution to our rich and diverse University community and our wider region. We would make those points to Government in any consultation on any proposed visa changes."

A white paper on immigration is to be published soon with further details. The UK's Home Office has commented that the upcoming immigration white paper is intended "to restore order to our broken immigration system." They also stated that they would "not getting into a running commentary on what will be contained in the white paper."

Photo Credit: Unsplash



## Council Meeting: "The UEA will have a Constant Spiral of Cuts-Failure-Cuts"

**Anna Johnson**  
News Editor

UEA's Vice Chancellor refuses to consider changes to recover the university's debt.

The University and College Union (UCU) suggested to extend voluntary severance. The UCU are a trade union in further and higher education representing over 120,000 academics and support staff. The severance means more staff can choose to leave their jobs at the university with pay. This was refused by the Vice Chancellor.

At the Union Council meeting this month, ways to reduce the growing debt were discussed.

According to the BBC, the UEA

is over £30 million in debt. Recently, 170 full-time roles were reduced.

Prof David Maguire, Vice-Chancellor, said: "This is needed to save an additional £11m to stay on track with our financial sustainability plan.

"These decisions have not been taken lightly, and I recognise that this will be difficult news for our UEA community."

This led to 82% of UEA staff having voted in favour of strike action, according to the UCU.

One way the university plans to reduce their debt are more international students. But it was described to be a "short term solution".

Increasing the numbers of students per course and class was suggested.

With supervisors being made redundant in the University's plan to save money, one audience member was concerned how this would

impact students. The Vice Chancellors Office claimed it would cause no disturbance.

The UCU shared fears the UEA will have a constant spiral of cuts-failure-cuts.

With the biggest cause to UEA's debt being the pay for all the staff, one student, Jaz Brooks asked: "Who decides how much the Vice Chancellors Office team get paid?"

The response: "Senior staff remuneration committee decide the pay of those people.

"Senate and the University Council are also engaged in the Vice Chancellor Office pay teams."

The University and College Union claimed they should be on the board to make these decisions. They fear of misinformation being spread and the decisions they are making

based on this misinformation.

The University council is being circumvented within the university system of checks and balances as a result of this.

The UCU discussed how students can help support them.

"Contact the Vice Chancellor and let him know that you are concerned about the cuts that are being proposed and what is already happening with students experience." For future communication the UCU planned to always collaborate with students and the Vice Chancellor Office team.

# Water Crisis: MP Shames Government for Neglecting Norfolk's Rivers

**Anna Johnson**  
News Editor

Clive Lewis introduced a new bill to stop water companies polluting waterways and rising prices

Campaigner and former singer Fergal Sharkey, Clive Lewis and UEA professors met to discuss the problems privatisation has had on water.

Clive Lewis, MP for Norwich South, said: "I can taste a difference in my water, there's pollution in it and our bills are going up"

The privatisation of water companies like Anglian Water in 1990 means water has become a product that can be used to reap maximum profits.

Mr Lewis goes on to say, "believe it or not you do not have a right to water."

If his bill is accepted, he aims to make water a human right and make water companies responsible for their actions under the slogan 'water belongs to all of us.'

According to Water UK, due to the privatisation and many water companies being in debt, water prices are set to rise exponentially.

Mr Sharkey called this "political failure" that has caused "pain, sorrow and anger".

His main concern is that water companies are not being called out for "dumping sewage" while simultaneously raising prices.

**"believe it or not you do not have a right to water"**

Ofwat is the water authority whose purpose is to regulate water companies, but Professor Oliver Springate-Basinski said they are "in breach of contract with the citizens".

Mr Sharkey described Ofwat as "blinked, blinded and obsessed."

"In an ideal world the Ofwat board should resign first thing tomorrow morning if they know anything of chivalry."

John, an environment enthusiast from Great Yarmouth, shared his anger as it is no longer safe to swim in the sea: "You have to take antibiotics for two weeks just to go diving in Yarmouth."

Peter, a swimmer in Norwich, said he used to swim by Cow Tower to keep active, but it is now no longer safe.

In response, Mr Sharkey said: "The truth is the companies had the money but didn't spend it on the sewage system, they spent it on themselves."

"They are committing ecocide right now"

Professor Springate-Basinski called the water companies to have caused "systematic fraud".

According to Gov.UK "only 14% of rivers and lakes in England achieved 'good ecological status'."

Mr Sharkey called this a "travesty."

Not only was he angry about pollution making it unsafe to swim, but there are "ancient riv-



Image credit: Anna Johnson

ers in Norfolk being destroyed."

Another problem Mr Lewis shared concerns for was the lack of places for people to live in the future.

**"They are committing ecocide right now"**

"Whitingham sewage works at capacity" leaving little room for more houses.

He said, "to save water, grey water needs to be flushed not clean."

Otherwise, he said "there will be terrible shortages of water."

"We are taking water for granted."

Mr Sharkey said these companies have failed customers and the environment.

He urged people to "demand leadership and urgency and flood the streets with rage, anger and disappointment."

Mr Lewis ended the debate that this bill "won't fix everything but it's a start".

## Young People Could be the Solution to Tackling Life Expectancy Stagnation

**Milla Cartwright**  
Deputy News Editor

A recent study by the UEA has shown that the rise in life expectancy has slowed down since 2011, however prioritising healthier lifestyles amongst young people could reverse these trends.

The study showed that life expectancy had been stagnating across most countries who participated in the research. The greatest decreases were found to be in Greece and England.

The research spanned 20 countries where it examined life expectancy and cause of deaths. The data focused on comparing three time periods (1990-2011, 2011-2019, 2019-2021). The countries included were either from the European Economic Area or the United Kingdom.

Professor Nick Steel was the lead

researcher of the study and collaborated with several universities and institutions, including Global Burden of Disease Project at the Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation.

Professor Steel is a clinical professor in public health at the UEA's Norwich Medical School.

**"The greatest decreases were found to be in Greece and England."**

Regarding the findings he has said: "We have high dietary risks in England and high levels of physical inactivity and high obesity levels. These trends are decades long – there isn't a quick fix."

Professor Steel explained: "Life expectancy mainly reflects mortality at younger ages, where we have lots of scope for reducing harmful risks and preventing early deaths."

As such, the researchers urged governments to address these long-term issues by prioritising healthier lifestyles among young people and to invest in public health initiatives to address the slowdown in life expectancy improvements.

The study, which was published in the Lancet Public Health Journal, found that the main causes of death revolved around cardiovascular diseases and cancer. These could be seen as attributable to the population's exposure to common risk factors.

According to the researchers, long-term policy interventions were closely linked to

the trends in life expectancy. As such policy choices "substantially influence the longevity of their population."

**"The study recommended that the countries with larger decreases in life expectancy implement government policies"**

The study recommended that the countries with larger decreases in life expectancy implement government policies to address major risks to health and well-being. Additionally, they would need to tackle commercial and social determinants for poor health, as well as to ensure access to affordable health services.

Professor Steel explained: "This

is about the big, long-term population protections from risk – so engaging with the food industry to improve our national diet to make it easier for people to eat healthier food and make it easier for people to move a little bit in our day-to-day lives."

The UEA has also highlighted the importance of incorporating activity into students' lives every day, stating that: "UEA Sport's Active Campus programme is dedicated to prioritising healthier lifestyles for young people, empowering them to stay active, connect with others, and embrace well-being as a foundation for success. The programme includes Ziggurat challenge, drop in sport and exercise classes, the moves app, adventure afternoons, events such as colour run, as well as our 56 sports clubs. Overall this engages 42% of the student population, encouraging everyone to prioritise a healthy lifestyle."

# Features

## War Stole My Home, My Youth, and My Friend: Three Years Since the Invasion

Natalia Makohon

I'm at home in bed, blanketed in a thick silence. It's not a comfortable silence, it is heavy and tense. I had a lot on my mind. While Russian officials kept saying they were only training, US and UK intelligence suggested things weren't looking good.

Feb. 24, 2022. I can hear loud bangs in the distance. Then, car alarms — one, two, three. I want to sleep but the noises are too loud, too out of the ordinary. I open my eyes and read the clock; it's 4:30 a.m. I glance out the window, I can see smoke rising from the direction of an airfield.

My mother pokes her head in my room and says, "Dear, the war has started."

Another bang; I feel the house tremble. I thought I'd lost my ability to breathe. When you hear words like that, it's like your entire world is crumbling right in front of you.

Everything just stops.

I saw disbelief and fear in her tired eyes. Before she even finished that short, terrible sentence, tears were already running down my cheek. That's where I was three years ago, in the eastern Ukrainian region of Donetsk, exposed to the sounds of explosions; my introduction to the soundtrack of warfare.

I thought it would end in a few days. One month later, as Russian missiles at-

tacked our neighbourhood, we took shelter in our bathroom. The air-raid siren blaring in the background as we hid. We were there for 10 hours. Cramped in a tiny space that felt more like a trap than a shelter.

The sirens stop.

We go to the kitchen to make some tea to warm up, but before the tea was even ready, the siren started again. We rush back to the bathroom as explosions surround us. I wondered to myself if we would survive if our house was hit and imagined being buried alive under the rubble; it terrified me.

That day the decision to leave was made.

For the next 36 hours on the train, my only thoughts were on what will be next; where we were going. Under such stress, I couldn't even think about food. We were able to get a space in one of the train compartments, which is only supposed to hold a family of four. Ours held 14 women and children. The atmosphere was tense - some people cried, some were silent, others couldn't stop talking, but everyone was glued to the news on their phones. We were all scared.

Our first night in Poland was our first night of peace since leaving home. We received help from volunteers who provided us with tickets for transportation, free SIM cards, hot meals, and translations. I felt their support; I saw it in their eyes and actions. While Poland wasn't our final destination, I still felt a sense of kinship with the people we met. Germany was our next destination. We luck-

ily found long-term accommodation there and were contacted via support groups on Facebook about a space in a small village.

I had to start my life from scratch in a new country, without family and friends, more than once. In Germany, then Japan, and now the UK. I don't know how many times I'll have to start over, and where I will end up next. These aren't the memories a 20-year-old is supposed to have. I should be with friends hanging out at cafes in Kyiv, continuing my studies, building a career in media, traveling in my beautiful country, and following my dreams. But this war has changed everything.

Happiness now means a clear sky free from missiles, a home untouched by destruction, and a family that's still whole. But at least I have this chance. At least I am free.

But some are not as lucky.

Egor is not. We went to the same school, and he's a friend. When Russian forces invaded Ukraine on February 24, they stormed Mariupol, the strategic port city on the Sea of Azov. They encircled the city and pushed Ukrainian soldiers back to their last stronghold - Azovstal. For three months, they held on, starving, wounded, but unbroken. The steel plant became both a battlefield and a horrible trap. Egor is a surviving soldier from Azovstal. But his survival came at a cost. He is being held captive in a Russian prison camp and endured a terror attack in Olenivka. In a sham trial, he was sentenced to over 25 years in prison.

Most recently, he was transferred to another prison camp infamous for its brutal torture practices. I can only imagine what he is going through. And I can do nothing to stop it.

It's difficult to know, hear, and read these stories while I am safe. This invasion has shown the world how strong Ukrainians are. Our resilience, our unity, and our determination to protect our country, even when everything feels impossible. Our defenders are giving their lives for every centimetre of our land. We are fighting for our freedom, independence, our homes and families, our language, our culture, and our future.

It is fighting for our right to exist.



## Farage, Trump and Internal Struggles: What's Next for Reform?

Mar Devonport  
Features Editor

The aggressive exchange in the Oval Office, between the President Trump, Vice-President Vance and the Ukrainian President, Zelensky was watched and retweeted in disbelief by the world. After a long couple weeks of diplomacy, the Prime Minister, Sir Kier Starmer, maintaining his "unwavering support" for Ukraine, relayed to the House of Commons Europe's next cause of action. He faced questions and mainly support from the House, including from the leader of the Reform Party, Nigel Farage. With his typical shpiel about Brexit that caused a stir in the House, Farage went on to "applaud [Starmer] for saying such positive words about President Trump and our relationship with America, even if nobody behind him agrees." This was followed by boos by the majority of those in attendance. Farage's friendship with Trump has been somewhat of a boasting point for the MP for Clacton, and something he increasingly valued after Trump was elected for a second time. However, the President's rash decisions and what some would call, his media stunts, Farage has had an in-

teresting time in interviews recently. So, what does this friendship mean for Farage and his Party? The balance between his support for Trump and the UK's public opinion on the war in Ukraine has been a tricky one to manage. The polls suggest that Britons dislike for Trump runs deep, with 80% saying they viewed the US president unfavourably, compared with 73% two weeks earlier. Despite this, Farage in an interview with LBC, echoed Trump and Vance's rhetoric; "I think [Zelensky] played it badly...I wouldn't expect a guest to be rude in my house. If I

turned up at the White House, I'd make sure I was wearing a suit, and my shoes were clean." For one that has accused the government of being 'out of touch', the Reform leader has since been accused of the same thing for his comments and as a result, his position in the polls has decreased.

Starmer's popularity, on the other hand, has increased, albeit marginally, after months of declining public opinion.

For a time when local elections are just around the corner, at least the ones that aren't affected by devolution (including Norfolk and Suffolk), Farage will likely be worrying about how his party and as the

leader of it, how he, appears to the general public — especially when Reform is predicted to do well. While the local elections are not focused on international or even national affairs, Reform's response to this global issue could have an effect on how they perform. And if it is not about Farage's stance on Ukraine that affects their performance, then the internal conflict in the party might. The MP for Great Yarmouth, Robert Lowe, has been suspended from the Reform Party after bullying accusations. After Farage wrote a piece in The Telegraph, saying how the suspension was the right thing to do, a feud has ensued between the two. The sense of unity Farage wanted to paint, as he put it, "has been dented" and this could have an effect on how well they do in the local elections. It is difficult to tell how much voters care about these issues, especially when local election turnout is so low, however, what is clear, is that while public opinion on Farage has been polarising, it appears that he is not as popular as he previously was.

Credit: Wikimedia Commons



# “No one stuck a needle in your arm, they just got you some drinks” - Alcohol Spiking as a Form of Spiking

Milla Cartwright and Clara Vela-Mason

Photo Credit: Unsplash

The SU is trying to broaden students' understanding of spiking to encapsulate more than drug- and needle-based spiking. Its approach is not just about illegal intoxicants, but also about nonconsensual consumption of alcohol, whether that's because someone is being pressured to drink more, or they're being given a sneaky double when they asked for a single.

As part of the SU's latest Anti-Spiking Campaign, Alicia Khuttan, the Women's Officer and Chris Kershaw, the Campaigns and Democracy Officer, have made a video in which they reiterate what spiking is. The campaign was sparked by Alicia hearing more and more about women's safety issues: “Holding a role titled Women's Officer, I felt responsible for all my friends and the women around me.”

**“it's hard for women to say 'no' when they're offered a drink, they're told they shouldn't be rude.”**

Alcohol-based spiking is the most common form of spiking but is often normalised as it generally stems from good intentions rather than malicious ones. It's usually surrounded with sentiments of 'let loose' and 'have fun'. This also makes it harder to turn down. According to police data, 81% of reported spiking victims were students.

The frequency of alcohol-based spiking does not mean that drug and needle-based spiking do not exist. These forms of spiking are less common but pose a bigger threat due to the dangers of mixing chemicals with alcohol. Spiking using alcohol is not seen as dangerous, perhaps because of alcohol's legality.

As soon as spiking is also thought of as alcohol-based, it's not the hooded stranger in the corner that needs keeping an eye on. It's the charming guy who's just bought you another drink – even though you've barely finished the last one. It's your friend who works behind the bar, who is being nice and overpouring your drink. It's your team-mate at pres who mixed a bunch of spir-its together to help you get drunk faster. Jungle Juice is another example of alcohol-spiking, as it is intended to be a cheap and quick solution for getting guests drunk. As a mixture of spirits, there's no way of really knowing how much alcohol is in one drink and so it isn't possible to drink it responsibly.

A student who was spiked with alcohol during their first semester shared her experience. “It's difficult because if you meet a guy who offers to get you a drink it's not something you're told to worry about.” “They'll keep buying you drinks even when you don't ask for one and at that point it's rude to say no because you've already accepted a few,” she shared. Alicia also commented on the socialisations surrounding alcohol: “it's hard for women to say 'no' when they're offered a drink, they're told they shouldn't be rude.”

Spiking is not as gendered as many preconceptions believe it to be, especially

concerning spiking using alcohol. Alcohol-related charity, Drinkaware, found that there was “almost an equal split” amongst men and women. Men are often spiked by their friends egging them on or with chugging contests. Drink spiking has existed for a long time but gained national traction in 2021 with an uptake in spiking reports.

Michael Kill of Night Time Industries Association said, “Despite the rise in reported incidents, this has been happening for some 20 or 30 years within the industry.” As such, training has often included recognising the overpouring of alcohol to be a form of spiking.

All staff members of the SU venues receive training on recognising instances of spiking, harassment and abuse. Implementing such training programmes is not mandatory and at the discretion of the venues themselves; this includes schemes like Ask for Angela or Stamp Out Spiking. Many bars, including the SU's venues, are equipped with anti-spiking tools such as spikees and lids. These tools are able to prevent pill slipping but are ineffective against the additional alcohol already in that person's cup. Prior to club nights and other events, all venue staff, including bar staff and security, are given a briefing regarding the expectations for the event, such as how many tickets were sold. They are also given a run through health and safety protocols.

## According to police data, 81% of reported spiking victims were students

A UK government report on spiking found that two-thirds of respondents felt that venue and security staff needed “more or better training.” One respondent shared: “I felt like we were failed by people who were sober and should have had a duty of care. Security at the bar just kick you off the premises, taxi drivers refuse to drive you because they don't want a mess in their taxi, the bar men just keep serving drinks.”

On club nights, the SU has additional support from St. John's Ambulance Service and Alcohol Impact to assist students. St. John's provides first aid and medical attention where needed, whereas Alcohol Impact focuses on helping students feeling overwhelmed or who have had too much to drink. Most test kits are handed out during club nights or if a student feels like they might have been spiked.

**“There are enough stories out there to show that there is a problem,”**

Students take the tests to the N&N to get checked. The N&N is part of Norwich's anti-spiking campaign and are able to test for 1600 compounds. The kits were introduced in 2021 to offer the best chance to detect substances before they pass through the body. The test kits are available throughout Norwich, including at the Walk-In Clinic and SOS Bus. The hospital only communicates with the ‘donor’ of the test. As such the SU and UEA rely upon students filing a report of the incident and sharing their results. When they do not receive feedback, they have to make assumptions regarding the results coming back negative for drug-related spiking. Last year, the UEA reported that there had been less than five allegations of spiking on campus.

Alcohol Education Trust found that 92% of those who had their drink spiked didn't report it. A further survey by the UK government found that 75% of respondents hadn't reported their spiking either. The reports found zero-tolerance drug approaches as well as real or perceived victim-blaming deterred victims from reporting incidents of spiking. It is currently not possible to test for alcohol-based spiking, especially if someone was already drinking alcohol. Therefore, it is not fully possible to accurately measure how widespread the issue is. “There are enough stories out there to show that there is a problem,” shared Alicia. “That's why we want to reiterate to students what spiking is.”



# Home of the Wonderful

## What the War on Terror Leaves Behind

### Distinguished Guest Speakers Discuss the Implications of the War on Terror at UEA Event

Photo Credit: Kasey Campbell

Kasey Campbell

On March 5th the School of PPA (Politics, Philosophy and Area Studies) welcomed distinguished guests Major General (retired) Zahid Mahmood, Professor Lee Jarvis and Dr Suzanne Doyle to discuss the ongoing socio-political impacts of the War on Terror. The event, organized by PPA's Dr Ra Mason and assisted by School Convener Syed Muhammad Hamza was attended by students and multiple faculty members. Spectators reported that the event, which had a panel discussion and Q&A structure, was 'one of the most well-attended' "Politics on Wednesdays" events.

Professor Lee Jarvis, a specialist in international security and professor of international politics at the University of Loughborough, opened the event by discussing the lingering impact of the War on Terror in the post 9/11 period. He argued that it is forever embedded in international security through the ever-present counter-terrorism measures in the international community. Professor Jarvis gave an outline of how the concept of counter-terrorism measures became more apparent to the Western public in the post 9/11 period, but cautioned against assuming the same outside of the

West. Jarvis explained that for regions such as South Asia, the emphasis on such 'new security challenges' predated the horrific 9/11 attacks. Professor Jarvis also discussed the shifting attitudes towards the U.S.' military response to 9/11, arguing that in the immediate period after the attack there was "diminished space" for criticism. Only after the 20-year anniversary of the attacks previously taboo views, such as the counter-productivity of military forces, were able to be discussed in the mainstream.

Joining from Pakistan was Major General (Retd) Zahid Mahmood, a former two-star Pakistan Army General who brought his expertise from the front-lines of the War on Terror. In 2008, as a Lieutenant Colonel, Mahmood commanded a battalion in the Bajaur region of Pakistan, a particularly turbulent area bordering Afghanistan. He sustained a severe injury and lost his right leg in the line of duty. The Major General retired as a highly decorated military official, receiving Tamgha-i-Basalat (Medal of Valour) for his bravery. The General is currently a defense analyst appearing daily in the Pakistani media. A strong speaker, Major General (Retd) Mahmood opened with a

striking statement regarding the War on Terror. He said that the global south is still "ground zero" and claimed the U.S.' withdrawal from Afghanistan comprised of "unmet promises hindering the path of peace".

Major General emphasised Pakistan's unwavering efforts to combat terrorism. However, in the wake of the U.S.' withdrawal from Afghanistan, terror attacks in Pakistan continue to increase. Additionally, Major General stressed the importance of separating acts-of-terror from religion for effective resolution. The University of East Anglia's

Dr Suzanne Doyle closed the discussion by reflecting on the "legacy of violence" left behind by the War on Terror. Doyle argued the war can never truly ever be over as the language of anti-terrorism is embedded in our everyday – giving the example of the British Transport Police's slogan "See it, say it, sorted". Dr Doyle discussed the importance of seeing security policies as contextual, arguing that the security threats faced by regions will differ. As the Q&A session closed, it was clear all three speakers could agree on one thing: as it stands, the future of global politics is unsettling and uncertain.



# Congratulations to...

Photo Credits: UEASU, Concrete, Enactus UEA

## CLUB OF THE MONTH... UEA CLIMBING

'UEA Climbing excelled with 220+ members, multiple weekly sessions, and a strong committee. They competed in the London Uni Bouldering Event, raised funds for mental health charity Mind Over Mountain, and introduced lead climbing training. Their inclusivity efforts include a women's-only climbing session and adaptive equipment. They've also improved safety procedures and built connections with other sports clubs. Amazing work, UEA Climbing!'



## SOCIETY OF THE MONTH... CONCRETE

Well this is a bit embarrassing! But I guess we could just have a little look at what the SU had to say about us...

'Concrete Newspaper had an incredible month, releasing a 56-page Sex and Relationships issue with insights from 463 students. They won Best Student Publication in the South East, and their Co-Editors-in-Chief received an Outstanding Contribution award. They also relaunched 'A Week in Concrete' and refreshed their arts and culture supplement. A fantastic start to the year—well done, Concrete!'



## ...AND THE ENACTUS SOCIETY

This month we thought that we would also highlight the recent achievement of the UEA Enactus Society, with their securing a place in the Top 20 of the Enactus UK and Ireland World Cup Qualifier 2025 with their project 'Soapful Hands'!

This allows them to present in the semi-finals of the Enactus UK and Ireland World Cup Qualifiers 2025 on the 7th of April at the ExCel in London.

We wish them the best of luck!



# UEA's Women's History Month: Our Wonderful Alumni

**Fiona Hill**  
Co-Editor-In-Chief

Established in 1987, Women's History Month has been celebrated internationally as a time to commemorate the lives and achievements of women that may have otherwise gone overlooked. From scientists to Olympians, writers to politicians, our university lays claim to a considerable amount of impressive alumni, many of whom identify as women! With many events taking place in the present (see the SU website), there is surely no better time to look back on our past and spotlight the stories of the women of UEA.

## **Baroness Valerie Amos- Leader of the House of Lords (2003-2007)**

Born in Guyana, Amos moved to the UK with her family in 1963. After studying for an undergraduate and postgraduate elsewhere, she received an ARE in education at UEA. It was after this that she began working in the charity sector in London, eventually becoming Chief Executive of the Equal Opportunities Commission in 1989. From here her career flourished, with her advising the South African government on human rights. In 1997 she became a member of the House of Lords where she spoke on Women's issues and social security. Her time in the Houses of Parliament also saw her become the first BAME woman to serve as a cabinet minister (Secretary of State for International Development). After a hugely successful career Amos was appointed as a Lady Companion of the Order of the Garter (equivalent of a Knighthood) in 2022. Aged 70 in 2025, she continues her work in the House of Lords whilst enjoying her passion for cricket!

## **Joanna Coles- Editor-in-Chief of Marie Claire (2006-2012) and Cosmopolitan (2012-2016)**



Joanna Coles Photo Credit: Wikimedia Commons

Graduating from UEA with a BA in English and American Literature, Coles began her career in journalism at The Spectator working on Fleet Street, the former heart of journalism in London. Moving to New York in 1997 she continued her career with The Guardian and The Times, before joining Hearst (a media company specialising in fashion and lifestyle magazines) in 2006 as Editor-In-Chief of Marie Claire. After many years of hard work, she became Editor-In-Chief of the Cosmopolitan before she was made chief content officer of the company in 2016. Coles' talents were not just limited to journalism, but saw her branch out into television, with her roles as executive producer on So Cosmo and The Bold Type. Today she continues to live in New York City and hosts a podcast on politics and pop culture (The Daily Beast) with Samantha Bee.

## **Dame Emily Lawson- Head of the NHS COVID-19 Vaccine Programme Dame Sarah Gilbert- Co-creator of the Oxford- AstraZeneca COVID-19 Vaccine**

It is no over-exaggeration to say that the COVID-19 pandemic may have looked very different if it had not been for UEA alumni Dame Emily Lawson and Dame Sarah Gilbert. Completing her molecular genetics doctorate at the John Innes Centre at UEA in 1993, Emily Lawson went on to study for a postdoctoral fellowship at the University of Pennsylvania. After a varied career in business and management, Lawson started at NHS England as National Director for Transformation and Corporate Operations. By November 2020 she was promoted to Senior Responsible Officer for the NHS COVID-19 vaccine deployment programme, which involved her managing the initial distribution. Her goal was to ensure easy access to the vaccine across all communities. In March 2025 Lawson stood down from her leadership position in the NHS and it is of yet unclear what she will now turn her attention to. After studying for a BSc in Biological Sciences at UEA, Sarah Gilbert went on to obtain a doctoral degree at the University of Hull where she explored the genetics and biochemistry of a particular type of yeast. From here she held a range of positions including postdoctoral researcher at the Brewing Industry Research Foundation before going back to academia in order to study malaria. She continued her work with viruses and was eventually brought



Baroness Amos Photo Credit: Wikimedia Commons

in to work on a vaccine against the coronavirus as Oxford project lead. Under this leadership, the Oxford- AstraZeneca COVID-19 Vaccine was created and was the first vaccine rolled-out outside of a trial in the UK. Gilbert has received plenty of recognition for her achievement including Matel creating a Barbie doll in her honour, a standing ovation at the Wimbledon 2021 and an honorary doctorate from the UEA.

## **Anne Enright- First Laureate for Irish Fiction and winner of the Man Booker Prize 2007**

After reading English and Philosophy at Trinity College Dublin, Enright won the Chevening Scholarship to study for an MA in Creative Writing at UEA. Her first novel, The Wig My Father Wore was published in 1995 and, like many of the novels Enright would go on to write, dealt with such themes as motherhood and the Roman Catholic Church. However, it was Enright's fourth novel, The Gathering, that would win the Man Booker Prize in 2007 due to its 'dark' and 'evocative' nature and 'tough and striking language'. In 2015, Enright was selected as the first Laureate for Irish Fiction, a position she held until 2018 and utilised to encourage interest in Irish literature through her public lectures. Now Enright is a professor of fiction at University College Dublin and consistently writes for the 'Books' section of The Guardian. These five women have contributed enormously to the society that we live in today and deserve praise and recognition for their achievements and their ability to lead in a system that does not promote female leadership. However, it has to be noted that they are just a small selection of wonderful women who leave this university and go on to make a positive difference in the world around them, international acclaim or not!

## **The UEA Love Languages Fair 2025: A Celebration of Language and Culture**

**Khushi Samtani**  
Home of the Wonderful Editor

The University of East Anglia's (UEA) much-anticipated Love Languages Fair will return to The Forum in Norwich on Saturday, March 15, 2025. This free event, which is accessible to everyone and runs from 10 AM to 4 PM, promises to be a lively celebration of language acquisition, cross-cultural interaction, and community involvement.

The Love Languages Fair, which is hosted by the Department of Languages and Communication Studies at UEA, features an engaging schedule of events aimed at exposing visitors to a variety of languages and cultures. Short language tasters in Greek, Spanish, Japanese, French, Italian, Mandarin, and British Sign Language are among the interactive programs that visitors can participate in, which are led by students and academics. These classes offer a special chance for language learners and language aficionados to interact with different languages in an enjoyable and approachable manner. In addition to language instruction, the fair will feature cultural performances and events like Pétanque and salsa dancing, giving visitors a firsthand look at many customs from around the world. Sessions of multilingual storytelling will emphasise even more how language can unite people and preserve cultural heritage.

The ability to communicate across languages is more important than ever in a society that is becoming more interconnected by the day. Learning a language develops deeper intercultural awareness, boosts professional chances, and strengthens cognitive abilities. Activities such as the Love Languages Fair are essential for promoting language curiosity and showcasing the practical advantages of multilingualism.

Anyone who is passionate about languages and culture should attend the Love Languages Fair in 2025. There is something for everyone at this event, regardless of your level of proficiency or interest in various customs. You can enter a world of linguistic and cultural exploration by just stopping by The Forum on March 15; reservations are not necessary.

You can reach [ulp@uea.ac.uk](mailto:ulp@uea.ac.uk) for additional details.



Source: Wikimedia Commons

# UEA Change Makers Grand Finale 2025

**Khushi Samtani**  
Home of the Wonderful Editor

On March 20, 2025, the University of East Anglia (UEA) will host the much-anticipated Change Makers Grand Finale 2025. In order to address some of the most important environmental and socioeconomic concerns of our day, this event will highlight the imaginative and creative student-led projects. The Change Makers program, which is a component of UEA's continuous dedication to sustainability and social responsibility, gives students a fantastic opportunity to realise their ideas and propose practical answers to global problems.

Students from various disciplines are encouraged to create and start projects with an emphasis on sustainability, social justice, and community betterment through UEA's vibrant Change Makers program. The program encourages creativity, teamwork, and entrepreneurship by giving students a safe space to develop their ideas from conception to execution. In an effort to have a real influence on local and global communities, students collaborate on projects that address topics including diversity, poverty, mental health, and climate change.

Numerous fascinating and inventive concepts will be showcased at the Change Makers Grand Finale 2025. Every finalist has created a proposal that combines student ingenuity with workable solutions to

tackle a significant environmental or societal issue. The precise finalists for this year's competition have not yet been revealed, but previous years' usual projects have included everything from community-driven renewable energy solutions to sustainable fashion ventures to even campaigns to raise awareness of mental health issues. Students have demonstrated incredible creativity by coming up with solutions that can be expanded upon, put into practice, or serve as templates for such projects in the future. At the Grand Finale, the finalists will showcase their initiatives in an effort to motivate others and effect change.

The winners of the Change Makers Grand Finale 2025 will receive more than just recognition for their innovative ideas. A financial reward will be given to each winning team so they can advance their project and leave a lasting impression. Whether that means working with industry experts, reaching a larger audience, or creating prototypes, this cash will enable them to extend their work. Winners will also receive priceless publicity, allowing them to network with mentors, panelists, and other industry changemakers. Career prospects, additional financing, and long-term relationships may result from this visibility.

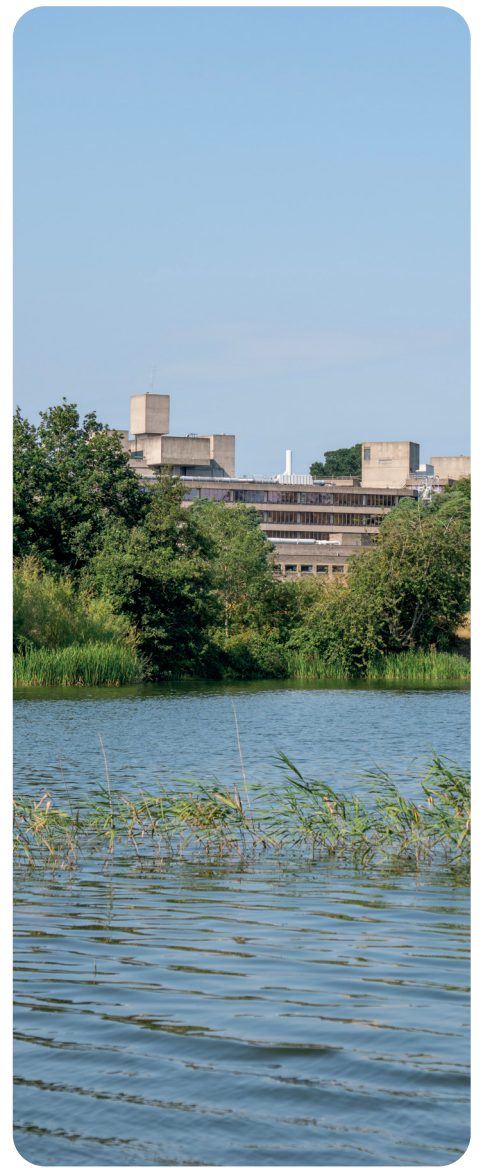
The UEA campus in Norwich will host the UEA Change Makers Grand Finale

2025 on March 20, 2025. Students, professors, and the general public will have the chance to interact with the finalists and see their ideas unveiled at the event, which will start at 6:00 PM. Although the exact location of this year's Grand Finale will be revealed closer to the event, past gatherings have taken place in UEA's Zachary Black Lecture Theatre, which is a suitable setting for an occasion that showcases the university's dedication to social responsibility and innovation.

Tickets for the Change Makers Grand Finale 2025 have been available for purchase since early March. UEA students will be able to attend for free, while tickets for the general public will be priced at £5. The event is expected to sell out quickly, so it's recommended to secure tickets early to ensure a spot at this exciting showcase of student-led creativity and impact.

The UEA Change Makers Grand Finale 2025 is expected to be a motivational occasion that showcases the ability of student-led innovation to address the most pressing problems of our day. UEA keeps promoting an innovative, sustainable, and socially conscious culture by helping students who are actively trying to change the world. Put March 20, 2025, on your calendars so you don't miss the opportunity to witness how the most innovative ideas from UEA are influencing the future!

Photo Credit: Maggie Read



# Concrete Archive: 31/01/07

**Fiona Hill**  
Co-Editor-In-Chief

When journeying back into the Concrete archive, it's very difficult to not exclusively select issues from the 90s. With the tabloid headers, quippy adverts and the strange amount of arts and crafts features, it truly is a gold mine of material to write about. In the years that followed, Concrete began to develop into the broadsheet-styled paper that you're reading today, maintaining a good grasp on relevant news stories, but leaving behind a wealth of... well a lot of puns. However, this change didn't happen overnight. The issue that I've chosen this month is from July 2007 and is a paper that, although essentially isn't a tabloid, manages to still incorporate such articles as 'UEA's Poster Boy', 'LCR Mania' and 'Spam Spam Spam, Lovely Spam, Wonderful Spam... Or Maybe Not'. So let's have a look at this period of transition together and see what UEA was up to in 2007.

Possibly the most eye-opening section of the paper is what was named 'The Concrete

Housing Guide,' with it featuring a brightly coloured title page, filled with elaborate door knockers in the shapes of lion and horse heads. I have to say this isn't a common occurrence on student houses where I live, but perhaps you're all living it up in Earlham? Perhaps the Concrete housing guide can tell me where to find such houses? Sadly, this was not the case. However, it did try to give me a bit of insight into what type of students I should be living with. 'In a house of girls, it is often good to have a token boy'. Apparently, the main reason for this was to 'seek' his advice on other men. The way it's put does make it sound like living with a sort of oracle, which I think I can testify against. Still, there is a good bit of useful information on deposits and landlords, as well as the best places to live. All in all, a useful article if you take some parts with a pinch of salt!

Particularly poignant to current student life, was an article on campaigning in SU elections. Following the story of a student and her campaign to become a part-time officer, the reader is given a glimpse into what she states is an 'exhausting' but

'profound' process. She speaks on manifestos, publicity and talking to strangers with great enthusiasm, claiming 'I learnt so much'. She also mentions that '[I] enjoyed going to Union Council', which I'm sure must have been a misprint... Still, it's a fascinating little case study and one that doesn't seem too dissimilar to today.

Now I understand that it would be completely unfair of me to have previously brought up the article 'Spam Spam Spam, Lovely Spam, Wonderful Spam... Or Maybe Not' and leave you forever in the dark about what exactly it was about. Well, I'm sorry to tell you that it was it was nothing more than a short piece on spam mail. Regardless, if you're passionate about junk emails and would like to read the article or any other in the Concrete archive, feel free to reach out to us! We have such a vast, funny, and interesting collection and it's so much better that they're read than enjoyed than hidden out of sight.

And here concludes our little detour into student life in 2007, the good, the bad and the slightly puzzling. Anyway, until next time...



**Issue 69: 31st January 2007**  
**Editor: Anna Steward**

# Puzzles

Aarohi Deshmukh  
Puzzles Editor

## Auntie G’s Horoscopes Relaxation Edition

Kasey Campbell  
Anne Glia

*Hello, I’m Aunt Glia – you’ve found me in the Puzzles Section! You should take some time to de-stress this month. See my recommendations below for a relaxing activity based on your Horoscope!*

**Aries** – Grab your favourite bath products and have a relaxing bath or shower, Aries. Pair it with your favourite hair and/or face mask. Grab your go-to drink, sit back and chill!

**Taurus** – Spend time helping others this month, Taurus. It will make you feel great with the added bonus of it...helping others!

**Gemini** – You’re a social being, Gemini. Have a get together, even if you all just chill in your jim-jams – have a yap session! Let the worries, and the conversation, flow!

**Cancer** – Remember that book that’s been on your list for ages, Cancer? You know the one. Read. That. Book!

**Leo** – Start that sport you’ve been thinking about, Leo! There’s so many mental benefits to exercise. Come on, give it a go!

**Virgo** – Take up knitting or crochet, Virgo. Enter your granny era. Have you ever seen a stressed-out granny? Yeah, that’s what I thought.

**Libra** – Learn a new recipe, Libra. Take a wholesome walk to the shop, buy your ingredients, cook while watching your favourite show and eat some yummy food. You can’t go wrong!

**Scorpio** – Be the mysterious stranger in a new place, Scorpio. Let off some steam and explore somewhere new!

**Sagittarius** – You really should chill out, Sagittarius. My suggestion? Meditation, meditation, meditation!

**Capricorn** – Spend some time outside to relax this month, Capricorn. You’ll be surprised by what some fresh air can do.

**Aquarius** – Do your childhood hobby, Aquarius, you’ll remember why you loved it and be surprised how much you remember.

**Pisces** – Visit somewhere fun, Pisces. Maybe somewhere you’ve not been since you were younger, like an aquarium or the zoo!

For more Anne Glia (our Agony Aunt)  
advice, go to Lifestyle on page 18!

## UNSCRAMBLE ... the words to find the secret theme!

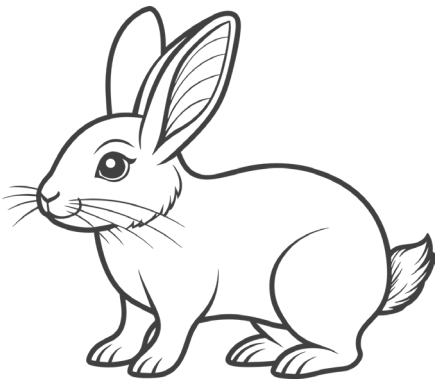
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De-stress with  
some colouring!

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|---|--|--|--|---|
| 1 |  |  |  | 2 |
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|   |  |  |  |   |
| 3 |  |  |  |   |

## MINI CROSSWORD

### Down

- 1. Could be acute, obtuse, or right
- 2. Type of zest

### Across

- 1. UEA Cheerleader
- 3. \_\_\_\_\_ Park

# Tensions Escalate Following Trump's Contentious Meeting With Zelensky

**Naa Yarley Yartey**  
Global Editor



A high-stakes meeting between US President Donald Trump and Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky in the Oval Office ended in a fiery confrontation that derailed a planned peace gesture. The two leaders had been poised to sign a deal granting the US access to Ukraine's valuable rare minerals in exchange for continued American military aid – an agreement touted as a confidence-building step toward a ceasefire with Russia. Instead, a heated exchange erupted. President Trump, joined by Vice President J.D. Vance, sharply rebuked Zelensky for not showing sufficient gratitude for support, with Vance branding the Ukrainian leader “disrespectful”. The confrontation culminated with Trump abruptly ending the meeting and reportedly kicking out Zelensky of the White House. A joint press conference was hastily cancelled, and the much-anticipated minerals-for-aid deal was left unsigned. Trump later issued a statement accusing Zelensky of not being “ready for peace,” claiming the Ukrainian was leveraging American support to avoid making concessions. The unprecedented public spat laid bare a rift in the US-Ukraine alliance and rattled diplomats across the West.

The Oval Office clash triggered swift and forceful reactions across Europe, as leaders moved to shore up support for Ukraine and decry Washington's confrontational stance. British Prime Minister Sir Keir Starmer, who assumed a mediator's role, spoke with both Trump and Zelensky within hours of the incident, conveying Britain's “unwavering support for Ukraine” and urging a “path forward to a lasting peace based on sovereignty and security for Ukraine,” according to a Downing Street statement. Starmer publicly condemned the breakdown of the meeting, calling it “regrettable,” and stressed that no one desires peace more than the Ukrainians themselves. He moved quickly to coordinate a united European response, inviting Zelensky and other leaders (including Italy's Giorgia Meloni) to London for emergency talks and a defence summit aimed at securing “lasting and enforced” peace terms.

Leaders across the continent echoed this solidarity. French President Emmanuel Macron bluntly reminded observers that “there is an aggressor, which is Russia, [and] an aggressed people, which is Ukraine,” affirming that Western nations were right to aid Kyiv and sanction Moscow and must “continue to do so”. German Chancellor Olaf Scholz emphasised that “nobody wants peace more than the

Ukrainians” and vowed that “Ukraine can rely on Germany – and on Europe”. From Poland, Prime Minister Donald Tusk reassured Zelensky, “you are not alone,” while Spain's Pedro Sánchez declared that Spain “stands with” Ukraine. European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen also offered personal encouragement to Zelensky, praising his “dignity” and telling him “you are never alone... We will continue working with you for a just and lasting peace”. The clear message from Europe was one of unwavering backing for Ukraine in the face of Washington's pressure. Across the EU, officials bristled at Trump's implication that Ukraine was prolonging war. Notably, allies emphasised that any peace must not come at the expense of Ukraine's sovereignty or territorial integrity, pushing back against the notion of forcing Kyiv into undue concessions.

The contentious meeting has undeniably strained the once-close US-Ukraine partnership. In its immediate aftermath, the Trump administration took steps to suspend military aid to Ukraine, freezing deliveries of weapons and funding pending a “review” of whether Ukraine is committed to pursuing peace. Trump and his advisors signalled they are prepared to leverage US assistance to compel Kyiv's cooperation; a White House official stated that America is “pausing and reviewing our aid to ensure that it is contributing to a solution,” reinforcing Trump's message that allies must be “committed” to peace talks.

In response, President Zelensky has trodden a fine line between expressing regret over the clash and extending an olive branch to Washington, while cautioning against any peace deal that sells Ukraine short. Acknowledging that the White House meeting “did not go the way it was supposed to” and calling the outcome “regrettable,” Zelensky publicly stated “it is time to make things right” between him and President Trump. He has since reiterated “Ukraine's commitment to peace” and its readiness to resume negotiations with Russia “as soon as possible to bring lasting peace closer”. In a notable conciliatory step, Zelensky announced that Kyiv is willing to sign the previously discussed minerals agreement at “any time, in any format,” calling that deal a potential “step toward greater security” and a prelude to solid peace guarantees.

At the same time, Zelensky has gently warned of the formidable challenges in reaching a just compromise with Moscow. He maintains that any peace must be “lasting and secure” – implying that Ukraine cannot accept a quick fix that leaves it vulnerable. Indeed, before tensions with Washington flared, Zelensky had cautioned allies that a durable peace deal was still “very, very far away,” given Russia's maximalist demands and ongoing aggression. Putin's regime continues to insist on conditions (like recognising occupied territories) that Kyiv deems unacceptable, complicating prospects for an immediate end to the war. Privately, Ukrainian officials worry that halting US aid now (without firm Russian concessions) would embolden the Kremlin to press its offensive. Zelensky has hinted that Russia will only engage seriously in talks if Ukraine's defences remain strong; in his view, a weakened Ukraine forced into concessions could invite a worse conflict down the road. Thus, while Zelensky is diplomatically accommodating Trump's calls for talks, he is also urging partners not to re-

ward Russian aggression or erode the principles at stake.

For Europe, the fallout of the Trump-Zelensky spat has been a wake-up call about transatlantic divisions. The episode has injected uncertainty into Western unity, just as Russia watches for cracks in the alliance supporting Ukraine. European leaders are not only scrambling to facilitate dialogue but also bracing for the possibility that US support might waver. In Brussels, there is talk of Europe bolstering its own security capacity in case it must shoulder more of the burden. EU Commission President von der Leyen announced plans to “massively boost... defence spending” by European states, declaring that the continent has entered “an era of re-armament” to ensure it can support Ukraine and protect itself. Still, European officials greatly prefer to keep the Americans engaged; hence their energetic efforts to patch up the Trump-Zelensky rift. The coming days will test whether the diplomatic intervention by London and Paris can persuade the Trump administration to restart aid and return to a more collaborative approach. The US-Ukraine relationship has clearly been dented, but not irreparably: Zelensky's conciliatory outreach and Europe's behind-the-scenes diplomacy could yet refocus all parties on their common interest, ending the war on terms that uphold Ukraine's sovereignty.

Photo Credits: Wikimedia Commons



# Sudan Accuses UAE of Genocide Convention Breach Amid Ongoing Conflict

**Naa Yarley Yartey**  
Global Editor

Sudan has initiated legal action against the United Arab Emirates at the International Court of Justice (ICJ), accusing the Gulf state of abetting genocide in Sudan's war-torn Darfur region. In a formal case filed in The Hague, Sudan alleges that the UAE has been arming and funding the Rapid Support Forces (RSF), a paramilitary group battling Sudan's national army, and in doing so has violated the 1948 Genocide Convention.

The complaint centres on atrocities committed in West Darfur, where the RSF and allied Arab militias stand accused of targeting the Masalit, an African ethnic minority, in what Sudan's government calls a campaign of genocide. According to evidence cited by Sudan, RSF fighters carried out "gruesome violations, including killings, torture and even the rape of women," often documenting these crimes themselves on video.

By allegedly supplying weapons and financial support to the RSF during this period, Sudan argues, the UAE directly enabled the perpetration of genocidal acts. In its ICJ application, Sudan asserts that Abu Dhabi's material support was indispensable to the RSF's brutal campaign and that the UAE therefore breached its obligation under the Genocide Convention to prevent and punish genocide. The United Arab

Emirates has forcefully rejected Sudan's accusations, dismissing the ICJ case as baseless and politically motivated. An Emirati official, speaking on behalf of the government, characterised Sudan's lawsuit as "nothing more than a cynical publicity stunt" aimed at diverting attention from atrocities committed by Sudan's army itself.

The conflict between the RSF (led by Mohamed Hamdan "Hemedti" Dagalo) and Sudan's regular army (led by General Abdel Fattah al-Burhan) – erupted in April 2023 and has since engulfed multiple regions, causing mass civilian suffering. According to United Nations estimates, more than 24,000 people have been killed in the fighting to date. The violence has driven an estimated 14 million Sudanese from their homes, roughly 30% of the country's population, in what has rapidly become one of the world's largest displacement crises. Human rights monitors warn that ongoing ethnic violence in West Darfur could spiral into full-fledged genocide if no protective action is taken. The Masalit minority, in particular, has been "hunted down" in and around the city of El Geneina, which was virtually obliterated by RSF-allied fighters in mid-2023.

By bringing its grievance to the ICJ, Sudan is leveraging one of the few legal avenues available to hold another state accountable for genocide. The case – Sudan v. United Arab Emirates – invokes the Genocide Convention, to which both countries

are parties, as the basis for the Court's jurisdiction. Sudan's petition asks the ICJ to declare that the UAE has breached its obligation to prevent genocide and to order "provisional measures," essentially emergency injunctions, to stop any further support that could facilitate genocidal acts. Such provisional measures, if granted, could come within weeks or months, given the urgency of alleged ongoing atrocities. They would be legally binding and put Abu Dhabi under international pressure to comply. However, the road to a final judgment will likely be long and arduous. Cases at the ICJ typically take years to reach a conclusion, especially when they involve complex questions of state responsibility and genocide – as seen in a similar genocide case Gambia brought against Myanmar that has dragged on since 2019. Even if the Court ultimately rules in Sudan's favour, enforcement of any judgment would rely on diplomatic pressure, as the ICJ has no direct means to compel state action.

That said, the filing of this case is significant in its own right. It marks the first time a government has been hauled before the ICJ over the Darfur carnage, and it turns a spotlight on the alleged role of foreign actors in Sudan's conflict. The outcome could establish an important precedent on whether states can be held liable for indirectly fueling genocidal violence in another country. In the immediate term, the proceedings keep international attention on Sudan's humanitarian crisis. Legally, the ICJ's rulings are binding

on the parties by the UN Charter, so a judgment against the UAE (even years from now) would carry substantial moral and political weight.

Ultimately, Sudan's move highlights the gravity of the Darfur situation. Whether the ICJ can meaningfully address a crisis unfolding amid an active war is uncertain. Nonetheless, the legal proceedings will document atrocities and could prod the involved parties toward restraint. In the best case, the mere threat of an ICJ order might discourage any external support that enables mass violence. In the worst case, if fighting and massacres continue unabated, the ICJ's eventual judgment will stand as an authoritative record that genocide was attempted and that those who aided it – directly or indirectly – were called to account. For the millions of Sudanese civilians whose lives hang in the balance, that is at least a step toward justice, however delayed.



Photo Credit: Wikimedia Commons

# Paddington Bear in Norwich: Embracing a Global Icon of Refuge

**Olivia Mephram**

In February, Norwich welcomed a beloved literary icon to the heart of our fine city – a charming statue of Paddington Bear. Nestled in the cathedral grounds, the statue invites visitors to sit beside the friendly bear on a bench, creating a delightful spot for fans and passersby alike. Norwich triumphed over 90 other towns and cities in the UK to secure a Paddington Bear statue, and the community came together to make the case and wrote letters of support. Norwich's decision to embrace Paddington feels particularly fitting – not least because of our status as a UNESCO City of Literature – but our city's long history of providing sanctuary to migrant communities. From the arrival of the "Strangers" fleeing persecution in the 16th century, to modern initiatives like Norwich City of Sanctuary's charitable efforts, Norwich has long fostered a culture of welcome – a tradition further reinforced by the arrival of Paddington Bear.

More than just a children's character, Paddington holds a cherished place in British culture as a symbol of warmth, kindness and acceptance. Introduced by Michael Bond in 1958, the infallibly polite little

bear from "deepest darkest Peru" was inspired by Bond's memories of British evacuees in World War II and the arrival of Jewish refugees in Britain. He arrives with a battered suitcase, a nametag that reads "Please look after this bear", and an affinity for home comforts in the form of marmalade sandwiches. The story resonates with the experience of migrants seeking a new home, carrying vulnerabilities and a hope for acceptance.

The Paddington books have sold over thirty-five million copies and have been translated into forty different languages since their original publication, with three hugely successful films released since 2014 that have been enjoyed by children and adults alike. Paddington has been cemented into British culture even more so in recent years. He had a tea party with Queen Elizabeth II in short made for her Platinum Jubilee and became a significant symbol and token of remembrance after her death in 2022.

The much-loved character has grown to personify British patriotism and sentimentality, yet it's a quiet contradiction that the reality faced by many real-life migrants today is often met with hostility, suspicion and barriers to belonging.

In 2022, civil servants put up parody deportation notices of Paddington on Home Office

noticeboards in reaction to the Rwanda plan proposed by the conservative government. Somewhat ironically, in October 2024, the Home Office issued an official British passport to Paddington Bear – a fictional migrant – as a prop for the film Paddington in Peru. In February 2025, Walthamstow MP Stella Creasy pointed out that Labour's new small boats crackdown that denies UK citizenship to refugees would mean turning away Paddington. Unsurprisingly she was mocked for this analogy by supporters of the crackdown – especially given that the comparison was to a fictional character. But fictional characters like Paddington can powerfully shape attitudes towards migration, symbolizing acceptance and the importance of welcoming newcomers. In this regard, cultural references are a useful tool in challenging restrictive immigration policy. Yet this positive influence risks contradiction when these symbols of compassion are celebrated, whilst real migrants face hostility – it reveals a gap between our cultural ideals and lived experiences.

Paddington has become a useful and important tool for sparking conversations about migration and inclusivity in British culture – it's been argued he "represents white ideals of assimilation", yet he is equally symbolic of migrant justice. He should not only foster a

culture of welcome but also offer an opportunity to raise further awareness of the realities faced by displaced people worldwide. His arrival in Norwich should help us bridge the gap between cultural sentimentality and meaningful change, and remind us of his story, – one of empathy, resilience and the belief that those who arrive on our shores should be met with compassion rather than suspicion.



Photo Credit: Wikimedia Commons

# Opinion

## 'Something like yours...something cheaper...something better' How Zelenskyy's Clothes United a Local Community

Emily Pitt-Shaw

I work in a pub in the heart of Norwich.

When Trump was elected as the 47th president of the United States in November, I was more horrified than ever about some of the opinions that walked through the doors. Middle aged men, most working class, believed that America was, truly, about to become great again.

"A woman couldn't run the corner shop down the road, let alone a country", I overheard one Thursday night. He ordered a single vodka-lemonade. I charged him a double.

With Donald Trump's victory over Kamala Harris last year came, what I still believe to be, one of the most shocking exit polls in political history. He had won 66% of the white working-class vote, and a larger share of the working-class Black and Latino vote than he had in 2020. As you may expect, your average, local free-house in the UK has a similar demographic split. Construction workers, mechanics, plumbers and electricians quickly become regulars on a first name basis.

But something's changed. When Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy visited the Oval Office on February 28th of this year, donning cargo trousers and his signature black sweatshirt, he suddenly became a local. The same tradesmen that came in for a pint of ale everyday at 5pm, suddenly saw Zelenskyy as one of their own. His attire, whilst perhaps unconventional for a visit to a political landmark, showed an excruciatingly hard-working, humble and enduring man. Mocked not once but twice on his outfit by President Trump and Real America's Voice reporter Brian Glenn; the people I served at work were understandably bitter. It mirrored what many had once been told - 'why are your hands so dirty?', 'why are you wearing your work clothes still?' and, most painfully, 'why do you look so poor?'. Trump had missed the mark.

A president who many working class men believed to be powerful, truthful and somewhat God-like, had become their bully. He was suddenly the white-collar manager, or the middle-class business owner who had condemned these

same men at some point in their lives for what they wore, what they look like. "Did you hear what he said? Did you see him smile as he said it? F---ing disgusting, I'll tell you that", I was told. I'm still convinced I saw tears in his eyes as he drunkenly preached the same to his friend. What genuinely surprises me even more is that this topic of conversation did not end at the bottom of the glass. Or after two or three nights of heavy drinking. In fact, two weeks on as I'm writing this, it continues.

These same blue-collar workers, many of which once exclusively read Facebook posts as news, were researching themselves. Each day they come in with new information. "You know he chooses to wear it? It's a way of remembering the troops he represents. Good guy", one told me. He'd read it in The Guardian, supposedly.

What I have learnt - what I perhaps already knew but never acknowledged - is that we are all one comment away from becoming someone else. These pub regulars, although nev-

er lacking empathy, had never been able to relate so much to someone so different. Suddenly, the man leading his country through war, became the man leading his country through war.

Suddenly, he was not so different. They were him, and he was them.

And if you ever need to see that unity and resilience, a restoration of faith, perhaps it's just down the road from you - through large oak doors, and sat on a bar stool.



Photo Credit: FMT

## UK Attack On Privacy Threatens To Spark A Diplomatic Incident.

Zac Steventon-Barnes

It is not every day that Donald Trump gets to play the part of defender of civil liberties. His constant attacks on the marginalised (covered in last month's issue), were accompanied in his first campaign by promises, thankfully undelivered, to lock up political opponents. His return has been accompanied with an attack on oversight across the US government, including a move to fire 3 members of the Privacy and Civil Liberties Oversight Board, taking it below the number it needs to operate.

Fortunately, last week he was meeting Keir Starmer, a man who as Director of Public Prosecutions pushed for absurdly harsh sentences for people caught up in the riots that erupted after the police shooting of Mark

Duggan, a move that culminated in sentences like 6 months of jail time for someone whose only crime was to steal a bottle of water from Lidl. The current row surrounds Apple preventing people turning on its Advanced Data Protection (ADP) feature in the UK, which uses encryption to prevent anyone - including Apple - from accessing a user's iCloud. Apple's statement did not say why, only that it "can no longer offer" the feature and it was "deeply disappointed" in this turn of events. It stated, "we have never built a backdoor or master key to any of our products or services, and we never will." However, it follows reports in the Washington Post that the UK government had demanded access to iCloud data protected with ADP using a secret order under the Investigatory Powers Act 2016 (known as the 'snoopers charter'). This has provoked outrage on both sides of the political aisle in the US. In a joint letter

from Democratic Senator Ron Wyden and Republican Representative Andy Biggs it was described as, "effectively a foreign cyber-attack waged through political means."

Meanwhile, director of National Intelligence Tulsi Gabbard stated lawyers are working on determining whether the UK may have broken a treaty it signed with the US. This appears to have even reached Donald Trump, who told The Spectator whilst his meeting with Keir Starmer was "very good", he told the prime minister on the topic of the alleged order, "you can't do this ... That's something, you know, that you hear about with China." The order also makes it seem like the UK's intelligence services do not speak to each other, as The Telegraph pointed out only a few months ago the UK's National Cyber Security Centre had recommended turning

on ADP as a measure lawyers and other legal professionals should take on its website. The National Cyber Security Centre appears to have now removed this guidance. A review of previous versions of the webpage by Concrete using archive.today, shows that this page has been changed to redirect users to a related page sometime between the 24th of February and the 4th of March. The Telegraph article was published on the 25th of February.

A spokesperson for the British government told Reuters "We have a close intelligence relationship with the U.S. and we take the partnership seriously," while The Minister of State for Security told the BBC, "It would not be appropriate for me either to confirm or to deny the existence of any notices under the Investigatory Powers Act 2016."

# Balancing Awareness, Activism and Wellbeing During UEA Climate Week

Liv Mepham  
Opinion Editor

The awareness and experience of escalating climate threats and inaction can generate distress or worry about climate change. Its effects on people, the environment and the future impact us all, making feelings of “doomism” ever more daunting. As a self-confessed over thinker, these feelings are made worse considering a heightened awareness and scientific and technological advancements - the climate crisis is an elephant in the room we can no longer ignore.

Climate guilt comes from our inability or unwillingness to effectively protect the environment. Many find themselves scrutinizing every trip, meal or purchase – yet for many, living a fully sustainable lifestyle is simply not financially viable. Being informed and caring deeply is important, but no one can carry the weight of the climate issue alone. It's also fair to say that the climate crisis is not always reported with the urgency it requires. In the UK, Teach the Future are a student-led campaign that push for a reform if the UK education system around climate justice, sustainability and the natural world.

In 2023, UNESCO revealed that when 58,000 teachers were asked about the challenges of teaching climate change, 30% admitted they were not familiar with suitable teaching methods.

While we now have more resources than ever to educate ourselves on climate issues, we shouldn't be too hard on ourselves for not knowing enough or let this discourage us from learning more. Undoubtedly, we all have a re-

sponsibility in the climate crisis. But we all have a responsibility to look after ourselves as students and individuals, and to enable mental wellbeing and long-term engagement. Integrating sustainable habits where we are able can make a difference, and students still can contribute meaningfully by staying open and informed. UEA Climate Week offers a range of engaging and enlightening events; on Thursday, 20 March Greenpeace campaigner Ruby Rae will give a talk on international oil, activism and the new Greenpeace vs. Big Oil campaign. Immediately after this, there will be an interactive “climate action simulation” event taking place. It is a role-playing negotiation game, allowing participants to rapidly assess different solutions to climate change such as land use changes or energy efficiency. This event sounds both fun and educational; especially for those like me who feel regrettably underinformed about key stakeholders and real-world, practical climate solutions. More information can be found under events on the SU website!

Whilst this stage of the semester is a busy time for a lot of us, why not find some time to check out some of the events on offer? It's a great way to step away from academic work, learn something new and alleviate feelings of climate anxiety and guilt. After all, taking an open and active approach to learning is valuable and productive! As well as this, climate wellbeing and resilience are essential green skills, and recognising their importance is a key step in developing climate awareness.

## “Let's Paint the Green Eyed Monster Pink”

Hannah Foley

When I got into an all girls grammar school, the first thing people told me was “be careful.” Look out for how nasty the girls will be. I imagined an experience like *Wild Child* or *Mean Girls*, and prepared to face my very own Harriet Benthleys and Regina Georges. I went in expecting the worst - and yet came out completely unscathed. I did not face any more cruelty than in your average school. Those I went to school with are certainly on a path to success, yet most alumni I speak to have already lost contact with their closest friends, but why? An environment full of intelligent, hard-working, young girls led us to grow jealousy. As teen girls, we were taught to strive for a beauty ideal, and were left feeling deflated. We couldn't all share first place. Coming to university is much a similar experience for many, drawing constant comparisons, feeling like an imposter, and simply attempting to navigate life.

I recently rewatched the 2001 classic, *Legally Blonde*. The protagonist, Elle Woods, is a fashion major who achieved top marks. She is a confident, gorgeous, blonde. On paper, she was the very thing I feared entering school. After getting into Harvard Law School, she meets Vivian, who immediately deems Elle as her rival. She takes effort in making her look foolish, she reduces her to a dumb blonde and laughs at her choice of pink attire. However, Elle continues to be unapologetically herself, kind to those who doubt her, and generally friendly. To jump to the film's ending, we later uncover Vivian's insecurity. Elle is kind to

her whilst she is vulnerable, and upon graduation they become best friends. Most would not want to admit it, but Vivian is relatable in her resentment of Elle. As an objective audience member, Elle is loveable. However, if I was in school with her, I too would view her as an opponent. I could grow to resent her “perfection.”

Whether inherent through teenage experience, or taught to us via Hollywood beauty campaigns and academic pressure, women are in fact trained to be competitors. Whilst this isn't to say my school experience was all terrible, I wish I had much sooner learnt from this film. Vivian initially attempts to bring Elle down, embarrass her, and find her faults. Jealousy too quickly forms hatred and cruelty: this is the warning I should have been given. We're taught to view jealousy as negative, but it can just as easily become a compliment. Elle also envies Vivian, but bringing up other women will get you a hell of a lot further than being mean.

I am jealous of my friends all of the time, and that is why I love them. They are brilliant, they are smart, they achieve great things. If I really am made up of the five closest people to me, then I am so glad it's them.

*“As teen girls, we were taught to strive for a beauty ideal, and were left feeling deflated. We couldn't all share first place.”*

Photo Credit: Wikimedia Commons



# Investigation

## How Much Would you Pay for a Better Future? Concrete Investigates UEA’s New Plan to Meet Net Zero Goal.

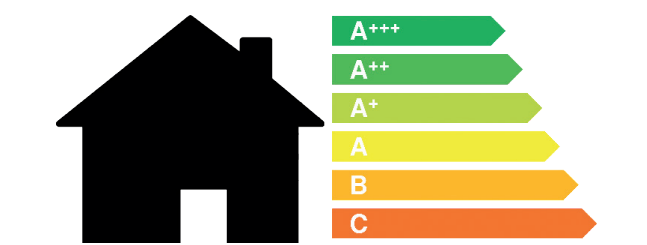
|  |                                                  |
|--|--------------------------------------------------|
|  | <b>Emily Pitt-Shaw</b><br>Investigation Editor   |
|  | <b>Petra Todd</b><br>Environmental Correspondant |
|  | <b>Jaz Brook</b><br>Environmental Correspondant  |

**A proposal to remove two large engines that supply power and heat at the University of East Anglia may mean an 80% reduction in carbon emissions at the institution is still on track.**

Concrete’s investigations team can reveal that plans to get rid of the Jenbacher Combined Heat & Power (CHP) plant could see the machines being removed earlier than the previously planned 2030.

The anticipated cost of the removal will match the revenue made from selling the equipment, {not yet confirmed}

They currently produce 2 million watts of power and 1.7 million watts of heat per hour each - enough to power approximately 3,310 homes every day.



The action alone would reportedly reduce scope one and two carbon emissions by 66% (versus 2015) - leaving the University of East Anglia to reduce a further 14% by 2030 to meet their 80% reduction commitment.

University of East Anglia has committed to a net zero goal by 2045, with scope three emissions being the primary reduction focus from 2030 onwards.

The reshaped Sustainability Committee and its Implementation Teams that have been tasked with delivering the changes required to meet such commitments.

UEA’s Head of Sustainability for the Estates Directorate, Matthew Bray, said: “the removal of the CHP plant is the most critical element of reaching the 2030 target”.

Instead, the University of East Anglia will now buy all of its power from the grid.

Image Credits:

Wikimedia Commons, Wannapic and StockCake

### So, what is ‘the grid’?

The power grid is an interconnected network of power-lines and stations that transmit and distribute electricity to consumers.

With the removal of the Jenbacher engines, all of UEA’s power supplies will be bought from the grid which currently supplies them with just 10-20% of power. This will be 100% renewable.

Matthew Bray suggested that the University of East Anglia could also improve the quality of the renewable guarantee of origin (REGO) by adding solar and wind generators, but no concrete plans have been confirmed as of yet.

The next question is the heat – what will this be replaced with?

There is mention of some renewables, but it will mostly rely existing on gas fired condensing boilers. Additional ones are to be installed later this year in Energy Centre Two (previously Biomass). The phase out of this method has not yet been determined.



### Why does this matter?

With recent data announcing that January 2025 was 1.75 degrees above pre-industrial levels, compared to the 1.5 degree maximum, the climate crisis is more serious than ever.

The past few weeks have been disconcertingly hot for March, and despite how nice it’s been to not be cold all the time, the heat is proving that rapid decarbonisation is needed across all institutions.

The climate crisis has been caused by the burning of fossil fuels. They release warm gases into the atmosphere and cause what can be described as catastrophic consequences.

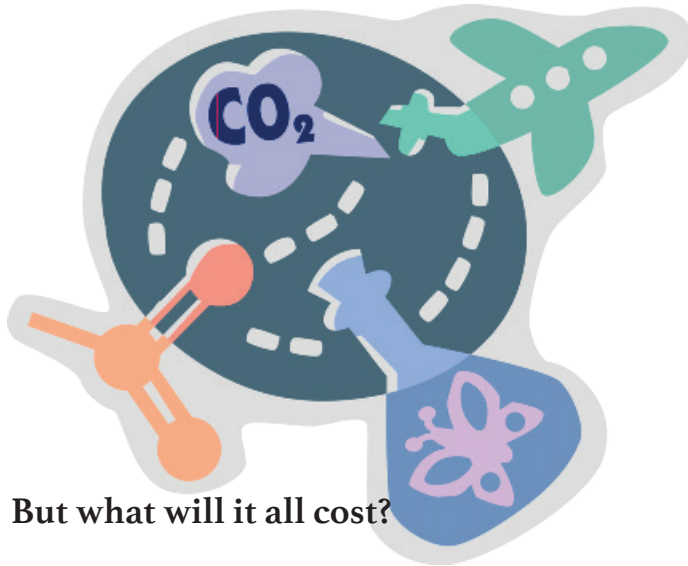
Just recently it was reported that February 2025 saw global sea ice at a record low, yet oil and gas fields continue to be explored by fossil fuel companies and governments. Despite the problem stemming from the top, all institutions have a part to play in the low carbon transition and universities are no exception.

It is vital that the University of East Anglia is part of this green transition. Educational institutions carrying out genuine carbon reductions portrays the severity of global heating to students.

In turn, these students will hopefully be inspired to make positive changes in their future careers and lives.

The climate crisis will massively affect our generation and devastatingly, our children’s childhoods will be very different to that of our own. If the world continues to carry on with business as usual, we risk societal collapse from crop failure, global water shortages, and extreme weather events. The California wildfires are just one of many examples of such.

These consequences pose global health risks to the populations, and even death in the most severe of cases.



### But what will it all cost?

With the University of East Anglia’s budget deficit of £7.6 million, not including Pension Schemes, in 2023/24, there may be some speculation around the financial implications of any decision.

Matthew explained that: “the CHP plant, since they were installed in 2017, have saved us [on average] over £1 million per annum - but that have depended on many factors; engine reliability, power and gas price, carbon price and maintenance contractor performance”.

In the last two years, energy market price volatility has effected these savings.

Instead, the university is looking to secure a fixed price virtual power purchase agreement from a portfolio of generators. This would allow them to remain in line with both the long-term financial forecast and stay on course to cut carbon emissions by 80% by 2030.

This strategy delivers a more stable and predictable financial and emissions outlook.

Matthew Bray said: “predictable and stable costs that guarantee to deliver the current financial forecast are preferable to potential savings that come with a very high level of risk and require a lot of manpower and effort to control”.

“Staying within the long-term financial forecast is key, and that is why the collaborative, engagement and synergy elements of the Environmental Sustainability Strategy are our immediate focus”.



**1.5 degrees above pre-industrial levels** = industrialisation was the point where we started adding warming gases into the atmosphere. Scientists have identified that the safe limit of warming is 1.5 degrees above what the global average temperature was before this time.

**Scope 1** = direct emissions that a company generates from its own operations and controlled sources.

**Scope 2** = indirect emissions from the generation of electricity, heat, steam, or cooling that a company purchases and uses.

**Scope 3** = all other indirect emissions that occur in a company’s value chain

**Decarbonisation** = this describes the process of moving away from fossil fuels

**Tyndall centre** = a centre of climate research at UEA.

### What does the future look like?

Opinion by Jaz Brook

“Net Zero by 2045 is the commitment date for all three scopes”. But how will this be achieved?

Close connections to other institutions and networks may be key.

“For example, we are members of EAUC and AUDE and they are both a source of detailed guidance as well as hubs for communicating with our peers across the sector”, said the Head of Sustainability said.

The Environmental Association of Colleges and Universities and The Association of University Directors of Estates are large-scale national networks for higher education that host events and develop and share resources that facilitate sustainability.

However, their strategies focus on scope one and two, pitching scope three as a future issue. As specified by the Carbon Trust, scope three includes all additional value chain emissions from waste disposal to employee commuting, investment to product inputs.

Although it’s reasonable to start with scopes one and two, this piece-meal approach might seem like sustainability isn’t prioritised or embedded in the whole institution but is instead tokenistic.

As states on the website for Higher Education Statistics Agency, UEA’s total scope three emissions total to approximately 113.712 tonnes of CO2 every year. This includes waste, water supply and wastewater treatment - the emissions of procurement, investment and employee travel aren’t mentioned or measured.

Matthew said: “In addition to being members of various groups we have also had some mutual/exchange style visits with other institutions, most recently Lancaster”.

The Lancaster University is definitely one to watch when it comes to decarbonisation.

They recently launched its groundbreaking Net Zero Energy Centre which, according to their website, “is part of a sector-leading renewable energy project to virtually eliminate the use of gas to heat its Lancaster campus.”

These connections in higher education decarbonisation are incredibly important for impactful action, but to me, it’s unclear how this will support scope three. In fact, it’s perhaps unclear any net zero strategies what the future will look like post-scope two.

### First Student-Led Climate Week in the UK at UEA 17th-21st of March

Are you ready for a fun-packed week of over 35 completely sustainable, student-led and inclusive events?



Youth Climate Solutions and the UEA Student Sustainability Network are proud to announce Climate Week at UEA from the 17th -21st of March 2025.

I’m Jaz Brook and I’m an Environmental Correspondent at Concrete. I’m also a DEV student, an activist and a social entrepreneur, and in collaboration with my organisation Youth Climate Solutions and the Student Sustainability Network here at UEA we are bringing you an amazing line-up of events.

I, along with others, feel that university is falling short of truly preparing us for the complexities of the world we’re about to enter.

So we’re taking matters into our own hands!

All careers need climate-conscious skills and young people need the skills to manage their wellbeing and fight injustice. This week is an incredible testament to our power as students when we come together for change.

Our team of over 20 students have worked tirelessly over the past few months to create a schedule of events that truly has something for everyone.

We’ve included climate action talks, workshops, fairs on careers, wellbeing and psychology, medicine, plant-based food, business, policy, fashion, grassroots, art, waste, yoga, communication, sport, travel, campaigns, dance, social justice, energy and more.

You will also find the University of East Anglia’s Sustainability Team there, alongside Matthew Bray.

In the meantime, you can reach out to him and the team at [sustainability@uea.ac.uk](mailto:sustainability@uea.ac.uk) to ask any questions about this article, or other topics.

We hope you can make it!

# Interview

## Norfolk Wildlife Trust Launches Youth Forum

Norfolk Wildlife Trust has recently introduced the NWT Youth Forum- a local action initiative aimed at bringing together “passionate young people from across Norfolk” to “protect and restore wildlife habitats,” whilst “empowering others to take action”. I caught up with Alex Day, Norfolk Wildlife Trust’s Senior Youth Engagement Officer, to explore the vision behind the Youth Forum and discuss how the trust is amplifying youth voices in its mission to conserve Norfolk’s wildlife.

**Question: Why was the youth forum created?**

Answer: “We know how important it is for young people in Norfolk to form deep con-

nections with the outdoors and have the opportunity to lead on nature’s recovery. By 2030, we’re aiming to support 1 in 4 people to act for nature, and our Wild Youth Action programme is a big part of that. This is the first time we’ve engaged specifically with young adults, and we can’t wait to build these new relationships and find out what the committee are most passionate about.”

The Youth Forum is a committee of 16-25 year-olds that meet monthly and support volunteering events throughout the year and this is all part of NWT’s Wild Youth Action programme: “[the] programme is part of our new Building Foun-

dations for the Future project, and is made possible by a generous grant from The National Lottery Heritage Fund. Central to the project is incorporating a youth voice and activism into Norfolk Wildlife Trust to ensure that young people are equipped and empowered to protect Norfolk’s natural heritage.”

**Question: How have NWT engaged with young people in the past?**

Answer: “At NWT Hickling Broad and Marshes and NWT Sweet Briar Marshes we host regular Wilder Wardens sessions for young people aged 11 to 17 who help manage these reserves and habitats with support from the Reserve Wardens. A typical session might involve raking and burning reeds to prevent habitat succession at Hickling or building a dead hedge in Sweet Briar Marshes’ woodlands beside the paths.”

**Question: How will the Youth Forum transfer young people’s thoughts and ideas into physical action?**

Answer: “Young people have bold, imaginative ideas and are really invested in creating a healthier natural world, we just want to act as a catalyst and help young people achieve their goals for wildlife. One of the Youth Forum’s first projects will be taking over the management of an important place for wildlife, called Sloughbottom Meadows. This will become our first youth-led reserve! We’ll work closely with expert ecologists and the Norwich Fringe Project to up-skill Youth Forum members and

turn their ideas into action.”

**Question: Have young people been consulted in the Youth Forum’s development, and if so, how?**

Answer: “It’s fundamental that young people have a say on all aspects of our Wild Youth action programme. What the group will achieve together is richer and feels more relevant to our young people when this happens. We’ve worked closely with youth organisations including MAP, Sprowston Youth Engagement project and Break to find out what issues young people are facing and collect ideas. Consultation is an on-going process and we’re looking forward to regularly spending time with the Youth Forum and shaping our programme led by their ideas, hopes and aspirations.”

**Question: What are the benefits of the Youth Forum for young people?**

Answer: “A growing body of scientific research shows just how important nature is to our wellbeing, and the Youth Forum aims to serve a big dopamine hit by offering young people opportunities to socialise and work outdoors in wild spaces. As part of our 2025 Youth Forum programme we’re partnering with The Resilience Project, a youth-led community set-up to enable other young people concerned about climate ‘to find their peace, their power and their people’. We hope members will feel more resilient and optimistic by taking part.”

**Question: Are there any specific benefits for University Students?**

Answer: “The Youth Forum



# Environmental Correspondent Jaz Brook in conversation with the Norfolk Wildlife Trust's Senior Youth Engagement Officer, Alex Day



offers an alternative education that is a healthy supplement to any university degree- supporting employment and well-being, and widening networks. Away from the pressure of exam-measured success, members will enjoy hands-on conservation tasks, have the opportunity to lead on community projects and work with students from across multiple disciplines. It's also an opportunity to leave the campus and explore wild corners of Norfolk!"

**Question: What are the benefits of the Youth Forum for NWT?**

Answer: "We know that nature really needs our help, and the scale of the challenge we face is growing every day. Young people are the future leaders within nature conservation, so investing in young people now is investing in our wildlife in the future. Working with the Youth Forum brings us new perspectives, helps us connect with young people in ways that they relate to, and allows us to have a wider impact on wildlife and their habitats, safeguarding the future of nature. We hope that by taking part in the Youth Forum, protecting and restoring our county for wildlife becomes a life-long passion for more young people and, in turn, strengthens the conservation sector for many years to come."

**Question: How will you ensure a diverse range of youth voices with-**

**in the Youth Forum?**

Answer: "To help more young people take action and learn about wildlife, we've created a progression ladder of Wild Youth Action activities, that supports people to try one-off volunteering sessions and then progress to leadership roles, like the Youth Forum, when they're ready. For Youth Forum members, we're providing outdoor equipment and covering travel expenses; and during sessions we're ensuring small groups and quiet spaces to help make the experience comfortable. These ideas are informed by listening activities held last year with youth organisations such as Break, and we're also working closely with staff across departments, including our Equality Diversity and Inclusion Officer, to make the experience as accessible as possible, helping a greater diversity of voices to take part."

**Question: How will you track and measure the impact of the Youth Forum?**

Answer: "Each Youth Forum member will keep a written journal documenting their time on the committee, recording their reflections, progress and ideas for the future as they go; and also chart their progress with start-of-project and end-of-project questions. We're working closely with external evaluators to ensure we collect personal stories and transformations in engaging ways, for example through a film or exhibition."

**Question: How will the Youth Forum link to other NWT projects?**

Answer: "As well as managing Sloughbottom Meadows alongside the Norwich Fringe Project, Youth Forum members will have opportunities to support other campaigns and initiatives with the Trust; for example by supporting the PR and Comms Team with news articles or the Engagement Team with activities at schools and colleges. Our activities will be informed by the passions and interests of group members."

**Question: In your opinion, why is youth involvement in general conservation and re-wilding important and what are the benefits?**

Answer: "Taking part in conservation volunteering as a

young person can provide transformative wellbeing benefits, which can be felt long into the future. Simply spending time outdoors can improve your mood, physical health and help you feel more resilient. It's also important for the future of Norfolk's wildlife that more young people are supported to form deep connections with wild spaces. The Youth Forum aims to encourage positive life-long habits and transferable skills that empower young people and support our national heritage to thrive."

To find out more and keep up-to-date with the Wild Youth Action programme, sign-up to the newsletter: <https://www.norfolk-wildlifetrust.org.uk/youth-action-now-e-newsletter>



Wilder Wardens at Hickling- Photo credits: Isabelle Mudge

# Lifestyle

## Botanical Elegance: The Things We Should Learn from Nature

**Valentina Vinciarelli**  
Lifestyle Editor

In a society which often shuts its curtains onto all things natural and spontaneous, it is easy to ignore the *essentia* of our human life as well as our shared *existentia* with the wider living world. It is easy to miss the changing of the seasons, the beginnings or ends of hibernation, even the gradual shifts in the timings of sunsets. It is easy to forget how and where we feature in this cycle, if we still feature in it at all.

Suppose we were to open our curtains now, all of them, both the literal and symbolical ones, and suppose further that a voice – say, William Wordsworth’s – were to call out to us: “Come forth into the light of things, | Let Nature be your teacher. [...] Come forth, and bring with you a heart | That watches and receives.” What would Nature teach us if we paid attention? What changes would she inspire within us?



Credits: Unsplash

Perhaps, we’d first be brought out into the garden and shown the daisies that stick out from the green expanse. We’d be told to notice how they all look slightly bent, bent towards the direction of the Sun. For indeed it is a fact that daisies are ‘heliotropic flowers’, namely flowers that track the Sun’s motion across the sky to promote their energy intake and growth. The dedication with which

these small beings **contort, change, and adapt in order to follow the light** seems like something worth learning: our first learning.

Next, we’d probably set out to visit the nearest park. We’d have to walk through the town to get there and, as we walk, we would be made attentive to the moss and weeds which have

grown around the poles of the traffic lights, against their cold metal, against the suffocating layer of hard cement. As moisture and nutrients accumulate inside the microscopic crevices of the concrete, the moss and weeds grow and anchor their roots. It is this very root action and its resulting pressure that breaks through those inhospitable barriers and converts them into spaces for renewal. Our second learning is before us and, this time, has much to do with **strength, persistence, and willingness to grow.**

Upon reaching the park, we’d be asked to sit on the grass and observe our surroundings. Our eyes would surely be drawn to the trees that outline our space. We would look up at their voluminous crowns and their complex webs of intertwining branches. There is no way of determining where each one begins nor ends because the branches of one crown are not only woven amongst themselves, but also with the

branches of other crowns from other adjacent trees. They graze at each other, hold hands, and twist together. We would look closer still and would immediately notice that what had initially appeared to us as two separate trees, is actually the merging of two trees into one. It happens often and it carries the name of ‘inosculation’: a natural phenomenon in which the trunks, branches or roots of two trees become joined. They support one another, they share resources, they grow together. Our third learning surely has to be about the **power of connection and unity**; about how **enrichment is a collaborative effort, after all, not a solitary one.**

Springtime is just around the corner, making it possible for us to step outside into the sun and actualise the above itinerary. With our renewed sense of appreciation for the natural world and its botanical elegance, we are made ready again to open the curtains, follow the sun, stay strong, and share this experience with our

## Witchcraft Fever: Are We Heading Towards Another Occult Revival?

**Fiona Hill**  
Co-Editor-In-Chief



Credits: Unsplash

If you were to turn on the television in 1973 you might have been so lucky to have been greeted with a public information film going by the name of ‘Lonely Water’. Featuring the Grim Reaper as he stands ominously by the side of a pond, the audience watches as young children fall into its depths. The message is clear yet terrifying; water is dangerous, don’t play near it. Shown during advertising breaks as a way of educating the general public, the Central Office of Information produced countless 1-2 minute films such as this. Although they may not seem particularly remarkable today, it might be useful to note that the genre, atmosphere and overall tone was a sharp deviation from the bright cartoon visuals that were shown in the 1960s. In many

ways, this was due to the growing interest in the supernatural, the esoteric and in other words, ‘the occult’ — a counter-culture that was gradually seeping into the mainstream.

An occult revival was no new phenomenon in Britain in the 20th century. The 1920s had seen a steep incline in those becoming involved with Spiritualism, a belief in the possibility of contact with the spirits of the dead. This can be understood to some degree as an after-effect of the First World War, with many struggling to comprehend their grief in a meaningful manner within the more traditional framework of the church. However, it was in 1951, when the Witchcraft Act of 1735 was repealed, that now infamous literature such as *The Witch-Cult in Western Europe* and the writings of Gerald Gardner were to be published. Gardner’s writing in particular was hugely significant in establishing the neo-pagan Wiccan religion, inspiring many to explore witchcraft and practical spell work. Although these books had begun to seep into the cultural consciousness, the 1960s as a time of social upheaval and rejection of mainstream values can also be seen as laying the foundations of what was to come.

But what did the 1970s occult revival actually look like? With roots in the newfound pop-

ularity of the esoteric bookshop, ‘alternative’ practices such as astrology, divination and mysticism were becoming increasingly available to the masses. Although many of these customs were harmless, Britain was entering the heyday of the tabloid press, with its love for ‘real-life’ stories on witch cults and satanic rituals almost exclusively revealing a darker side to the occult. It was these shocking and often sexualised stories that began to be represented within the film and television of the time, with Robin Hardy’s *The Wicker Man* and Piers Haggard’s *Blood on Satan’s Claw* coming to be characteristic of how the public saw the occult. This transition into the mainstream can be seen to be fully realised by the BBC’s broadcasting of dark and supernatural motifs in what is essentially the agent of the establishment; a public information film (e.g. *Lonely Water*).

But can this whirlwind of supernatural curiosity during the 1970s tell us anything about today? Post-Brexit, and indeed Post-Pandemic, there has been a sharp rise in spiritual and occult interest, with sales of tarot cards tripling in 2020 and pagan Wicca being one of the fastest growing religions worldwide. Again we can see this being translated into certain passionate subsets in art and media. For instance, independent film and production company A24, with their involvement in the promotion of

folk horror as a genre in film and as a result, literature. However, whether we can say that this has entered the mainstream or even the cultural zeitgeist is a little bit more ambiguous. With signs pointing towards what could either be a repeat or a red herring, the question is as follows — are we on the precipice of an occult revival or will we be balancing on the edge for another decade yet?



Credits: Unsplash

# Anne Glia: Pink Sparkly Buckets and Stress Reduction

**Kasey Campbell**  
Anne Glia (Agony Aunt)

Hello everyone! Welcome back to another issue of Concrete. I'm Aunt Glia, your resident Agony Aunt!

How are we all doing this fine month of March? I can almost hear the collective cry from all the third-year dissertation students in the back. Me too, gang.



Credits: Unsplash

It's always stressful, isn't it? Whether it's exams, summative work or a dissertation, we all know the feeling when the academic pressure starts to build up, alongside everything else. I am writing this article in UNIO late after studying eight hours and my eye is twitching from excessive caffeine intake. Do as I say though, guys, not as I do.

But that does indeed bring me to the question of the hour: **“Anne Glia, how do I deal with the excessive pressure from summative work? Balancing everything is so overwhelming”.**

I'd like to draw your attention to the psychological concept of ‘The Stress Bucket’. Imagine a bucket, it can be whatever bucket you want. Mine is pink and sparkly – but that's just me. Got your bucket? Great.

This bucket represents how much stress you can reasonably manage. Think of all the stressful things in your life filling the

bucket. You have lectures to catch-up on, you're late to class, your partner forgot to tumble dry your socks and they're still wet. All these things, big and small, fill up your stress bucket. Eventually your bucket will fill, and you might struggle to manage it all. That's when I do something like buy yet another planner, or decide I need to dye my hair (no this is not a sign to dye your hair. Remember, as I say not as I do, people!).

When the stress bucket is full, we need to empty it. Emptying the bucket could be done through any activity that makes you feel calm; things like your favourite hobby or even just chatting with a friend. However, there are also research supported methods of emptying your stress bucket. Gulzhaina Kassymova and colleagues published a study on stress reduction techniques for students in 2018, finding meditation, deep breathing and progressive muscle relaxation to be some of the most helpful!

Once you've emptied your stress bucket a bit, it's time to organise. The ‘Eisenhower Matrix’ is one method of organisation that I personally find beneficial. Divide a page into four, along the top write ‘Urgent’ and ‘Non-Urgent’ and down the side write ‘Important’ and ‘Not Important’. Then you can divide your tasks accordingly. Focus on the ‘Urgent/Important’ box first and then work your way through.

Now, your stress bucket is empty, and you have a to-do list organised by priority. Also, find me in the Puzzle section to find out which relaxing activity is best for you based on your horoscope!

Whatever you've got going on, prioritising your mental health is important. After all, you can't pour from an empty cup! Take the time to invest in yourself, find a method of organising that works for you. You'll be alright.

Best of luck,  
Anne Glia.

# The Importance of Bright Colours

**Olivia Mepham**

Bright colours play a crucial role in everyday life, offering a striking contrast to the rising trends of the “clean girl” aesthetic and its minimalist, beige-toned palettes. Have you ever noticed how a pop of colour can instantly lift your mood, transform a room or elevate an outfit? Whilst muted tones have dominated recent trends and create a sense of calm and simplicity for many, bright colours can shape our emotions, styles and spaces in unexpected ways.

Colours can have a psychological effect on us by triggering different moods and emotions. General associations with colours of different moods and emotions are somewhat subjective, and specific interpretations can vary across cultures. Generally, warm tones evoke emotions associated with comfort and warmth as well as love and anger. I was intrigued to learn that orange is often seen as the colour of extroverts, symbolizing optimism and self-confidence. Because it stimulates mental activity and encourages social interaction, orange is an excellent choice

for spaces where people gather, as well as for outfits in spaces that encourage collaboration. Perhaps from now on, I'll keep orange in mind for outfits on days where I have a seminar or a night out when I'm keen to meet some new people! I realised I was a person who chooses clothing based on individual pieces rather than pre-planned outfits, so dopamine dressing was a revelation. No longer do I agonise over whether a multicoloured striped shirt and bright blue checkered trousers necessarily “go together”. While it is undoubtedly satisfying when two perfect pieces go together, I realised I was holding on to too many pieces in the hope that they would someday match more than just one specific outfit. When you dress for yourself – without worrying about conformity and fashion norms (and even interiors!), it feels empowering! Pattern clashing is your friend! Mixing and matching vibrant colours and textures is fun, so dress for joy.

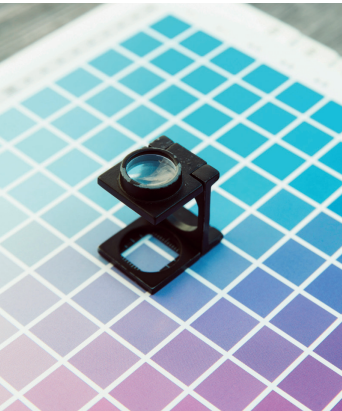
Dr Vien Chung, an Associate Professor of Colour Imaging Science at the University of Leeds, suggests a connection between colour combinations

and harmony - they “reassure balance, a pleasing appearance and visual correction”. There's something undeniably satisfying about how auburn hair pops beautifully with emerald, green, turquoise or blue outfits. Similarly, the classic pairing of pink and green is visually pleasing - perhaps it was revived upon the release of the new Wicked film, but for me it brings a warm sense of nostalgia for the early 2000s.

The ultimate festival for celebrating bright colours in all their splendour, the Hindu festival of Holi is commencing on Friday, 14 March. Known as the Festival of Colours, Love and Spring, it is celebrated by throwing coloured water and gulal (a coloured powder) at one another, symbolising joy and good over evil. The different colours thrown at Holi have their own vibrational frequencies and meanings; red symbolises strength and the life cycle, with green depicting new beginnings and growth. Connecting with people and sharing a unique cultural experience like Holi can greatly benefit our mental health overall, but the integration of colour therapy adds a huge element of foster-

ing feelings of positivity and renewal – bright colours, dancing and socializing all trigger our endorphins and evoke a feeling of optimism.

Credits: Unsplash



As students, we juggle busy schedules, academic pressures and the challenges of maintaining a work life balance. Embracing vibrant colours can boost confidence, evoke personal reflection and inspire creativity. In incorporating bright colours in our lives -whether through fashion, art, and cultural experiences such as Holi, - we can benefit our mood and outlook. This spring, don't shy away from vibrant hues whether you're dressing for seminars, aiming to boost focus in the library or simply seeking a mental refresh, as it's a simple way to bring energy and optimism into everyday life.

## Quick How To:

Growing Violas (Violaceae family) is a relatively easy and rewarding project. Follow these steps for a successful Viola growth!



Credits: Unsplash

- Materials Needed:**
- Viola seeds
  - Seed-starting mix
  - Pot with drainage holes
  - Watering Can or Spray Bottle
  - Windowsill

### Instructions:

#### 1. Pot + Soil

Select a pot with drainage holes to prevent waterlogging and root rot. Fill the pot with a seed-starting mix.

TIP: Violas prefer soil that's slightly acidic to neutral (pH 6-7).

#### 2. Add the Seeds

Scatter the Viola seeds on top of the seed-starting mix. Gently press the seeds into the soil, but do not cover them as they need light to germinate.

#### 3. Bright Spot

Place the pots in a bright spot with indirect light.

#### 4. Water Regularly

Water the soil gently and regularly using a watering can or spray bottle, keeping the surface evenly moist. Be careful not to overwater, as Violas don't like soggy soil nor stagnant water.

#### 5. Patience is Key

Wait for your Violas to germinate, to grow, and to bloom.

With proper care, your indoor Violas will reward you with their colourful company!

# Travel

## Embracing Confusion: Five Months in Japan

**Oscar Welchman**

Last year, I spent a semester living in central Tokyo, Japan. I arrived having never lived anywhere outside of the UK before, never learned another language except the very basic Japanese I had recently studied (in my own time; I study English and Creative Writing), and never lived in a place more populous than Norwich. For five months, I found myself in the biggest city in the world, navigating a language quite literally opposite to ours; symbols instead of alphabets, books read backwards, and sentences in vertical lines: top to bottom, right to left.

I lived in a comparatively quieter area of the central Tokyo Shinjuku Ward (quiet by Shinjuku standards, but far busier and more densely populated than anywhere Norwich. (For context, Shinjuku station is the busiest station in the world, with an output of 3.5 million passengers daily). I attended the prestigious Waseda Daigaku: a massive 50,000 student university with a comparatively small international student population, which had a campus made up of a collection of twenty-storey buildings and a stunning Japanese-style garden in the middle. Living in an international student building was a wonderful homebase; it was where I met and engaged with amazing people from all over the world, but it unnerved me how little the other foreign students around me engaged with the normal Japanese students around us. I was one of only three international students I knew to join 'circles'; Japan's name for university clubs and societies (but instead of their being 300 like at UEA, there were over 3,000). I started university in April, the beginning of the Japanese academic year. At this time, the Japanese I knew was minimal. I

could barely string a basic sentence together, let alone have conversations; and so I knew that attending the Waseda circle fair was going to be difficult. What I wasn't expecting was something resembling a music festival. As I entered the campus square, I waded through crowds of people, everyone trying to get my attention and handing me leaflets. I was obviously foreign, so students tried to recruit me with broken English phrases – I would learn later that university students may have high English reading and writing proficiency, but rarely were they taught to speak it in class; for most, English was a written, not spoken, language. I left the fair with enough leaflets to make a book.

**“I was the only non-native and Japanese beginner in the club of 60, but that student I met remains a friend of mine...”**

I joined two circles at Waseda. One was English Parliamentary Debating; it served as the perfect place to make English-speaking Japanese friends and learn about the political context of Japan (plus it gave me the upper hand as I was one of the few debating with my mother tongue). I also joined an elusive Japanese martial art. Coming from Okinawan karate, it is only practiced by around 10,000 people around the world. Taïdo was the name, and I joined because I met an English speaking student at the circle fair who told me the club was beginner friendly and open to Japanese beginners (I was to later find that I was the only non-native and Japanese beginner in the club of 60, but that student I met remains a friend of mine, and visited me in Norwich the other day). Taïdo became central to my experience of Japan; never before

had I felt so confused in my life as instructions I could not understand were shouted at me in a big Tatami-mat room. Their way of training was radically different to anything I had ever experienced before, and I stood out: I was the only westerner and, being 6'4, was a head taller than the second tallest Taïdo member. I joined new to the club with the first years, but when they realised I was in year older than they were, they quickly switched to a more formal register of Japanese and offered to call me 'Senpai' – a respectful name given to those older than you: living in Japan, you learn there is a great hierarchy of age.

One night a week, I visited my Japanese grandma and grandpa in Ookayama, Tokyo. They were not real relatives of mine, but had known my family for years; and they taught me what it was like to live in a Japanese household. Together with the Taïdo and other university friends I made, I credit them for teaching me almost all the Japanese I know today. My Japanese grandparents had a house in Yamagata prefecture; one of the most rural (and ageing) areas of Japan. It was both stunning and eerie to see the immensely beautiful mountainous landscapes (over 70% of Japan is mountainous) next to the almost derelict seaside resort towns; a relic of an 80s Japan still in an economic boom. One thing about Japan I particularly miss is the public baths. You enter, scrub yourself clean at a sit-down shower, then enjoy a variety of different baths, hot and cold, inside and outside, mineral and other. The perfect place to decompress. I now know the best locations in Shinjuku for public baths; it became a ritual for me to visit after a stressful week of work. And yes, you do bathe naked, and in public. Each bathhouse is split by sex,

and you learn to get comfortable with nudity. While awkward at first, I found myself more at ease bathing than I was most other times of the day, even with my western friends.

**“You learn to get comfortable with nudity. While awkward at first, I found myself more at ease bathing than I was most other times of the day, even with western friends...”**

One day I found myself at the Kanamara Penis festival. As an ancient Shinto festival, it celebrated... the penis. While eating a penis sweet and wearing a penis hat, I learned about the history of the penis festival and watched the portable penis shrine be carried around the town. I was confused a lot in Japan. But I loved it. I particularly remember, soon after arriving, going to the seaside island of Enoshima, where I watched the sun set over mount Fuji-san alongside Elias, a friend of mine from Norwich who had also come to study in Tokyo. We were elated; we couldn't believe our luck – just couldn't believe we were here. I miss Japan – I miss it passionately like you miss dreams or moments when you were a kid and life was easier. But in truth, I was glad to come home in the end. I needed to digest everything before I go back. And I do intend to; just like how I intend to one day be fluent in Japanese. I'm conversational now; I practice every day, and I continue to plan my return. I have a whole community to return to in Tokyo; family, friends...



Credit: Oscar Welchman

## Home's Most Beautiful Highways

**Caitlin Bennet**  
Senior Writer

Whenever you choose to browse your holidays, whether you are an early-bird planner or a last minute deals browser, you are normally looking at tourist hotspots and hotel destinations. How often do you think of the traveling you can do on arrival? Maybe after this article you will begin to think what bus rides, tours and car journeys you can take when you next travel abroad or plan your staycation. Let's start closer to home, where you are pri-

oritizing packing the wet weather gear rather than the sun cream and aloe vera gel. Britain has some incredible landscapes. From Scotland all the way to the southern counties, there are breath taking places to see and the best way to experience the wonder of these places is to drive through them. Let's start from the top – in Scotland you can visit one of the most publicized roads in the UK called North Coast 500. 516 miles of castles, beaches, hills and valleys with it's own website for you to browse if this article inspires you. In the legendary Peak District you have several well known roads.

In my opinion the most unexpected delight is Winnats Pass, a blind corner leads to a steep winding climb into the sky and who wouldn't want to explore the crystal cavern at its top! Let's go left before we go over water and appreciate the tarmac of Wales. The Coastal Way following an oceanic path of our west coast, is 180 miles in total but is voted one of the best road trips in the world if you have the time and petrol to explore the entirety of it. Over the water to Ireland, there are many to choose from however I believe your jaw will drop at the Ring of Derry with the breathtaking

beauty of the cliff formations or the causeway coastal route where you can see a world-renowned landmark as well on the roadtrip.

To discuss further afield in this article would be a challenge too great for the word count, but other countries best rated for the road trip are, obviously and famously, America, Canada, Australia and Germany; so I highly recommend looking at the tours and travel routes of the area, instead of spending as much time comparing hotel buffets (still incredibly important though).

# Locations from Film Celebrating Women Both Behind and On-Screen

**Tania Casali**  
Travel Correspondent

To recognise March as International Women's History Month, here are some beautiful locations from films either female-directed or featuring strong female-leads!

## Little Women (2019)

Little Women was directed by Greta Gerwig, an American director, writer and actress who has received many nominations and awards for her work. Filming took place around Massachusetts and the East Coast, including the town of Concord where Little Women was set in the original book published in 1868. A replica of Orchard House, where author Louisa May Alcott lived, was built on a 50-acre property in Concord for the movie. However, the original house is open to the public as a museum, shown by guided tours. Another notable location in the film is when Laurie, played by Timothee Cha-

lamet, proposes to Jo, played by Saoirse Ronan, on the picturesque Gibbet Hill in Groton, Massachusetts. This iconic site offers stunning views of the surrounding countryside.

## Past Lives (2023)

This film focuses on two childhood friends over the course of 24 years, directed by Celine Song, a Canadian director and playwright. Inspired by real events from Song's life, it was shot in a variety of locations including New York City and South Korea. The scenes from childhood of characters Nora, played by Greta Lee, and Hae Sung, played by Teo Yoo, were filmed in South Korea, showcasing traditional Korean urban architecture from the 1990s. The famous Madison Square Park in New York also features in the film, which is a 6.2-acres and open to the public. Located in the centre of Manhattan, it is a common location for people to take a stroll, have a picnic or enjoy various events such as concerts and sports.

## Hidden Figures (2016)

Hidden Figures follows the true story of three incredible African-American female

mathematicians at NASA who helped win the space race whilst dealing with racial and gender discrimination at work. The movie was primarily filmed around Georgia, USA, and settings were modified to reflect the racially segregated South in the 1960s. The Langley Research Centre in Virginia, where the mathematicians worked, was recreated for the film with studio sets and location shoots.

## The Salt Path (2025)

This film is an upcoming release in April, starring Gillian Anderson and Jason Isaacs. The movie is based on the true story of Raynor Winn and her husband Moth which deals with the themes of homelessness and the unpredictability of life. The couple embark on a year-long trek around the South West Coast Path in England, as a way to find purpose and healing, which runs along the coast of Exmoor and continues along the coast of North Devon into Cornwall. It covers 630 miles and on average takes 7-8 weeks to complete according to the South West Coast Path website. The current record time for completing the

trail is 10 days, 12 hours and 6 minutes, set by Kristian Morgan in September 2020!

## Legally Blond (2001)

In Legally Blond, sorority president Elle Woods who majors in fashion merchandising ends up following her ex-boyfriend to law school. She ends up falling in love with her studies and proves that both beauty and intelligence can go hand in hand. Although the film was primarily set at Harvard University, most campus scenes were filmed at a mix of UCLA, USC and Rose City High School in California. The final scene where the graduation ceremony takes place was actually filmed in London, as Reese Witherspoon was in the city for another film shoot. The original ending received negative feedback and so producers decided to re-do it with the ceremony. This took place at Private School Dulwich College.



Credit: Unsplash

# Don't Give Up on The American South

**Samuel Starling**

On the night of Donald Trump's second election victory, I was sat in a dive bar in the heart of Republican country: Mississippi. I'd lived there for some time earlier in the year, and was back visiting my partner with whom I now shared a drink, in solemn, depressed silence. A small boxy TV shared the news as it had done all day, but our two heads were the only ones turned toward it. In the corner of the bar sat a small group of fraternity brothers brandished in cotton Letters, and across the counter from us, a pair of young women. It was a quiet night, and the news of the shifted fate of the land of the free seemed to have made little splash on the civilian streets save our own quiet, despairing conversation.

Our friend who had been the other side of the bar from us, supplying us our liquor for the night, was making ready to leave with us when the college bar exploded, however. Unbeknownst to me, the aforementioned fraternity brothers and young women had been quietly bickering across the room until, in a fiery outburst, the latter pair had told the men to "go to hell." In a matter of moments, a stool had toppled over and a drink had been knocked flying to the floor.

The bar staff (our friend) quickly moved to calm things down, and the women soon left. In my dissolute ignorance I hadn't known what had caused it until later that night when my cognizant partner filled me in, and it was revealed unto me the tensions of the night. What had caused such a rift between complete strangers? The 47th President of the USA.

In the intoxicating fumes of cheap liquor and even cheaper moral spirits, the fraternity brothers had felt able to make several remarks as to the ownership of the two women's bodies. While this is as common as bar fights for many, Donald Trump's re-ascendancy seemingly gave courage to a group of men to mimic the words of Nicholas Fuentes, "your body, my choice." The fraternity brother's perceived victory, in Donald

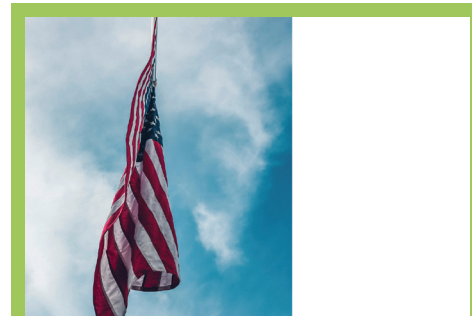
**"I was in a unique position a tourist and outsider to a momentous, deeply personal event for Americans on both sides of the political spectrum..."**

Trump's election, of the quasi-silent majority of young misogynists in American culture has set a stunningly miserable precedent. Yet, a couple of months on, seemingly little had changed in the land of the free. Even

that night as we left the bar, I found that the political landscape had little impact on the view of a starlit southern sky. Come the 20th January however, as I sat in the same bar and watched as Trump signed executive order after executive order live on television, reality hit. The bar was unchanged both in quality and staff, and yet the little town I had grown to love seemed changed. Outside, a young man about my age paraded the streets in nothing but cargo shorts and an American flag. I was in a unique position a tourist and outsider to a momentous, deeply personal event for Americans on both sides of the political spectrum. The victorious quite literally paraded in the streets; commiserations in such an environment are to be delivered quietly among friends you know support you.

Such is the dilemma of the South of the States, whose merits as a culture and community are (as I have experienced) boundless, but whose political ambitions put them at such severe odds with much of the Western world. During my time in Mississippi, "Southern Hospitality" was at the forefront of my experience with the local community. Were you to mention the fact that you have never had "real American BBQ" before, you would find five invitations the very next day;

during the Superbowl I had a group of a dozen people endearingly teaching me the rules of the sport amid a flow of generous drinks. My glowing experience of Mississippi is constantly at odds with the reality of their politics. My own literature does little but add to the misery. Nevertheless (as I must remind myself), one would do well not to despair. It is easy to demonise the States, but to do so would be to further silence the voices already repressed by the words of Fuentes, Tate and Trump – for in the deepest corners of Republican territory there are many fearful of the future, and to give up on America would be to give up on them. It may well be naivety, but I am confident in the generosity and spirit of the historic American South to grow against the progressively dramatic decisions of the new administration. I am anxious to return not merely to see loved ones, but to see if the little town I fell in love with has changed.



Credit: Unsplash

# Joie De Vivre: A Guide to The South of France

**Sofia Royal**  
Co-Editor-In-Chief

It had been on my bucket list for many years to visit the South of France. I had been to France before but never ventured into the beauty of the south. It was a spontaneous girl's trip with my housemate last July that finally saw my French dreams come true. The best part of the South of France is the proximity. Once you're down there, you're close to so many other iconic tourist attractions and places that there is no chance to ever feel bored.

**“It was only towards the end of our trip that I realised what a scam the the airport was running.”**

For any first timers, your central point should be always Nice. It's where all flights to that area of France land into and it gives you access to so many other places to

visit. Upon arrival at the airport you may decide that you want to take the metro to your hotel, but what many will find is how much of a tourist trap this is. When purchasing your metro card, it costs €10 for one return trip, but your return must be to the airport. Locals in Nice must laugh at tourists for paying this extortionate price when regular trips cost no more than €2. It was only towards the end of our trip that I realised what a scam the airport was running. The best way to get around this, is booking yourself a taxi. You'll find that you can pay less than €10 for one and if you're travelling with friends, it's even cheaper.

What I loved about Nice was the trains. As your centre-point, you can grab a train from Nice Ville and explore the south. On my trip, I ventured to Monaco. As the richest country and one of the smallest in the world, it was something that you could only dream

of. With Lamborghini's driving past every few seconds, it's a country that you should experience at least once when in the South of France. You can grab a coffee at the Cafe du Paris, whilst sitting in Casino Square and taking in the true opulence Monaco has to offer. For Formula One fans, you can head around the circuit and end your trip by the harbour to explore Prince Albert's car collection.

**“You can immerse your diet in the traditional French dishes of Moules Frites, Boeuf Bourguignon and Tartiflette.”**

Other trains will take you to Cannes, Antibes, Menton and Villefranche-sur-mer. All beautiful, these places are a great way of getting out of the hustle and bustle of Nice to get some peace on a sandy beach and explore the quaint villages of the south.

When in Nice, one of the best areas to head for is Old Nice. This was one of my favourite parts of my trip as you really get to see Nice for what it truly is. With a stunning cathedral in the square, you'll find yourself surrounded by cafes and restaurants. Here you can immerse your diet in the traditional French dishes of Moules Frites, Boeuf Bourguignon and Tartiflette.

My main piece of advice would be to enjoy the south as much as possible. There's so much to explore and the days can all blend into one. But find time to relax. Enjoy the expanse of the beach- as rocky as it is! Take a dip in the Mediterranean and soak in the sun.



Credit: UnSplash

## Top Spots to Visit From 'Emily in Paris'

**Tania Casali**  
Travel Correspondant

Paris has been in the spotlight in the last year- with the Olympics and its allure continues to build with the new season of “Emily in Paris”, released on August 15th. As the show continues to portray the intriguing Parisian lifestyle, many of its filming sites have become must-see spots for travellers and fans alike. Here are the best locations from Emily in Paris that you won't want to miss on your next visit.

### Terra Nera Restaurant

One of the central “Emily in Paris” filming locations is the restaurant “Les Deux Compères”, where Gabriel works, serving as a backdrop for many of the show's most dramatic moments. Although portrayed as a French restaurant in the series, it's actually an Italian eatery in real life called “Terra Nera”. The restaurant, located at 18 Rue des Fosses Saint-Jacques in Paris, has embraced the show's popularity by introducing a dish called “Tagliata di Manzo Emily”, featuring sliced beef tenderloin with arugula, parmesan cheese and vinegar sauce as a tribute to the series.

### L'Atelier des Lumières

In Season 1 of the series, Emily visits an im-

mersive Van Gogh expedition at the L'Atelier des Lumières with Gabriel and Camille. This digital art museum offers a unique experience to visitors, allowing them to explore a variety of artworks in a captivating way. Located at 38 Rue Saint-Maur, 75011, the museum has been inviting visitors to relive past exhibitions this summer, including ‘Van Gogh, Starry Night’ and ‘Dreamed Japan, Images of the Floating World’. With exhibitions constantly changing, it's a place you'll want to visit time and time again!



Credit: UnSplash

### Jardin du Luxembourg

Featured in multiple scenes throughout the show, Jardin du Luxembourg is a picturesque park which sees Emily going for her morning jogs. In 2022, it was voted Europe's most beautiful garden by internet users, and it's easy to see why. The garden boasts elaborate symmetry, beautiful flower beds, 102 historic statues

and 3000 trees of various species. Situated in the 6th arrondissement of Paris, it is the perfect place to take a stroll or enjoy a picnic.

### Café de Flore

Café de Flore is one of the oldest cafés in France, renowned for attracting high-profile writers, philosophers and artists such as Pablo Picasso in the past. In season 1, Emily visits this famous café and meets Thomas, one of her love interests. Located in the Saint-Germain-des-Prés area of the 6th arrondissement, the café offers a diverse menu including salads, omelettes, ice cream and profiteroles. Be sure to order their hot chocolate, which has gained popularity on TikTok for its quality cocoa flavour and silky texture.

### Provence

In season 3, Emily ventures out of Paris to explore Provence in southeastern France, famed for its lavender fields and vineyards. French cast members such as William Abadie, who plays Antoine, were just as thrilled to visit the region as their American costars. The lavender fields bloom from May to early August, with the full bloom taking place end of June and the beginning of July. Photographers particularly love the golden hour in this lo-



Credit: UnSplash

cation, capturing stunning photos at sunrise and sunset. Lucas Bravo, who portrays love interest and chef Gabriel, described Provence as the “best location” he's ever visited for a project. For the latest season released this summer, creator Darren Stars has shared that Emily in Paris season 4 will showcase a mix of filming locations across France and Italy, with a focus on Rome and its iconic monuments. This season promises to be an exciting one for Emily's ongoing adventures as she navigates her career and personal life.



Credit: UnSplash

# What to Expect : Full-Time Student Officer's Key Manifesto Points



## Activities & Opportunities Officer: Olivia Hunt

**'Financial barriers shouldn't prevent participation:** I'll advocate for a hardship fund to support students with costs for joining clubs, societies, removing financial barriers to participation.

**Improve the Day-to-Day Operations for Clubs:** I'll work with UEA Sport to address issues with allocations, transport, and cancellations, ensuring clearer transparency in grants and scholarships to enhance committee and member experiences.

**Keep the Night Bus:** Nathan and Luke have done a great job with the Night Bus, ensuring accessibility and safety. I'm committed to continuing and maintaining its success.

**Fix Room Bookings:** Work with the university to resolve room booking issues affecting clubs and societies.

**An SU That Comes to You:** The best ideas come from you. I'll listen, adapt and ensure your voice is heard, making the SU responsive and focused on delivering what you want.'

## Communities and Culture Officer: Amjad Daher

**'Better Transport – More Bus Times for Bowthorpe:** Students living in Bowthorpe deserve more reliable and frequent buses. I will work to increase bus services, ensuring students can travel easily.

**Affordable & Better Food on Campus:** Lower food prices for students and more diverse food options. (Vegan, Halal...)

**More Funding for Placement Students:** Fight for increased financial support and push for travel and living cost subsidies

**More Cultural Club Nights & Events:** Organize more cultural club nights and support societies in hosting bigger and better events

**Stronger Support for International Students:** Advocate for better international student support and ensure UEA is a welcoming place for all backgrounds'



## Campaigns & Democracy Officer:

**'Renew Our Democracy:** Rather than asking a broken system to change itself, with the support of the Student Officer Committee I've called for a referendum, so students have the final say on the form that their democracy takes.

**Protect International Students:** I'll expand my "Know Your Rights" campaign to housing, visa, and settling in the UK with emphasis placed on getting international students confident in our community.

**Make Your Voice Heard:** I'll keep using my years of campaigning experience and connections with teaching staff to keep fighting for the people make this University a place to be proud of – the teaching and support staff, and every student!'

## Postgraduate Officer: Bhaskar Shivanna

**'Winter Graduation Ceremony:** The campaign for a Winter Graduation Ceremony will continue, allowing PGT students completing their degrees in September to celebrate without waiting for 10 months.

**PhD Researcher Funding:** Will work with the university, National Union of Students and advocate for increase in PhD researchers' pay, as the recent increase is not enough.

**Increasing PG SU Funds & Graduate Centre Facilities:** Securing an increase in the PG Budget from £5,000 to between £10,000–£15,000. Advocate for table service in Scholars' Lounge and Scholars' Corner.

**Postgraduate Sports & Fitness:** Working with UEA Sport to introduce more drop-in PG sessions. Organising inter-faculty tournaments and a dedicated PG Sports Day.'



## Undergraduate Education Officer: Turaiya Lemard

**'Disability Inclusion:** To establish a Disability Convenor to represent the disabled student community! Similarly to faculty convenors, they will advocate their concerns across multiple schools within the faculty at Faculty, Teaching, and Quality Committees (FLTQCs) and Education Committees.

**Seminar Recordings:** Lobby for the recording of seminars and workshops! It's now mandatory for lectures to be recorded, but some lecturers are getting around this by labelling them as seminars on timetables. If seminars and extra contact hours are recorded too, they won't be able to dodge this.

**Student Engagement Partnership (SEP) Engagement:** The new academic rep system, the Student Experience Partnership (SEP), was introduced late last year, but student engagement has been super low! I'll push for a points-based system where members can earn rewards for their participation.'

# Food and Drink

## ALBUMS & ALES: Vault City’s Cloudy Lemonade and *SUB- JECT TO CHANGE* by Kelsea Ballerini

Edie Davies

Recently, I found myself traversing a familiar canal towpath in my hometown of Birmingham, heading towards my local pretentious craft beer “joints.” I joke, but I am the friend that encourages my vodka-lemonade-drinking peers to choke down a matcha-flavoured IPA that doesn’t get them buzzed and tastes like something a dog vomited up. (Their words, not mine.)

Occasionally though, we find a winner, which this month came in the form of a can of Vault City’s Cloudy Lemonade. Edinburgh-based Vault City Brewery is the UK’s current patron saint of sours. This vegan-friendly beer is made with a zesty combination of Citra and Nelson Sauvin hops, from North America and New Zealand respectively, and packs a lip-pursing sour punch. However, the classically sweet, refreshing aftertaste of lemonade kept my friends and I thirsty for more.

I’d recommend Cloudy Lemonade to anyone on the craft beer hate train, who sits nursing their watery Lemon Drop Martini, feeling dissatisfied with how much alcohol they were given. Do you dread the next time that you’ll have to pay another thirteen quid for a drink that takes three sips to finish? Try Vault City’s Cloudy Lemonade for that same citrus kick and a 4.2% ABV, perfect for session drinking.

And to the pop girls who want to diversify their music tastes as well as their tastes in alcohol, I’d recommend pairing this beer with Kelsea Ballerini’s 2022 pop-country album *SUBJECT TO CHANGE*. If you’re partial to Taylor Swift’s Fearless era, tracks on the album like “I CAN’T HELP MYSELF” and “MUSCLE MEMORY” are for you. The twang of country music instruments is a wonderful addition to Ballerini’s punchy pop melodies, harmonising with Vault City’s hoppy, sharp spin on a classic soft drink.

Spring is finally upon us, so if you feel the urge to crack open a cold one and party like you’re tailgating in Tennessee, this pairing is great for days where the skies are so blue that the only clouds are in your drink.



## A Night with ABACUS and Cooking and Tasting

Lin Vu  
Food and Drink Editor

Here’s a little self-exposé. Despite having an interest in cooking and tasting, and being the Food and Drink section editor, I had yet to attend an actual Cooking and Tasting society event. I know, blasphemous.

So, I attended my first Cooking and Tasting social on the 4th March that was in collaboration with the ABACUS society. And quite frankly, it was a lot of fun!

In small groups of four, we made tangyuan, which is a traditional Chinese dessert made out of glutinous rice flour, filled with black sesame or peanut filling, and served in a hot brown sugar syrup infused with ginger. Though, we made it with black sesame and red bean filling instead.

It’s pretty similar to Vietnamese chè trôi nước, which has a savoury mung bean filling and are topped with coconut milk and sesame seeds instead. I’ve made chè trôi nước many times before, so I approached tangyuan with confidence money couldn’t buy. Until we got to the filling portion.

Truth be told, I never make my chè trôi nước with filling just because one, I could never be bothered enough, and two, I never liked mung bean filling. I will (proudly) say that I successfully filled my first ball. The end result was perfectly squidgy (is this a word?) with the perfect amount of sweetness, though my group agreed we could’ve done with more ginger (this was on us!).

Upon reflection, I found what ultimately made the experience so memorable



was the focus on communal cooking. It was much easier to get to know people by cooking, and eating as a group, and to feel a sense of belonging. Even though it was my first ever social with the Cooking and Tasting society, I felt an immediate sense of comfort, and we shared plenty of laughs.

I spoke to the Vice President of ABACUS society, Cherrine Hui.

“How did you come to collaborate with Cooking and Tasting, and why choose tangyuan?”

“We collaborated with Cooking and Tasting to spread the culture of Chinese New Year, and have people enjoy food. We wanted to share the culture. Since ABACUS didn’t have the experience setting up cooking stations, it made sense to collaborate with Cooking and Tasting. We chose tangyuan because after 15 days of Chinese New Year, you gather around with family and friends to eat food together.”

I also spoke to the President of the Cooking and Tasting society, Fred Rodgers.

“What are the main goals of the society, and what have been some challenges? What are you guys doing different-

ly this year to increase outreach?”

“Our main goal is to keep the society alive and incorporate more events, since last year, the society only hosted one event. [Vice President] George and I always liked cooking, and we decided to take over the society. We find it’s good for people to cook together and learn. We’ve found that getting people into a room has been a learning curve, and we’re still learning along the way. We’ve invested in new equipment to make cooking safer, and are hosting more social events and paid cooking lessons to increase outreach.”

The social embodied the very essence of what both societies strive to promote: bringing people together through food. Whether it was learning a new recipe, embracing a different culinary tradition, or simply enjoying the company of others, this collaboration proved that cooking is as much about connection as it is about taste. If this event was any indication, I’ll certainly be attending more Cooking and Tasting socials in the future, maybe with a newfound appreciation for filling my chè trôi nước. And you should, too.

Image Credit: Wikimedia Commons

## Set in Stone: What Role Does Concrete Play in Wine Making?

Emily Pitt-Shaw

What does the University of East Anglia’s brutalist architecture have in common with a bottle of Bordeaux red wine?

Concrete.

Since the early 1900’s, the cement, water and aggregate mix has been used in European vineyards to form large tanks.

These tanks - often constructed layer on layer with thick walls to insulate the wine - allow the grapes to ferment in a stable environment and age consistently.

The process, now called ‘concrete egg fermentation’ due to the recently reinvented shape of the cooler, is an alternative to more commonly used oak or stainless steel barrels.

While oak can offer a more distinct texture to wine, such as smok-

iness or sweet vanilla, concrete lets the wine’s natural flavours flourish.

It softens tannins - bitter chemical compounds found in plants and fruit - which in turn creates a richer body in the alcohol.

Concrete’s naturally porous structure allows the wine to breathe and retain its fruity characteristics - often notes like citrus, peach, and apricots.

Currently, only one winery in the UK uses this method. Coates & Seely, based in the chalk downs of Hampshire, produce an English sparkling wine that’s a blend of Chardonnay and Pinot Noir.

At £3,000 an egg, it’s far from the cheapest choice for wine makers. But its unobtrusive nature, encouraging and developing the grapes natural flavours, offers a stripped back approach to the

UK’s favourite alcoholic beverage. So, when you’re next drinking a glass of wine, see if you can taste its origin story.

And if it’s fruity and full bodied, think of us - like how it was made - in Concrete.

*“While oak can offer a more distinct texture to wine, such as smokiness or sweet vanilla, concrete lets the wine’s natural flavours flourish.”*



Image Credit: Flickr

# Oh, to Have a Full Fridge of Groceries...

**Lin Vu**  
Food and Drink Editor

New year, new problems.

One of the most ridiculous things I saw while scrolling on TikTok was 'quiet luxury foods.' And of course, ridiculous grocery hauls.

Vital Farms Pasture Raised Organic Eggs, Graza Olive Oil, Kerrygold Pure Irish Butter are apparently, a few examples of 'quiet luxury foods.'

I actually had to take a break from my phone and think about the content I was consuming, because the discourse around 'quiet luxury' gets really mind numbing really quickly. But then, it got me thinking about the deeper, philosophical implications behind it.

Luxury is being redefined. With global inflation and recession, the wealth gap continues to widen, and traditional means of luxury are becoming more unattainable. More and more people are unable to afford basic groceries. With President Trump's false promises of bringing grocery prices down, but instead causing the economic red wave (yay, recession!), it's clear that being able to have a full fridge of groceries is now a status symbol.

Of course, food has always been political and served as a status symbol. Lobster, for example, was once

a 'poor man's food,' but is now a food reserved for those who can afford it. But the status symbol manifests itself differently, thanks to social media now.

According to a YouGov survey for Whole Foods, 70% of Gen-Z respondents indicated they were willing to pay more for higher quality foods, unsurprisingly driving up the grocery bill. When it comes to expensive groceries, there are always health-related reasons to justify paying the price.

The devotion to 'health is wealth' is a display of economic power. As the cost of living continues to increase, people's dreams of owning a home and a fancy new car are becoming more unattainable. So, people have resorted to grocery hauls as a symbol of luxury.

Andrea Hernández, the author of the newsletter Snaxshot, calls this the new lipstick effect: an economic theory that says consumers spend money on more affordable luxuries, like lipstick, during economic downturns.

'It's a form of affordable affluence,' she said. "We're now getting into this phenomenon of food not as a basic need but as a luxury experience."

Erewhon, an upscale grocery store with 10 locations in Los Angeles county, is the epicentre of the regurgitated 'health is wealth' phenomenon. Grocery shopping is slowly becoming cen-

tral to people's identities, as people are turning these Erewhon shopping trips into opportunities to represent themselves online to curate a specific lifestyle. Perhaps, in hopes of bringing you along on a luxurious experience to live vicariously through them.

But it also begs the question of how sustainable are these lifestyles, and is it simply just for social media? Erewhon's collaborations with celebrities, such as Hailey Bieber and Bella Hadid, to come out with \$20 smoothies has Gen-Z eager to try to emulate these influencer lifestyles. The \$20 smoothies signify to others that they have the money to spend in order to be as healthy as their favourite influencers. In fact, some people are working multiple jobs just to be able to afford groceries at Erewhon to push a curated identity of luxury.

Luxury groceries have become a consumerist trend once again. Most of the content is spoon-fed through TikTok, where it feels like food is subjected to becoming micro-trends, reminiscent of the fad diets that come and go. Of course, not all of it is bad health advice. It's always good to get more protein, more fibre, and more micronutrients in. But it's excessive when brands are really capitalising on these market demands, pushing the new 'IT girl' food items as if they're lip glosses, forcing us to ask each other, 'are you an Ollipop girl, or Poppi girl?'

What is integral to your identity?

Image by jjuntune from Pixabay



## Healthy Dense Bean Chicken Salad

**Lin Vu**  
Food and Drink Editor

Sometimes, I just cannot be bothered to stand in the kitchen for longer than an hour and a half at a time, but I still want something healthy instead of oven food. When I first moved to the UK, I didn't anticipate how difficult it would be for me to get a salad to-go. I kind of assumed there would be a Sweetgreen equivalent, but I quickly realised that equivalent would be my kitchen, so I had to get really creative. So when I miss the simple fresh flavours of home, I make one of my favourites: chicken salad. Inspired by @violet.cooks on TikTok, I've started to add beans to my salad to add more fibre and protein. What really ties it all together is a homemade vinaigrette, which is a lot simpler than you think.

### INGREDIENTS:

- 1 can of chickpeas, drained and rinsed.
- 1 can of butter beans, drained and rinsed.
- 4-6 chicken thighs
- 1 box of cherry tomatoes
- Bunch of fresh parsley
- 1 red bell pepper
- Juice of half a lemon
- 1 whole cucumber
- Pickled red onions
- Seasonings of choice for the chicken
- 3 tbsp extra virgin olive oil
- 1 tbsp red wine vinegar
- Salt and pepper

### INSTRUCTIONS

Marinate your chicken with seasonings of choice and some olive oil. Set aside for at least 30 minutes. Cut your vegetables into bite sized pieces and add them into a mixing bowl.

Add your drained and rinsed beans into the bowl. Cook your chicken either on the stove, or in a preheated oven at about 220C for 30 minutes, skin side up. Cut your chicken into bite sized pieces once cooled, and add into the bowl. To make the dressing, add the olive oil, red wine vinegar, lemon juice, and salt and pepper into a small mixing cup. To emulsify, just use a fork to beat it. Toss, and you're done.

The great thing about this salad is that it stores well in the fridge and I like to eat it over the course of a couple days to save me cooking time when I'm bombarded with work. There are so many different ways you could add to the salad as well. I sometimes like to switch up the beans by adding some other variation of white beans, or add an avocado for healthy fats.



# Science

## March ‘25 Research Roundup

Trinity Yiu

As winter fades, the fruits of months and years of research emerge. This research roundup highlights three groundbreaking projects from the past months to usher in a year of innovation, creativity, discovery.

### Reshaping International Telecommunications

Led by Prof. Gerard Parr of UEA and partnered with leading U.K and Indian researchers, the landmark UK-India Future Networks Initiative (UKI-FNI) will be seeking to advance telecommunication infrastructure to drive AI networks, data storage, and quantum computing . These technologies require powerful, fast, and reliable networks, which are traditionally built with components from a small group of equipment manufacturers, making networks costly. Now, an approach called OpenRAN allows network functions to run as software on general-purpose hardware, which improves security, promotes competition, and decreases costs by reducing reliance on large suppliers. However, it comes with many challenges that UKI-FNI seeks to address, such as software and hardware integration. UKI-FNI will also create large test environments to test new OpenRAN systems, components, and management software. In addition to enhancing collaboration between U.K and India in the digital telcoms sector, UKI-FNI will help develop an understanding of regulatory issues to assist with future policy making to promote equitable and safe access to digital technologies.

### Forecasting Climate Change

UEA’s Forecasting Tipping points in Marine Biogeochemistry and Ecosystem Responses (TiMBER) project was recently awarded a £4.25m grant as part of the Forecasting Tipping Points programme. The programme aims to identify thresholds that, when crossed, lead to severe, irreversible, and self-perpetuating changes in the climate system that can irrevocably damage

ecosystems, communities, and global security. The TiMBER project is a collaboration between UK governmental and academic institutions that will focus on North Atlantic marine ecosystems, especially on identifying “sentinel” marine species that are sensitive to early climate changes. Other aims of the project include developing an Ocean Systems Model to assess the risk of tipping points and determining how tipping points can affect the ocean’s ability to absorb carbon emissions. Combined with research from 27 international teams, TiMBER can help create an early warning system to support climate-resilient industries and guide climate action, mitigation, and adaptation.

### Promoting Cancer Recovery

Researchers from Norwich Medical School, U.K, and European institutions have identified a medication that can reduce heart failure in cancer patients. Many chemotherapeutic drugs damage healthy cells while eliminating cancers. In particular, anthracyclines can cause change the heart on a cellular level, impairing its ability to pump blood around the body. Analysing data from over 88,000 patients, the research team found that SGLT2 inhibitors, originally prescribed to help lower blood sugar, can reduce heart failure hospitalisations by 51% in cancer patients. This protective effect was particularly pronounced in breast cancer patients undergoing anthracycline therapy. Furthermore, SGLT2 inhibitors also lower the risk of developing heart failure and particular irregular heart rhythms. These findings suggest that SGLT2 inhibitors can help optimise cancer treatment to enable patients to make a full recovery. “Impact of sodium-glucose cotransporter-2 inhibitor on heart failure outcomes in cancer patients and survivors: a systematic review and meta-analysis” was published in the European Journal of Preventative Cardiology on March 6 2025.

## Wildlife Wins: Psychotherapist Tips to Help with Eco-Anxiety

Daisy Lester  
Science Editor

There’s lots of advice, big and small, out there on how to save the planet. From building solar panels to donating sums of funds, a fair amount isn’t exactly accessible to students. With nearly 60% of us facing some level of

climate anxiety, we’ve compiled some psychotherapist approved ways to reduce the stress while still protecting the environment.

• **Align your life with your values.** As mentioned in the “Science of change” article earlier in the year, making con-

## Beavers Are Back - Reintroduction and Rewilding

Elle McKinnell-Michael

In February it was announced that beavers were to be reintroduced to British ecosystems. In March, the first beavers were set free in English waterways in Dorset, brought down from the Tay Catchment area in Scotland. The beaver population in England is as low as five hundred, a number that has dwindled due to centuries of over-hunting.

Beavers represented a missing piece in the English ecosystem. The creatures are known as woodland engineers, dramatically changing the environments around them through damming rivers and streams. This often results in the formation of habitats where other creatures can flourish, as well as in the reduction of flooding downstream. This reintroduction was carried out in the hopes that the beaver population will grow, and that the next generation of beavers will fill in this gap in our ecosystems.

Not everyone has ‘beaver fever’, the National Farmers Union is concerned about

flooding of crop fields and the disruption to their livelihoods. The decision was made by the government after years of trialing, and the beavers will be released under a licensing system in coalition with ‘Natural England’. The NFU wants the right to cull beaver populations should they pose a risk to their fields and farms.

Scotland is an interesting model for this move toward rewilding or natural conservation; their efforts to repopulate beaver populations have resulted in a beaver population of over 1500. The beavers released in Dorset were taken from an area in Scotland of rapid re-population; in other areas the growth has been so significant that there have been similar relocation efforts, or even culling. The release of beavers in Dorset is a big moment for the Beaver Trust, who say they are ‘looking forward to new wild sites being proposed’. This move toward rewilding begs the question: which other animals are due for reintroduction into English ecosystems?



Credit: Wikimedia Commons

scious decisions is a valuable way to stop feelings of overwhelm and anxiety from creeping in. Statistics also show a large amount of hypocrisy in our age demographic, being one of the most environmentally conscious... but one of the top consumers of fast fashion. Maybe next

time instead of checking out online, you could check in with some friends and join one of the Sustainability Society’s charity shop trails? As an extra tip, the shop bakery offers a meat free deal on Mondays!

• **Change systems, not yourself!** Let the

# Scripts and Schemas - Creativity Backed By Science

## Ella Pamment

Before you read this, understand one thing: perception is not passive. It's engineered. The most powerful brands, the most influential voices, the most unstoppable ideas are meticulously framed, cognitively primed, and strategically placed to be unforgettable. What follows isn't just an article; it's a blueprint for control – of attention, of narrative, of the very way people think. **Read carefully. This is how it's done.**

I just primed your brain to expect power. To anticipate authority. Every word you just read was more than just information – it was a cognitive setup. I framed this article as something undeniable, something you *need* to pay attention to. And now, whether you realise it or not, your brain is processing everything that follows through that filter. That's the power of priming. That's how narratives take hold. And that's exactly what I'm about to show you how to do.

Every time you interact with a brand, read

an article, or even hear a conversation, your brain is being primed and framed to interpret information in a specific way. These cognitive processes shape how you perceive the world – often without you realising it.

### What is Priming?

Priming is the psychological process where exposure to one stimulus influences how you respond to another. Your brain constantly makes associations, and once an idea is introduced, it affects how you interpret everything that follows.

For example, if you read the words *luxury*, *legacy*, *power* before seeing a product ad, your brain is primed to perceive that product as high-status – even if the ad never explicitly says so. This happens because words and concepts activate networks of related ideas in your memory, shaping your expectations.

There are different types of priming:

- **Lexical Priming:** When certain words trigger related meanings. (e.g., hearing “money” makes

you process “success” faster.) not just what is said, but *how* it's said.

- **Contextual Priming:** When your environment influences perception. (e.g., luxury brands use sleek, minimalist aesthetics to prime exclusivity.)
- **Emotional Priming:** When prior emotional states affect how you absorb new information. (e.g., a brand using nostalgia primes trust and familiarity.)

Brands, media, and storytellers use priming constantly. A political speech that starts with “*For generations, we have fought for freedom*” primes you for patriotism before the real message even begins. A marketing campaign that opens with “*Imagine yourself in the driver's seat*” primes you to experience ownership before a purchase decision.

### What is Framing?

While priming influences perception on a subconscious level, **framing** is about the deliberate structuring of information to shape interpretation. It's

A great example is the difference between:

- “95% *success rate*” vs. “5% *failure rate*” – Same fact, different framing.
- “*An investment in your future*” vs. “*A cost you have to cover*” – One sounds like growth, the other like a burden.

Frames create the mental lens through which people see a message. Luxury brands frame themselves as *exclusive*, high-performance products frame themselves as *cutting-edge*, and political campaigns frame issues as *moral imperatives*.

### Using Priming and Framing Effectively

Understanding these tools means you can craft messages that don't just inform but control *perception*. By strategically priming and framing your audience, you ensure they interpret your message exactly as intended – making it more persuasive, memorable, and influential.

## PhD Patter: Aparna Reghunathan – The Indian Ocean: Where Physics Gets Wet and Wild

### Daisy Lester Science Editor

#### So, what's your research about?

So you know oceans? I study the oceans - specifically the Indian ocean... using weather models. It's very interesting because the ocean is not like a singular entity – it's so connected to the atmosphere. There are so many kinds of models such as an ocean only model, atmosphere only model – [I'm looking at] an ocean-atmosphere coupled model. There are a lot of pros to this but one con is that it introduces a lot of error. So, if I wanted to look at the heat content in the ocean, there's a lot of



processes that affect this. What I am doing is looking at each of the individual terms [in

the model, such as mixing and advection], to see where the error is coming from.

#### What did your journey look into this role look like?

I'm coming from like a very different background in terms of academic culture. I did my undergraduate and masters degrees in India and moved to the UK as part of my PhD scholarship. I feel like the UEA, especially the ENV school, is very diverse in terms of experiences. I feel like Norwich is such a great hub for activities to do. I'd say Norwich is a small space, but it has that community. A lot of people are interested in science. You have the science festival.

#### Oh, were you involved?

Yes! My then studentship director and some other PGRs applied for a grant from NERC to develop some games to encourage young people to pursue environmental sciences for further education, especially in low-income areas where the continuation to further education is quite low. We took to schools and the Norwich Science Festival. We got some really good feedback, and it's been one of the best parts of my time here.

#### What keeps you motivated?

My stipend. MONEYYYYYY. Nah, I like doing research, I like being on campus. The at-

mosphere at the university is brilliant. As a PhD student, life can get so lonely. You have your supervisor, but your project is very personal. It gets exhausting, it can be too much, so making friends was the best thing I did... it's great to have that supportive community. I also get to teach students which brings me a lot of joy. Doing outreach and teaching along with research exposes me to many different aspects of academia. Your role as a researcher doesn't stop when you publish a paper or give a talk to people who already know the topic.

#### If you could change one thing about your field, what would it be?

I want to make it more interdisciplinary. My research is I don't work with like biologists or chemists - I want to make it more collaborative, more interdisciplinary.

#### What implications to your research could there be?

If you look at the Indian Ocean like I'm looking at, there's this thing called Indian Ocean dipole. Consider like a seesaw on the Indian ocean, and one end is on the eastern part (where the temperature is very high) and the western part (where the temperature is very low). [Because of this], in the east Indian ocean and adjacent countries there would be flood conditions due to the increased temperature, and, conversely, on the western side,

like Africa, there are drought conditions. So, it's the same ocean, but causing two completely different weather conditions in different places. It's a massive driver of conditions.

The Indian Ocean has increased by 1 degree – the fastest of all the global oceans. Even though you might think 1 degree is tiny, such a change can cause floods and wildfires and effect the global weather patterns, with [the link between the ocean and atmosphere] transferring these changes globally. When we talk about climate change we always talk about deforestation, which is very important, but as an oceanographer, I think the ocean carries a bigger role in moderating the global temperature. Some facts:

- Ocean is the no 1 carbon sink (it absorbs most of the CO<sub>2</sub> in the atmosphere).
  - It's the no 1 heat sink. It absorbs most of the heat in the atmosphere.
  - It produces 50-60% of all the oxygen in the atmosphere (because of the phytoplankton)
- So, along with deforestation, there is a point where the ocean can not absorb any more heat or CO<sub>2</sub>, it can't help anymore. It's important but underrepresented in the climate change conversation.

*Thanks again to Aparna for sharing her thoughts and research with us!*

right people know how you feel! While Norwich City Council is one of only 25% of local authorities that have declared a “nature emergency” and developed an evidence-based action plan, Norfolk County Council have not done the same. Noticed something the university could improve? Tell them! Change starts with the first person speaking up.

- **Protect your local spaces and get involved!** Stated previously in the “Science of Happiness” article, having a pos-

itive impact on your local community is hugely beneficial for your mental health. There are loads of society events on campus with this specific aim. You could even make a bug hotel at the upcoming Arty Bugs workshop (26th March). In collaboration with the Norfolk Wildlife Trust's Youth Action Now, you can help create a creepy crawly corridor from the UEA campus straight to Sweet Briar Marsh!

**Be a nature tourist!** With spring break coming up (and the weather not brighten-

ing up fast enough) it can be tempting to think about the distant shores of a sunny beach, with sun, sand, and not so sustainable travel options filling your head. But much cheaper, mental health hacking and sustainable option is choosing something closer to home. As we're sure you know, transport takes up about 20% of all global emissions, with a large chunk including flying. However that also includes jet-skis away. But research shows that making conscious and motorboats (which have deeper implications for aquatic life), over kayaks and canoes. But don't let there be any shame if

you're choosing to return to a far-off home – studies show a link between decreased anxiety and familiarity with ones local area. The more you go out (wherever that may be) the better you'll feel, and the more you'll learn about what effects the space around you. There are tonnes of low-cost local trips on the SU website for you to join.

Climate anxiety is real, and probably won't go away. But research shows that making conscious changes and taking (any sized) action can help you feel empowered rather than overwhelmed.

# Sport

## The Tush Push – How One Play Turned the NFL Upside Down

**Daniel Freeman**  
Sport Editor

A month on from the Philadelphia Eagles romp of the Kansas City Chiefs in Super Bowl 59, the rest of the NFL is already trying to hamper the Eagles efforts to repeat their super bowl success in the 2025 season. Not only are the 31 other NFL teams terrified of Philadelphia replacing Kansas City as the new dynasty of the league, but they're also now attempting to destroy their biggest weapon, 'the tush push'. Yes, a simple push of Quarterback Jalen Hurts from the backside by his teammates to gain yardage seems like a very simple play for defences to stop, but with an 82.4% success rate in 2024, the tush push has become a lethal weapon in the Eagles' arsenal. Yet despite its simplicity, the tush push can undoubtedly be looked at as one of the most polarising plays in NFL history. It's a play that even divides the US media, not only with people agreeing on the play's validity but with disagreement on the name of the play, is it the tush push or the brotherly shove? However, the future of the play is now under threat. League owners will vote at the end of the month to decide whether the play should be taken out of the league, and this leads us to ask, how did we get to this situation? And will the play survive?

*"Yet despite its simplicity, the tush push can undoubtedly be looked at as one of the most polarising plays in NFL history."*

The push (pun intended) for the play to be axed from the league has come from the NFL's most historic franchise, the Green Bay Packers. Green Bay's CEO Mark Murphy, when stating his reason for proposing the play to be banned, argued that "there is no skill involved, and it is almost an automatic first down on plays of a yard or less." He is afraid of its impact on the NFL product stating that, "the play is bad for the game, and we should go back to prohibiting the push of the runner." Murphy's response is encapsulated by the fact that for years previously, teams would call a Quarterback sneak in short down situations where the quarterback can run behind their

offensive line similarly to a tush push but without help from other players behind to push the QB forward.

Teams have argued that the tush push could be dangerous for players and that the QB sneak is a better way of protecting their players, but from the three years of Philadelphia's use of the play injuries have been rather low. In a league constantly changing the game to reduce the numbers of injuries, you can't argue that the tush push is a threat



to player safety, well not more than

any other play in American Football. So why should teams be scared, it's not like this play is only exclusively available to the Philadelphia Eagles. Why haven't the rest of the league caught up and been as successful in running the play. Whether it's the Philly special or the Jet sweep, teams copy plays all the time and are very successful. The Buffalo Bills are prime example of this who unlike many others began to adopt their own tush push throughout 2024, with varying successes. Buffalo's adaptation of the play showed that teams can use it as a successful ploy to win football games, but it was the Bills lack of success in using the play against Kansas City in the AFC Championship that made it clear to the league that 'the tush push' cannot

be described as an easy first down. The Chiefs often dissected Buffalo's intent to run Quarterback Josh Allen to the left on each tush push and showed that the play was not impenetrable. This example provides solid evidence that the Eagles' successes aren't based on an illegal play but a well-built roster and a superb coaching staff. So, for a league that bases its

*"In a league constantly changing the game to reduce the number of injuries, you can't argue that the tush push is a threat to player safety."*

principles on these ideals, why should there be a need to get rid of it?

*"It's not like this play is only exclusively available to the Philadelphia Eagles."*

The plays been called boring, it's been called a cheat code and it's supposedly ruining the NFL product, but for a league filled with innovate play callers, highly paid athletes and simply monstrous body types, why can't the rest of the league catch up. Why can't we see a league filled with teams using the tush push? This attempt from the Packers to push it out the league feels like an attempt to just weaken Philadelphia and not ensure player safety or improve the quality of the league.

*"Why can't we see a league filled with teams using the tush push?"*

Yes, if we had a whole league full of teams successfully converting 82.4% of their tush push attempts in short yardage situations then the league would have to worry about its product and the tush push could come under serious questions. However, this is not the case. The tush push is a play that has helped define a superpower in the league and has proven that the NFL is a league full of incredibly talented individuals. For a league known for its innovation, surely teams could find a way to weaken the play's efficiency and use the play to their own advantage, just like Buffalo tried to during the 2024 season.

No play is unbeatable and soon the league will catch up and the tush push will become less efficient than it has been. But while it's here, take advantage of it. Be the team that dethrones the Eagles and not the team that complains it's unfair. If taken out, not only could the tush push question the NFL's lack of enthusiasm for innovation but it could hugely affect the outlook of the league for 2025 and onwards. Quite simply, the rest of the NFL needs to step up their game and stop complaining.



*"Quite simply, the rest of the NFL needs to step up their game and stop complaining."*

# All About Tottenham Hotspur

## Elliot Lecointe

Before the beginning of the 2024/25 Premier League season, there was a feeling of optimism for Spurs, both within the team and the fans. After a hard-fought previous season, the first without their world-class striker, Harry Kane, Tottenham Hotspur believed they had the pieces to show off what a new era for Spurs looked like. Unfortunately, it seems this new era is a bit of the same old.

This season's struggles can be attributed to one of the most brutal injury crises' Tottenham have suffered in years. With the likes of our first choice Goalkeeper, Guglielmo Vicario being injured in November with an ankle injury, our two key centre-backs, Cristian Romero & Mickey Van De Ven both being sidelined with hamstring injuries early into the season, Spurs' back line fell apart as if it was hit with a curse. More injuries lined up at Hotspur Way, with other first team players such as Richarlison, Destiny Udogie, Radu Dragusin and just recently, star player of the squad, Dejan Kulusevski being hit with a foot injury.

Manager Ange Postecoglu has hit back against reporters ignoring the crisis of

first team injuries this season. In a press conference, Ange was asked what was causing this performance this season and as blunt as Ange could put it, he said "Just injuries, you can walk outside and say 'Jeez, it's really bright' and look at the sun and think 'Maybe it's not the sun.' But it's the sun, mate. We've just got injuries".

But Ange himself has been in the hot seat recently with fans beginning to question his position as head coach of Spurs with the crowd beginning the question if he is the one to lead the team forward. Ange's tactics have been heavily criticised since his arrival, some calling it unrealistic to near suicidal with his high lines pushing up the pitch against squads who have seemed to figure out his game. His attacking philosophy has been deemed by some pundits such as Jamie Carragher as nonsensical, quoting after the brutal 6-3 loss at home to Liverpool that "nobody has ever won anything playing like that". Just recently last week after a draw to Bournemouth, son of former manager of Spurs, Jamie Redknapp claims his style of play "drives me insane," and with Ange himself saying that a majority of the squad is still hesitant to adapt to his style of play, it leaves the question: is the sack inevitable for Postecoglu? For Ange's defence, it seems the problems are way deeper than it seems going back to the

business of Tottenham Hotspur. Spurs have had to rely heavily this season on its younger talent, with this season having the youngest average age we've ever seen in a Spurs squad. Due to the club's injury crisis, this was inevitable but so was the clear level inexperience compared to other teams. Ange has asked owner of the club, Daniel Levy for help at the beginning of the January transfer window but fans were left dumbfounded with the hesitancy to invest in the club's squad.

The fans have made themselves known, they want Daniel Levy out. With protests taking place in and out of the Tottenham Hotspur Stadium, fans are sick to death with their club being treated as a business first and football club second – with an iconic banner of the phrase "24 years, 16 managers, one trophy-time for a change" being hung from the stands signaling to Levy, it is time to go. Whether that happens is up to himself. Former Newcastle goalkeeper Shay Given went on record on Match of the Day saying, "I would question what are Daniel Levy's thoughts. Why haven't they given Ange Postecoglu money?" as Carragher slammed the board saying, "someone else needs to be in charge of this football club".

Currently as of writing, Spurs sit at 13th in the Premier League, out of the domestic cups they are sitting on a loss in the

first leg of their round of 16 bout in the Europa League. In their lowest league position since 2002/2003 season, all Tottenham fans can do at this moment is carry on and chant as always, come on you spurs.



Photo Credit: Unsplash

## Lights Out and Away The Season Goes...

### Sofia Royal Co-Editor-in-Chief

If pre-season testing has taught Formula One fans anything, it's to take testing results with a pinch of salt. Although, as the sport gears up for a new season opener in Melbourne, it's difficult to hold out hope for certain teams.

Set to be a tumultuous season with Hamilton's maiden year at Ferrari, a competitive McLaren and a grid full of rookies- this year looks as though we may see the end of Max Verstappen and his RedBull dominance.

**“Set to be a tumultuous season with Hamilton's maiden year at ferrari”**

From testing results, it seems that Verstappen and his new teammate Liam Lawson are visibly struggling with the RB21. Whilst there is the promise of sev-

eral upgrades throughout the season, RedBull proved last year that these upgrades don't necessarily improve the performance of the car. Having completed the least amount of laps out of any Constructor in testing, the 304 laps driven by Verstappen and Lawson likely places them as the third-fourth fastest car on the grid for this season. However, one can expect that Verstappen's skill will see a few podiums across the year, but it will be exciting to see how Lawson matches up as he makes the jump from RB to RedBull.

As for Ferrari, it's an exciting year for the Tifosi who are filled with the hopes of a chance for a championship. With a Hamilton and Leclerc pairing, the chances couldn't be any higher. The SF-25 looked rather promising in testing and even more so after it has been speculated across the paddock that Ferrari have been heavily sandbagging during testing. With their current figures, we can expect many Ferrari podiums across the season. The talents of Leclerc and Hamilton will set the standards

high this year and will definitely make for great competition across the grid.

McLaren appear to be the Constructor on everybody's lips. Having risen from the ashes last season to take home the Constructor's title, the pressure is on for Zak Brown and his papaya counterparts. With Piastri signing a multi-year extension it seems that he and Norris will continue their partnership into the next few seasons. It is likely that McLaren have something up their sleeves for this season but will the title contender of Lando Norris be able to handle the pressure? Whilst I think that Norris will crumble as we get further into the season, it will be interesting to

**“McLaren appear to be the Constructor on everybody's lips.”**

see how Piastri places as he is likely to be Ferrari's biggest competition going into the season.

**“Will the title contender of Norris be able to handle the pressure?”**

In terms of Mercedes, the question is will they or won't they. It's been a disaster few years for the German outfit and with Hamilton's departure, George Russell takes the reins with rookie wonder-kid, Kimi Antonelli. It's a promising partnership but it's no secret that Mercedes are relying heavily on car performance which hasn't favoured the team recently. Mercedes are likely to get a feel of a mid-field car for this season. Whilst I believe that Antonelli will shine this year, I think we can expect to see a forgettable year for this team.

# UEA Pirates 24/25 Season Review – A Playoff Campaign that’s Raised Expectations for their Derby Day Clash with Essex

**Daniel Freeman**  
Sport Editor

With up to forty players kitting up and getting their pads on for every gameday, the UEA Pirates have quickly become one of the fastest growing sports teams on campus and they’re helping to put American Football on the map. In their 2024/25 season, the Pirates not only ended their season with a trip to the playoffs after a season of demolishing wins and gut-wrenching losses, but they crucially took two dominant victories against rivals Essex to set up a tantalising Derby Day fixture at the end of April.

Defensive Tackle and Treasurer Tom Watkins described the season as “one of two halves”, but he loved the comradery shown throughout the team at the end of the season, stating that “we really rallied and made ourselves proud by getting into the playoffs.” Similar sentiment was shared by President Eamon O’Boyle who emphasised that “when we were good, we were good”, and despite injuries and inconsistency riddling the team throughout the year he was impressed that, “we certainly had a positive year and made the best of a tough situation.”

“we really rallied and made ourselves proud by getting into the playoffs.”

It was undeniably clear that despite a tough set of circumstances with injuries and games not always going their way, the fight shown by the players to reach the playoffs and perform at their best against their biggest rivals was a real tale of the passion each player had to be a part of the crew. This passion is passed on by defensive back Ryan Barton calling the Pirates, “a commitment that buys back into you” and emphasised the family like nature that the team exhibits. First year running back Julian Esquivel Cuellar raved about his rookie year on the team calling his experience, “the most fun I’ve had in a team sport” and that, “as a first-year player, I’ve grown in confidence, skill, and understanding of the game, thanks to the guidance of my coaches and support from my teammates.” The Pirates not only

succeeded under tough circumstances in 2024, but they provided opportunities for a team of forty plus players to become incredibly close to each other both on and off the pitch. Creating a unique and special year for those who played a role, 2024 for the Pirates proved how they are clearly one of the most inviting teams on campus and a team that should be popular for students considering American Football in the next few years.

“the most fun I’ve had in a team sport”



Photo Credit: UEA Pirates

From talking to the team, it was hard for anyone to not mention the team’s demolition of rival Essex at Colney in the early weeks of January. Looking to bounce back after a shaky period before Christmas and improve their playoff hopes, the Pirates bulldozed their way to a 48-0 victory in front of their home crowd. Tom Watkins described the game as the “best team performance of the year” and “validation for all the hard work we put in so far during the season, it gave us a good platform for the rest of the season.” Tom’s enthusiasm was shared by President Eamon who told me that, “Scoring nearly 100 points on Essex over two games and scoring my first touchdown for the pirates away at Essex was arguably my greatest highlight on the pirates.” The Pirates used the successes against Essex to propel a season that turned a 2-3

team littered with injuries into a quickly resurrected 4-4 season and a spot in the all-important playoffs. Not only did the Essex results propel the teams’ season, but it rekindled the needle and rivalry felt between the two outfits. Defensive back Ryan took much pride in demoting Essex into the division below the Pirates and called it the “privilege to play against a team we proudly demoted.”

However, it wasn’t just the 48-0 demolition of Essex that many members of the team took the most pride in during the 2024/25 season. Rookie Julian took the most joy from the team’s crucial

“to avenge the loss of last year for the third years who for many of them it will be their last game on the pirates.” President Eamon is buoyed by the opportunity to defeat their hated rivals stating that the game is, “an amazing opportunity to have a last outing at home for some of our graduating players.” Such an emphasis on giving the final year standouts a good sendoff was a real marker into how close the team feel to each other. Vice President Ryan describes the team as “a family from day one” and rookie Julian describes the team as, “having an incredible sense of friendship and family” and that, “If you’re looking for a rewarding experience with an awesome group of people, the Pirates are the team to join!”

“Scoring my first touchdown with the pirates away at Essex was arguably my greatest highlight on the pirates.”

As I’ve got to know the team, watched a host of their games and even been involved in chain crew for their game against Essex, the Pirates have grown into an incredibly tight-knit group. With Derby Day on the horizon and off the back of a very rewarding season, the Pirates deserve to be given the plaudits and appreciation they deserve.

Without a doubt, despite a large section of the team graduating at the end of the year, the successes they gained in 2024 will provide much opportunity for the team to make a huge statement at Derby Day in April and with the support of the UEA crowd they will be huge favourites to bring home the glory. Therefore, the Pirates should not only be considered as one of the most inviting groups on campus and close-knit but a group ready to build and send a message to our closest university rivals for the next few years to come.

“If you’re looking for a rewarding experience with an awesome group of people, the Pirates are the team to join!”

20-0 victory against UCL in January, a victory that kept their playoff hopes alive in the penultimate game of their season. Julian scored his first touchdown for the Pirates on a scintillating 60-yard run describing the moment as a momentum changing moment that combined with their incredible team spirit, made the game an unforgettable one for the Norwich outfit. It was that spell at the end of the season despite an eventual loss to Brunel in the playoffs, a team that is on the cusp of winning a national title at the time of writing, that showed the huge progression that the Pirates made over the course of 2024.

But, the team now turn their attentions to the 30th of April and their fierce clash with the Essex Blades. Defensive standout Tom calls the game an opportunity