



## Coventry and Warwickshire Humanists Newsletter May 2026

Dear Fellow Humanists

Welcome to the May issue of the Coventry & Warwickshire Humanists Newsletter. At the time of writing this Newsletter on Bank Holiday Monday the temperatures are rising to 30+ degrees with wall-to-wall sunshine 12 hours a day for the rest of the week. So, I have escaped the scorching heat to my study to compose the Newsletter. Regardless of the heat, I hope that you are enjoying the sunshine and summer feeling. Obvious thoughts will swing towards the issues of Climate Change and how it affects our environment and world. Personally, I have not known May to be this hot before? As you are probably aware, the Annual Humanist Convention will take place in Bournemouth on 12<sup>th</sup> to 14<sup>th</sup> June. This is always an important event in the Humanists UK calendar. More about this later in the Newsletter.

As I mentioned in the April Newsletter, the meeting on Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> May would be devoted to a discussion on developing the group, particularly in terms of attendance at meetings and general involvement. More about this discussion later in the Newsletter. One issue that was discussed was the lack of a Humanist presence at the recent Warwick Peace Builders Festival. I was there with the Amnesty International stall, but it would have been useful for Coventry & Warwickshire Humanists to also have a stall? Likewise, the Leamington Peace Festival is on Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> and Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> June, which unfortunately clashes with the Humanists UK Convention! Nevertheless, it would have been useful for those of us not attending the Humanists Convention to have managed a presence at the Leamington Peace Festival? I do believe that this is an area where we do need to raise our presence, especially as there were Christian and Muslim groups with stalls at the Warwick Peace Festival. If anyone is available and willing to attend the Leamington Peace Festival on either 13<sup>th</sup> or 14<sup>th</sup> June, please let me know. We can provide you with the group portable banner and a selection of leaflets etc.

I will leave you all to continue to enjoy the current heatwave, and a reminder that our next meeting will be on Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> June where Jane Sault, Adrian Davis and I will do a presentation and report on the Humanist Convention.

Thank you and very best wishes to you all

Brian Goredema-Braid

Chair of Coventry & Warwickshire Humanists

### Meetings:

**Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> May:** This was the meeting where we were hoping for a forthright and open discussion based on the recent article by article by Maggie Hall, 'Has Organised Humanism Had It's Day?' We were hoping that this meeting would be devoted to discussing how we can build Coventry & Warwickshire Humanists, not just the content and quality the meetings, but building and developing our membership. There was no set agenda as such, just an opportunity for everyone to make a contribution. Unfortunately, this was one of the poorest attendances we have ever had with just 10 persons in attendance. Further unfortunately, it did not lead to the open discussion that I had hoped

for? There were one or two suggestions for future meetings, but nothing specifically about increasing attendance and involvement. John Goodman and Glyn Evans mentioned an opportunity to plan for a more inclusive meeting. The other suggestions included a presence at community events such as the Leamington Peace Festival (see above). Also, to organise a debate on Humanist issues, (i.e. religion vs. science etc.) with school children. I send out this Newsletter to 50 email addresses, it would be helpful if 50% of those recipients made contact or attended some of our meetings. I will still welcome further ideas and suggestions from those of you who were unable to attend. Please send any suggestion to me via email.

**Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> June:** This meeting will be devoted to a resume and feedback from the Humanists UK Annual Convention on 12<sup>th</sup> -14<sup>th</sup> June at Bournemouth. Jane Sault, Adrian Davis and myself will be in attendance at the Convention and we will give you our individual thoughts and perspectives on the discussions and presentations from the different speakers at the Convention.

Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> July: To be confirmed – a discussion on a more inclusive meeting led by John Goodman and Glyn Evans

**August** – As usual we do not have a meeting August.

**Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> September:** "Glyn Evans and John Goodfellow will offer, a presentation on "**A Humanist response to the turmoil and suffering of our 21st Century world**" The main focus will be the profound effect of the growth in Economic Inequality in the UK and across the world in the last 40 years. We will present statistics and other empirical evidence with regard to the influence of economic factors on the physical and emotional well-being of - especially- poor and vulnerable people. Glyn and John intend to discuss with members at a future meeting how we might increase attendance on this occasion."

#### **Festival of Humanism:**

The poster for the Festival of Humanism 2026 in Bournemouth features a grid of 24 small portraits of diverse individuals on the left. The central text, set against a yellow background, reads "FESTIVAL OF HUMANISM Bournemouth 2026" in large blue letters, followed by "12-14 June" and the website "humanists.uk/festival". Below this, it says "Day tickets on sale now". On the right, a dark blue vertical panel contains a stylized yellow graphic of a human figure with arms raised.

Final sales end on 1 June  
**Festival of Humanism 2026**  
Friday 12 June, 19:00 –  
Sunday 14 June, 15:15  
**Bournemouth International Centre**  
Exeter Road,  
Bournemouth  
BH2 5BH

The Festival of Humanism is a true highlight of the humanist calendar. Kicking off on Friday evening with a fantastic evening of entertainment and welcome drinks in the bar, from Saturday morning through to Sunday afternoon we welcome scientists and campaigners, historians and artists, politicians and journalists, to fascinate, educate, entertain – and inspire! There is a wide variety of speakers including:

Janet Ellis, current President of Humanists UK, Former Presidents Alice Roberts and Adam Rutherford, Andrew Copson, Chief Executive of Humanists UK.

Main Speakers include – Lord Alf Dubbs, Sharon Booth, Laura Iteanu, Robin Morgan, Iszi Lawrence, Alfredo, Carpineta, Paul Fitzgerald, David Wearing, Clare Stanthorp, Jass Kawkby, Yaniv Akin, Erica Buist, Alex von Tunzelmann, Jamie Hodgson, Kathy Riddick, Niki Seth-Smith, Roger Hutton, Neil Weddell, Emma Monk, Phoenix Andrews and Oscar Lozada.

Humanists UK staff include: Karen Wright, Clare Elcombe Webber, Rachel reign, Luke Donnellan, Maggie Ardiente and Madeline Goodall.

### **Humanists UK reacts to the King's Speech: Welcome words, missing action.**

The King's Speech is where the Government sets out the laws it wants to pass in the year ahead. Although the King reads the speech, it is written by the Government as a way for them to say what they think matters most and what they plan to do next.



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The King's Speech and the new parliamentary session cover many different issues, but our response focuses only on the ones where we have a policy position or active campaign.

For Humanists UK, the key question is whether the plans will help build a society where people can live freely, equally, and with dignity. On that test, this King's Speech made some progress, but left some big issues out.

### **Change coming to be celebrated**

The King's Speech included a commitment from the Government to support our pluralistic society. The King said the Government:

'Will defend the British values of decency, tolerance and respect for difference under our common flag, and they will harness the potential of the pride felt across this country for its communities. My government will take urgent action to tackle antisemitism and ensure all communities feel safe.' We recently condemned rising antisemitism and called for solidarity with British Jews in light of a spate of attacks.

We also welcome measures to be announced to support women's participation in society.

Humanists have always stood up for the equal rights of women, including their right to complete autonomy and control over their own bodies. The King said:

'My ministers will champion the right of women and girls to live in a world free from violence, this will include promoting women's full economic and political participation in society, including more agency over decisions that impact their lives.'

We work wherever possible to give moral and practical support to significant initiatives to meet today's global challenges, such as climate change, poverty, and humane treatment for refugees, and to promote a culture of respect for human rights. We welcomed a dedication to these issues in the King's Speech:

'My government will remain a leading advocate for tackling climate change and achieving a world free from poverty. The United Kingdom will also take action to reduce humanitarian need and conflict around the world.'

### **What was missing?**

#### **A draft bill to tackle conversion practices**

The Government again announced it will introduce a draft Bill to ban so-called 'conversion therapy', which will be consulted upon. This is welcome after several years of Government promises to do so.

Conversion therapy means attempts to change or suppress someone’s sexual orientation or gender identity. It is harmful, degrading, and based on the false idea that LGBT people need to be ‘fixed’. A society based on equality and human dignity should protect people from these practices, and we are glad to see that Britain is catching up with the rest of the world on this issue. We’ve been alarmed by the surge in funding to promote anti-LGBT conversion practices.

**There was no mention of assisted dying.** This is despite Parliament having already spent a great deal of time debating the issue, and despite MPs voting in favour of a safeguarded change in the law.



The Assisted Dying Bill was then blocked in the House of Lords, where a small number of peers used repeated speeches and amendments to stop the Bill from passing, without even a vote.

For humanists, this is deeply disappointing. People who are terminally ill, mentally competent, and suffering should have the right to make their own choices at the end of life, with strong safeguards in place. This is about compassion, dignity, and personal freedom.

**Marriage reform – Humanists should be on equal footing**

Marriage reform was not mentioned either. In October last year, the Government announced it will legally recognise humanist marriages as part of a wholesale review. However, the Government will consult on its proposals in 2026 before introducing legislation to reform marriage law when ‘parliamentary time allows’.



This means that humanist couples in England and Wales will continue to wait to have a wedding that reflects their own beliefs and values, led by a humanist celebrant. But this doesn’t need to go through a Bill, the Government has had the power to grant legal recognition via Order since the passing of the Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Act 2013, but it has yet to do so. We call on the Government to lay the Order, even in the interim, while it considers wider marriage reform.

Religious couples already have this right. Non-religious couples should be treated equally.

**Lords reform – Remove automatic rights for bishops to sit in the Lords**

There was no mention of reforming the House of Lords, despite it being in the Labour manifesto.

The UK Parliament automatically awards 26 seats in the House of Lords to bishops of the Church of England. These bishops are able to (and do) vote on legislation, make interventions,



and lead prayers at the start of each day’s business. This is an extremely unusual and anti-democratic set-up, which has a negative influence on the quality and character of British politics. The only two sovereign states in the world to award clerics of the established religion votes in their legislatures are the UK and the Islamic Republic of Iran (a totalitarian theocracy).

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## **Bills we are worried about**

### **Immigration and Asylum Bill**

The speech mentioned that 'legislation will be introduced to increase confidence in the security of the immigration and asylum systems' through a new Immigration and Asylum Bill.

We've previously raised concern about asylum proposals, saying that any changes to the asylum system must be fair, humane, and respect human rights.

We will be watching closely to make sure the Bill does not make life harder for refugees, weaken human rights protections, or treat vulnerable people as a political problem rather than as human beings.

### **Opportunities ahead**

Even though these issues were missing from the King's Speech, there will still be chances to raise humanist concerns in Parliament.

#### **Education:**

The last session showed progress is possible. The Children's Wellbeing and Schools Act introduced important measures to shut down illegal schools. But the plans also open the door for more religious selection in schools proven to worsen socio-economic and racial segregation.

In the King's speech, the Government made further commitments around children and education: 'My government believes that the United Kingdom should be a country fair for all and a place where every child is included in the nation's highest aspirations. My ministers believe that every child deserves the chance to succeed to the best of his or her ability and not be held back due to poverty, special educational needs, or a lack of respect for vocational education.'

Outside of this new legislation, called the Education for All Bill, we hope to see plans for a reformed Religious Education inclusive of humanism to be placed on the national curriculum, which we will respond to when published.

#### **What next?**

In the year ahead, Humanists UK will continue to campaign for laws based on reason, compassion, equality, and human rights. That means action on assisted dying, a comprehensive ban on conversion practices, legal recognition of humanist marriages, reform of the House of Lords, inclusive education, and a fair and human-rights focused asylum system. The King's Speech is not just a list of proposed laws. It tells us what the Government is choosing to prioritise. Humanists will keep making the case for a country where everyone can live by their own values, free from harm, and with equal dignity under the law.

#### **Humanists UK Chief Executive Andrew Copson said:**

'Today's King's Speech contains some welcome commitments on equality and tackling conversion practices, but it also leaves major questions unanswered. A truly free and fair society must give people dignity at the end of life, equal recognition for humanist marriages, inclusive education, and a Parliament that reflects democratic values rather than religious privilege. We will keep pressing the Government to turn warm words about tolerance and respect into real change.'

**Humanists UK President Janet Ellis tells parliament: 'All children deserve hope, choice, and opportunity.'** Broadcaster, writer, and President of Humanists UK Janet Ellis joined parliamentarians at a meeting of the All-Party Parliamentary Humanist Group in Westminster yesterday, and called on them to act across our campaigns on humanist marriages, inclusive education, and compassionate assisted dying reform.



In a conversation chaired by Lizzi Collinge MP, attending MPs and peers were introduced to Humanists UK's President Janet Ellis. During the wide-ranging conversation, Janet reflected on her own journey to humanism, discussing how her non-religious beliefs have shaped her career. Janet spoke passionately about Humanists UK campaigns. This included the need for inclusive education in schools, and an education that gives all children hope, choice and opportunity.

The discussion also touched on assisted dying reform, where Janet spoke about the need for parliamentarians to bring back the Assisted Dying Bill after it was talked out in the House of Lords without a vote.

Janet also raised the pressing need to grant humanist couples in England and Wales the same right to marry in line with their beliefs as their religious counterparts, and as humanist couples enjoy in Scotland, Northern Ireland, Ireland, and beyond. She called on Government to use its existing powers to lay the Order to legally recognise humanist marriage without delay.

The All-Party Parliamentary Humanist Group is a cross-party group of around 130 Members of the House of Commons and the House of Lords of all the main parties. The Group is not part of Humanists UK, but Humanists UK provides the secretariat.

***President of Humanists UK, Janet Ellis, said:***

'It was wonderful to attend my first meeting of the All-Party Parliamentary Humanist Group as President of Humanists UK and meet so many committed MPs and peers. The warmth and support in the room for our campaigns – from the urgent need for legal recognition of humanist marriages in England and Wales to the push for more inclusive education and compassionate assisted dying reform – was reassuring and inspiring in equal measure.

I look forward to working alongside the group to ensure the non-religious voice continues to be heard in Westminster.'



**Only 4 in 100 under-35s attend church regularly – new research reveals**

The gold-standard British Social Attitudes survey has revealed that only four in 100 under-35s attend Christian church regularly and that overall Church attendance in Britain continues to decline dramatically. These findings are supported by the Church of England's own attendance figures. Humanists UK says the data is 'another nail in the coffin for the myth of Christian revival', shows that Britain is not a Christian country, and that religious institutions shouldn't continue to be privileged in public life and national identity.



In the National Centre for Social Research (NatCen)'s latest British Social Attitudes survey, just 4% of those aged under 35 say they attend a Christian service at least once a week. The level of reported weekly attendance among those aged 70 and over is, at 9%, just half of that recorded in 2017. There is further evidence to counter the report of a 'quiet revival' of Christianity, which was based on the

now-retracted claims by the Bible Society that younger people are turning back to Christianity.

The Bible Society retracted its report that there is a quiet revival of Christianity after it revealed the report was based on a faulty and unreliable YouGov survey. Preliminary figures from the Church of England’s Statistics for Mission figures for 2025 confirm what the British Social Attitudes survey has shown, in that there is a long-term decline.

**Humanists UK Chief Executive Andrew Copson said:**

‘The UK is a diverse and mainly non-religious society, and our politics must reflect that. An overwhelming amount of evidence shows the decline of Christianity, and the UK is no longer a Christian country. Yet Christian institutions are given preferential treatment in our politics, our children’s education, and our nation’s ceremonies.

‘This isn’t about celebrating a decline in faith, it’s arguing for a politics and society based in the current reality. A growing Christian nationalist movement is seeking to impose beliefs on others, and we must work together to stop it. Otherwise, we will be undermining our ability to work for peace and cohesion in our diverse society.’

	2019	2025	Difference
<b>Regular worshippers</b>	1.11 million	1.02 million	– 90,000
<b>Average weekly attendance</b>	854,000	707,000	-147,000
<b>Average Sunday service attendance</b>	690,000	590,000	-100,000
<b>Christmas attendance</b>	2.33 million	1.96 million	-370,000
<b>Easter attendance</b>	1.18 million	1.03 million	-150,000

**Sir John Curtice said**

‘The evidence from the British Social Attitudes survey is clear: there has been no revival in Christian observance in Britain. Church attendance remains below pre-pandemic levels across all age groups, and the suggestion that younger people are leading a religious renewal is not borne out by the data. COVID-19 appears to have had a more lasting effect on religious practice in Britain than many had hoped and that extends to faith communities beyond Christianity too.’

**‘Everything Went Well’ – 00.30 – BBC2 on Saturday night 30th May - An excellent French film on the issue of Assisted Dying**

A very thoughtful film on the sensitive issue of assisted dying. A French film with subtitles that nevertheless addresses the issues and dilemmas for family members. This drama from French director François Ozon is a masterful meditation on mortality. It's also a hugely personal project for the film-maker, as it adapts the memoir of Emmanuèle Bernheim, the screenwriter he worked with earlier in his career, and who passed away in 2017. Sophie Marceau plays Emmanuèle, who is attempting to come to terms with the demands of her ailing father (André Dussollier).



After a debilitating stroke has left him unable to enjoy life, he requests that she help him undergo assisted suicide. Taking great care in bringing Emmanuèle's story to the screen, Ozon circumvents debating the ethics of euthanasia, instead focusing on the practicalities of undertaking this long goodbye despite the potential legal ramifications. Both sisters have to come to terms with their own personal issues.

The meeting with the representative from the Swiss clinic is traumatic for one of the sisters. The father's last days are planned with a big family meal and the chance to watch his granddaughter's concert performance. Things become more constrained when the French Police become suspicious. The journey to Switzerland in an ambulance has a humorous side when the father and the two ambulance drivers stop at a roadside café. Sensitive but never sentimental, right down to the deliberately prosaic title, this is a deeply humane story driven by warm performances, including a lovely cameo from one-time Rainer Werner Fassbinder muse Hanna Schygulla.

#### **Cinema Film Preview:**

***(Some are shown on the main cinema circuit, but most are available at the small art cinemas, Warwick Arts Centre, Midland Arts Centre and Leamington Spa Theatre)***

**Sheep Detectives:** A brilliant laugh out loud comedy. Each night a shepherd reads a murder mystery aloud to his flock. When he is found dead under mysterious circumstances, the sheep decide to investigate. Starring Hugh Jackman and Emma Thompson and an array of star names providing the voices of the sheep.

**Eagles of the Republic:** Egypt's most popular actor is pressured to star in a propaganda film commissioned by the authorities. He finds himself in danger. He begins an affair with the mysterious wife of the general overseeing the film – described as a moth drawn to a flame!

**Power Ballad:** A feel-good musical comedy. A wedding singer meets fading boy-band star. They bond over music and a late-night jam-session. The boy-band singer turns one of the wedding singer's songs in to a hit that reignites his career. The wedding singer sets out to reclaim the recognition he deserves – at all costs. Starring Paul Rudd and Nick Jonas.

**Tuner:** A veteran piano tuner is losing his hearing; his shy apprentice is incredibly sensitive. Together, they're the best tuners in town. The apprentice's skills are exposed to a criminal side trade and falls in love with a music student. Starring Dustin Hoffman, Leo Woodall and Havana Rose Liu

**Backrooms:** A strange doorway appears in the basement of a furniture showroom. Two people find themselves in a world where reality no longer has a hold. Starring Renate Reinsve and Chiwetel Ejiofor

**Wild Foxes:** A promising young boxer survives a deadly accident, but the road ahead isn't easy in this sports boarding school. An inexplicable pain gradually takes hold of Camille, which threatens his dreams of greatness in the ring.

**Orphan:** Set in post-war Budapest, after the war, a boy is reunited with his mother. As he grows, so too does his longing to reconcile the identity of his father. The boy's dogged quest paints a much larger and complex portrait of a haunted Jewish community rebuilding itself as it grapples with the horror of erasure.

**Hen:** A hen's-eye view of the world reveals the cut-throat nature of existence and puts human flaws into relief in this tragicomic tale. An animal protagonist can take you places where people cannot penetrate. This is a coming-of-age story, but of a chicken. Surviving battery farming, a fox, traffic, the dangers of a big city, a dog and being made into soup, the hen ends up taking refuge in a crumbling Greek seaside restaurant where a human tragedy is unfolding.

**Savage House:** Set against the backdrop of 18th century England, a massive Pox outbreak and Jacobite Uprising, this is a timely and darkly satirical story of Sir Chauncey Savage played by Richard E. Grant and Lady Savage's Claire Foy and a blind pursuit of a better life. Filled with duels, decadence, and bloodshed, this is a madcap play on class and power.

**Leonora in the Morning Light:** The epic true story of a woman who turned trauma into transcendence, creating beauty from chaos and forging a legacy that changed the history of modern art. Leonora Carrington refused to live by anyone's rules but her own. In the charged atmosphere of 1930s Paris, she falls under the spell of the Surrealist movement—and German artist Max Ernst. Together, they build an otherworldly refuge in the south of France. But as war engulfs Europe, Ernst

is arrested as an enemy alien, and Leonora is thrust into a nightmare of loss, madness, and survival. Fleeing to Spain, she spirals into psychological torment and endures brutal institutional treatment.

**Madfabulas:** Meet Toppo, a fabulously flamboyant aristocrat. Born in 1875, he inherited a fortune and promptly set about spending every last penny of it on jewels, theatre productions and scandalously lavish parties. While polite society clutched its pearls, Toppo became a beloved figure to the people of Bangor.

**Virginia Woolf's Night and Day:** Based on Virginia Woolf's lesser-known comic novel, *Night & Day* is a refreshing take on the romantic comedy, set against the backdrop of early 20th-century London and the crumbling Edwardian patriarchal attitudes. An aspiring astronomer is passionate about two only: the stars and Cambridge University. While her controlling father tries to push her away from learning and into marriage with family friend. The headstrong young woman gets involved in the suffragette movement. Starring Haley Bennett and Timothy Spall.

**Scream:** A sly and witty horror film. A sleepy town wakes up screaming. There is a killer in midst who has seen too many horror films. Starring Neve Campbell, Courtney Cox and David Arquette

### **Still on the Circuit:**

**Colours of Time:** Brought together by an unexpected inheritance, four cousins explore their mysterious family history. In 1895, their ancestor Adele leaves her hometown to search for her mother in Paris. As her descendants retrace her steps, they unravel a surprising past and the two timelines collide, leaving everyone's future forever changed. **A definite 'must see' film!**

**Primavera:** In 18<sup>th</sup> Century Venice a talented orphan musician's life changes forever when she meets the orphanage's new music teacher, Antonio Vivaldi. Under his mentorship, she gains courage to break free from life in the orphanage.

**The Devil Wears Prada 2:** A welcome sequel for the film of the cut-throat atmosphere of the fashion industry. Starring Meryl Streep, Ann Hathaway and Stanley Tucci

**Mother Mary:** A returning pop icon approaching the beginning of her new tour, reunites with her long-lost best friend and former costume designer when she needs a new dress for her grand comeback. However, this reconciliation brings with it repressed hurt and emotional scars that bubble up to the surface the night before the first performance. Starring Ann Hathaway and Michaela Coel

**Glenrothan:** After 35 years in the USA, Donal returns to his family-owned whisky distillery in the Scottish Highlands. On the day of his mother's funeral, he and his brother wound up in a violent exchange with their father. Now, with the survival of their treasured family business on the line, Donal hopes to make amends before it's too late. Starring Alan Cumming and Brian Cox

**Our Land:** Who has the 'right to Roam' in the English countryside? This energetic documentary takes us to the heart of the 'Right to Roam' movement as it embarks on a provocative campaign to mass trespass and education, while exploring landowners' concerns. A definite film for hikers and walkers!

**The Christophers':** An art restorer's fortunes look up when she's approached by the estranged heirs of a painter to steal a series of abandoned paintings, "The Christophers." To complete them and reap a huge percentage once they are sold after the painter's imminent death. Excellent performances from Ian McKellen and Michaela Coel.

### **The Screening of Live Theatre Plays from the West End:**

**All My Sons:** Bryan Cranston and Marianne Jean-Baptiste feature in a five-star, triumphantly acclaimed new production of Arthur Miller's classic play, from visionary director Ivo Van Hove

**Playboy of the Western World:** Nicola Coughlan joins Éanna Hardwicke and Siobhán McSweeney in John Millington Synge's riveting play of youth and self-discovery.

**Les Liaisons Dangereuses:** Lesley Manville joins Aidan Turner in a striking new staging of Christopher Hampton's celebrated adaptation of the classic novel, where among the glittering salons of the super-rich, one misstep can mean ruin.

## Art Exhibitions on Screen:

James McNeill's Whistler

Renoir and Love

Monet

## TV & Film:

**Friday 29<sup>th</sup> May: A good night for jazz lovers, Miles Davis, Ella Fitzgerald, Cleo Laine and Jazz 625**

**21.00 – BBC1: Have I Got News for You** - Katherine Ryan is tonight's host, with journalist Jo Coburn and comedian John Tothill joining regular team captains Ian Hislop and Paul Merton

**21.05 – BBC4: Miles Davis: Birth of Cool** - Documentary profile of the great jazz bandleader, horn player and innovator whose restless determination to break boundaries and live life on his own terms made him a star, but also made him difficult to live with.

**22.40 – BBC1: St Denis Medical** – One of my favourite comedy sitcoms set in a chaotic US hospital – next episode is at **23.00**

**23.00 – BBC2: Love and Mercy** - Biographical drama of Brian Wilson of the Beach Boys and his struggles and panic attacks. An older Wilson tentatively enters into a relationship with a Cadillac saleswoman, but his therapist's intense scrutiny threatens to derail the union before it gathers any momentum. Starring Paul Dano and John Cusack. Marvellous in every way

**23.05 – BBC4: Ella Fitzgerald's Other Show** – Vintage quality jazz - American singer Ella Fitzgerald in performance at Ronnie Scott's Jazz Club in 1974.

**23.05 – Channel 4: Dante's Peak** - Disaster action adventure starring Pierce Brosnan and Linda Hamilton. An expert on volcanos investigates seismic activity at Dante's Peak. When 2 bodies are found in a hot spring, local business is desperate to minimise the damage to the tourist industry.

**23.45 – BBC4: Cleo Laine at the BBC** - Britain's First Lady of Jazz's finest moments on the BBC. Duets with John Williams, Dudley Moore, Tony Bennett and her late husband Johnny Dankworth

**00.45 – BBC4: Jazz 625** - Archive material from the show originally broadcast in the 1960s, with performances by Duke Ellington, Dave Brubeck, Dizzy Gillespie and Chris Barber's Jazz Band

## Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> May:

**19.25 – BBC1: Michael McIntyre's Big Show** – A new series of the popular family TV show

**21.05 – BBC4: Ghost Trail** - Thriller based on true events, 2 years after his release from prison during the Assad regime, a Syrian refugee lives in France where he fixates on locating the man who brutalised him, and joins an online network dedicated to tracking down war criminals.

**21.15 – BBC1: Two Weeks in August** - A fascinating serial when a Mediterranean break turns from an idyllic trip into a holiday nightmare for a group of friends and family.

**21.30 – Channel 4: Wrath of Man** - Action thriller, a new employee working as a security guard for an armoured truck company proves his mettle during an attempted heist. His colleagues are impressed, and then increasingly suspicious about his skill set and motivation.

**22.45 – BBC4: This is Joan Collins** – I know it is not everyone's 'cup-of-tea' – but it is an interesting bio-pic (**Repeated at 23.50 on Monday**)

**22.50 – ITV1: Taken** - Action drama as former CIA operative calls upon his tried-and-tested skills in a race-against-time bid to rescue his daughter from the sex traffickers who have kidnapped her during a holiday in France. Starring Liam Neeson

**23.10 – BBC1: Escape Room** - Horror thriller, 6 strangers sign up to take part in a mysterious competition that offers a \$10,000 cash prize. Upon arrival, they realise their challenge has already begun - and is far more terrifyingly immersive than they could have imagined. (If you must?)

**23.50 – Channel 4: Central Intelligence** - Action comedy where life gets dangerous for a bored accountant when he reconnects with a former school classmate who now works in international espionage. Starring Dwayne Johnson and Kevin Hart.

**00.30 – BBC2: Everything Went Fine** - An exceptional French drama on the subject of assisted dying. Shortly after he suffers a stroke, A father asks his 2 adult daughters to help him end his life. It's a difficult request for daughters to take on, but, as they discover, it's also just another facet of her complicated family life. starring Sophie Marceau and André Dussollier

**Sunday 31<sup>st</sup> May:**

**19.25 – BBC4: Top Hat** – Pure nostalgic musical comedy starring Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers

**20.15 – BBC1: Death Valley** - Another episode of the comedy crime drama starring Timothy Spall and Gwyneth Keyworth.

**21.00 – BBC1: Dear England** – This is much better than I originally thought it would be. Haunted by decades of failures, Gareth Southgate becomes England manager and uses psychology to confront fear and pursue victory. Starring Joseph Fiennes and Jodie Whittaker.

**21.00 – BBC4: Michael Palin and the mysteries of Hammershoi** - The actor combines his passion for travel and art to discover more about the life and work of Danish artist Vilhelm Hammershoi. He searches for clues in London, the Netherlands and Copenhagen

**22.00 – BBC2: Later – With Jools Holland** - Joining Jools at Alexandra Palace Theatre are singer-songwriters Jessie Ware and Holly Humberstone, soul singer Sade, electronic band Fcukers, and producer, songwriter and musician Jack Antonoff.

**22.30 – BBC1: The Nice Guys** - Crime comedy, a PI is hired to investigate the death of a porn star but, he collides with a violent enforcer. After they learn that a missing young woman could be in danger, the two men team up as the mystery develops. Starring Ryan Gosling and Russell Crowe.

**22.45 – BBC2: The Blues Brothers** – A brilliant classic musical comedy starring John Belushi and Dan Aykroyd who reform their legendary band to raise money for their old orphanage threatened with closure. Chased across the country by a band of neo-Nazis, an irate country & western group and the police. Supporting artistes include Ray Charles, Aretha Franklin, James Brown and Cab Calloway.

**NOT TO BE MISSED! (Repeated on Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> June on BBC4 at 22.55)**

**00.05 – Channel 4: Lion** - Drama based on a true story, starring Dev Patel and Sunny Pawar. A 5-year-old boy from a village in India, looking for work with his brother when the two are separated. After falling asleep on a train, he ends up lost in Kolkata, where he is adopted by an Australian couple when the authorities cannot trace his family. Years later, as a young man, he tries to locate his home town.

**Monday 1<sup>st</sup> June:**

**20.30 – BBC1: Scam Interceptors** - Rav Wilding is hunting down the scammers plaguing our lives. Working to hack into the fraudsters' illegal call centres, using cutting-edge technology to monitor the scammers' phone calls in an effort to stop victims losing out to real-time scams.

**21.00 – Dear England** – Another episode of Gareth Southgate transforming the England football team starring Joseph Fiennes and Jodie Whittaker

**Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> June:**

**21.00 – BBC1: Who Do You Think You Are?** - This week it is Strictly dancer Amy Dowden who turns detective, travelling to west Wales to investigate a rumour of murder in her family.

**21.00 – BBC2: QI XL** - Sandi Toksvig hosts the comedy panel show, with Aisling Bea, Roisin Conaty and Jessica Fostekew joining regular Alan Davies to answer questions on senses

**22.00 – BBC4: Muhammed Ali** – Four films charting the life of one of the greatest sportsmen to have ever lived. As well as being the finest heavyweight boxer of his generation, a man of principle with humour and personality who did much to bring about Civil Rights in the USA. **Next episodes at 22.50, 23.40, 00.30**

**22.40 – BBC1: Half Man** – One of the very best drama's that I have seen on TV this year. I know that there are violent scenes, but the actual drama is gripping and tense. Unfortunately, this is the last episode – but watch the rest if you can. Two brothers. Not related in blood, one, fierce and loyal, the

other, meek and mild-mannered. Inseparable youth. Brought into each other's lives through death and circumstance, all they have is each other

**23.30 – BBC2: Defiance** - World War 2 drama based on a true story. Belarus in 1941, 4 Jewish brothers escape from the Nazis and hide in the forests they have known from childhood. From there, they lead a ragtag army in a series of increasingly daring attacks against the invaders. Starring Daniel Craig and Liev Schreiber

**23.50 – BBC1: Everest** - Adventure thriller based on a true story. In 1996, climbers from 2 expeditions embark on a final push to reach Everest's summit. But the last thing the explorers need is a life-threatening blizzard. Starring Josh Brolin, Jake Gyllenhaal.

**Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> June:**

**21.00 – BBC1: Amandaland** - The return of the Motherland spin-off, starring Lucy Punch and Joanna Lumley. Amanda is still juggling teenagers, her online Senuous brand and her co-lab.

**21.30 – BBC1: Only Child** – Tame comedy. A son returns home to visit his dad, after the passing of his mum. But on arriving, he realises his dad may need more help than he had originally thought.

**22.40 – BBC1: A Good Girls Guide to Murder** – Emma Myers returns as a teenage amateur sleuth. She is determined to stay away from any more investigations and focus on her friends and school. But when a key witness in the Max Hastings' trial disappears, she feels the pull of a new case.

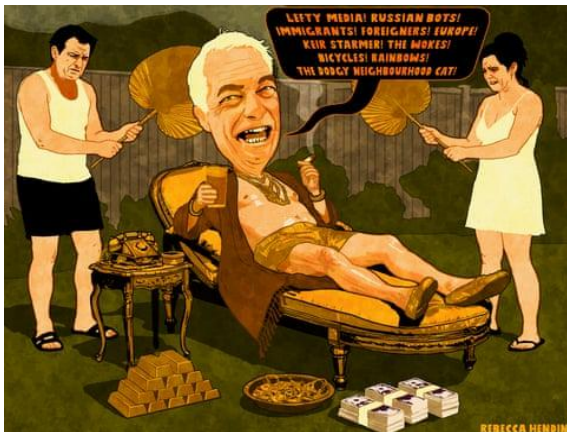
Adapted by Holly Jackson from her novel Good Girl Bad Blood, and co-starring Henry Ashton, Zain Iqbal and Jude Morgan-Collie. **Next episode at 23.25**

**Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> June:**

**20.00 – BBC4: The Searchers** - Classic western starring John Wayne, Jeffrey Hunter and Natalie Wood. John Ford's masterpiece tells the story of a man and his five-year search for the last surviving member of his murdered family - a young girl captured by Comanches.

**21.00 – Channel 4: Taskmaster** – The penultimate episode where 5 comedians are being put through their paces to complete ridiculous tasks by Gregg Davis and Alex Horne

A Few Cartoons:



## A Few Funnies to Finish With:

THESE ARE ACTUAL COMPLAINTS RECEIVED BY "THOMAS COOK VACATIONS" FROM REAL CUSTOMERS: x 🤔😂😂😂

1. "They should not allow topless sunbathing on the beach. It was very distracting for my husband who just wanted to relax."
  2. "On my holiday to Goa in India, I was disgusted to find that almost every restaurant served curry. I don't like spicy food."
  3. "We went on holiday to Spain and had a problem with the taxi drivers as they were all Spanish."
  4. "We booked an excursion to a water park but no-one told us we had to bring our own swimsuits and towels. We assumed it would be included in the price."
  5. "The beach was too sandy. We had to clean everything when we returned to our room."
  6. "We found the sand was not like the sand in the brochure. Your brochure shows the sand as white but it was more yellow."
  7. "It's lazy of the local shopkeepers in Puerto Vallarta to close in the afternoons. I often needed to buy things during 'siesta' time -- this should be banned."
  8. "No-one told us there would be fish in the water. The children were scared."
  9. "Although the brochure said that there was a fully equipped kitchen, there was no egg-slicer in the drawers."
  10. "I think it should be explained in the brochure that the local convenience store does not sell proper biscuits like custard creams or ginger nuts."
  11. "The roads were uneven and bumpy, so we could not read the local guide book during the bus ride to the resort. Because of this, we were unaware of many things that would have made our holiday more fun."
  12. "It took us nine hours to fly home from Jamaica to England. It took the Americans only three hours to get home. This seems unfair."
  13. "I compared the size of our one-bedroom suite to our friends' three-bedroom and ours was significantly smaller."
  14. "The brochure stated: 'No hairdressers at the resort.' We're trainee hairdressers and we think they knew and made us wait longer for service."
  15. "When we were in Spain, there were too many Spanish people there. The receptionist spoke Spanish, the food was Spanish. No one told us that there would be so many foreigners."
  16. "We had to line up outside to catch the boat and there was no air-conditioning."
  17. "It is your duty as a tour operator to advise us of noisy or unruly guests before we travel."
  18. "I was bitten by a mosquito. The brochure did not mention mosquitoes."
  19. "My fiancée and I requested twin-beds when we booked, but instead we were placed in a room with a king bed. We now hold you responsible and want to be re-reimbursed for the fact that I became pregnant. This would not have happened if you had put us in the room that we booked."
- These are all real complaints....I hope you enjoyed them 😊

I hate spelling mistakes. You mix up two letters and your whole joke unrined.

What happens when a microscope runs into a telescope? They kaleidoscope

My wife said, "What rhymes with Orange"... I said, "No, it doesn't."

Recent studies have shown that birthdays are actually beneficial for us. The more of them that we have, the longer we live.

I'm having some friends round tonight and we're going to sit and look at our phones