



Coventry and Warwickshire Humanists Newsletter August 2026

Dear Fellow Humanists

Welcome to the August edition of the Coventry & Warwickshire Humanists Newsletter I hope that you are all still enjoying the wall-to-wall sunshine and hot weather? In the July edition of this Newsletter I wrote of 4-5 weeks of constant sunshine. Well, apart from a brief respite at the end of July, we are now into another 4 weeks of constant heat and sunshine. I have never known a summer such as this. My memories of the summer of 1976 recall that the constant 30+ degree sunshine only lasted for about 2 weeks. As I also said in the July edition, this is becoming a serious crisis for climate change. The lack of rain is directly affecting green areas which now become yellow areas. If heavy rain does come, because the ground is so hard, there will undoubtedly be many floods. The lack of rain is also affecting agriculture, pastoral and harvest yields and animal husbandry in particular. News reports show that farmers are already using their winter stocks to support their livestock. There are also concerns for the imminent harvest. This will further cause difficulties with a predicted increase in food prices during the winter. Which is a long-winded call for immediate action to be taken with issues affecting climate change. As I further stated in the July edition of this Newsletter – “There is an urgent need for a ‘grown-up conversation’ on the issue of climate change without any populist rhetoric and scaremongering”.

On a more positive note, it is encouraging to note that there has been a significant growth in Humanist representation on local religious education bodies. The number of Humanist representatives serving on local religious education councils has seen a significant growth over the last five years, embedding a more inclusive education about religion and worldviews for young people across the country. More about this growth in detail later in this Newsletter.

Brian Goredema-Braid

Chair of Coventry & Warwickshire Humanists

Meetings:

Saturday 1st August: We enjoyed a Summer Social with a difference. Jane Sault invited us all to her house for lunch. Preceding the lunch, we had an opportunity for us to attend to sort through some of the old Coventry & Warwickshire Humanists files that Roy Saich’s nephew had passed on to us. This was a very interesting exercise to plough through some of the documents and minutes of bygone meetings and discussions amongst sadly departed Humanist pioneers. The search through the documents was interesting and opened up some comments and discussion. I ended up taking away a few files and folders for further perusal. I will report on my findings at future meetings and in future Newsletters. This may also be useful information for Madeline Goodall the Humanists UK leader of Humanist Heritage? Those who attended this event bought items of food to share for the

lunch after the 'search'. The meeting concluded with a picture quiz. Overall, a thoroughly enjoyable meeting and coming together of members.

Thursday 17th September: "A Humanist response to the turmoil and suffering of our 21st Century world" led by John Goodfellow and Glyn Evans. The main focus will be the growth in Economic Inequality in the UK and across the world in the last 40 years. John and Glyn 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. Members are encouraged to bring a friend to this meeting

Thursday 15th October – At present we do not have a speaker for this meeting. Hopefully, we will have speaker for this meeting. We welcome any suggestions for items of discussion and speakers for future meetings.

Dolly Parton 1946-2026:

At the time of writing this Newsletter, I heard the sad news of the death of humanitarian Dolly Parton. Not only was she a great country singer, musician and all-round brilliant entertainer, but was devoted to several humanitarian and philanthropic causes. Most notably her reading programme "*Dolly Parton's Imagination Library*" providing free age-appropriate books to children in the USA, UK and Australia. Each book would arrive personalised and addressed directly to each child from birth until they turned five years old. The Imagination Library further provided books to libraries in many deprived areas. All paid for from her own personal wealth.

I also happened to see this posting on Facebook from New Humanist Magazine:



New Humanist Magazine's Post

We had the honour of interviewing Dolly back in January 2024. The article is an incredible read – she was a force of nature. On her beliefs in her later years, she told us: 'I'm very creative – what keeps me going is both spiritual and creative energy. I'm not a religious fanatic. I wouldn't even say I'm religious, though I grew up with that background. But I have a lot of faith in myself and I've been so blessed to have been around great people my whole life, my Uncle Bill and my family being supportive, and all the people I met along the way.'

Huge growth in humanist representation on local religious education councils

The number of humanist representatives serving on local religious education councils has seen significant growth over the last five years, embedding a more inclusive education about religion and worldviews for young people across the country.

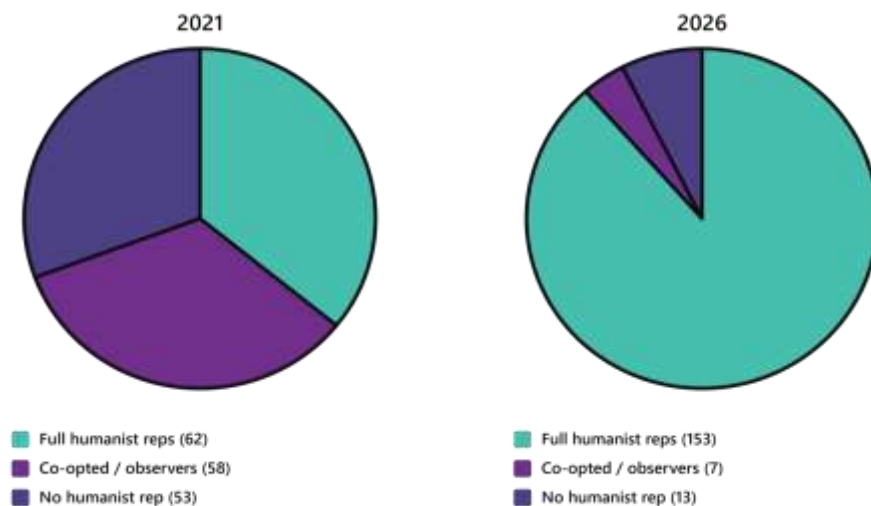
Today, there are 153 full humanist members sitting on Standing Advisory Councils on Religious Education (SACREs) across England and Wales, out of a total of 173 SACREs. This marks an increase from around 60 full members in 2021, and is up from the low 20s over a decade ago.

Every local authority in England and Wales is required to have a SACRE to advise on religious education (RE) in local schools. With syllabuses for RE still agreed at a local level, humanist representation on SACREs is crucial to securing the teaching of humanism and making sure RE lessons reflect the reality of modern Britain. Today, nearly every locally agreed syllabus in England and Wales is inclusive of humanism.

A major catalyst for this surge in full memberships was the landmark 2023 High Court case, *Bowen v Kent County Council*. Supported by Humanists UK. Humanist Steve Bowen successfully challenged Kent County Council after they refused to admit him as a full member of their SACRE. The High Court

ruled that the council's refusal was discriminatory and unlawful, making it clear that humanists have the right to serve as full members of SACREs alongside representatives of religions.

Since the 2023 ruling, Humanists UK has worked to make sure that the Bowen precedent was acknowledged across the country. Dozens of local authorities have been persuaded to appoint humanists to their SACREs or give reps with previously co-opted or observer status full voting membership.



With the government's recent proposal to add religious education to the national curriculum, there remains an open question about the future role of SACREs. However, even if they no longer decide on the subject content for RE, they may retain an advisory role, and the UK Government's cohesion strategy [Protecting What Matters](#) suggested these bodies could play a role in promoting social cohesion. Humanist representation will therefore continue to be of importance.

Humanist SACRE rep Steve Bowen said:

'After I joined Kent SACRE I was warmly welcomed by colleagues and have enjoyed working collaboratively to support high-quality, inclusive religious education for Kent's children. I contribute to projects gathering evidence on curriculum provision and have recently contributed to a teacher education day. My experience shows that humanist representation enriches a SACRE's work by bringing our unique perspective, ensuring RE reflects the diversity of beliefs and worldviews found in our society.'

Humanists UK's Head of Education Luke Donnellan commented:

'We are delighted to see such an increase in the number of full humanist representatives on SACREs. While the Bowen case was an important moment for inclusive education, that's been followed up by persistent, on-the-ground advocacy. Particular credit needs to go to our volunteer SACRE Reps Coordinator Trevor Dobson. Millions of young people will ultimately benefit from a more balanced education about religion and worldviews.'

Birmingham Humanists – 'One Life' Course:

I recently received an email from Tony Howe, the Secretary of Birmingham Humanists, about a series of Humanist Courses – 'One Life' – it is being run by Birmingham Humanists, but anyone who is interested can also join this exciting course. I have reproduced Tony's email in full:

"We are excited to invite you to join us for one of our biggest projects of recent years, our 'One Life' course. Perhaps you have heard about these Humanist courses, which have happened in various locations around the country over a number of years. 'One Life' is a deep-dive introduction to and exploration of Humanism, each session having a different and specific focus. We hope it will appeal both to people new to Humanism and to long-time Humanists. The Birmingham Humanists course is

informed by previous courses in other places, but it has been adapted and carefully planned, so it will also be unique to us - no prior preparation is needed and there's no homework 😊. The course will be led by Sarah and Mark, both of whom have lots of presenting experience.

To whet your appetite, I have attached a beautiful-looking digital flyer, which gives more information. (See below)

We very much hope you'll want to join us. We do ask you to sign up for each session you would like to attend and not just to turn up, please, to help us plan and so we can be sure there is space for everyone.

The five dates are listed separately on the Events page of our website here:

<https://birminghamhumanists.org.uk/events>

You could fill in the forms for each date, or simply reply to this email if you prefer, stating which dates you can come to. We would encourage you to come to all five sessions if you can, but if there are dates you cannot make, then you are still very welcome to attend. We are pleased to be able to offer all sessions free of charge, although we'd encourage you to leave a donation towards the cost of drinks and biscuits (suggested amount £1 for members).

The dates are now confirmed and are slightly different from the ones in News & Views. It is running across five consecutive Sundays: September 27th and October 4th, 11th, 18th and 25th. Each one will be at Stirchley Baths from 11am till 1pm, but please remember to sign up!

We very much hope to welcome you to as many of the sessions as you can make it to, and if you know of somebody else who might be interested, please do share the details with them.

With best wishes

Tony Howe

Secretary, Birmingham Humanists

For and on behalf of Birmingham Humanists



**BIRMINGHAM
HUMANISTS**

OneLife

A 5-WEEK HUMANIST COURSE

*Explore big questions.
Share ideas. Live better.*



**Life is your one opportunity.
Let's make the most of it together.**

The One Life course is an introduction to Humanism and a chance to explore the ideas that can help us lead good lives, treat others well and build a fairer world.

Each session includes short talks, open discussion and a chance to share perspectives in a friendly, welcoming space.



**OPEN TO
EVERYONE**

No prior knowledge
needed



**DISCUSSION
NOT LECTURE**

Share ideas,
not dogma



**RESPECTFUL
& INCLUSIVE**

Different views
welcome

Curious minds. Kind hearts. Better together.



VENUE
Stirchley Baths,
Birmingham



TIME
11.00am – 1.00pm
All sessions are on Sundays



COST
FREE OF CHARGE

5 SUNDAYS | 11.00AM – 1.00PM



27 SEPTEMBER 2026

One Life – an introduction to
Humanism and the One Life course



4 OCTOBER 2026

Science and Wonder –
how do we know what is true?



11 OCTOBER 2026

Ethics –
how do we know what is
right and wrong?



18 OCTOBER 2026

Social Justice –
acting for everyone



25 OCTOBER 2026

One Life – what is a good life
and how do we find meaning?

Discover. Discuss. Make a difference.

BOOK YOUR PLACE TODAY!



**BIRMINGHAM
HUMANISTS**

Building a community
for a fairer, kinder world



Find out more & book your place:
birminghamhumanists.org.uk
Visit our website and go to the
Events page to book.

Free to attend • All welcome



@birminghamhumanists



Humanists UK has launched ten Humanist Heritage walking tours, inviting everyone to learn more about the humanist radicals who shaped modern life across the UK. The self-guided walks are free to download, print, and follow, giving visitors and local people a new way to explore their city. And, conveniently, can be done at your own pace and at any time.

Humanist Heritage: putting humanism on the map

Across the ten cities, walkers can discover sites connected to pioneering humanists and freethinkers including Charles Darwin, Virginia Woolf, Bertrand Russell, George Eliot, Nye Bevan, William Morris, Harriet Martineau, Thomas Paine and so many more.

Stories range from Bristol-born Emma Martin, a humanist who lectured to 'promiscuous audiences', to Nottingham radical bookseller Susannah Wright, who defied imprisonment to defend freedom of the press, and Belfast social reformer Mary Ann McCracken, who continued her executed brother's struggle for equality through decades of non-denominational social work.

The walks also uncover surprising links to global figures: Mahatma Gandhi corresponded with Britain's emerging organised humanist movement; formerly enslaved abolitionist Frederick Douglass challenged the religious defenders of slavery in Belfast, Bristol, and Nottingham; and South African anti-apartheid campaigner Kader Asmal helped to shape Belfast's civil rights movement.

Celebrating 130 years of Humanists UK

The launch of these marks the 130th anniversary of Humanists UK. In 1896, representatives from Britain's growing network of ethical societies came together to establish the Union of Ethical Societies, the organisation now known as Humanists UK. Although its name and activities have evolved, its central purpose has remained consistent: bringing non-religious people together to lead ethical lives and work for a fairer, more tolerant society.

The walks show how that story continues today. The Cardiff route features Humanists UK Vice President and Cardiff University alumna Professor Alice Roberts, while the Sheffield walk recalls local events featuring Vice President Professor Jim Al-Khalili.

Humanist Heritage Manager Madeleine Goodall said:

'Humanist history is everywhere, if you know where to look. These walks bring that history into view, revealing the freethinkers, reformers, scientists, writers, and activists whose ideas helped to shape our towns and cities.'

Humanists UK Chief Executive Andrew Copson said:

'These walks are a wonderful way to celebrate 130 years of organised humanism in the UK. They allow people to step directly into the history of a movement whose members have worked across generations to expand freedom, equality, knowledge, and human happiness.

'The stories may be rooted in particular streets and cities, but the values connecting them remain as relevant as ever: think for yourself, act for everyone. We hope people will download a route, gather some friends, and discover how much humanist history has been hiding in plain sight.'

Humanist history is closer than you think. You can use our interactive Humanist Heritage map to find your nearest humanist landmark. I have downloaded the Birmingham Tour below – and maybe,

we could do this tour as a group activity in the near future? Travel to Birmingham by train and follow the map through the Metro and finish up in Birmingham city Centre for lunch?
Alternatively, you may want to do this tour on your own?

Humanist Heritage

BIRMINGHAM TOUR

Birmingham was the birthplace of two key figures who quite literally defined the humanist movement at different stages of its evolution. George Jacob Holyoake (1817–1906) coined the term 'secularism' in 1851, describing an earthly philosophy synonymous with humanism today. Just over a century later, Harold John Blackham (1903–2009), became the first Executive Director of the British Humanist Association (now Humanists UK), earning the title of architect of the modern humanist movement. These two men form part of a wider story of Birmingham freethought, spanning the scientific curiosity of the Lunar Society, the defiant atheism of John Baskerville, and the pioneering work of Harriet Martineau.



1 IKON GALLERY

The Ikon Gallery was once the Dozells Street Board School, opened in 1878 by the Birmingham School Board. Such Boards were brought about following the 1870 Elementary Education Act – a landmark piece of legislation driven by the National Education League's push for free, compulsory, and non-sectarian schooling. This movement attracted prominent secularists like G. J. Holyoake, who argued at the League's founding conference that education should be practical and entirely secular. The school was also a meeting place in the early 1880s for the Birmingham Positivists, who practiced a 'religion of humanity' that replaced supernatural worship with a secular celebration of human achievement.

2 THE GOLDEN BOYS

This gilded bronze statue by William Bloye, unveiled in 1956, depicts three steam engine pioneers: Matthew Boulton, James Watt and William Murdoch. All three men were members of Birmingham's Lunar Society, sometimes referred to as the 'Birmingham Philosophers' or 'Fellow schemers'. Another member was Erasmus Darwin (1731–1802), grandfather of Charles Darwin, who wrote on early concepts of evolution, and supported the idea of women's education.



4 BASKERVILLE HOUSE

Baskerville House occupies the site of John Baskerville's home. Baskerville wanted to be buried in a conical building on his own premises. His self-penned epitaph read:

*Stranger—Beneath this Cone in
Unconsecrated Ground
A Friend to the Liberties of
mankind Directed his Body
to be Inhum'd
May the Example Contribute to
Emancipate thy mind
From the Idle Fears of
Superstition
And the wicked arts of
priesthood.*

His wishes were honoured, but when redevelopment took place in the area he was disinterred in 1820 and reburied nine years later in Christ Church. When this was demolished, his remains were removed again, and are now in the Church of England Cemetery in Warstone Lane.

3 CENTENARY SQUARE

Centenary Square is home to Industry & Genius: a monument to renowned printer and fervent atheist John Baskerville (1706–1775), by Birmingham-born artist David Patten. Best remembered today for the typeface which bears his name, Baskerville was an unapologetic non-believer, a fact celebrated by later generations of freethinkers. In 1877, just over a century after his death, the Birmingham secularists opened Baskerville Hall (at The Crescent), named in his memory.





5 BIRMINGHAM MUSEUM & ART GALLERY

Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery first opened in 1885, and contains more than 40 galleries of art, applied art, social history, archaeology, and ethnography. Paintings of and by a number of prominent freethinkers can be found in its collections, from James Millar's 1774 portrait of John Baskerville to works by humanist and Pre-Raphaelite painter Ford Madox Brown.



6 BIRMINGHAM & MIDLAND INSTITUTE

On 1 October 1877, physicist John Tyndall delivered a Presidential Address here titled *Science and Man*. In it, he argued that the roots of morality were human – not divine – and for the fundamental importance of honesty and the scientific method: 'When facts present themselves let us dare to face them, but let the man of science equally dare to confess ignorance where it prevails'.

Birmingham-born writer and philosopher Constance Naden took classes here in botany, French, and German from 1879. Naden developed an atheist philosophy called 'hylo-idealism', based on unity in diversity, and contributed to freethought journals like the *Agnostic Annual*. Bold in her own humanist philosophy, she observed of 19th century Britain that it was 'a nation of practical secularists [who] can tolerate passive religion better than active atheism'.



7 CHAMBERLAIN CLOCK

Joseph Chamberlain was a businessman, social reformer, radical politician, and the father of Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain. He was raised as a unitarian, but lost his faith following the death of his second wife, Florence Kenrick, in 1875. In stark contrast to the feeling of liberation expressed by some freethinkers, like Harriet Martineau (next step), Chamberlain wrote bitterly: 'I refuse to try & buy comfort by forcing myself into insincere conviction—but still I thoroughly abhor the result at which I have arrived'. It was Chamberlain who proposed the vote of thanks to John Tyndall following that 1877 lecture at the Birmingham and Midland Institute.



8 KEY HILL CEMETERY

Key Hill is the city's oldest cemetery, opened in 1836 as the non-denominational Birmingham Central Cemetery. Alongside a host of Birmingham's great and good, two of the 19th century's most remarkable freethinkers are buried at Key Hill: Harriet Martineau and Constance Naden. Both women embraced a humanist philosophy of reason, empathy, and rational inquiry, detached completely from theological ideas.



Harriet Martineau was a pioneering writer, thinker, and activist, considered the first woman sociologist. She is buried in Key Hill alongside a number of her family members.

Scientist, poet, philosopher, and freethinker Constance Naden is buried alongside her mother and maternal grandparents. Their gravestone, replaced in 2019 following a fundraising campaign, bears an inscription from Naden's poem 'The Pantheist's Song of Immortality': 'For earth is not as though thou ne'er hadst been'.

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)

Tony: A 19-year-old Anthony Bourdain travels to Provincetown and stumbles into the chaotic world of a restaurant kitchen, setting off a summer that will shape the course of his life. Tony is a funny, warm, and endlessly charming treat - hugely enjoyable for anyone, whether you're an ardent Bourdain fan or barely know the name. Starring Dominic Sessa, Emilia Jones, Leo Woodall and an excellent support performance from Antonio Banderas

Teenage Sex and Death at Camp Miasma: An astonishing and sexy open-hearted ride into cult horror films and the space that media occupies within us. A young film director investigates a long-running slasher series that has problematic origins but is determined that the key to its success will be bringing back the original Camp Miasma final girl. Starring Hannah Einbinder and Gillian Anderson. Be prepared to be shocked!

Coyote vs. ACME: After enduring years of catastrophic product failures at the hands of ACME, Inc., a tenacious, unemployed coyote uncovers a corporate cover-up and spearheads an unhinged battle against the multinational conglomerate that's been blowing him up in the name of profit. Also, there's a roadrunner - and dynamite.

Bitter Christmas: A sun-dappled journey exploring life, art and the ownership of stories that are told. A filmmaker suffers debilitating migraines. She also feels stuck creatively. She yearns to write a new film. Meanwhile, her friends have their own problems. She puts these friendships to the test when she decides to incorporate elements from their lives into her autobiographical script. Questioning the morality of artists drawing inspiration from the lives of others.

The Death of Robin Hood: A grizzled and tired unheroic Robin Hood enters a battle in which the odds are very much against him and he does not expect to survive. But he does...barely, and ends up in a remote abbey in the care of a kindly nun where he takes on the role of protective father figure to a disparate and makeshift family, he contemplates his brutal past and discovers a route to salvation. Starring Hugh Jackman and Jodie Comer

& Sons: Bill Nighy heads a stellar cast, which includes Imelda Staunton, Johnny Flynn and George MacKay, playing a Lear-like figure with a reputation for leaving destruction in his wake. A reclusive novelist summons his two middle-aged sons to his secluded home to share some important information. The unexpected consequences of the encounter ripples outwards, unravelling relationships and leading us towards a startling revelation.

The Dog Stars: Based on Peter Heller's best seller, The Dog stars, set in a post-apocalyptic world, it follows a young pilot and a military survivalist who receives a mysterious radio transmission. They venture into the unknown in search of hope. Starring Jacob Elordi, Josh Brolin and Margaret Qualley.

Bad Apples: Set in an underfunded school a foul-mouthed and violent pupil tests a desperate teacher who reaches breaking point. A split-second decision sparks a chain of events that raises questions about responsibility, authority and the limits of patience. Starring Saoirse Ronan.

Pressure: Pressure follows the nail-biting 72 hours in the lead-up to D-Day. General Dwight D. Eisenhower employs chief meteorologist Captain James Stagg to advise him on when to launch the largest seaborne invasion in history. With the fate of the free world hanging in the balance, Stagg must cut through military egos, crushing uncertainty and terrifyingly high stakes to make an impossible call. A tense historical thriller about weather, warfare and the burden of responsibility, Starring Brendan Fraser and Andrew Scott.

The Incomer: On a remote Scottish island, two siblings have lived alone for decades, surviving by hunting seabirds, speaking to mythical creatures and defending their home from dreaded 'incomers'. Their world is upended when an awkward land recovery co-ordinator arrives to locate them to the mainland. Starring Domhnall Gleeson, Gayle Rankin and Grant O'Rourke.

Just an Illusion: A heartfelt comedy-drama set in 1980's Paris. A young man caught between an aloof older brother and continually fighting parents, he fumbles through teenage life. .

The Cycle of Love: A young street artist from Delhi sets off with a handful of paint brushes and an old bicycle on a journey across Europe and Asia to find a woman who captured his heart during her visit to India. Convinced that their meeting was fate.

Nostalghia: Directed by Andri Tarkovsky. When a Russian poet arrives to live in Tuscany, he has an intense yearning for his homeland. Images of nature, music, painting and poetry and elements of fire and water. A contemplative work of pure cinema.

The Sacrifice: Andri Tarkovsky's last film. A retired actor is celebrating his birthday with family and friends when an imminent nuclear catastrophe is announced. He makes a promise to god that he will sacrifice all he holds dear if the disaster can be averted. The next day, he must keep his promise.

Le Femme Infidele: Claude Chabrol's wicked psychological thriller follows the fall-out from a husband discovering his wife's affair. His obsession deepens and takes a devastating turn.

Hadestown: The Musical: A genre-defying musical blending modern American folk music with New Orleans-inspired jazz to reimagine a sweeping ancient tale of two intertwining love stories, that of young dreamers Orpheus and Eurydice, and King Hades and his wife Persephone. Filmed live on stage in London's West End and featuring the original Broadway cast.

On the Sea: A moving tale of the attraction between a local hand raker, and an itinerant deckhand. Married to his childhood sweetheart, Jack finds himself drawn to the charismatic Daniel, sparking an affair that shakes their remote fishing community.

I Want Your Sex: Stuck in a relationship going nowhere with his girlfriend and confused about his sexuality, frustrated and neurotic twentysomething finds himself suddenly at the sexual beck and call of his boss, domineering and ultra-confident art gallery boss. Is this a toxic relationship or is there something deeper growing between these apparently very different people?

Holy Days: A young boy finds refuge with three delightfully eccentric elderly nuns at a run-down convent facing shutdown. Holy Days is a joyful comedy packed with heart, humour, and high-speed hijinks, complete with a stellar cast that includes national treasure Miriam Margolyes.

Super Nature: A spellbinding visual and auditory experience about the natural world, beautifully shot in Super 8, which invites you to marvel at nature and the wildlife around us.

Fallen Angels: Noël Coward's champagne-fresh comedy of bad manners. Two upper-class wives, their husbands away for the day, share a few toasts to their pre-marital dalliances—with the same man, who just may be en route from France to visit. Starring Rose Byrne and Kelli O'Hare

Anniversary Films:

Raiders of the Lost Arc (45th Anniversary)

Terminator 2 – Judgement Day (35th Anniversary)

Films on Musicians:

Oasis: Don't Look Back in Anger: Join Oasis at their triumphant 2025 tour after 20 years of estrangement. It captures the tumultuous ups and downs of the Gallagher brothers and their ecstatic reception from fans across the globe.

Pulp: What Do You Do for an Encore? Legendary frontman Jarvis Cocker narrates this celebration of Pulp and their rise from obscurity to Britpop stardom. A band with sharp wit and empathy.

Plays from the National Theatre Live:

The Misanthrope: Award-winner Sandra Oh (Killing Eve) plays the title role in this razor-sharp reimagining of Molière's classic dark comedy.

Golden Boy: During the Depression, a gifted young violinist is lured into professional boxing. He must confront what he is willing to sacrifice and who he's willing to become. Starring Josh O'Connor.

Giant: A theatre play about the life of Roald Dahl, starring John Lithgow

Opera from the Met Opera:

Così fan Tutte

Macbeth

Sansom et Dalila

Exhibitions on Screen:

James McNeill's Whistler

Renoir and Love

Still on the Circuit:

The Odyssey: Directed by Christopher Nolan, detailing the arduous, dangerous journey of Odysseus, after the Trojan War to his homeland. His dwindling army face a series terrors and temptations.

Starring Matt Damon and Anne Hathaway. Highly recommended – despite it being 3 hours long!

A Private Life: Jodie Foster stars as a psychiatrist in this gloriously witty and suspenseful French detective thriller. When her patient unexpectedly commits suicide, she is accused of overprescribing antidepressants by the widower. Suspecting there is more to the case than meets the eye, she tries to uncover the truth, assisted by a hypnotist and her ex-husband. Also starring Mathieu Amalric.

Blue Heron: Set in Vancouver Island, an 8-year-old girl and her Hungarian immigrant family attempt to build a new life, only to be destabilised by her dangerous older brother.

Phantom Israel: A year after 7th October 2023, a British American Jew sets out to find out why 75% of Jewish Israelis support the way the war is being fought in Gaza.

TV and Film Preview:

Thursday 27th August:

21.00 – BBC1: Ludwig - A welcome return to this intriguing series. No longer having to impersonate his twin, puzzle setter John 'Ludwig' Taylor returns as a crime scene consultant. The search for his brother continues, but a new threat closes in. Starring David Mitchell and Anna Maxwell-Martin

21.00 – BBC4: Jaws – Showing old Spielberg films is quite popular at present on different TV channels and cinemas. Just remember the opening music, and – 'You'll need a bigger boat!'

22.00 – ITV1: No Time to Die – James Bond films usually get a new airing every summer. This is the last outing for Daniel Craig as 007.

00.05 – BBC2: Dear Evan Hansen - Musical drama starring Ben Platt, Julianne Moore and Amy Adams. A lonely, depressed high-school student is wrongly identified as having been the best friend of a recently deceased classmate.

Friday 28th August: A good night for fans of The Specials from Coventry

21.00 – BBC1: Would I Lie to You? - Comedians Sam Campbell and Darren Harriott, and TV presenters Diane Carson and AJ Odudu join Rob Brydon, David Mitchell and Lee Mack

21.00 – BBC2: The Marlow Murder Club - An adaptation of Robert Thorogood's best-selling novel about a retired archaeologist and crossword setter who believes that a brutal murder has taken place in the sleepy town of Marlow. Starring Samantha Bond and Cara Horgan.

21.00 – Channel 4: The Murder Detective - A gripping real-world thriller, seven years in the making, telling the inside story of the complex, high-risk police investigation into the murder of journalist Lyra McKee. The 3rd episode of 3 – previous episodes available on I-Player

22.15 – ITV1: Superman Returns - Blockbuster fantasy adventure starring Brandon Routh as the Man of Steel, Kevin Spacey as Lex Luther and Kate Bosworth as Lois Lane. Superman returns to Metropolis after a 5-year mission to planet Krypton, only to find that his former sweetheart has a new boyfriend and arch foe is out of prison and plotting his next evil scheme.

22.20 – BBC4: The Specials: 6 Music Sessions – Music documentary on Coventry's favourite two-tone ska band – followed at **22.55: 2Tone: The Sound of Coventry** – **23.55: The Specials: Rock Goes to College** –

22.40 – BBC1: Fointaineo DC @ Reading Festival 2026 - The Brit Award-winning five piece from Dublin perform at Reading Festival

23.05 – BBC2: Tuesday - Fantasy drama starring Julia Louis-Dreyfus and Lola Petticrew. A young mum refuses to accept that her teenage daughter is soon to die from terminal cancer.

00.10 – BBC1: Stan and Ollie – An excellent biographical comedy drama starring Steve Coogan and John C Reilly. In 1953, a declining Laurel and Hardy embark on a tour of Britain's music halls.

00.10 – Channel 4: 127 Hours - Based on a true story, starring James Franco. While solo climbing in Utah, he falls into a crevasse and becomes trapped by a falling boulder. He resigns himself to the fact that his survival depends on resorting to desperate measures.

Saturday 29th August:

19.10 – BBC1: Paddington 2 - Excellent comedy starring Hugh Bonneville, Sally Hawkins, Hugh Grant and Ben Whishaw as the voice of Paddington.

20.00 – Channel 4: Black Panther - Superhero adventure starring Chadwick Boseman, Andy Serkis and Michael B Jordan. Following the death of his father, Prince T'Challa must prove himself worthy of leading the hidden, technologically advanced, African country Wakanda.

21.15 – ITV1: Man of Steel – And another Superman film. Starring Henry Cavill as Superman

22.30 – Channel 5: Kinky Boots - Comedy drama based on a true story, starring Joel Edgerton and Chiwetel Ejiofor. How Lola, a drag queen saves a failing Northampton shoe factory

22.45 – Channel 4: Terminator: Dark Fate - Science-fiction action thriller starring Linda Hamilton and Arnold Schwarzenegger. You know what you are going to get!

Sunday 30th August:

21.00 – BBC1: Vigil - Crime drama, episode 1 of 6 - following detectives investigating military murders in the Arctic. Starring Suranne Jones and Rose Leslie

21.00 – ITV1: Trigger Point – Drama following an experienced bomb disposal officer working for the Metropolitan Police. starring Vicky McClure – **Episode 2 is at 23.10**

22.00 – BBC2: The Godfather - Arguably one of the greatest films ever made. Directed by Francis Ford Coppola, starring Marlon Brando, Al Pacino and James Caan. Don Corleone is determined that his family should keep control of the American crime world.

22.15 – BBC4: Absurd Person Singular - Three couples meet on separate Christmas Eves in their respective kitchens. A 1985 adaptation of Alan Ayckbourn's comedy drama, starring Michael Gambon, Maureen Lipman, Geoffrey Palmer, Prunella Scales, Cheryl Campbell and Nicky Henson

00.00 – BBC3: Arthur the King – A true sports drama starring Mark Wahlberg. An athlete embarks on an endurance test that will see him trek, bike, climb and kayak through the Dominican Republic. His team are joined by Arthur, a scrappy street dog with whom they form an unbreakable bond

00.15 – Channel 4: Three Thousand Years of Longing - Romantic fantasy starring Idris Elba and Tilda Swinton. In Istanbul, a British academic unleashes a mystical djinn from an antique bottle. After she refuses his offer of three wishes, the djinn proceeds to relate three fantastical tales from his long, storied existence.

A Few Cartoons:



A Few Funnies to Finish With:

Blake went into Home Depot "I'd like to buy 80,000 bricks please". The assistant said "That's a lot of bricks for a DIYer, if you don't mind me asking, what are you building?"

"A barbeque" he replied

You don't need 80,000 bricks for a BBQ surely?

Yes, I do.... I live on the 23rd floor!!!

I own a racing snail.

I removed its shell to make it go faster.

All it did was make it more sluggish.

I've just been pulled over by a Police Officer. He saw my licence and said I'm supposed to be wearing glasses. I said I have contacts.

He said he didn't care who I knew.

I was on a plane, and the air hostess came up to me and said:

"Would you care for an orange juice?"

I replied: "If it needed me to".

Finally, here are Some Classic Female Put-Downs:

Man – haven't I seen you someplace before?

Woman – Yes, that is why I don't go there any more

Man - Is that seat empty?

Woman - Yes, and this one will be if you sit down

Man - Your place or mine?

Woman - Both – you go to yours, and I will go to mine

Man - So, what do you do for a living?

Woman - I am a female impersonator

Man - So, how do you like your eggs in the morning?

Woman - Unfertilized

Man - Your body is like a temple

Woman - Sorry, there are no services today

Man - I would go to the end of the world for you

Woman - But, would you stay there?

Man - Hey baby, what is your sign?

Woman - Do not enter!

Man - If I could see you naked, I would die happy

Woman - If I saw you naked, I would probably die laughing