

compared to a pandemic. So we should go out and do that, first of all. Then we need to work with drug companies to help design vaccines against those future diseases. That will require putting money into it, because without a disease having emerged, no-one is going to buy the vaccine. But we know where emerging diseases normally start: they tend to be poor, rural communities that don't have great healthcare systems. We can build better hospitals and clinics for them, and catch viruses the minute they get into populations. And we can work with those communities and talk to them about activities that are high risk, like hunting bats or using pangolins in traditional Chinese medicine. There are organisations doing that, but we need to do it on a global scale.

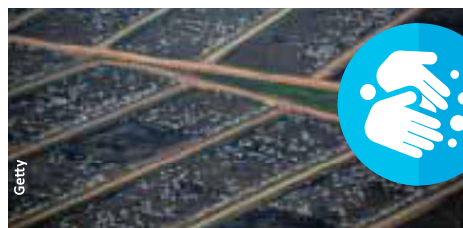
● **In all the media coverage, do you think there's anything else that's been overlooked?**

Yeah, I think there's a mistake that we all make. We look at scientists from the point of view of TV or the movies, where they have white coats and work in a lab and will design a vaccine to save us all. But the answers to pandemics are a lot more complicated than that, and it's all about how local communities in places around the world interact with the environment. It's about what we buy every day and how that has an impact. If I buy toothpaste with palm oil in, that's part of the deforestation of Indonesia that drives diseases. So the idea that scientists in labs are the solution to pandemics is not really true. It's ecologists, it's veterinarians, it's conservationists, it's people working with communities, trying to help them do things in a safer way for their health, because that will benefit our health. We need to go beyond just thinking that everything is going to be fixed by doing some lab work. It's not.

**DON'T EXPLOIT THE PLANET**

● **Has the criticism of China been fair?**

Everybody who works on emerging diseases knows that these things can happen anywhere – we've found emerging diseases in the UK. I remember mad cow disease and salmonellosis in eggs back in the 1980s/1990s. We've got industrial farming, we've got global deforestation, climate change. The impacts of that are going to be pandemics. They're likely to happen in places where there is more wildlife, and it just so happens that south China has got lots of diversity of bats and lots of people, all making contact, so it's not China's fault – it's our collective fault. We need to look within ourselves and ask what we can do to reduce our global impact and not exploit the planet to the point that we get pandemics.



A huge cattle farm in Brazil, where forests are cleared to make way for cattle farms or to grow crops like soy to feed animals with

● **What about critics of the World Health Organization's (WHO) response?**

When it's a new disease and people are dying, it's very chaotic. You're scared. The people who are



A farm in Denmark, where mink are bred for their fur. The Danish government ordered farmers to kill millions of mink, after it became clear the animals could be infected with COVID-19 from humans and vice versa

trying to help patients are scared that they're going to get infected – and a lot of them did. You don't know how quickly the virus spreads. Often you don't even know what the virus is yet, so there's a lot of worry and fear and panic, and that means things happen that could have been done better in hindsight. But I think they did a pretty good job. The WHO is an amazing organisation that is really there to protect us at a global level.

● **How big a worry are fur farms?**

Fur has gradually crept back into the fashion industry, with little trims of fur, and it seems harmless. But it is cruel. It's wild animals kept in unpleasant conditions, bred just for the statement of a fur coat or a fur trim around your hood. There are millions and millions of mink in Europe that now turn out to be really good at transmitting SARS-CoV-2, the virus behind COVID-19, and they've infected people. There's a chance that the virus could evolve in those animals or just spread more widely. Anything you can do to persuade your friends not to buy fur is a really good move.

● **The poor have been hit hardest by this pandemic, but do you think it's likely that countries will try to make things fairer?**

I really thought the pandemic would drive this message home, but politics in some countries has become so divided that there's almost a cruelty to it. People die from COVID at a higher rate if they're minority races or they're poor, and that's just not fair. Why would we have our neighbours dying at a higher rate just because they have less money?

**FOLLOW THE SCIENCE**

● **How well do you think the health advice and risk is being communicated to the public?**

What I've seen that's great is scientists on the news giving really good advice and being listened to and respected again. The problem has been that some people just don't listen, and there's been this growing background of conspiracy theories and anti-science feelings and an anti-vaccine movement that's really undermined basic common sense. Scientists look at things from a very logical point of view. They look at the evidence and come to a conclusion and say this is going to happen, we should really get ready for it. They don't do it because they have an agenda [plan] or want to make money out of it. They do it because they believe in understanding the truth.

● **How big a danger is fake news?**

What I've seen in the US and the UK is really dangerous. People believe theories that just clearly aren't true. They believe this virus was made on purpose and released to kill people, but there's no evidence for that at all. But it's because we're in this position where we've lost control over our own lives: we're on lockdown, we're not in school, we're not at work, so we feel powerless and look for something to blame. This has happened throughout history, but we need to be aware that if we're being fooled, there's a real price to pay. I worry that so many people believe this misinformation that it is going to affect the future, that we're going to have this group of people, maybe 30% of the population, that won't take a vaccine, for instance. And if they don't take a vaccine, the virus will carry on circulating.



Anti-lockdown protests (like this one in London) have helped to spread nonsense conspiracy theories

● **What message do you have for our readers?**

Firstly, understand more about what causes diseases like COVID to emerge, about the connections with wildlife, and get involved with organisations that are working in conservation and climate change, and talk to them about how the work they're doing is also going to benefit by reducing pandemics. And then the second thing: I'm really worried about the way countries don't come together at times of crisis, and some have tried to gang up and blame each other for the origins of pandemics, and that's a real mistake. Viruses don't think or act on feelings, they just spread from one person to another. I don't care what passport you've got or how old you are or what race you are, what religion, and if we get stuck on all those things, viruses are always going to defeat us. So I recommend talking to your friends who are from other countries, talking about their relatives, and just becoming more global in the way you think and the way you act with your friends, and thinking about the world as one living planet that we're all here on and depend on, and need to preserve for the future.



# SUDOKU!

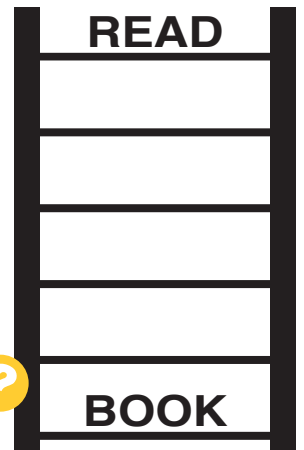
CAN you complete our sudoku puzzle, filling in the numbers one to nine?

8								2
			1		9			
9		5		2		4		1
5	7		9		1		3	4
		1	4		3	9		
4	9		5		2		1	7
1		8		5		6		9
			8		4			
7								8

# WORD LADDER



SEE if you can get from the top of the ladder to the bottom by changing one letter at a time to make a new word.



# CROSSWORD

CAN you complete our crossword puzzle by using the clues below?

1		2			3		4		5	
6					7					8
9			10			11				
12						13		14		
						15				
16	17							18		
					19					

**ACROSS**

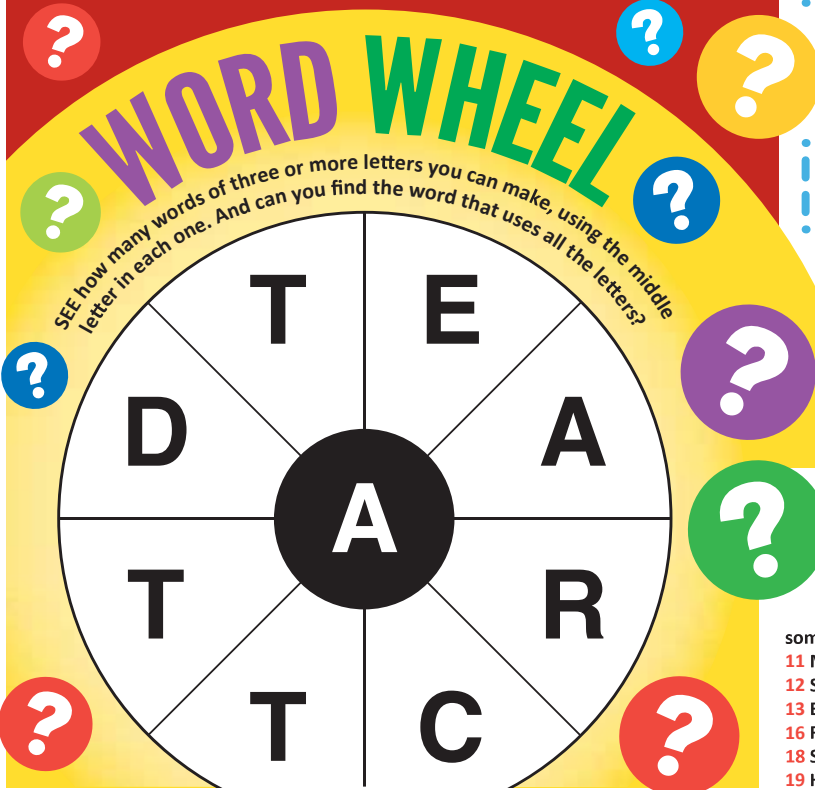
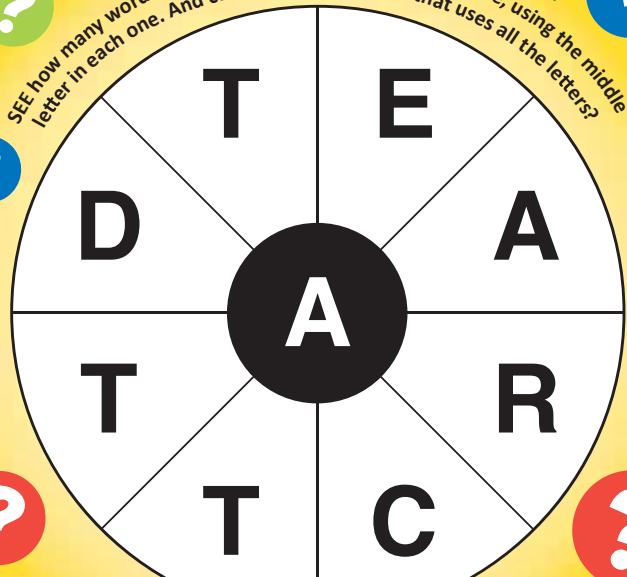
- 1 Bike with three wheels (8)
- 6 Put things into a vehicle (4)
- 7 Air taken into the lungs (6)
- 9 Factual evidence of something (5)
- 11 Material jeans are made of (5)
- 12 Small green or black oval fruit (5)
- 13 Book of maps (5)
- 16 Repeat performance (6)
- 18 Small; tiny (4)
- 19 Have difficulty with (8)

**DOWN**

- 1 Mobile \_\_\_\_ : communications device (9)
- 2 US state (5)
- 3 Young foxes (4)
- 4 Mount \_\_\_\_ : very high mountain (7)
- 5 Animal doctor (3)
- 8 English county where you'll find Southampton (9)
- 10 Easy to see or understand (7)
- 14 Telling an untruth (5)
- 15 Pick up sound with the ears (4)
- 17 Quick sleep (3)

# WORD WHEEL

SEE how many words of three or more letters you can make, using the middle letter in each one. And can you find the word that uses all the letters?







# SPOT THE DIFFERENCE

JUST for fun this week! Can you spot the five changes we've made to this picture from *The Croods* 2?



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## WORDSEARCH

## WHAT ON EARTH?

CAN you find the words in our food-themed wordsearch?  
Remember that the words can be horizontal, vertical or diagonal.

THESE can all be found at the park. Can you guess what they are?

V	G	T	Y	E	S	B	O	R	D	M	E	O	B	L	G	M	L	O	N	C	X	R	T	D	L	S	Y	
Q	U	A	E	J	V	T	V	L	T	O	D	V	B	T	C	U	F	H	E	A	K	H	O	S	V	Q	G	
F	S	F	W	X	V	X	E	C	S	K	V	L	O	E	C	H	I	P	S	N	P	X	F	L	F	O	T	
C	I	C	D	G	G	E	W	A	O	A	O	D	G	S	Q	U	M	P	D	H	S	N	U	I	Y	G	C	
Z	Z	Q	F	P	J	Z	G	M	K	J	E	J	W	T	L	O	Z	X	N	S	F	Z	M	A	D	D	C	
S	J	M	R	K	H	S	L	E	Z	Z	E	K	U	N	Y	W	O	A	Y	Q	R	E	V	D	S	V	L	
U	C	O	Y	M	S	A	N	T	T	S	M	X	B	H	U	L	D	O	G	G	D	O	G	U	F	N	C	
L	B	H	B	R	E	A	D	Q	I	A	Z	U	Q	N	I	B	Z	Q	G	U	E	G	G	H	Y	P	I	
E	Z	X	W	H	K	P	G	G	N	L	B	F	Z	E	B	R	S	V	Z	P	U	S	Z	M	T	M	H	
P	V	X	Y	P	A	V	M	X	O	J	L	L	C	J	N	G	G	H	S	S	M	F	X	Z	M	A	J	
Y	W	F	J	T	F	M	N	A	L	Z	O	C	E	U	I	N	U	T	M	I	H	M	G	H	E			
O	A	M	S	A	R	P	B	J	F	O	V	Y	G	S	P	Q	I	K	D	E	Z	I	M	Q	S	Y	A	
W	S	B	B	X	R	L	L	U	J	T	S	Z	P	C	W	E	T	W	W	Q	S	E	O	O	V	M	Z	
M	Y	S	V	T	U	M	Y	P	R	Z	X	J	I	E	V	E	Q	R	G	L	F	R	N	U	A	B	N	
T	Q	M	I	T	F	I	S	H	X	G	M	F	K	U	E	R	J	E	U	C	I	F	H	W	X	R	M	
W	Q	X	S	C	A	E	E	M	S	G	E	M	G	M	J	E	S	V	B	G	Q	S	F	N	Y	I	C	
D	F	W	H	U	J	R	O	O	N	H	Z	R	H	E	T	O	T	Z	K	X	X	Q	V	Q	X	C	R	
H	S	H	T	L	G	E	H	N	S	E	V	M	N	U	R	C	J	H	Y	D	Z	D	S	M	I	E	H	
T	O	I	N	B	H	Q	P	R	G	J	V	W	R	V	B	R	O	D	L	E	S	P	A	S	T	A	Y	D
B	R	A	Y	M	S	K	M	I	F	T	P	G	E	N	O	D	L	E	S	P	A	S	T	A	Y	D		
C	H	E	E	S	E	B	R	R	X	G	T	Q	Q	I	H	F	H	W	X	N	C	B	O	X	B	M	R	
A	P	P	J	K	H	X	N	W	P	C	C	R	C	C	Q	N	E	L	T	G	N	S	B	Q	V	J	Y	

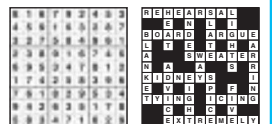
- Pasta
- Bread
- Cheese
- Noodles
- Tofu
- Hamburger
- Rice
- Fish
- Chips
- Steak
- Vegetables
- Eggs



**COMPETITIONS:** You can enter First News competitions in one of two ways. 1. Go to [firstnews.co.uk/competitions](http://firstnews.co.uk/competitions) and follow the instructions. 2. Email us at [win@firstnews.co.uk](mailto:win@firstnews.co.uk) putting 'competition name' (e.g. Holiday), in the subject box. Please note: First News will not share your personal details with third parties. First News will only use your details to contact the competition winners. First News competitions are only open to those aged 17-and-under and residents of the UK & Republic of Ireland, except employees of First News, First Group Enterprises Ltd, Reach plc and any associated companies and their families. Winners will be the first correct entries drawn after the closing dates. No purchase necessary. No responsibility can be accepted for entries that have been lost or damaged in transit. First News will not enter into any correspondence. All winners will be notified accordingly and their names and location will be available on request. No cash alternative for any prizes will be offered. The winner may be required to partake in media activity relating to the competition.

**LAST WEEK'S ANSWERS:**

Spot the difference: Hotel name changed, pigeon added, theatre sign is a different colour, lady's head is bigger, end of pole is missing. **What on Earth?** party poppers, champagne, fireworks, Big Ben, calendar, confetti. **Word ladder:** turn, torn, worn, word, ford, food. **Word wheel:** willpower. **Who on Earth?** Vernon Kay, Dougie Poynter, Roman Kemp. **Connection:** 1. room 2. p; they're all foods 3. dog, pig, mouse, goat; all animals 4. The Masked Singer.





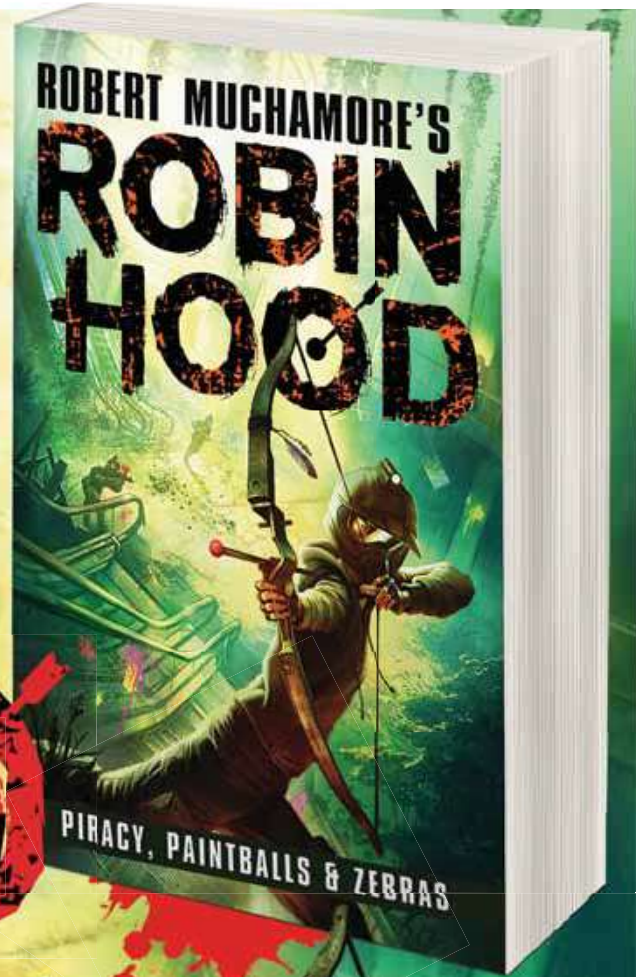
# ROBIN HOOD

## AS YOU'VE NEVER SEEN HIM BEFORE!

ROBIN Hood is back in this action-packed sequel, *Robin Hood: Piracy, Paintballs and Zebras*, by the bestselling author of *CHERUB*, Robert Muchamore.

Robin Hood lives... but for how long? Mobster Guy Gisborne has offered a £100,000 reward for anyone who captures Robin Hood.

But while grown-ups try to keep Robin out of danger, the 12-year-old rebel is determined to fight back, with a lucrative robbery, a plot to hack the computers at Sherwood Castle and a daring assault using paintball guns and smoke bombs...



Make sure you check out the first book in the series, *Robin Hood: Hacking, Heists and Flaming Arrows!*

Head to [muchamore.com](http://muchamore.com) to find more of Robert Muchamore's work

**OUT NOW**

## ROBIN HOOD WORD HUNT!

Where is Robin hiding? Find all of the words in the grid. The remaining letters will spell out his hiding place!

P E Y E S L L U B  
 D A R R O W H E I  
 O P I R A C Y N S  
 O S I N N S I A C  
 W H E R T B R A W  
 R E N R O B S I G  
 E O O R E T A D U  
 H F O Z L R E L Y  
 S S T E D O O H L

- ARROW
- BULLSEYE
- CASTLE
- GISBORNE
- GUY
- HOOD
- PAINTBALL
- PIRACY
- ROBIN
- SHERWOOD
- ZEBRAS

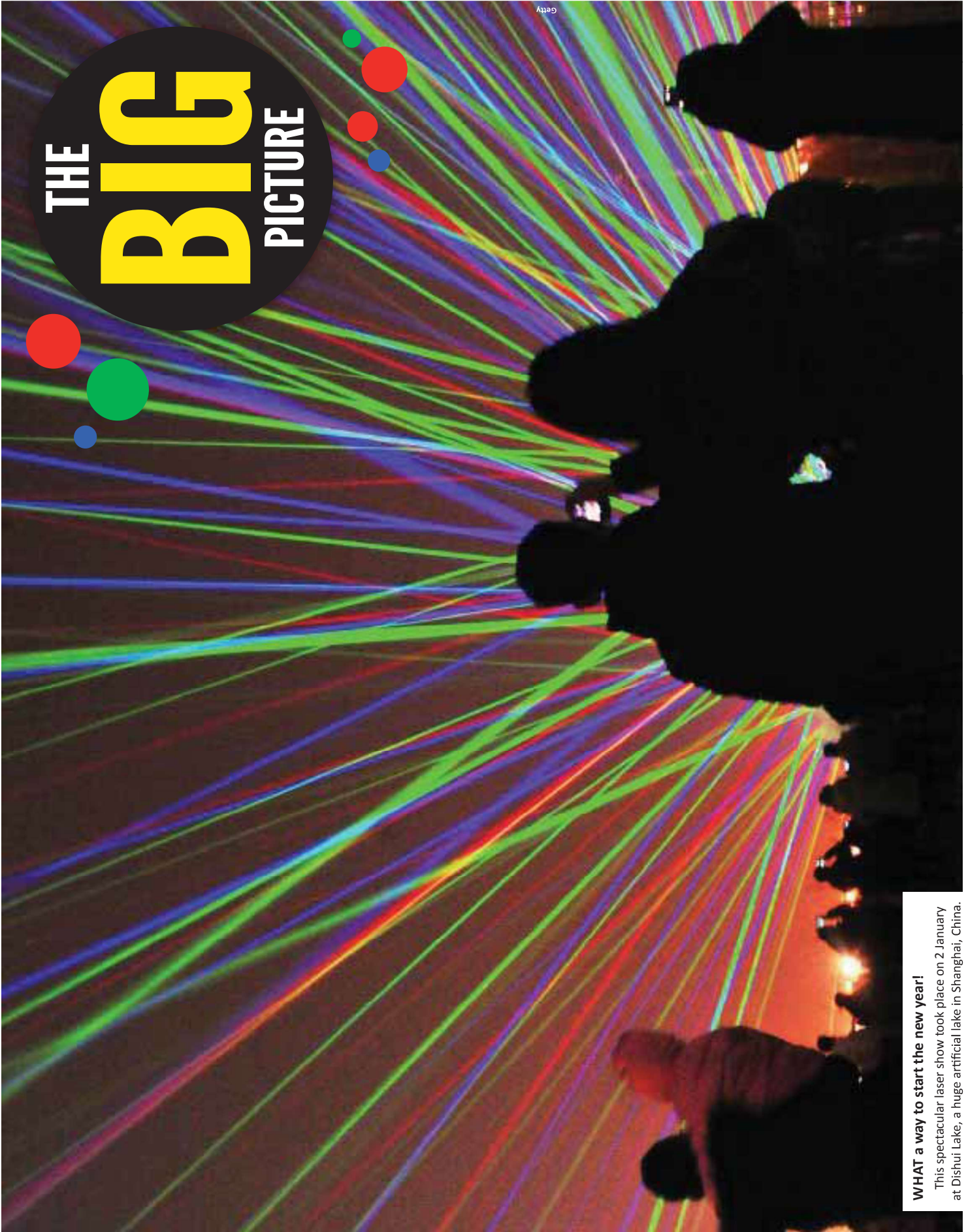


Where is Robin hiding?

ANSWER: He is in Sherwood Forest







Getty

# THE **BIG** PICTURE

## WHAT a way to start the new year!

This spectacular laser show took place on 2 January at Dishui Lake, a huge artificial lake in Shanghai, China.



# CLADDING CRISIS



**AFTER the 2017 Grenfell Tower disaster, it was discovered that thousands of buildings were at similar risk from fire. Three years later, why are many people still having to live in unsafe homes?**

The tragedy at London’s Grenfell Tower was the worst residential fire in the UK since the Second World War. One reason the blaze spread so quickly and was so difficult to control was that the cladding on the outside of the building was combustible, meaning that it could catch fire easily.

Cladding helps keep heat in a building and protects it from the weather. The cladding that was used on Grenfell, and other buildings, is called ACM. But it’s been discovered that other types of combustible cladding, such as zinc, have also been used on homes.

Additional fire risks such as timber balconies have been identified too. Work has since been carried out to renovate some homes at risk, but a lot of residents are enduring a long, worrying wait.



In October 2020, 1,000 people had to leave their homes in London due to unsafe cladding

## ♥ FOOTING THE BILL

Many of the people affected live in flats in tower blocks. The people who pay money to live in these flats are known as leaseholders, while the whole building is owned by the freeholder. A lot of leaseholders have formed groups to support each other and campaign for renovations around the UK.

The UK Cladding Action Group (UKCAG) claims that more than three million people across the UK are living in unsafe buildings – and the cost of the work is causing anxiety for many of them.

A spokesperson for UKCAG said that although “the Government has suggested that freeholders have the work done [to make the buildings safe], it is not law”. Even if work is done, the cost often falls on the leaseholders, who find their service charge – money you pay to the owners so they look after the building – increasing.

“As leaseholders, we are legally obliged to pay [for renovations], so you can see it is grossly unfair, since we do not own the building! So many people are suffering through no fault of their own with staggering bills.”



## ♥ FAMILIES’ FEARS

In September 2020, the residents of one block of flats in Hendon, North London, discovered that their building had been constructed with five different combustible materials. The leaseholders and their families are obviously worried.

Eleven-year-old Mo says: “If somebody accidentally causes a little fire, then the building will burn down easily. All of our belongings will get burned and people will get seriously injured.”

Deborah Daus, aged eight, says: “It has affected me and my mum because our anxiety levels have been higher. If there’s a fire, with this cladding, it’s all going to be burnt down. I have lots of good friends here and I go to a really good school and I would just be so sad to leave it all behind.”

“If I could talk to the prime minister, I would say the cladding needs to be fixed and Notting Hill Genesis [the freeholders] and the Government should have to pay. They shouldn’t make the residents pay, because it’s not their fault the building is unsafe.”

Work hasn’t started on the flats – and it isn’t due to be completed for another four years! Deborah’s mum, Charlotte, says: “The thought that me and my daughter have been sleeping in what is, effectively, a tinderbox [a device used to start fires], for the past seven years fills me with horror. Imagining the nightmare of being woken in the night and having to quickly leave my home with Deborah is terrifying, as is the thought of losing our possessions, or worse, our lives.”



Deborah Daus is one of many children living in unsafe buildings around the UK. Moving to safer housing is difficult, as unsafe properties cannot be sold until the freeholders make them safe. Families are stuck living in homes that are viewed as too dangerous to sell

## ♥ THE GRENFELL TOWER FIRE

Grenfell Tower was a 24-storey block of flats in West London.

On 14 June 2017, a faulty fridge-freezer started a fire, which quickly spread throughout the building. It burned for 24 hours and hundreds of firefighters were needed to extinguish the blaze.

Tragically, 72 people died and more than 70 others were injured. The remains of the building are still standing, but plans have been announced to build a memorial there for those who lost their lives, after it has been demolished.

