

SATURDAY 19 DECEMBER 2020**SAT 00:00 Midnight News (m000q8ps)**

The latest news and weather forecast from BBC Radio 4.

SAT 00:30 A Promised Land by Barack Obama (m000qh56)
Ep 5 - The First 100 Days

Former President Barack Obama reads from the first volume of his presidential memoirs offering a unique and deeply personal account of life in high office and some of the landmarks of his first term. Today the newly inaugurated President settles into his first 100 days in office and must confront the economic crisis that he has inherited from the Bush administration. It's a brutal start and he contemplates what he can do to halt the economy's collapse. Trying to get the biggest emergency spending bill in history through Congress is, as he himself says, 'like trying to get a python to swallow a cow.' He also appears for the first time at the G20 summit and observes the different characteristics of the European leaders with wry humour before he and Michelle are invited to meet the Queen.

Elected in 2008, Barack Obama became the 44th president of the United States and the first African American to sit in the Oval Office. A Promised Land offers a unique and deeply personal account of presidential life and its highs and lows, and threaded through it all there are tantalising glimpses of family life with Michelle, Malia and Sasha at one of the world's most famous addresses.

Abridged by Katrin Williams.

Produced by Julian Wilkinson; the editor is Di Speirs.

SAT 00:48 Shipping Forecast (m000q8pv)

The latest weather reports and forecasts for UK shipping.

SAT 01:00 Selection of BBC World Service Programmes (m000q8py)

BBC Radio 4 joins the BBC World Service.

SAT 05:20 Shipping Forecast (m000q8q2)

The latest weather reports and forecasts for UK shipping.

SAT 05:30 News Briefing (m000q8q6)

The latest news from BBC Radio 4

SAT 05:43 Prayer for the Day (m000q8q9)

A spiritual comment and prayer to begin the day with The Right Reverend John Arnold, Bishop of Salford

Good morning. We are in the final week of preparing for Christmas. Usually there are many people in a rush to get last things in place. Forgotten presents, buying food, cooking, decorating the house. For just about everybody, whether Christmas is part of their religious faith or not, this is a party time – good and special in itself and it is right that we brighten up these dark and wintry days. It is a time for family or perhaps lots of friends. Certainly, the accent is on being busy with having fun. But for most of us, things need to be rather different this year. That should not mean that Christmas cannot be celebrated but maybe this year we are being required to think about Christmas and its celebration in a different way because of all the restrictions and fears about spreading the Covid virus.

Celebrating Christmas in a different way might actually have some real value and benefit. Many of us Christians might well find that we have rather neglected the reality of the Christmas Story which gave rise to the whole reason for the holiday. Is this year giving us a chance for us to think about the original meaning? Behind all the presents and decorations and cards and parties – and probably too much food - there is the story of a special child being born in poverty. The Son of God. In these final days before Christmas, which are probably going to be quieter than usual, let's give thought to what Christmas means.

Loving Father, may we seek to renew and rehearse our understanding of the meaning of that first Christmas when You sent Your Son, born in a stable in Bethlehem, to bring hope to a broken world.

Amen.

SAT 05:45 In Their Element (m000ckvj)

Series 4

Silver

Andrea Sella, Professor of Inorganic Chemistry at University College London, explores the art and science of silver. Nina Gilbey at the London Jewellery Workshop teaches him how to work the metal and make a silver ring, and at the Science

Museum he admires the handiwork of silversmiths who fashioned an elaborate microscope for King George the Third.

Rupert Cole, Curator of Chemistry at the Science Museum, shows Andrea a silver thimble that was used (with some zinc and a few drops of an acid) to generate an electric current that was sent through a transatlantic telegraph cable in 1866. And Andrea finds out about silver's antibacterial properties from Jean-Yves Maillard, Professor of Pharmaceutical Microbiology at Cardiff University.

SAT 06:00 News and Papers (m000qhgz)

The latest news headlines. Including the weather and a look at the papers.

SAT 06:07 Open Country (m000q9cb)

The Lighthouse on the Headland of the Great Seas

Ardnamurchan Lighthouse, on the westernmost tip of the UK mainland, is one of a number of 19th century "Stevenson" lighthouses and has a unique Egyptian style of architecture – inspired by the ancient Lighthouse of Alexandria. On a clear day there are spectacular views towards Skye and the Outer Hebrides. On a dark, stormy night it's a desolate, forbidding place.

The Ardnamurchan light is operated remotely from Edinburgh by the Northern Lighthouse Board but a local community trust recently bought the site and wants to develop its tourism potential.

On a wet and windy day, Helen Mark is shown around the site by the trust's manager and retained light keeper, Davie Ferguson. Despite sophisticated new technology, mariners still rely on lighthouses for guidance and Davie leads Helen up the dizzying climb to the lantern room to show her the modern LED light which casts its beam 24 miles out to sea.

The area's connections with the lighthouse are deep rooted – its construction provided employment for local people during the potato famine and the keepers and their families were important members of the small crofting community. Former lighthouse keeper, Ian Ramon, now acts as a guide, tells visitors what life was like when the light was run on paraffin and when being caught asleep on shift meant instant dismissal!

As well as enjoying the stunning scenery and feeling the power of the wind and waves, visitors can tour the small museum and take shelter in the tearoom when the storms are sweeping in from the Atlantic. For many, the biggest attraction is the giant red foghorn which sits at the bottom of the lighthouse. It hasn't sounded for many years but the trust's recently appointed project officer, Stephanie Cope, tells Helen of her hope that it may, one day, blare out its warning signal again.

Ardnamurchan Point is also part of a network of viewing areas set up by The Hebridean Whale and Dolphin Trust along the west coast of Scotland. Volunteers record sightings around the peninsula in the summer months and arrange exhibitions and talks for visitors. Siobhan Moran, from the Trust, talks to Helen about the project's links with the lighthouse and the importance of Ardnamurchan as a whale watching site.

Presented by Helen Mark
Produced by Kathleen Carragher

SAT 06:30 Farming Today (m000qhr1)

Farming Today This Week

The latest news about food, farming and the countryside

SAT 06:57 Weather (m000qhr3)

The latest weather forecast

SAT 07:00 Today (m000qhr5)

Including Sports Desk, Weather and Thought for the Day.

SAT 09:00 Saturday Live (m000qhr7)

Michel Roux Jr

Nikki Bedi and Rev Richard Coles are joined by Michel Roux Jr, whose father and uncle were the first in the UK to achieve three Michelin stars for their London restaurant Le Gavroche, where he partly trained in classical French cookery, also doing military service working in the kitchens of the Elysee Palace cooking for two French presidents. He now runs Le Gavroche, and has continued the cooking dynasty as his own daughter has also become a chef.

Maria Leijerstam Edy holds the Guinness World Record for being the first person to cycle to the South Pole, in 2013. Navigating avalanches and crevasses, extreme weather conditions and chronic pain, she reached her goal in just 10

days. She joins us.

Meriel Larken has spent over 30 years rescuing a ship that lies today on the world's highest navigable lake, Lake Titicaca in Peru. The Yarvari, a Victorian steamboat built in a Birmingham shipyard was transported piecemeal through the Andes on mule back. It's now a popular tourist destination and B&B.

Rainer Hersch studied economics, but has made his name in orchestral music that has the audience laughing raucously in scenes more expected at a stand-up show. He joins us.

Don Black chooses his inheritance tracks: Besame Mucho by Steve Lawrence and Eydie Gorme and The Way You Look Tonight by Fred Astaire and we have your thank you.

Producer: Corinna Jones

SAT 10:30 You're Dead To Me (p07nwyfm)

LGBTQ History

From Molly Houses to secret diaries, discover the real-life stories that make up the history of the LGBT community.

Greg Jenner is joined by comedian Suzie Ruffell and Dr Justin Bengry, historian and creator of the world's first masters degree in Queer History. It's history for people who don't like history!

Produced by Dan Morelle
Scripted and researched by Emma Nagouse

A Muddy Knees Media production for BBC Radio 4

SAT 11:00 The Week in Westminster (m000qhrb)

Paul Waugh of HuffPost UK looks behind the scenes at Westminster.

This weekend, we discuss Climate Change 2021, with Baroness Brown of Cambridge, deputy chair of Statutory Committee on Climate Change, and Ruth Edwards MP, Conservative, Post-Covid economic outlook, with Rupert Harrison, BlackRock, and Torsten Bell, Resolution Foundation, and a year to remember, with Rob Hutton, The Critic Magazine, and Jennifer William, Manchester Evening News. The Editor is Marie Jessel.

SAT 11:30 From Our Own Correspondent (m000qhrd)

Insight, wit and analysis from BBC correspondents, journalists and writers from around the world

SAT 12:00 News Summary (m000qj3s)

The latest national and international news from BBC Radio 4.

SAT 12:04 Money Box (m000qhbb)

The latest news from the world of personal finance

SAT 12:30 Dead Ringers (m000q8pb)

Christmas Specials 2020

Episode 2

Topical satire from Jon Culshaw, Jan Ravens, Lewis McLeod, Debra Stephenson and Duncan Wisbey.

Dead Ringers somehow manages to make fishing quotas funny. Other topics include The Crown, panic shopping, Christmas bubbling and why on earth the BBC has redesigned the Daleks.

The writing squad for the series: Nev Fountain & Tom Jamieson, Laurence Howarth, Ed Amsden & Tom Coles, Sarah Campbell, James Bugg, Simon Alcock, Jeffrey Aidoo Alex Hardy Edward Tew, Lewis Cook, Jane McUtcheon and Vivienne Riddoch, Sophie Dickson and Cody Daher.

Producer: Bill Dare. A BBC Studios Production

SAT 12:57 Weather (m000qhrk)

The latest weather forecast

SAT 13:00 News (m000qhrp)

The latest national and international news from BBC Radio 4

SAT 13:10 Any Questions? (m000q8pg)

Brandon Lewis MP, Lucy Powell MP, Professor Anand Menon, Lionel Shriver

Chris Mason presents political debate and discussion from Broadcasting House in London with a panel which includes Secretary of State for Northern Ireland Brandon Lewis MP, Shadow Business Minister Lucy Powell MP, the director of the UK in a Changing Europe thinktank Professor Anand Menon and the author and journalist Lionel Shriver.

Producer: Emma Campbell
Studio direction: Kirsty Starkey

SAT 14:00 Any Answers? (m000qhrt)
Have your say on the issues discussed on Any Questions?

SAT 14:45 In Their Element (m000cngv)
Series 4

Helium

Who doesn't smile at the sight of a floating Father Christmas or a hovering happy birthday? Helium filled balloons are festive, but as the gas reserves run low – should we reconsider the balloons?

Helium is a finite resource here on Earth and many branches of science need it. Doctors need it to run MRI machines to diagnose tumours, engineers test rockets for leaks with it and deep sea divers use it to avoid the bends.

The story of helium starts with a solar eclipse in 1868. The event had many astronomers' eyes fixed on the sun. Two astronomers, nearly simultaneous and independently, made the same observation; a strange light with an unusual wavelength coming from the sun. It turned out to be the first sighting of extra-terrestrial helium. It would take decades for helium to be discovered on Earth and longer still for its worth to be recognised.

As its ability to make things float and inability to burn became apparent, the US military started hoarding it for their floating blimps. But they soon realised that it is very hard to store an element that is so light that it can escape the Earth's gravitational pull. As we empty our last reserves of the periodic table's most notorious escape artist – is the future of floating balloons up in the air?

SAT 15:00 Passenger List (m000qhry)
Cyberspace

The guilty client, the twin brother and his lover, how to hack a plane...

Atlantic Airlines flight 702 has disappeared mid-flight between London and New York with 256 passengers on board. Kaitlin Le, a college student whose twin brother vanished with the flight, is determined to uncover the truth. Kelly Marie Tran, Pattie PuPone, Colin Morgan and Rob Benedict star in this multi-award-winning mystery thriller.

Written by Lauren Shippen & Mara Wilson

Cast:
Kaitlin Kelly Marie Tran
Mia Patti LuPone
Thoma Colin Morgan
International War Tribunal Judge Philip Desmeules
Begovic Nathan Osgood
British Police Detective Becci Gemmill
Police Officers Carl Prekopp, Eben Figueiredo, Fode Simbo
Agent Gerard Nicole Stedwell
Roberto Manalo Nick Massouh
Mai (Kaitlin's Mother) Elyse Dihn
Kein (Kaitlin's Father) George Nyugen
Agent Saurez Richard Tanner

Created by John Scott Dryden

Script Editor, Mike Walker
Casting, Janet Foster
US Producer, Julia Thompson
Assisted by Julia Adamo
UK Producer, Emma Hearn

Editing, Sound Design & Music by Mark Henry Phillips
Directed by Lauren Shippen & John Scott Dryden
Executive Producers: Lauren Shippen & John Scott Dryden
Executive Producer for Radiotopia, Julie Shapiro

A Goldhawk production for Radiotopia/PRX and BBC Radio

SAT 16:00 Woman's Hour (m000qhs2)
Sharon D Clarke, Food and class prejudice, Gender stereotypes

Sharon D Clarke talks about her role as The Narrator in an audio adaptation of "Peter Pan".

Three women from this year's Power List - physicist and climate researcher Prof Joanna Haigh; one of the leads from the Climate Assembly Prof Rebecca Willis; and Guardian Environment Correspondent Fiona Harvey discuss how we understand and talk about climate change.

Sharon Hague from Pearson talks about a new study by the Fawcett Society into gender stereotypes and the damaging effect it has on society.

Leading gynaecologist and early pregnancy specialist Dr Jessica Farren talks about miscarriage and the grief that can be exacerbated by the festive period.

Food historian, Pen Vogler talks about our eating habits and reveals how they are loaded with centuries of class prejudice.

The Panamanian-American conductor Kalena Bovell talks about her international conducting debut at the Southbank with Chineke!

Presenter: Jane Garvey
Producer: Paula McFarlane
Editor: Lucinda Montefiore

SAT 17:00 PM (m000qhs6)
Full coverage of the day's news

SAT 17:30 Political Thinking with Nick Robinson (m000qhsb)
Nick Robinson gets beneath the surface in a personal and political interview

SAT 17:54 Shipping Forecast (m000qhs)
The latest weather reports and forecasts for UK shipping.

SAT 17:57 Weather (m000qhs)
The latest weather forecast.

SAT 18:00 Six O'Clock News (m000qhsr)
The latest national and international news from BBC Radio 4

SAT 18:15 Loose Ends (m000qhs)
Jamie Cullum, Gemma Arterton, Jenna Coleman, Loudon Wainwright III, Arthur Smith, Clive Anderson

Clive Anderson and Arthur Smith are joined by Gemma Arterton, Jamie Cullum and Jenna Coleman for an eclectic mix of conversation, music and comedy. With music from Loudon Wainwright III and Jamie Cullum.

SAT 19:00 Profile (m000qhgv)
Viola Davis

The academy award winning actor's latest film, *Ma Rainey's Black Bottom*, is one of the first big budget releases since the pandemic closed cinemas. Viola Davis is the first black actor to win an Oscar, Emmy and Tony award – a triple crown of the most prestigious awards in film, television and theatre. Born on her grandmother's farm, a former slave plantation in California, Davis was raised on the East Coast – in Providence, Rhode Island. As a child growing up in poverty, acting became a means of escape.

After a decade's long career as a respected theatre actor, she was propelled to international attention in 2008, when she was nominated for an Oscar for her performance in a single scene; alongside Meryl Streep in the film *Doubt*. Since then, she's starred in a great many films and TV series; becoming widely recognised as one of the greatest actors of stage and screen this century.

Becky Milligan explores her life and career and talks to her sister, Deloris, to find out what motivates an actor whose meteoric rise is symbolic of a deeper shift in how the film industry values black artists.

Producers: Tom Wright and Ben Crighton
Editor: Rosamund Jones

SAT 19:15 My Teenage Diary (b0b6m9k2)
Series 8

John Finnemore

John Finnemore reads from his hilarious diary, which tells of his six months teaching English to school children in Poland.

Presenter: Rufus Hound
Producer: Harriet Jaie

A Talkback production for BBC Radio 4.

SAT 19:45 What Is a Story? (b061qv4f)
Is Anyone Responsible?

Marina Warner asks, "Is Anyone Responsible?"

A look at the world of contemporary fiction. In the company of leading contemporary writers, she considers a story and story writing from a different angle.

Marina speaks with writers as diverse as Julian Barnes, Michelle Roberts, Fanny Howe, Marlene van Niekerk, Alain Mabanckou, Lydia Davis, Edwin Frank, Elleke Boehmer, Wen-Chin Ouyang, Daniel Medin, Nadeem Aslam and Laszlo Krasznahorkai.

There are questions around the boundaries between fact and fiction which Marina believes are central to any consideration of storytelling, since readers' pleasure depends so much on trust built up between the storyteller or writer and the audience.

With discussions on the reasons for writing, writers as witnesses and political interaction.

Marina was Chair of the Man Booker International Prize 2015 and the series draws on the expertise of the International Booker judging panel, the views of the shortlisted writers, as well as other key literary talent.

Producer: Kevin Dawson
A Whistledown production for BBC Radio first broadcast in July 2015.

SAT 20:00 Archive on 4 (m000qhsy)
Disorienting

Comedian Phil Wang takes a personal look at the representation of East and South East Asians in the West - on stage, screen and beyond.

He shines a light on many ingrained racist stereotypes, reflects on yellowface and whitewashing - all at a unique moment. With a backdrop of an alarming rise in violence and threat in the shadow of Covid-19, East and South East Asian artists, writers and others in the media are mobilising like never before to fix the longstanding issues and address a persistent form of racism that gets largely overlooked.

Talking with academics Diana Yeh, Xun Zhou and Lu Gram, actors and writers Daniel York Loh and Chloe Mi Lin Ewart, master illusionist Jim Steinmeyer and musician Emma-Lee Moss (also known as Emmy the Great), Phil encounters magic crystal lanterns, starships and ouija boards. He takes a yellowface ride from Fu Manchu and Suzy Wong, to James Mason with a dodgy moustache and an even dodgier accent, through to 21st century Hollywood.

Phil also discovers the dark power of stereotypes, from the screen to the playground to the street and in the bedroom.

Presenter: Phil Wang
Producer: Richard Ward
Executive Producers: Max O'Brien and Sean Glynn

A Novel production for BBC Radio 4

SAT 21:00 Tracks (m000qc90)
Series 5: Abyss

Abyss: Episode Eight

By Matthew Broughton

Episode eight of the conspiracy thriller's final series.

As the search for Arca Island continues, Helen is offered fresh hope that her life could be saved.

A gripping thriller, *Tracks* was the first drama to hit the top of the iTunes podcast chart back in 2017. It went on to win Best Sound (BBC Audio Drama Awards) and Best Fiction (British Podcast Awards). Now *Tracks* is back with a fifth and final 9 part series.

All four previous series of *Tracks* are available now in full on BBC Sounds.

Helen... Olivia Poulet
Freddy... Jonathan Forbes
Professor Manuel... Peter Marinker
Amina... Emma Fryer
Frances... Juno Robinson

Directed by James Robinson
A BBC Cymru Wales Production

SAT 21:45 Rabbit Is Rich (b09yh6nc)
Episode 10

John Updike's masterful Rabbit quintet established Harry

"Rabbit" Angstrom as the quintessential American White middle class male. The first book Rabbit, Run was published in 1960 to critical acclaim. Rabbit Redux was the second in the series, published in 1971 and charted the end of the sixties - featuring, among other things, the first American moon landing and the Vietnam War.

This third book finds Rabbit in middle age and successful, having inherited his father in law's car business - selling newly imported Toyotas to the mass American market. But his relationship with his son Nelson was severely compromised by Rabbit's affair with Jill and her subsequent death has left them both wary of each other.

Published in 1981, Rabbit is Rich won Updike, among other awards, the Pulitzer Prize for fiction - and it's extraordinary how many of its themes continue to reverberate down to the present day.

Abridged by Robin Brooks
Read by Toby Jones
Produced by Clive Brill
A Brill production for BBC Radio 4.

SAT 22:00 News (m000qht0)

The latest national and international news from BBC Radio 4

SAT 22:15 Grounded with Louis Theroux (p08ybsww)

12. Sia

Covid-19 hasn't gone away and, due to travel restrictions, neither has Louis Theroux. In the second outing of his podcast series, he tracks down more high-profile guests he's been longing to talk to - a fascinating mix of the celebrated, the controversial and the mysterious.

In the second episode of the new series, singer-songwriter Sia talks to Louis Theroux about being catapulted to superstardom, the Aussie drinking holes of West London and her lockdown addiction to reality TV. Plus Louis gets the chance to sing Sia some of her most famous songs...

Produced by Sara Jane Hall and Catherine Murnane
A Mindhouse production for BBC Radio 4

SAT 23:00 Counterpoint (m000qmbm)

Series 34

Heat 2, Series 34

(2/13)

Three more amateur music lovers join Paul Gambaccini for radio's most eclectic music quiz. The questions range across every musical genre, from the classical repertoire to show tunes, jazz, film music, indie rock and chart music of the past 60 years.

The competitors also have to choose a special topic on which to answer individual questions, with no advance warning of the categories on offer and no chance to prepare.

Taking part today are:

David Hale, an audio technician from South London
Dr Victoria Kingham, a landlady from Hackney
Jamie Sellers, a copywriter from St Leonards on Sea

Producer: Paul Bajoria

SAT 23:30 Poetry Please (m000qbk1)

Simon Armitage

The Poet Laureate Simon Armitage is Roger McGough's guest with his pick of listeners' favourite poems. Many have an environmental theme and Simon talks about his responsibility as a poet to write about the natural world. There's also the chance to hear his own translation of an old English text documenting an argument between The Owl and The Nightingale

The programme includes:

Shakespeare - from Richard II
from The Owl and the Nightingale (anonymous - translated by Simon Armitage)
Alison Brackenbury - Honeycomb
Lorna Goodison - My Mother's Sea Chanty
Shivane Ramlochan - Caracara (or Kiskadee Bride)
William Wordsworth - a section from Michael
Thomas Hardy - A Light Snow-Fall After Frost
Wilfred Owen - Parable of the Old Man and the Young

Producer: Maggie Ayré

SUNDAY 20 DECEMBER 2020

SUN 00:00 Midnight News (m000qht2)

The latest news and weather forecast from BBC Radio 4.

SUN 00:15 The Creation of an Icon (m0001p6t)

Halos

Aidan Hart is painting an icon to mark the season of Advent. Today he puts in the finishing touches to the angel Gabriel and the Virgin Mary and he explains how the halo has changed through history and the connection between icons and modern art.

You can see how Aidan created this icon by going to the picture gallery on the programme's webpage.
<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/m000117x>

Producer: Phil Pegum
Series Producer: Amanda Hancox

SUN 00:30 Short Works (m000q8p0)

Baby by Tishani Doshi

During the long days of lockdown, Mrs Bhatia finds herself thinking back to her childhood in India. An original short story for radio by the poet and novelist Tishani Doshi, read by Chetna Pandya.

Tishani Doshi was born in the city formerly known as Madras in 1975. She has published six books of poetry and fiction. Her essays, poems and short stories have been widely anthologized.

Her first book, COUNTRIES OF THE BODY, won the prestigious Forward Prize for Best First Collection in 2006. GIRLS ARE COMING OUT OF THE WOODS was shortlisted for the TED HUGHES AWARD & a Firecracker Award. Tishani's debut novel, THE PLEASURE SEEKERS, was shortlisted for the Hindu Literary Prize and long-listed for the Orange Prize and the International IMPAC Dublin Literary Award. SMALL DAYS AND NIGHTS, her second novel, has been shortlisted for the TATA BEST FICTION AWARD 2019 and the RSL ONDAATJE PRIZE 2020.

Read by Chetna Pandya
Produced by Mair Bosworth

SUN 00:48 Shipping Forecast (m000qht4)

The latest weather reports and forecasts for UK shipping.

SUN 01:00 Selection of BBC World Service Programmes (m000qht6)

BBC Radio 4 joins the BBC World Service.

SUN 05:20 Shipping Forecast (m000qht8)

The latest weather reports and forecasts for UK shipping.

SUN 05:30 News Briefing (m000qhtb)

The latest news from BBC Radio 4

SUN 05:43 Bells on Sunday (m000qhhg)

St Paul's Cathedral in London

Bells on Sunday comes from St Paul's Cathedral in London. The iconic cathedral and its bells famously survived the bombing during the second World War, when so many towers and their bells across the whole of Europe were destroyed or damaged by war. The present ring of twelve, cast in 1878 is one of the heaviest in the country, with the tenor weighing sixty two hundredweight. We hear them ringing Stedman Cinques.

SUN 05:45 Profile (m000qhgvy)

[Repeat of broadcast at 19:00 on Saturday]

SUN 06:00 News (m000qhfl)

The latest national and international news from BBC Radio 4

SUN 06:05 Something Understood (b01pt87q)

A Joy Forever

Rev Elizabeth Adekunle, chaplain of St. John's College, Cambridge, explores the idea of lasting beauty. A brief experience with modelling left her more aware of the limitations of physical beauty and surface glamour. Her work as a chaplain brings her into contact with some students who are troubled by body image.

She begins by looking at the commercial notion of beauty and refers back to Shakespeare in Sonnet 68 voicing his disapproval of beauty accessories such as wigs: "the golden tresses of the dead" and then laments the deception of what he calls "false

art".

She asks what happens when physical beauty fades, and how it's possible to age gracefully. And she explores the idea of a beauty which comes not from a perfect body but from looking out of the window and inhaling the beauty in our surroundings - as expressed in Fleur Adcock's poem 'Weathering'.

Referring to St. Peter's words of wisdom "Let your adornment be the inner self with the lasting beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is very precious in God's sight" (1 Peter 3:3-4), Elizabeth Adekunle then goes on to look at a more satisfying sense of beauty. It is the natural world which inspired the French composer Debussy "to feel the supreme and moving beauty of the spectacle to which Nature invites her ephemeral guests this is what I call prayer".

And finally she refers to an excerpt from Keats poem 'Endymion' in which he observes, "in spite of all, some shape of beauty moves away the pall from our dark spirits." And so Rev Elizabeth Adekunle concludes that true beauty - music, nature and art - can help us out of the shallow bleak world of consumer fashion and glamour and offer us a way to draw closer to the Divine.

Producer: Kim Normanton
A Loftus production for BBC Radio 4

SUN 06:35 Natural Histories (b09fy56f)

Reindeer

Reindeer have been entwined with the lives of people living in the most northerly parts of the world for thousands of years, following the herds north as the Arctic ice retreated. Karen Anette Anti from a long line of Sami herds-people and Tilly Smith with her herd of reindeer in the Scottish Highlands, teach Brett Westwood that there's a lot more to reindeer than Rudolph. In a programme also featuring reindeer expert Dr. Nicholas Tyler, Palaeolithic archaeologists Dr. Felix Riede and Dr George Nash.

Revised and shortened repeat.

Archive producer Andrew Dawes for BBC Audio Bristol

SUN 06:57 Weather (m000qhfp)

The latest weather forecast

SUN 07:00 News and Papers (m000qhrf)

The latest news headlines. Including a look at the papers.

SUN 07:10 Sunday (m000qhtf)

Bethlehem's quiet Christmas, Cardinal Pell's prison journal, Choir's Covid test

Palestinian Christians in Bethlehem have begun their Christmas celebrations under strict restrictions following a surge in corona virus cases in the occupied West Bank. As Yolande Knell reports, church leaders say Bethlehem will continue with its festivities to try to send a hopeful message to the world.

In 2019 Cardinal George Pell was sentenced to six years in prison for 'historical sexual assault offences'. Earlier this year the Australian High Court voted 7-0 to overturn the original convictions. In a frank interview, the man who was once the third most powerful person in the Catholic Church reflects on his time inside jail, what he feels about his past handling of abuse allegations and the man whose accusations put him behind bars for 404 days.

And the full choir of Leicester Cathedral have all been booked in for rapid Covid tests on Sunday morning. The Dean, the Very Rev David Monteith tells Edward why it will be such a momentous moment if the choir can sing together for the first time since March.

Producers:
David Cook
Dan Tierney

Series Producer:
Amanda Hancox

SUN 07:54 Radio 4 Appeal (m000qhfv)

Samaritans

The novelist, journalist and broadcaster Elizabeth Day makes the BBC Radio 4 Appeal on behalf of the charity Samaritans.

To Give:
- Freephone 0800 404 8144
- Freepost BBC Radio 4 Appeal. (That's the whole address. Please do not write anything else on the front of the envelope).
Mark the back of the envelope 'Samaritans'.

- Cheques should be made payable to 'Samaritans'.
- You can donate online at bbc.co.uk/appeal/radio4

Registered Charity Number: 219432

SUN 07:57 Weather (m000qhfy)

The latest weather forecast

SUN 08:00 News and Papers (m000qhg0)

The latest news headlines. Including a look at the papers.

SUN 08:10 Sunday Worship (m000qbk0)

Cities of promise: a place for the Saviour

During this era of Covid the city seems to have been devalued as a place of human flourishing. Instead it's become a place of fear of contamination - a place to get away from, no longer a sought after place to live. But the biblical view is of a redeemed city, a place where human culture is valued alongside restored relationships - a place of beauty and worship of the living God.

For this fourth Sunday of Advent, Sunday Worship comes from the UK's smallest city, St David's in Pembrokeshire. Dean of St David's Cathedral, Very Reverend Dr Sarah Rowland Jones, reflects on how Jesus came to the tiny city of Bethlehem, and how we can find the Saviour in our cities today.

The service is led by the Sub-Dean, Canon Leigh Richardson. The cathedral choir, able to perform (socially distanced) under Welsh government rules, have recorded music specially for this service and are led by Oliver Waterer, with Simon Pearce at the organ.

Music includes:

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel
Once In Royal David's City
This Is The Truth
Draw Tua Bethlehem (2019) - Meirion Wynn Jones
O Little Town Of Bethlehem

Producer: Dominic Jewel

SUN 08:48 A Point of View (m000q8pj)

Off the Map

Sara Wheeler loves maps.

Taking her cue from a 1755 map on her desk, she asks how maps can help us navigate our contemporary crisis.

And she argues that - from cholera to covid - public health cartography has played a crucial role.

Producer: Adele Armstrong

SUN 08:58 Tweet of the Day (b04t0144)

Kea

Michael Palin presents the kea from a windswept mountain in New Zealand. A snow-capped mountain in New Zealand's South Island are not a place where you'd expect to find a parrot, least of all a carnivorous one (and with a penchant for rubber). But this is the home of the kea.

Keas are curious birds in every sense of the word. Drab greenish brown, they're the world's only Alpine parrot. When they can find them, keas eat fruits and berries, but also, especially in winter they descend from the higher slopes and scavenge on animal carcasses at rubbish dumps, cracking bones with their sharp beaks to reach the marrow. They will even attack live sheep, stripping the fat from their backs and damaging vital organs. Although this habit is rare and is now understood to be largely restricted to injured sheep, it led to widespread persecution of the birds and a bounty was paid on the head of each bird killed which led to widespread declines so that keas became endangered.

Today Keas are legally protected. In their mountain homes, the parrots survive to entertain and exasperate tourists as they clamber over cars, strip rubber seals from windcreens and remove wiper-blades ... curious birds indeed.

SUN 09:00 Broadcasting House (m000qhg2)

The Sunday morning news magazine programme. Presented by Paddy O'Connell

SUN 10:00 The Archers Omnibus (m000qhg4)

Writers, Adrian Flynn & Sarah Hehir
Director, Rosemary Watts
Editor, Jeremy Howe

Neil Carter Brian Hewlett

Susan Carter Charlotte Martin
Eddie Grundy Trevor Harrison
Tracy Horrobin Susie Riddell
Kirsty Miller Annabelle Dowler
Philip Moss Andy Hockley
Gavin Moss Gareth Pierce
Oliver Sterling Michael Cochrane
Roman Trench Ewan Bailey
Blake Luke MacGregor
Kenzie Ryan Walker-Edwards
Jordan Billy Kennedy
Victoria Ruth Gemmill

SUN 10:54 Tweet of the Day (m000qhg6)

Tweet Take 5 : Robin

The robin has long been associated with the festive season. This feisty but lovable bird adorns Christmas cards and decorations, yet it's repetitive territorial song can begin as early as July. In this seasonal extended version of Tweet of the Day, we hear three stories of the robin from naturalist and wildlife presenter Brett Westwood, professor of philosophy and music David Rothenberg and Sir David Attenborough.

Produced for BBC Audio in Bristol by Andrew Dawes

SUN 11:00 Desert Island Discs (m000qhg8)

Sir Cliff Richard

Sir Cliff Richard makes a second trip to the island he first visited 60 years ago, when he had just turned 20, but had already topped the UK charts three times.

Over the course of his career, Sir Cliff has released over 100 albums and sold well over 250 million records. His chart success in the UK has been eclipsed only by his hero Elvis Presley and one-time rivals, the Beatles.

Born Harry Webb in Lucknow, India, Sir Cliff returned to the UK with his family in 1948; money was tight and the family of six shared a room until they were able to move into a council house. Sir Cliff's father bought him a guitar for his 16th birthday and he initially performed in a skiffle band until he discovered rock 'n' roll and started a new band called the Drifters which later became the Shadows. His first hit single came in 1958 with Move It - often credited as being the first authentic British rock 'n' roll track - and he dominated the home-grown music scene of the late 1950s and early 1960s.

During his long career Sir Cliff performed on screen in films including Summer Holiday and The Young Ones. He has fronted television shows, twice performed Britain's entry in the Eurovision Song Contest and starred in two stage musicals. Today, at 80, he is still recording new songs and itching to get back on tour to perform his music in a post-Covid world.

Sir Cliff's return to Desert Island Discs after 60 years is record-breaking: it's the longest time between appearances in the programme's eight decade history.

Presenter: Lauren Laverne
Producer: Paula McGinley

SUN 11:45 Charisma: Pinning Down the Butterfly (b067w3ph)

The 'It' Factor

Francine Stock attempts to pin down the alluring yet elusive quality of charisma

6.The "It" Factor

Sarah Bernhardt and the beginnings of celebrity charisma

In her day, the French actor Sarah Bernhardt was said to be the most famous woman in the world after Queen Victoria. The American scholar Edward Berenson helps Francine untangle the many strands of Bernhardt's appeal, from her beauty and energy on stage and screen, to her eccentricity (she was said to sleep in a coffin and keep wild animals as pets) and her later disability. Edward Berenson pin-points the moment when he believes Bernhardt's celebrity was transformed into true charisma. And, as Bernhardt later appeared in the new art-form of film, Francine sets out on a path to explore the early movie stars who did - or, in many cases, did not - have the famed "It Factor".

With contributions from the illusionist Derren Brown and the Australian author of a study of charisma, Professor John Potts.

Reader: Simon Russell Beale
Producer: Beaty Rubens.

SUN 12:00 News Summary (m000qhg8)

The latest national and international news from BBC Radio 4.

SUN 12:04 I'm Sorry I Haven't A Clue (m000qbmp)

Series 73

Lockdown Recording 1

A remote recording for lockdown of the nation's favourite wireless entertainment sees Marcus Brigstocke, Rachel Parris, Miles Jupp pitted against Rory Bremner, Jo Brand and Andy Hamilton with Jack Dee in the chair. Colin Sell provides piano accompaniment.

Producer - Jon Naismith. It is a BBC Studios production.

SUN 12:32 The Food Programme (m000qhg4)

Christmas Cooking: The 2020 Edit

Christmas will be different this year, but it doesn't mean it should be any less delicious.

Sheila Dillon is joined by cooks who know about cooking for Christmas. She pays food writer Nigel Slater a socially distanced festive visit to talk about one of his favourite seasons in the kitchen. Baker, writer and doctor Tamal Ray, who cooked his family Christmas dinner solo for the first time in 2019, shares his learnings and gives advice for last minute Christmas desserts. Brothers and co-founders of 'Original Flava' Craig and Shaun McAnuff share memories of Christmases past and their ideas for festive party drinks. While writer Kate Young, author of "The Little Library Christmas" speaks to Sheila about making new culinary traditions and embracing the downtime the festive period can provide. And in a year where get-togethers might just look a little bit different, outdoor cook and BBQ expert Genevieve Taylor proves the cold isn't an excuse not to keep cooking al fresco and designs a full Christmas dinner for the fire.

With a few days to go before the big day, and whatever's on the menu this year, The Food Programme and friends guarantee a bit of Christmas cheer.

Presented by Sheila Dillon.

Produced by Clare Salisbury for BBC Audio Bristol.

SUN 12:57 Weather (m000qhg6)

The latest weather forecast

SUN 13:00 The World This Weekend (m000qhgj)

Global news and analysis, presented by Mark Mardell.

SUN 13:30 The Listening Project (m000qhgk)

Fi Glover presents friends and strangers in conversation as the nation adjusts to the 'new normal'. In this week's programme: strangers Clare and Pat live at different ends of the country and both have years of experience working in supermarkets. They share stories about the funny as well as dark side of their front line jobs; Rona and Stefan tell the story of how they met online and fell in love in lockdown and are now looking forward to their first Christmas together.

The Listening Project is a Radio 4 initiative that offers a snapshot of contemporary Britain in which people across the UK volunteer to have a conversation. The conversations are being gathered across the UK by teams of producers from local and national radio stations who facilitate each encounter. Every conversation lasts up to an hour, and is then edited to extract the key moments of connection between the participants. Most of the unedited conversations are being archived by the British Library and used to build up a collection of voices capturing a unique portrait of the UK in this decade of the millennium. You can learn more about The Listening Project by visiting bbc.co.uk/listeningproject

Producer: Mohini Patel

SUN 14:00 Gardeners' Question Time (m000q8ny)

GQT at Home: Coconuts and Cacti

Peter Gibbs hosts the gardening panel show, joined by a team of experts - including Matthew Wilson, Bunny Guinness and Pippa Greenwood - to answer questions sent in by listeners from across the country.

This week, the panellists discuss whether we should touch our plants, suggest flowers to grow for an October wedding, and reveal odd things that have happened in their garden this year.

Away from the questions, Juliet Sargeant shares her tips for using unusual evergreens in the garden, and Alex Young gives his guide to keeping your Poinsettia beyond the festive season.

Producer - Rosie Meroira
Assistant Producer - Jemima Rathbone

A Somethin' Else production for BBC Radio 4

SUN 14:45 Disability: A New History (b01slvj)
The Only Dwarf in Liverpool

Across the country, historians are discovering the voices of disabled people from the past. In this 10-part series, Peter White draws on the latest research to reveal first-hand accounts of what it was like to live with physical disability in the 18th and 19th centuries.

The result is moving, revealing, and sometimes very funny: 'Sirs, I am a dwarf. I have lost my job at the circus and what is a dwarf to do in such a situation? In this Godforsaken place the snow comes so deep that a self-respecting dwarf can't even walk along the street without drowning!'

This document is from a huge archive of letters from disabled people in the 19th century, applying to the local authorities for money. They are a rich source of what life was like with a disability. Sources like this are only now being discovered and interpreted by historians across the country - it amounts to a new historical movement.

In the first programme, Peter explores what this new history reveals, and challenges our pre-conceptions.

For Peter, as a blind man, there is a strong sense of personal discovery. He says, 'I never realised disabled people had a history. History was what happened to everyone else.'

For him the series is revelatory. This programme, for instance, includes 18th century jokes about disability and discusses what juicy terms for disability were common in a society where there was no political correctness.

With historians David Turner, Chris Mounsey, Stephen King, Judith Hawley, and voices from the past brought vividly to life by actors Gerard McDermott, Ewan Bailey and Emily Bevan.

Producer: Elizabeth Burke
Academic adviser: David Turner, Swansea University
A Loftus production for BBC Radio 4.

SUN 15:00 Drama (m0001pjh)
The Haunting of M.R. James

by Neil Brand

Starring Mark Gatiss. Every Christmas, the master of the ghost story, M.R. James would read a tale to his Cambridge students. In this original chilling drama he finds horrific events from those stories are echoed in reality alongside the inevitable forces of change and modernism.

M.R. James Mark Gatiss
Gwendolyn MacBryde Fenella Woolgar
Jack Pownall Ryan Whittle
Dr. Luxmoore Gerard McDermott
Davey Steadman Cameron Percival
Sellsman Ronny Jhutti
Jukes Michael Bertenshaw
Grant Tony Turner
Thomas Herrick Ewan Bailey
Dr. Cameron Chris Harper
Webb Sam Dale
Student Lewis Bray

Director: David Hunter

SUN 16:00 Open Book (m000qhgq)
The Joy of Dickens

Johny Pitts explores the dazzling brilliance of Charles Dickens, a writer we often associate with Christmas. Even in his own lifetime Dickens was dismissed by some as a great showman and entertainer rather than an accomplished author, and today his biography can overshadow his novels. In this programme novelist Thomas Keneally, Professor John Mullan, and writer Armando Iannucci share their joy in his use of words and language, his literary inventiveness and modern techniques, while food historian Pen Vogler guides us through some of the delicious and celebratory meals in his novels.

SUN 16:30 Poetry Please (m000qhgs)
Kim Moore

Kim, the award-winning poet who lives and works in Cumbria, chooses her favourites from listener requests, including an old favourite from Thomas Hardy and new discoveries from Ameer Ameer, William Gee and Caleb Femi. She's also very honest about why she began writing poetry...

Produced by Sally Heaven for BBC Audio in Bristol

SUN 17:00 Scientists in the Spotlight (m000q9gj)
Back in 2019, most scientists struggled to get any media

attention. Now scientists involved in fighting the pandemic are generating media headlines, daily. On top of working harder than ever to understand the virus and how it spreads, many have become public figures. Some have been caught in the headlines. Others have stepped into the footlights. Many have found themselves at the centre of highly politicised conversations - not something their scientific training has prepared them for particularly well. And the fact that everyone is now an expert on R numbers and immunology has created a new set of challenges. Jim Al-Khalili talks to the scientists who have been in the media spotlight in 2020 and hears about some of the challenges they've faced trying to tell us what they know.

We may look to science for certainty (all the more so during uncertain times) but there is no magic moment when scientists can announce with absolute certainty that 'this is how it is'. And now that science is being reported in real time revealing the bumpy road to discovery, there is a risk that our faith in science will be undermined. But scientists airing their dirty laundry in this way could result in a much greater appreciation of the true nature of scientific knowledge and how it's formed. Perhaps during these difficult times, a new relationship between scientists and the media has been forged? Scientists have been the source of non-stop news. And maybe journalists have help science to progress by synthesising scientific findings and interpreting what they mean. When the pandemic is over, will scientists continue to be part of the national debate?

Producer: Anna Buckley

SUN 17:40 Profile (m000qhgvy)
[Repeat of broadcast at 19:00 on Saturday]**SUN 17:54 Shipping Forecast (m000qhgx)**
The latest weather reports and forecasts for UK shipping.**SUN 17:57 Weather (m000qhgzy)**
The latest weather forecast.**SUN 18:00 Six O'Clock News (m000qhh1)**
The latest national and international news from BBC Radio 4.**SUN 18:15 Pick of the Week (m000qhh3)**
Kate Bottley

With all the components you'll need for rescuing the festive season, this week's Pick of the Week has carols, cosiness and a great big slab of chocolate. There's also the Nativity itself and we hear from wise men, a woman who works with wool, and not just one baby but three. Plus there's sequins and Christmas joy with St Dolly Parton and a visit from the man in red himself.

Presenter: The Reverend Kate Bottley
Producer: Miriam Williamson
Production support: Ellen Orchard
Studio Manager: Mike Smith

Contact potw@bbc.co.uk

The full programmes of all of the selections featured can be accessed in the Related Links section on the Pick of the Week homepage.

SUN 19:00 Strictly Stories (m0004h05)
Foxtrot

A single dad is baffled to learn that his ear-studded, activist daughter wants to go to the Pink Lemon Dance Studio to learn the foxtrot.

Written by Bethan Roberts and read by Paul Bazely.

The music is More by Nat King Cole.

Directed by Kate McAll
A Pier production for BBC Radio 4

SUN 19:15 Big Broadcast (m000qhh5)
Series 4

Politics

Neil Brand's musical caper set in a Chicago radio station in 1937. When a local property magnate uses the Hour of Charm to run for office, only a Hollywood star can stop him.

Cast
Katharine Hepburn Susannah Fielding
Robert F. Winkler Ian Cunningham
Arthur Clarke Neil McCaul
Barbara Meek Bettrys Jones

Ramona Fairfax Heather Craney
Jerry Soundguy Hasan Dixon
Preston Lanister Clive Hayward
Singer Helen Neeves
Singer Nancy Cole
Singer Christopher Bowen
Singer Jimmy Holliday
Foley Alison Craig

Written and composed by Neil Brand
Directed by Jessica Dromgoole

SUN 19:45 The Hotel (m000qhb8)
14: The Priest

Barbara Flynn reads the next in Daisy Johnson's deliciously dark series of short stories, set in a remote hotel on the Fens.

Today: a cult seventies horror movie shot at The Hotel continues to haunt those who starred in it....

Reader: Barbara Flynn
Writer: Daisy Johnson
Producer: Justine Willett

SUN 20:00 Feedback (m000q8p4)

After almost half a century, I'm Sorry I Haven't a Clue is still the most popular radio comedy, according to a poll of Radio Times readers.

The producer of the series for nearly 30 years is Jon Naismith. He gives insights into the show and explains that it nearly didn't survive the pilot.

Equally loved by radio listeners is the Christmas Eve broadcast from Kings College Chapel, Cambridge. Producer Philip Billson explains how the Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols will sound with no congregation present, and the choir socially distanced.

And do you care whether Bollywood is monopolising the modern Indian music scene? Husband and wife amateur reviewers have very different views.

Presenter: Roger Bolton
Producer: Kate Dixon
Executive Producer: Samir Shah

A Juniper Connect production for BBC Radio 4

SUN 20:30 Last Word (m000q8p2)

John le Carré, Patience Thomson, Doug Scott, Dame Barbara Windsor

Matthew Bannister on

The author John le Carré, the pen name of David Cornwell, who drew on his own experiences as a spy to elevate the espionage novel to new heights.

Patience Thomson, the educator who devoted herself to helping children with reading difficulties and set up a publishing house to create books for them. Michael Morpurgo pays tribute.

Doug Scott, the pioneering mountaineer who was the first Englishman to climb Mount Everest. His friend Sir Chris Bonington recalls Doug's adventures.

Dame Barbara Windsor – the much loved actor who went from Carry On to Eastenders.

Interviewed guest: Adam Sisman
Interviewed guest: Sir Chris Bonington
Interviewed guest: Denise Prior
Interviewed guest: Alice Thomson
Interviewed guest: Michael Morpurgo

Producer: Neil George

SUN 21:00 Money Box (m000qhhb)
[Repeat of broadcast at 12:04 on Saturday]**SUN 21:25 Radio 4 Appeal (m000qhfw)**
[Repeat of broadcast at 07:54 today]**SUN 21:30 My Name Is... (m000lv6l)**
Lucy: Should I stay on dating apps?

Lucy is single, 41 and looking for a long-term relationship. Through apps like Tinder, Bumble and Hinge, she's now been on over 500 dates.

After five years of swiping through potential dates like it's a

never-ending card game. Lucy wants to work out whether she's wasting her time using apps which don't seem to be invested in helping her find love. Is she right about this? Should she rid of them and concentrate on living her best single life instead?

To work this out, Lucy discovers how the algorithms work and whether they are actually failing her; why people behave badly on the apps and how to remain optimistic.

Lucy talks to: Nichi Hodgson, author of *The Curious History of Dating*, from Jane Austen to Tinder; Luke Stark, Assistant Professor in the Faculty of Information & Media Studies at the University of Western Ontario; Sacha McElligott, President of Replay app and Dr Helen Fisher, biological anthropologist and author of *Anatomy of Love: A Natural History of Marriage, Mating and Why We Stray*.

Producer: Eliza Lomas

SUN 22:00 Westminster Hour (m000r499)

With guests Baroness (Angela) Smith, Labour leader in the House of Lords, Tom Loughton MP, Conservative, and Polly Mackenzie, chief executive, Demos. The columnist is Katy Balls, deputy political editor, *The Spectator*.

SUN 23:00 The Film Programme (m000q9cj)

Lesley Manville

With Antonia Quirk

Lesley Manville reveals how her Oscar nomination for *Phantom Thread* led to her latest role as a psychotic American matriarch in *Let Him Go*

A tale of two Picturehouses over one year: Kevin Marckwick, the owner of the Uckfield Picture House and Clare Binns, Joint MD of the Picturehouse chain, discuss their contrasting fortunes over the past twelve months and reveal why the future for cinema is still bright, despite rumours to the contrary.

Photograph: Rachell Smith

SUN 23:30 Something Understood (b01pt87q)

[Repeat of broadcast at 06:05 today]

MONDAY 21 DECEMBER 2020

MON 00:00 Midnight News (m000qhhd)

The latest news and weather forecast from BBC Radio 4.

MON 00:15 Thinking Allowed (m000q8z9)

The Meaning of Work

The anthropologist, James Suzman, explores the shifting meaning of work, and argues that for 95% of our species' history, it held a radically different importance – it did not determine social status, mould our values or dictate how we spent most of our time. How did it become the central organisational principle of our societies and is it time for a dramatic re-think?

Also, Ella Harris, Leverhulme Fellow in the Geography department at Birkbeck, University of London, examines 'pop up culture'. Temporary or nomadic sites such as cinemas, supper clubs and container malls are now ubiquitous in cities across the world. But what are the stakes of the 'pop-up' city? Has economic insecurity and precarity been re-branded as desirable and exciting?

Presenter Laurie Taylor
Producer Jayne Egerton

MON 00:45 Bells on Sunday (m000qhhg)

[Repeat of broadcast at 05:43 on Sunday]

MON 00:48 Shipping Forecast (m000qhhj)

The latest weather reports and forecasts for UK shipping.

MON 01:00 Selection of BBC World Service Programmes (m000qhhl)

BBC Radio 4 joins the BBC World Service.

MON 05:20 Shipping Forecast (m000qhhn)

The latest weather reports and forecasts for UK shipping.

MON 05:30 News Briefing (m000qhhd)

The latest news from BBC Radio 4

MON 05:43 Prayer for the Day (m000qhhs)

A spiritual comment and prayer to begin the day with The Right Reverend John Arnold, Bishop of Salford

Good morning.

Christians talk about the Season of Advent, those four weeks or so which lead up to Christmas, as being a time of waiting in hope. How do we understand "Hope"? It can be something rather vague and wishful, even superficial? "I hope we are not running late for some event or we hope the sun will shine today". Or it can express something very important and be Hope which is based on conviction. The hope expressed at Christmas is a firm belief that, no matter what difficulties we might be facing, there are solutions. Despite the challenges, there are possibilities and opportunities.

This is perhaps all the more important for us this year, as we celebrate Christmas in the midst of a pandemic. And indeed, already - all through the pandemic, there have been signs of Hope. – The commitment and courage of health workers. The dedication of those providing our essential services. The initiatives in local communities to provide for the isolated and the housebound. And increasingly, hope of the vaccines to be available to all. All the directives and restrictions on our freedom, which will have caused varying degrees of inconvenience and disruption and anxiety, have all been imposed with the intention that we might all have Hope in better times to come.

For Christians, the Hope we express and renew at Christmas is that God, having sent His Son into the world, is guiding us step by step along the way. Lord, may we strengthen our Hope and never lose sight of the possibilities and opportunities that you provide as you guide us in our lives.

Amen

MON 05:45 Farming Today (m000qhvh)

21/12/20 - Sugar beet processing. New uses for wool, Harvest mice

As the sugar beet harvest continues through the winter, a new way of processing it is being trialled which could allow more farmers to grow it. Sugar extraction is currently only done by one company - British Sugar - and is concentrated in the east of England. Most growers are within 60 miles of a processing plant. These huge factories heat the beet and get 95% of the sugar out. But we visit York University, where scientists are looking at a different way of extracting the sugar syrup which can be done on a much smaller, local scale, anywhere in the country.

This year has been grim for sheep farmers looking to sell wool - the price has been so low that some have burnt or buried fleeces rather than pay to transport them. Wool produced in the UK is generally used in carpets, textiles, some clothing, and a growing insulation market. But we hear from a wool expert about some innovative new uses.

And the Mammal Society is setting up a nationwide survey of harvest mice to try and find out how well they are doing in the wild. It follows on from a five-year local survey in Kent conducted that the Wildwood Trust.

Presented by Charlotte Smith
Produced for BBC Audio in Bristol by Heather Simons

MON 05:56 Weather (m000qhhs)

The latest weather forecast for farmers.

MON 05:58 Tweet of the Day (b040lwc)

House Wren

Tweet of the Day is the voice of birds and our relationship with them, from around the world.

Sir David Attenborough presents the house wren found across the New World. Having one of the largest ranges of any songbird in the New World, the migratory house wren occurs anywhere from their breeding grounds in Canada and North America, to their wintering grounds from Central America to Chile. The male house wren's song is a torrent of trills delivered at full volume from his territory of shrubs, low trees and ferny banks. Diminutive he may be but he's feisty and is known to drag other birds' eggs or chicks from a nest-hole he wants for himself. In parts of North America, house wrens are a significant cause of nest failure in some other species of songbirds.

MON 06:00 Today (m000qjy6)

News and current affairs, including Sports Desk, Weather and Thought for the Day.

MON 09:00 Start the Week (m000qjy8)

Thomas Becket and the rift between church and state

As the 850th anniversary of the murder of Thomas Becket approaches Andrew Marr explores the dynamic between church and state and what happens when the most powerful political friendships turn sour.

The academic Laura Ashe explains the background to the murder in the cathedral on 29th December 1170. King Henry II had promoted the lowly born Thomas Becket to the highest positions in the land – first Lord Chancellor, then Archbishop of Canterbury. But their growing animosity and conflict over the rights and privileges of the church led to his infamous assassination by four of the King's knights.

In recent years the former librarian Christopher de Hamel has succeeded in identifying the Anglo-Saxon Psalter which Becket cherished in his lifetime and may even have been holding when he died. In *The Book in the Cathedral: The Last Relic of Thomas Becket*, de Hamel looks at what this book reveals about the life of Becket. He also compares the veneration for relics of the saints in the Middle Ages, with our relationship today with historical artefacts.

In Britain the Anglican Church still has an establishment role within the state, with Bishops in the House of Lords and the monarch regarded as 'defender of the faith'. But across the Channel in France a formal separation of church and state, *laïcité*, was enshrined in French law in 1905. The cultural historian Andrew Hussey, who is based in Paris, looks at the devastating fault lines that have emerged in 2020 in the country's secularist ideals.

Producer: Katy Hickman

MON 09:45 A Promised Land by Barack Obama (m000qjzv)

Ep 6 - Obamacare

Former President Barack Obama continues reading from the first volume of his presidential memoirs *A Promised Land*, offering a unique and deeply personal account of some of the landmarks of his first term at the White House.

In today's episode, Obama charts the extraordinary difficulties he must overcome to achieve his dream of universal healthcare. His team face challenging odds as they try to push through legislation against the backdrop of a historic recession, a distinct lack of co-operation from the Republicans and the slurs of the Tea Party movement. At last when things start to move, it is the Democratic party itself that causes an own goal. Obama also opens up to reveal a very personal reason for believing in affordable healthcare and introduces us to Bo who is a lively new member of the family.

Elected in 2008, Obama became the 44th president of the United States and the first African American to sit in the Oval Office. With extraordinary frankness he explores his own ambition and drive to achieve real change and how he had to confront the limitations of presidential power.

Abridged by Katrin Williams.

Produced by Julian Wilkinson; the editor is Di Speirs.

MON 10:00 Woman's Hour (m000qjyd)

The programme that offers a female perspective on the world

MON 10:45 The Mystery of Edwin Drood (m000qjyj)

Part 1

By Charles Dickens

Kate Dickens tells the story of her father's final and unfinished novel, a fast-moving thriller set in the cathedral town of Cloisterham.

Edwin visits his fiancé Rosa at Miss Twinkleton's Academy, but his gift of a pair of gloves for every one of her nineteen years is not as successful as he had hoped. In an opium den near London's docks, Princess Puffer teases secrets from Edwin's uncle, John Jasper.

Kate Dickens... Pippa Nixon
John Jasper... Joel McCormack
Edwin Drood... Iwan Davies
Rosa Bud... Isabella Inchbald
Princess Puffer... Rachel Atkins

Adapted by Mike Walker
Directed by Jeremy Mortimer
A BBC Cymru Wales Production

It is Christmas in Cloisterham. All is fine until Edwin, the young man who appears to have it all, a beautiful and charming prospective bride, the promise of an engineering job in Egypt,

disappears. Presumed murdered. Could it have been impetuous Neville Landless ? Or Edwin's uncle Jasper ?

Dickens' last, unfinished, novel is set in a phantasmagoria drug fuelled landscape where nobody is who or what they say they are and motives are more tangled than the streets and alleys of the city of Cloisterham where the action is played out. Drood is an impressionistic and fast moving thriller and a study of guilt in an edgy, and unpredictable landscape. Whilst he was writing it, Dickens was driving himself towards exhaustion and death through his obsessive public performances of the most lurid parts of Oliver Twist. He is revisiting his first successful novel as he is struggling with his last, fearful that his creative well is drying up and that he will never bring this story to a close - and struggling with a hidden guilt of his own.

Mike Walker's dramatization is narrated by Dickens' daughter Kate, witness to her father's final weeks, and whose fascination with The Mystery of Edwin Drood leads her to look into its unsolved conclusion to find clues about her father's character.

Pippa Nixon (Unforgotten ITV) plays Kate Dickens. Peter Davison (Life, Gentleman Jack BBC) plays Hiram Grewgious. Joel MacCormack (Safe House 2 ITV) is John Jasper. Damian Lynch (Giri/Haji BBC/ Netflix) is the Reverend Crisparkle. Rachel Atkins (Doctors, Call the Midwife, Chernobyl) plays Princess Puffer. Maanuv Thiara (Brassic, Line of Duty) plays Neville Landless. Halema Hussain (SuperNova BBC Films) plays Helena Landless. Iwan Davies, who plays Edwin, graduated from RADA in 2019.

MON 11:00 The Untold (m000qjyj)
I Can't Have My Son Home

John's mother thinks he is involved with county lines. How can she get him to stop?

From a fun and gorgeous, football-loving youngster John has turned into an uncontrollable teen.

He has had several run-ins with the police, has vast amounts of money in the house and sleeps with a knife under his pillow.

Tanya and Antony are middle-class professionals and had big dreams for their son. Now they just want to keep him safe.

"I went from academic expectation, to no GCSEs - then I got down to be alive, and actually not harm anyone else."

They've reached out for years for support as John has special needs; they have had to fight his diagnosis, for his education and now they are struggling to find a way to keep him from a life of drugs and crime.

They've tried every parenting trick in the book. "It's all about setting boundaries". Yeah, right! We're kind of beyond boundaries."

Now they might have to deprive him of his liberty to keep him alive.

Producer: Sarah Bowen
Narrator: Grace Dent

MON 11:30 How to Vaccinate the World (m000qjyl)
The Vaccine Year Ahead

What might the wonderful world of vaccines have in store for us in 2021? And what are the challenges that lie ahead in getting them to the billions of people who need them across the world?

Tim Harford is joined this week by Dr Anna Blakney, Bioengineer at Imperial College London, Dr Nick Jackson from the Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations and Natasha Loder, Health Policy Editor at the Economist.

MON 12:00 News Summary (m000qk2c)
The latest national and international news from BBC Radio 4.

MON 12:04 An Almost Perfect Christmas by Nina Stibbe (m000qjyq)
Episode One: Going Home for Christmas

Perennially dry turkeys, Christmas pudding fires, wonky Christmas trees and unreliable Santas - An Almost Perfect Christmas is a set of hilarious (and highly relatable) short stories and personal reflections on the joys and insanity of Christmas from the author of Love, Nina.

"The true heir to Sue Townsend" - Caitlin Moran
"Nina Stibbe is a national treasure" - Jon Ronson

Nina Stibbe was born in Leicester. She is the author of two works of non-fiction - Love, Nina and An Almost Perfect Christmas - and three novels: Man at the Helm, Paradise Lodge,

and Reasons to be Cheerful, which won the Bollinger Everyman Wodehouse Prize for Comic Fiction 2019.

Abridged by Sara Davies
Read by Sally Phillips
Produced by Mair Bosworth for BBC Audio in Bristol

MON 12:18 You and Yours (m000qjys)
News and discussion of consumer affairs

MON 12:57 Weather (m000qjyy)
The latest weather forecast

MON 13:00 World at One (m000qjyx)
Analysis of news and current affairs, presented by Sarah Montague.

MON 13:45 Why Why Why? (m000qjyz)
Should I stay or should I go?

Comedian Phill Jupitus searches for the answers to questions posed by songs. A 1981 hit by The Clash provokes a discussion about decision making with expert Joseph Bikart.

Joseph has written a book entitled The Art of Decision Making: How we Move from Indecision to Smart Choices. From his years of research and practice in decision making, he offers Phill advice - from philosopher Aristotle to business tycoon Warren Buffet - about how to become better at making decisions.

Producer: Rosie Boulton
A Must Try Softer production for BBC Radio 4

MON 14:00 Tracks (m000qjz1)
Series 5: Abyss

Abyss: Episode Nine

By Matthew Broughton

The last ever episode of the conspiracy thriller.

As time runs out for Helen, the truth about Arca Island is revealed and she's offered an impossible choice.

A gripping thriller, Tracks was the first drama to hit the top of the iTunes podcast chart back in 2017. It went on to win Best Sound (BBC Audio Drama Awards) and Best Fiction (British Podcast Awards). Now Tracks is back with a fifth and final 9 part series.

All four previous series of Tracks are available now in full on BBC Sounds.

Helen... Olivia Poulet
Freddy... Jonathan Forbes
Amina... Emma Fryer
The Architect... Siân Phillips
The Reporter... Kathy Clugston
The Medic... Stefan Adegbola
Frances... Juno Robinson

Directed by James Robinson
A BBC Cymru Wales Production

MON 14:45 Welcome to the Quiet Zone (b05vffp2)
Hunter and the Hunted

Homer Hunter takes Emile down by the creek in Stoney Bottom star gazing. Homer remembers before the telescope was built and when the Quiet Zone was just a quiet place - apart from the moonshine, and the blue grass, and the bear hunting, and the preaching.

Producer: Sara Jane Hall.

MON 15:00 Counterpoint (m000qjz3)
Series 34

Heat 3, Series 34

Three amateur music lovers from around the UK join Paul Gambaccini for a special edition of the wide-ranging music quiz. The focus is very much on festive music, with plenty of extracts to suit the season, from traditional carols to music from films that are holiday favourites. The competitors will also be asked to choose a musical category on which to answer their own individual questions, with no advance warning of the topics on offer - but with a festive flavour to all of them.

Taking part today are

Annie Hodgkinson, a retired recruitment officer from Kingswinford in the West Midlands
Barbara Kay, a maths tutor from Wallasey
Karen Rasmussen, a disability mentor from York

Producer: Paul Bajoria

MON 15:30 The Food Programme (m000qhgq)
[Repeat of broadcast at 12:32 on Sunday]

MON 16:00 Faith in Music (m000qjz6)
Edward Elgar

Catholic composer Sir James MacMillan considers Sir Edward Elgar's complex life and religious faith as an English composer living through times of great distress and turmoil.

Following the somewhat disastrous premiere of his oratorio, The Dream of Gerontius, Elgar complained, "I always said God was against art and I still believe it. I have allowed my heart to open once - it is now shut against every religious feeling and every soft, gentle impulse forever."

James talks with Em Marshall-Luck, Stephen Johnson and Joanna Bullivant about Elgar's religious upbringing and the triumphs and tragedies of his life which were reflected in his attitude towards faith and religion.

Over the centuries, composers have created musical masterpieces which many listeners have come to regard as spiritual touchstones. For example, Tallis's motet Spem in alium, Wagner's opera Parsifal, Elgar's oratorio The Dream of Gerontius, Bernstein's Mass. But what did these composers actually believe about God, faith, compassion, an afterlife and redemption? And do we need to share these beliefs in any way, to have a spiritual experience as listeners to their music?

Answers to these questions are complex, fascinating and challenging.

Produced by Rosie Boulton
A Must Try Softer production for BBC Radio 4

MON 16:30 Beyond Belief (m000qjz8)
Virgin Mary

Christmas is often a time of celebration and reflection. A time of sitting by the Christmas tree, eating and drinking, spending time with loved ones and for Christians reflecting on the birth of Jesus. His mother Mary is a highly revered figure in both Christianity and Islam. The iconic pose of the Madonna and Child is celebrated in art but we are told very little about her in the Bible. Joining Ernie Rea to discuss the Virgin Mary is Prof Tina Beattie, Director of the Catherine of Sienna College, the University of Roehampton; Mona Siddiqui, Professor of Islamic and Interreligious Studies at the University of Edinburgh; and His Eminence Archbishop Angelaos, Coptic Orthodox Archbishop of London.

Producer: Amanda Hancox

MON 17:00 PM (m000qjzb)
Afternoon news and current affairs programme, reporting on breaking stories and summing up the day's headlines

MON 18:00 Six O'Clock News (m000qjzg)
The latest national and international news from BBC Radio 4.

MON 18:30 I'm Sorry I Haven't A Clue (m000qj6n)
Series 73

Lockdown Recording 1

A second lockdown recording of the nation's favourite wireless entertainment sees Marcus Brigstocke, Rachel Parris, Miles Jupp take on Rory Bremner, Jo Brand and Andy Hamilton with Jack Dee in the chair. Colin Sell attempts piano accompaniment.

Producer - Jon Naismith. It is a BBC Studios production.

MON 19:00 The Archers (m000qj9)
Tracy struggles to pick up the pieces and Freddie finds himself with more on his plate than he anticipated.

MON 19:15 Front Row (m000qjzj)
Live magazine programme on the worlds of arts, literature, film, media and music

MON 19:45 The Mystery of Edwin Drood (m000qjyg)

[Repeat of broadcast at 10:45 today]

MON 20:00 ...And Please Can I Have A Unicorn And World Peace? (m000qjzl)

Miles Jupp enters a winter wonderland as he travels to Santa's post office in the Arctic Circle. He's been given special permission to join the elves who help Santa with around half a million letters that arrive each year from around the world. Donning a green and red elf hat, and braced by snow and sub-zero temperatures, Miles gets to work sorting letters under the watchful eye of Elf Riitta.

In this programme, we follow Miles on his magical trip and discover what lies in the hearts and hopes of children – and sometimes adults – who write to Santa.

Other global outposts of Santa's postal service include the UK's Royal Mail and, in the USA, the town of Santa Claus, Indiana.

Joanna Espin from The Postal Museum in London reveals how historic letters to Santa can offer a social history of the times, sharing how a child in the late 19th century whose father had died from smallpox touched Santa with a heartfelt letter, receiving gifts and help. Chief Elf Pat Koch in Santa Claus, Indiana, shares a letter from the 1930s depression where a young girl asks for clothes and help for her family rather than toys and sweets.

In the UK, we join Yorkshire school children in Sheffield as they write their letters.

And back in Lapland, Miles takes a trip through snowy landscape on a reindeer sled as he prepares for a visit to the grotto of the Big Man himself.

With thanks to Riitta Elf, Santa Claus' Main Post Office, Arctic Circle, Finland Joanna Espin, Curator, The British Postal Museum & Archive Pat Koch, Chief Elf, Santa Claus Museum, Santa Claus, Indiana Harthill Primary School and Birkdale School, Sheffield

Producer: Sara Parker
Executive Producer: Emma Walker
A Rosa production for BBC Radio 4

MON 20:30 Crossing Continents (m000q9bk)

Darfur: A Precarious Peace

After 17 years of conflict costing 300,000 lives a peace agreement offers new hope to Sudan's troubled Darfur region. It comes as UNAMID, the United Nations and African Union peacekeeping force, prepares to finally pull out at the end of this month. But with nearly two million displaced people still living in camps and some armed groups yet to sign the agreement, who will protect civilians if the peace fails? For Crossing Continents, Mike Thomson gains rare access to Darfur to hear the stories of those still living with deep uncertainty.

Producer, Bob Howard.
Editor, Bridget Harney

MON 21:00 Don't Log Off (m000q9ff)

Series 12

Searching For Hope

Alan Dein searches for the stories that connect us in a changed world. Inspiring and moving accounts of how the pandemic has changed people's lives on every continent.

Today, Liana in Armenia celebrates her 30th birthday as her country finds itself at war with Azerbaijan - as well as covid-19.

We also catch up with 25 year old entrepreneur Fahad in Bangladesh, who Alan first spoke to in March when it looked like he might lose his hard-earned fortune.

Plus, Ugandan midwife Marion faces the toughest year of her career and Fish in China describes how lockdown is affecting her fellow students' mental health.

Producers: Sarah Shebbeare & Laurence Grissell

MON 21:30 Start the Week (m000qjy8)

[Repeat of broadcast at 09:00 today]

MON 22:00 The World Tonight (m000qjzp)

In depth reporting, intelligent analysis and breaking news from a global perspective

MON 22:45 An Almost Perfect Christmas by Nina Stibbe (m000qjyq)

[Repeat of broadcast at 12:04 today]

MON 23:00 Loose Ends (m000qhsW)

[Repeat of broadcast at 18:15 on Saturday]

MON 23:30 Today in Parliament (m000qnzl)

News, views and features on today's stories in Parliament

TUESDAY 22 DECEMBER 2020

TUE 00:00 Midnight News (m000qjzs)

The latest news and weather forecast from BBC Radio 4.

TUE 00:30 A Promised Land by Barack Obama (m000qjzv)

[Repeat of broadcast at 09:45 on Monday]

TUE 00:48 Shipping Forecast (m000qjzx)

The latest weather reports and forecasts for UK shipping.

TUE 01:00 Selection of BBC World Service Programmes (m000qjzz)

BBC Radio 4 joins the BBC World Service.

TUE 05:20 Shipping Forecast (m000qk01)

The latest weather reports and forecasts for UK shipping.

TUE 05:30 News Briefing (m000qk03)

The latest news from BBC Radio 4

TUE 05:43 Prayer for the Day (m000qk05)

A spiritual comment and prayer to begin the day with The Right Reverend John Arnold, Bishop of Salford

Good morning.

The Christmas story speaks of the birth of the child Jesus, in Bethlehem. Our waiting in Hope in this season of Advent gives us time to remind ourselves of the gift of God, in sending His Son into our world at a specific time in a certain place. We also look forward to what we call the second coming of Jesus, at the end of time. But there are early Christian writers who were intent on reminding us that there is a third form of Jesus' coming – not in particular events – but in His presence, when he comes to us each day. Jesus said quite simply "I am with you always, until the end of time".

We certainly live in a world where so many problems cause distress and suffering. We must all, at times, feel that we are being overwhelmed in some way by a problem or challenges. It is precisely at those moments that we need to remind ourselves that we are never alone – "I am with you, always", says the Lord. It is so easy to forget this truth in the busyness of our lives, with all our jobs, chores, concerns and distractions.

Our lives can be so noisy and cluttered and in the rush of everything we want to handle everything ourselves. But the truth is Jesus wants to be part of everything that we do in all our choices decisions and actions. Lord Jesus help us to remember that you are present to us in all the actions of every day. May we listen for you, talk with you, and be guided by you, in all that we do.

Amen.

TUE 05:45 Farming Today (m000qk07)

The latest news about food, farming and the countryside.

TUE 05:58 Tweet of the Day (b03thsbj)

Duncock

Tweet of the Day is a series of fascinating stories about our British birds inspired by their calls and songs.

John Aitchison presents the duncock. You'll often see duncocks, or hedge sparrows, as they were once called, shuffling around under a bird table or at the bottom of a hedge. They're inconspicuous birds being mostly brown with a greyish neck and breast. They aren't, as you might imagine, closely related to sparrows, many of their nearest relatives are birds of mountainous regions in Europe and Asia.

TUE 06:00 Today (m000qjdl)

News and current affairs, including Sports Desk, Weather and Thought for the Day.

TUE 09:00 Soul Music (m000qjdr)

I Wonder as I Wander

As Christmas approaches, Soul Music leads you through Advent with the Appalachian carol "I Wonder as I Wander".

Written by American folklorist and singer John Jacob Niles, its origins come from a song fragment collected in 1933. Mysterious, inspiring, this traditional Christmas carol reflects on the nativity and the nature of wondering.

While in the town of Murphy in Appalachian North Carolina, Niles attended a fundraising meeting held by evangelicals who had been ordered out of town by the police. He wrote of hearing the song:

"A girl had stepped out to the edge of the little platform attached to the automobile. She began to sing. Her clothes were unbelievably dirty and ragged, and she, too, was unwashed. Her ash-blond hair hung down in long skeins. ... she was beautiful, and in her untutored way, she could sing. She smiled as she sang, smiled rather sadly, and sang only a single line of a song".

The girl, named Annie Morgan, repeated the fragment seven times in exchange for a quarter per performance, and Niles left with "three lines of verse, and a magnificent idea". Based on this fragment, Niles composed the version of "I Wonder as I Wander" that is known today.

This most unusual of carols touches people in different ways. With childhood memories from a 1960's RAF base in Oxfordshire, a Nigerian school girl who found her place in Winchester Cathedral, reflections from a candlelit vigil in an Appalachian town, and a Christmas gift as described by world renowned singer Melanie Marshall.

Guests: Performer Melanie Marshall, Ron Pen (biographer John Jacob Niles), Viva Choir member Louise Sheaves, author Chibundu Onuzo and music scholar John McLain. Featuring music from John Rutter and Burl Ives.

Consultant: Ted Olson.

Producer: Nicola Humphries

TUE 09:30 In Their Element (m000cmrs)

Series 4

Aluminium

At the time of Emperor Napoleon the Third aluminium was more valuable than gold and silver. The Emperor liked the metal so much he had his cutlery made out of it. But once a cheaper way was discovered to extract aluminium it began to be used for all kinds of objects, from aeroplanes to coffee pots. Andrea Sella, Professor Inorganic Chemistry, talks to Professor Mark Miodownik at the Institute of Making at UCL about why aluminium is such a useful material, from keeping crisps crisp to the tinsel on our Christmas trees. Andrea visits the Science Museum where he admires an aluminium plane of the class flown by Amelia Earhart. And he talks about the lightness of bicycles made from aluminium with Keith Noronha, of Reynolds Technology.

TUE 09:45 A Promised Land by Barack Obama (m000qjhs)

Ep 7 - As Others See Me

Former President Barack Obama continues reading from the first volume of his presidential memoirs A Promised Land, offering a unique and deeply personal account of some of the landmarks of his first term at the White House.

In today's episode, Obama receives an early morning phone call that pre-empt's a trip to Oslo for something wholly unexpected. He also sets out to build his reputation overseas with a series of official visits. We eavesdrop on his first meeting with Vladimir Putin at his dacha in Russia where Obama is treated to a lengthy monologue, and touch down in China to discover the rigours of surveillance around Obama's team and an order by President Hu Jintao to the People's Liberation Army Orchestra to play one of Obama's favourite tunes.

Elected in 2008, Obama became the 44th president of the United States and the first African American to sit in the Oval Office. A Promised Land documents the unrelenting demands on the President of the USA and reveals glimpses of family life with Michelle, Malia and Sasha at one of the world's most famous addresses.

Abridged by Katrin Williams.

Produced by Julian Wilkinson; the editor is Di Speirs.

TUE 10:00 Woman's Hour (m000qjfd)

The programme that offers a female perspective on the world

TUE 10:45 The Mystery of Edwin Drood (m000qjft)

Part 2

By Charles Dickens

Newly arrived from Ceylon, orphan twins Neville and Helena Landless arrive in Cloisterham. Helena makes firm friends with Rosa, but Neville, lodging with Reverend Crisparkle, clashes with Edwin.

Kate Dickens... Pippa Nixon
John Jasper... Joel McCormack
Edwin Drood ... Iwan Davies
Rosa Bud ... Isabella Inchbald
Reverend Crisparkle ... Damian Lynch
Neville Landless ... Maanuv Thiara
Helena Landless ... Halema Hussain
Pianist Colin Sell

Adapted by Mike Walker
Directed by Jeremy Mortimer
A BBC Cymru Wales Production

TUE 11:00 Don't Log Off (m000qjf8)
Series 12

Grounded

Alan Dein searches for the stories that connect us in a changed world. Inspiring and moving stories of how the pandemic has changed people's lives on every continent.

Today, airline pilot Peter in Australia talks about deciding to become a bus driver after the pandemic forced him to stop flying.

And wedding planner Vithika in India discusses the dramatic impact of the pandemic on her industry.

Plus, Chun Wing, a ballet dancer at the Paris Opera shares the frustrations of not being able to perform.

Alan also speaks to Shira who lives in an orthodox community in Israel and he catches up with doctor Ahmed in Sudan who's just made a major decision about his job.

Producers: Sarah Shebbeare & Laurence Grissell

TUE 11:30 New Song (m000qjfd)

Songwriting is the creative bedrock of pop music. But the rise of streaming technology and new platforms - from Spotify and YouTube to TikTok - has not only changed the way we listen to music, it is revolutionising the art of songwriting itself.

For decades, the focus was on the album as a whole, and which tracks would work for radio play or single release. With streaming, all consideration is rolled into the song itself, the central currency of the new technology.

But it is also dictating the way songs are being written. For professional writers today, streaming means shorter durations, the compression of melodic and harmonic ideas and faster tempos to counter our diminishing attention spans. It means overloading the front of songs with hooks and earworms and heading straight to the chorus to stop listeners skipping tracks.

The pressure to deliver hits that keep the listener engaged in real time is, some argue, industrialising the craft with a huge growth of song-writing long-distance and by committee - a creative division of labour between producers (now called 'track writers') beat-makers and 'topliners', those writers hired to focus solely on the melody and lyrics.

Music platforms are recording our listening choices even as they deliver their services, and this is changing the way music is written too. AI and algorithm technologies mean that, even as we stream and share music online, our data is harvested and fed back to record companies and labels and then passed on to the writers, creating a kind of conservative feedback loop. Songwriters are now under pressure to produce more and more of the same formula, discouraging innovation and risk while the ear becomes conditioned to certain tempos, chord progressions, hooks and production textures.

Meanwhile, the streaming economy itself is coming under political scrutiny. Campaigns like Broken Record are challenging an economic model they argue is so skewed, with so little remuneration for writers, that it's endangering the profession itself.

From the 45 rpm single and the album era to the digital download, the medium has always shaped the way pop music is written as well as listened to. Now the craft of songwriting is being revolutionised again, even as the technology re-wires our cognitive relationship to music.

Presented by songwriter and topliner Heliene Lindvall, this feature hears from songwriters, lyricists and producers from across the pop spectrum including Tre Jean Marie, Emily Phillips, Guy Chambers, Jin Jin, Nick Atkinson, Tom Gray and Iain Archer.

A Brook Lapping production for BBC Radio 4

TUE 12:00 News Summary (m000qkkj)

The latest national and international news from BBC Radio 4.

TUE 12:04 An Almost Perfect Christmas by Nina Stibbe (m000qjfm)

Episode Two: A Present for Teacher

Perennially dry turkeys, Christmas pudding fires, wonky Christmas trees and unreliable Santas - An Almost Perfect Christmas is a set of hilarious (and highly relatable) short stories and personal reflections on the joys and insanity of Christmas from the author of Love, Nina.

A Present for Teacher: A darkly comic tale of the last day of term and Christmas homework.

"The true heir to Sue Townsend" - Caitlin Moran
"Nina Stibbe is a national treasure" - Jon Ronson

Nina Stibbe was born in Leicester. She is the author of two works of non-fiction - Love, Nina and An Almost Perfect Christmas - and three novels: Man at the Helm, Paradise Lodge, and Reasons to be Cheerful, which won the Bollinger Everyman Wodehouse Prize for Comic Fiction 2019.

Abridged by Sara Davies
Read by Sally Phillips
Produced by Mair Bosworth for BBC Audio in Bristol

TUE 12:18 You and Yours (m000qjfs)

News and discussion of consumer affairs

TUE 12:57 Weather (m000qjft)

The latest weather forecast

TUE 13:00 World at One (m000qjg1)

Analysis of news and current affairs, presented by Sarah Montague.

TUE 13:45 Why Why Why? (m000qjg5)

What time is love?

Phill Jupitus searches for the answers to questions posed by songs. A 1988 trance music hit for The KLF provokes a discussion about circadian rhythms with Professor Russell Foster.

Professor Russell Foster is Head of the Nuffield Laboratory of Ophthalmology and Director of the Sleep and Circadian Neuroscience Institute at Oxford University.


Producer: Rosie Boulton
A Must Try Softer production for BBC Radio 4

TUE 14:00 The Archers (m000qjg9)

[Repeat of broadcast at 19:00 on Monday]

TUE 14:15 Drama (m000qjgf)

From Shore to Shore

From Shore to Shore 

An audio adaptation of the successful touring theatre show which chronicles the complex lives of migrants from China. Mary Cooper and multilingual collaborator MW Sun worked with Chinese communities in Leeds and West Yorkshire, where some people spoke for the first time of events which had shaped their lives and which had not been previously told, even to their children. Stories of love and loss, struggle and survival, create a powerful universal drama. The theme of separation from the mother - and by extension, the motherland - was a feature of all these interviews, with the oldest interviewee aged 87 and the youngest aged 12.

Cheung Wing/Old Tyke/Bailiff - Ozzie Yue
Young Cheung Wing - Hayden Zhenxi Yu
Adolescent Cheung Wing/Bob/Doctor - Paul Chan
Mei Lan/Neighbour/Teacher - Michelle Yim
Yidi/Kam Fa - Luna Dai
Yidi's Ma/Ma/Por Por/Mei Lan's Ma - Alice Lee
Yidi's Dad/Trader/Uncle/Mei Lan's Dad - Windson Liang

Written by Mary Cooper with MW Sun
Directed for theatre by David Tse for On The Wire Theatre
Produced and directed for BBC Audio by Pauline Harris

TUE 15:00 Short Cuts (m000qjgk)

A Merry Little Christmas

Cold-calling Santa Claus, family gatherings and a solo tradition for the 25th December - Josie Long presents festive short documentaries.

Production team: Andrea Rangecroft
Series Producer: Eleanor McDowall
A Falling Tree production for BBC Radio 4

TUE 15:30 The Curious Cases of Rutherford & Fry (m000qjgn)

Series 17

The Good and Bad in Fungi

"Why are some fungi helpful and others harmful?" asks Paul Glaister in Reading. Rutherford and Fry try to outdo each other with fungal top trumps to get to grips with the answer.

Decomposition ecologist Lynne Boddy, Professor of Microbial Ecology at Cardiff University, helps Hannah calculate the amount of dead plant material we'd be buried in across the globe, if we didn't have fungi to recycle it. And she describes her first fungal encounter in her student flat which was riddled with dry rot, and explains how without fungi, we wouldn't have plants.

On Adam's team is Curator of Mycology, Dr. Bryn Dentiger, at the Natural History Museum of Utah. Bryn tells Adam that he can't think of a single food that doesn't have some association with fungus. And the links are mostly positive rather than just mould on the top of your jam or rotten fruit in your fridge. He introduces Adam to the Humungous Fungus - the biggest living organism on Earth - and they get excited at the prospect of 20,000 different fungal sexes.

The pros and cons of fungi don't stop there. Microbiologist Dr. Ada Hagan, in Michigan lists some of the fungal diseases we're prone to, and the numerous drugs derived from fungi that help treat a whole host of common diseases.

Presenters: Hannah Fry & Adam Rutherford
Producer: Fiona Roberts

TUE 16:00 A Sailor Went to Sea Sea Sea (m00017sj)

Singer-songwriter Emma Lee Moss (aka Emmy the Great) returns to the playground to re-explore one of her earliest musical influences, the clapping game.

Emma finds the playground very much alive with song, new and old. So how is this seemingly old-fashioned pastime surviving in an age of YouTube and smart phones?

Emma speaks to children and researchers, as well as exploring the archive of amateur folklorist Iona Opie, to understand the secrets of the clapping game's success since the 1950s.

How are songs created? How do they spread? How do they last generations? What makes them catchy? These are the fundamental questions at the heart of any songwriter's profession and Emma thinks the answers lie with the overlooked songwriting prodigies of our time - children.

Listening to games from her own primary school in Hong Kong, to the playground songs of England and Iceland, Emma traces the global passage of clapping games and tries to unpick their craft. Could she learn from the creative process behind the clapping game? As children borrow lyrics and melody from adult culture to work into their games, Emma borrows from the playground - composing riffs and rhythms as she goes.

With contributions from Dr Kate Cowan, Dr John Potter, Professor Andrew Burn, Dan Jones (aka the Rhyme Collector), Una Margret Jonsdotir and Dr Julia Bishop.

Produced by Claire Crofton
A Boom Shakalaka Production for BBC Radio 4.

TUE 16:30 Great Lives (m000qjgd)

The Great Lives of Great Lives

Back in the late summer of 2001, a new biography series aired on Radio 4. Matthew Parris was not the first presenter, but he has chaired more editions than anyone else. His very first episode was about Morecambe and Wise, since when he's listened to claims for Leon Trotsky, Donna Summer, Doris Day and Benito Mussolini. So what makes a great life, and can anyone join? Here, with some help from the first programme's producer, he starts to draw some conclusions of his own.

Extracts include Toni Morrison, Frank Sinatra, Muhammad Ali, Virginia Woolfe, Kenny Everett, and Clement Attlee. Nominators include Jessie Ware, Christopher Hitchens, Ken Dodd, Andi Oliver, Penelope Keith, David Attenborough, and Grace Dent.

The presenter is Matthew Parris, the producer in Bristol Miles

Warde

TUE 17:00 PM (m000qjgs)

Afternoon news and current affairs programme, reporting on breaking stories and summing up the day's headlines

TUE 18:00 Six O'Clock News (m000qjh1)

The latest national and international news from BBC Radio 4.

TUE 18:30 Ed Reardon's Christmas Week (m000qjh5)

Meet Ed Reardon, author, pipe smoker, consummate fare-dodger and master of the abusive email, trying to survive in a world where the media seems to be run by idiots and charlatans.

It's nearly Christmas, and Ed needs a room at the inn. The Lock Keeper's Arms, that is. But first, he's got to deal with Scrooge.

ED REARDON.....CHRISTOPHER DOUGLAS
 PING.....BARUNKA
 O'SHAUGHNESSY
 JAZ MILVAIN.....PHILIP JACKSON
 JAKE.....SAM PAMPHILON
 ELI.....LI SA COLEMAN
 AUDIOBOOK.....NICOLA SANDERSON
 LANDLORD.....COLIN MCFARLANE

Written by Christopher Douglas and Andrew Nickolds.

Produced by Victoria Lloyd
 A BBC Studios Production

TUE 19:00 The Archers (m000qjh9)

David's evening takes a surprising turn and Eddie is very much in demand

TUE 19:15 Front Row (m000qjhd)

Live magazine programme on the worlds of arts, literature, film, media and music

TUE 19:45 The Mystery of Edwin Drood (m000qjf4)

[Repeat of broadcast at 10:45 today]

TUE 20:00 Can I Talk About Heroes? (m000qjhg)

Vicky Foster's award-winning Radio 4 Audio Drama Bathwater looked at the effect the murder in 2005 in Hull of the father of her children, a firefighter, is still having on her family.

In this documentary, Can I talk about Heroes? Vicky looks at the way society creates heroes, whether the meaning and significance of that label has changed in recent times and if the term is still useful.

This questioning has been prompted by her own story. Stephen Gallant, convicted of the murder of Vicky's ex-partner, was out on day licence attending a prisoner rehabilitation event in November 2019 when he tackled the London Bridge terrorist with a narwhal tusk, which caught the attention of the public and the media. He was quickly branded a 'hero'.

Vicky Foster talks to Dr Zeno Franco, Associate Professor, Medical College of Wisconsin
 Emma Kinder, Victim Support's Homicide Regional Manager
 Jacquie Johnston-Lynch, Head of Services at Vitality Homes Recovery Centre
 Mel, a nurse working on a covid ward.

Produced by Susan Roberts, BBC Audio North

TUE 20:40 In Touch (m000qjhh)

A Writers' Special

Peter White speaks to three visually impaired writers about how they got started. What tips do they have for someone hoping to get published themselves as a poet, a playwright or novelist?

What part does blindness play in their creative work?
 Our guests are Claudine Toutingi, Mandy Redvers-Rowe and Tanvir Bush.

PRODUCER: Mike Young

TUE 21:00 All in the Mind (m000qjhl)

Programme exploring the limits and potential of the human mind

TUE 21:30 Soul Music (m000qjdr)

[Repeat of broadcast at 09:00 today]

TUE 22:00 The World Tonight (m000qjhn)

In depth reporting, intelligent analysis and breaking news from a global perspective

TUE 22:45 An Almost Perfect Christmas by Nina Stibbe (m000qjfn)

[Repeat of broadcast at 12:04 today]

TUE 23:00 Date Night (m0003d0w)

Episode 3

Semi-improvised comedy show written and performed by Marc Wootton with Catherine Tate, Monica Dolan, Katherine Parkinson, Hammed Animashaun, Ellie White and Jamie Demetriou. Together they portray a series of couples all embracing the modern phenomenon of date night.

DATE NIGHT, noun: A pre-arranged occasion when a couple who have been together for a long time commit to a regular night out in order to keep their relationship alive.

The series follows a collection of couples who are desperately trying to keep their relationship functioning by creating a weekly date night intervention. For some, the relationship is already broken, for others it's their pre-emptive strike in the hope of new-found longevity. More often than not, the stakes are high, involving children, careers and homes.

Date Night is written and created by Marc Wootton whose previous credits include High & Dry (Ch4), La La Land (Showtime), Shirley Ghostman (BBC) and My New Best Friend (Ch4).

Cast:

Rob/Barry/Terry/Patrick/Fiona Marc Wootton
 Gary Jamie Demetriou
 Rita Ellie White
 Terri Catherine Tate
 Carol Monica Dolan
 Jamali Hammed Animashaun
 Narrator Fi Glover

Sound Designers: David Chilton and Lucinda Mason Brown
 Assistant Producer: James Peak
 Producer: Anna Madley

A Black Hat production for BBC Radio 4

TUE 23:30 Today in Parliament (m000qnz)

News, views and features on today's stories in Parliament

WEDNESDAY 23 DECEMBER 2020**WED 00:00 Midnight News (m000qjhb)**

The latest news and weather forecast from BBC Radio 4.

WED 00:30 A Promised Land by Barack Obama (m000qjhs)

[Repeat of broadcast at 09:45 on Tuesday]

WED 00:48 Shipping Forecast (m000qjhw)

The latest weather reports and forecasts for UK shipping.

WED 01:00 Selection of BBC World Service Programmes (m000qjhz)

BBC Radio 4 joins the BBC World Service.

WED 05:20 Shipping Forecast (m000qjhz)

The latest weather reports and forecasts for UK shipping.

WED 05:30 News Briefing (m000qjj1)

The latest news from BBC Radio 4

WED 05:43 Prayer for the Day (m000qjj3)

A spiritual comment and prayer to begin the day with The Right Reverend John Arnold, Bishop of Salford

Good morning.

I wonder how these months of pandemic may have affected you and your family? We have never experienced anything like this in our generation. It was quite a shock to suddenly be faced with a lockdown last March, effective within a few days - which restricted travel, limited our choices, separated us from family and friends. All that was a sudden inconvenience for everyone

but then the on-going effect was felt by people in different ways. There was the introduction of furloughing which ushered in the prospect of redundancy for many people, or at least uncertainty about future employment. Small businesses closing, the hospitality industry in crisis. Churches, shops and public spaces closed. There were all the adjustments for so many people who had to learn how to work from home, of the problems of families stranded in small flats and apartments, with young children to be home-schooled, with or without proper access to online learning. There was also the growing shadows of mental stress and the effect on the elderly in care homes or the housebound who were distanced from family members.

All these difficulties in our crisis pose a question to us. Are we courageous enough to learn and to change, to seek new priorities for building a better society where our priority is genuinely our care for those around us, everyone in our wider family?

Lord, guide us in changing direction. Help us, through dialogue, encounter and compassion to build global understanding, with care for all our brothers and sisters in our global family so that no-one is left behind and no-one is beyond reach.

Amen.

WED 05:45 Farming Today (m000qjj5)

The latest news about food, farming and the countryside.

WED 05:58 Tweet of the Day (b09h6x6h)

Mark Cocker on the Short-eared Owl

Despite having a call like an asthmatic dog, for birdwatcher and naturalist Mark Cocker, the flight of a wintering short-eared owl is one of the most beautiful sights you will ever see.

Producer Tim Dee

Photograph Steve Boddy.

WED 06:00 Today (m000qkmg)

News and current affairs, including Sports Desk, Weather and Thought for the Day.

WED 09:00 The Reith Lectures (m000qkms)

2020: Mark Carney - How We Get What We Value

From Climate Crisis to Real Prosperity

Mark Carney, the former Governor of the Bank of England, argues that the roots of the climate change threat lie in a deeper crisis of values. He suggests that we can create an ecosystem in which society's values broaden the market's conceptions of value. In this way, individual creativity and market dynamism can be channelled to achieve broader social goals including, inclusive growth and environmental sustainability.

Presenter: Anita Anand

Producer: Jim Frank

Editor: Hugh Levinson

Production Coordinator: Brenda Brown

Studio Manager: Rod Farquhar

WED 09:45 A Promised Land by Barack Obama (m000qkp6)

Ep 8 - Climate Change

Former President Barack Obama continues reading from the first volume of his presidential memoirs A Promised Land, offering a unique and deeply personal account of his first term at the White House.

In today's episode, Obama confronts one of the key issues of any current world leader - what to do about climate change. Prompted by his own experiences of a Hawaiian childhood and driven by the need to create a safer environmental future for his daughters Malia and Sasha, he refuses to be blown off course. With the Kyoto Protocol set to expire in 2012 Obama is determined to negotiate a major international climate agreement. He travels to a summit in Copenhagen but is confronted by stalemate as world leaders refuse to compromise or, in some cases, to even engage with the issue. He decides the only way forward is to engage in a spot of gate crashing with Hillary Clinton.

Elected in 2008, Obama became the 44th president of the United States and the first African American to sit in the Oval Office. With extraordinary frankness he explores the opportunities and limitations that high office present, and offers intriguing glimpses of family life with Michelle, Malia and Sasha at one of the world's most famous addresses.

Abridged by Katrin Williams.

Produced by Julian Wilkinson; the editor is Di Speirs.

WED 10:00 Woman's Hour (m000qkmx)
The programme that offers a female perspective on the world

WED 10:45 The Mystery of Edwin Drood (m000qkmz)
Part 3

By Charles Dickens

Mr Grewgious visits his ward, Rosa, to discuss the terms of her forthcoming marriage to Edwin, while stone mason Durdles takes John Jasper on a tour of the Cathedral crypt and tower.

Kate Dickens... Pippa Nixon
John Jasper... Joel McCormack
Edwin Drood ... Iwan Davies
Rosa Bud ... Isabella Inghald
Neville Landless ... Maanuv Thiara
Hiram Grewgious... Peter Davison
Stony Durdles... Ian Conningham
Deputy... Aaron Gelfokf

Adapted by Mike Walker
Directed by Jeremy Mortimer
A BBC Cymru Wales Production

WED 11:00 ...And Please Can I Have A Unicorn And World Peace? (m000qjzl)
[Repeat of broadcast at 20:00 on Monday]

WED 11:30 The Cold Swedish Winter (m000qkn1)
Series 5

An American in Yxsjö

Danny Robins' romantic Swedish comedy, partly recorded on location with a mainly Swedish cast, continues.

The little town of Yxsjö begins to come to terms with 'the Covid' and turns its attention to the local economy. British comedian Geoff is now a Swedish citizen and fully (as he thinks) accepted into the bosom of his growing Swedish family.

But a fly lands firmly in the ointment, when an email arrives from a rich American Andersson (Nic Sampson) who's been tracing his genealogy and turns out to be a long lost cousin. The family Andersson fall in love with the go-getting cousin Wilb, especially when he offers to help out financially - but, of course, Geoff thinks he smells a rat.

Cast
Geoff: Adam Riches
Linda: Sissela Benn
Sten: Thomas Oredsson
Gunilla: Anna-Lena Bergelin
Wilbur: Nic Sampson
John: Harry Nicolaou
With Thomas Eriksson and Johanna Wagrell

Written by Danny Robins

Produced and directed by Frank Stirling
A 7digital production for BBC Radio 4

WED 12:00 News Summary (m000qkr1)
The latest national and international news from BBC Radio 4.

WED 12:04 An Almost Perfect Christmas by Nina Stibbe (m000qkn5)
Episode Three: The Christmas Tree

Perennially dry turkeys, Christmas pudding fires, wonky Christmas trees and unreliable Santas - An Almost Perfect Christmas is a set of hilarious (and highly relatable) short stories and personal reflections on the joys and insanity of Christmas from the author of Love, Nina.

"The true heir to Sue Townsend" - Caitlin Moran
"Nina Stibbe is a national treasure" - Jon Ronson

Nina Stibbe was born in Leicester. She is the author of two works of non-fiction - Love, Nina and An Almost Perfect Christmas - and three novels: Man at the Helm, Paradise Lodge, and Reasons to be Cheerful, which won the Bollinger Everyman Wodehouse Prize for Comic Fiction 2019.

Abridged by Sara Davies
Read by Sally Phillips
Produced by Mair Bosworth for BBC Audio in Bristol

WED 12:18 You and Yours (m000qkn7)
News and discussion of consumer affairs

WED 12:57 Weather (m000qkn9)
The latest weather forecast

WED 13:00 World at One (m000qknc)
Analysis of news and current affairs, presented by Sarah Montague.

WED 13:45 Why Why Why? (m000qknf)
Are you lonesome tonight?

Phill Jupitus searches for the answers to questions posed by songs. A song made a hit by Elvis in 1960 provokes a discussion on the connection between loneliness and night time with Samaritan volunteer Sue Peart and Louise Arseneault, Professor of Developmental Psychology at Kings College, London.

Producer: Rosie Boulton
A Must Try Softer production for BBC Radio 4

WED 14:00 The Archers (m000qjh9)
[Repeat of broadcast at 19:00 on Tuesday]

WED 14:15 Where This Service Will... (m000q4h)
Where This Service Will Depart

By Katherine Jakeways

As David embarks on a new life in Chicago, Suzie plans to surprise him at the airport. The final instalment of the romantic comedy about a couple who met on a train.

Suzie has taken the plunge and planned a surprise romantic reunion at Heathrow airport with David, as he leaves the country to start a new life in the USA. But Suzie discovers that surprises don't always go to plan.

A couple of years ago, Suzie and David sat next to each other on a train journey from London to Penzance. Both married, they shared an intense and unforgettable five-and-a-half hours. Since then they've enjoyed escaping their middle-aged lives together. But in reality, is there any future for them?

A romantic comedy from writer Katherine Jakeways. The Radio Times described Katherine as the 'new Victoria Wood' saying "her character comedy is so acutely observed and so sharp that it's in danger of causing permanent injury." Starring Rosie Cavaliero (Prey) and Justin Edwards (The Thick of It).

Suzie Rosie Cavaliero
David Justin Edwards
Julia Pippa Haywood
Check-in Person/Security Officer/Passenger Sargon Yelda
Ticket Person/Make-up Woman/Air Steward Katherine Jakeways

Directed by James Robinson
A BBC Cymru Wales Production

WED 15:00 Money Box (m000qknh)
MBL: Charity fundraising

It's been a tough year for charities since the global pandemic struck but many of you have come up with innovative ways to raise money for the causes you love. The closure of charity shops and the cancellation of events has greatly reduced income and many charities are also experiencing rising demands, so finding new ways to generate income has been vital.

On Wednesday's Money Box Live Louise Cooper and guests will look at charity finances and fundraising in 2020. Joining Louise are:

Caron Bradshaw, Charity Finance Group
Daniel Fluskey, Institute of Fundraising
Robin Osterley, Charity Retail Association

We'd love to hear your ideas and experiences so e-mail moneybox@bbc.co.uk now to join in with the conversation.

Presenter: Louise Cooper
Producer: Diane Richardson
Editor: Emma Rippon

WED 15:30 All in the Mind (m000qjhl)
[Repeat of broadcast at 21:00 on Tuesday]

WED 16:00 Thinking Allowed (m000qknk)
Laurie Taylor explores the latest research into how society works.

WED 16:30 The Media Show (m000qkmm)

Topical programme about the fast-changing media world

WED 17:00 PM (m000qknp)
Afternoon news and current affairs programme, reporting on breaking stories and summing up the day's headlines

WED 18:00 Six O'Clock News (m000qknt)
The latest national and international news from BBC Radio 4.

WED 18:30 Sandi Toksvig's Hygge (m000qknw)
Episode 4

'Hygge' (pronounced hoo-goo) along with 'tak' (the word for 'thank you' that we learnt from watching Borgen and other Scandi dramas) is one of the few Danish words to have become known to us in the UK.

It's a word that means comfort, contentment and cherishing the simple pleasures in life. In lifestyle magazines it's faux fur throws, cups of hot cocoa and scented candles; but to the Danish it has simpler and less commercial roots. As these cold Winter nights draw in after a difficult year of scant comfort, it feels like we all need some hygge and legendary Dane, Sandi Toksvig, will do her best to bring it to you.

Broadcasting from her wooden cabin near a lake deep in the Danish countryside Sandi will explore the concept of "hygge" with Professor Brian Cox who finds comfort in physics, piano playing and mulled wine and comedian Zoe Lyons who would like nothing more than to clear out ditches all day.

Guests for the series are Grayson Perry, Alan Davies, Dr Maggie Aderin-Pocock, Bridget Christie, Clive Myrie, Professor Brian Cox, Sindhu Vee, Zoe Lyons and presenters and podcasters Rose and Rosie . We look forward to you joining Sandi in her cabin (there will be mulled wine).

Host...Sandi Toksvig
Producer...Julia McKenzie
Material for Sandi's opening script... Charlie Dinkin and Simon Alcock
Production Coordinator...Carina Andrews
Sound Recordist and Editor...Rich Evans
A BBC Studios Production

WED 19:00 The Archers (m000qjn5)
Gavin reaches the end of his tether and Jazzer calls a truce

WED 19:15 Front Row (m000qknj)
Live magazine programme on the worlds of arts, literature, film, media and music

WED 19:45 The Mystery of Edwin Drood (m000qkmz)
[Repeat of broadcast at 10:45 today]

WED 20:00 Grounded with Louis Theroux (p08ybt1b)
13. Rylan Clark-Neal

Covid-19 hasn't gone away and, due to travel restrictions, neither has Louis Theroux. In the second outing of his podcast series, he tracks down more high-profile guests he's been longing to talk to - a fascinating mix of the celebrated, the controversial and the mysterious.

In this episode, television and radio presenter Rylan Clark-Neal settles down in his personal Big Brother diary room to talk to Louis about modelling his own home on the Big Brother house, crying onstage in front of millions and how one of Louis's documentaries ignited his teenage sexuality.

Produced by Sara Jane Hall
Assistant Producer: Catherine Murnane
A Mindhouse production for BBC Radio 4

WED 20:45 Full Circle (m000281p)
Fox and Sharon

La Ronde, written by dramatist Arthur Schnitzler is a play about sexual morality between social groups, explored through a prism of infidelity, lust and desire. Considered a very controversial work it was censored and banned as soon as it was printed in 1900. Although provocative the dramatic structure of the play is simple. It's a succession of 10 sexual encounters exclusively focused on the before and the after; the act itself is never described. Each successive scene takes one character from the previous one and introduces another.

In the style of the play La Ronde, Julien Manuguerra, who produces a podcast about breakups and more largely, our common and very humane vulnerability in the face of love, explores how intimacy and morality are evolving today. The

series draws a picture of what modern love is – or rather, what modern love can be. The original La Ronde was considered a social commentary master piece on how sexual contact transgresses boundaries of class, our radio version of the play will explore how sex can transgress any boundaries. But it's not a play, there won't be any actors or actresses. Our characters are real, and they're all linked to one another; always by sex, sometimes by love, sometimes by something in between. They'll tell us about their inner emotional experiences of desire and connection and hopefully, this time too, our Round of Dance will go Full circle.

A search for identity is at the core of this third episode and how identity plays an important role within relationships.

Presented by Julien Manuguerra
Produced by Kate Bissell

WED 21:00 The Senses (m000qmx6)
Hearing

From a whisper to the roar of thunder, every sound creates vibrations in our ears which the brain decodes, to tell us what we're hearing. But, as neurologist, Dr Guy Leschziner explains, when disruptions occur along the way, extraordinary things can happen, changing the way we perceive the world.

We meet Mark, whose hearing problems start in his forties. He can't hear his friends in a noisy pub, but more disturbingly, the sound of every bodily function is amplified in his head. He even hears the squelch of his eyeballs moving. After years of misery, he's diagnosed with superior canal dehiscence syndrome, caused by a tiny hole in his inner ear. Illustrating how even the smallest defect can cause big problems.

Kelly is in her twenties when she gets spinning attacks that send her falling to the floor. The sensation, like being on a child's roundabout, lasts for hours. With every attack, she loses hearing. She's told it's Meniere's disease, an inner ear disorder that affects balance - demonstrating its intimate link with our sense of hearing.

Keen bird-watcher Bill recognises his hearing loss when he can no longer pick out the call of the smallest birds. But Bill has another problem: he can hear elaborate musical tunes, when there's nothing playing. These musical hallucinations are created by his brain, to compensate for what his ears can't hear any more.

We rely on our brains and nervous systems to tell us the truth about the world around us – but they can deceive us. These astonishing cases show how tiny changes in our bodies can turn our understanding of the world upside down, leading us to question our own version of reality.

Presenter: Dr Guy Leschziner
Producer: Sally Abrahams

WED 21:30 The Media Show (m000qknm)
[Repeat of broadcast at 16:30 today]

WED 22:00 The World Tonight (m000qkp0)
In depth reporting, intelligent analysis and breaking news from a global perspective

WED 22:45 An Almost Perfect Christmas by Nina Stibbe (m000qku5)
[Repeat of broadcast at 12:04 today]

WED 23:00 Felicity Ward - Appisodes (m000qkp2)
Series 2

Procrastination

The series in which stand up Felicity Ward uses phone apps to help her cope with modern life. Keen to be more productive, Felicity heads to the App Store and buys "If You Don't Task, You Don't Get" (voiced by Sindhu Vee). Will Felicity conquer her procrastination or will the app conquer her?

Written and performed by Felicity Ward.
Script Editor: Gareth Gwynn
Production Co-Ordinator: Caroline Barlow
Producer: Adnan Ahmed

A BBC Studios Production.

WED 23:15 Ken Cheng: Chinese Comedian (m000fq8s)
Series 2

6: Money

Stand-up series exploring British Chinese culture from BBC

New Comedy Award finalist Ken Cheng.

Dave's Joke of the Fringe Winner, Cambridge mathematics dropout and professional poker player Ken Cheng returns with a brand new series in which he'll explore free speech, social status, racism and money...

Producer: Adnan Ahmed

Ken Cheng - Chinese Comedian is a BBC Studios Production.

WED 23:30 Today in Parliament (m000qznz)
News, views and features on today's stories in Parliament

THURSDAY 24 DECEMBER 2020

THU 00:00 Midnight News (m000qkp4)
The latest news and weather forecast from BBC Radio 4.

THU 00:30 A Promised Land by Barack Obama (m000qkp6)
[Repeat of broadcast at 09:45 on Wednesday]

THU 00:48 Shipping Forecast (m000qkp8)
The latest weather reports and forecasts for UK shipping.

THU 01:00 Selection of BBC World Service Programmes (m000qkpb)
BBC Radio 4 joins the BBC World Service.

THU 05:20 Shipping Forecast (m000qkpd)
The latest weather reports and forecasts for UK shipping.

THU 05:30 News Briefing (m000qkpg)
The latest news from BBC Radio 4

THU 05:43 Prayer for the Day (m000qkpj)
A spiritual comment and prayer to begin the day with The Right Reverend John Arnold, Bishop of Salford

Good morning.

The way we would normally celebrate at Christmas stands in stark contrast to the events of that first Christmas. Even in these times of Covid restrictions, we are probably hoping to meet at least some family and friends, exchange presents, feast and enjoy some luxuries. How different for Mary and Joseph. It was in these days that they have travelled from Nazareth to Bethlehem – a journey required because of the need to register in a census imposed by the occupying Roman authorities. Mary is in the final stages of her pregnancy and travelling all those miles on a donkey could not have been comfortable – indeed it was dangerous. They are far from home and far from their wider family.

There was no pre-booking of a place to stay and, when they arrived in Bethlehem, the only shelter offered was a stable. But at least the innkeeper was kind enough to offer that space to them. In human terms there was so little to celebrate. Yes, the baby is born safely but there is no-one there to celebrate or to reassure. No way of telling grandparents that the baby was safe and well. Mary trusts in God's promise – as she has trusted since the angel spoke to her of that promise all those months ago. She lives with a convinced hope that all will be well.

Faced with so many troubles in our world: the Covid pandemic, Climate Change, the plight of refugees and the victims of conflict, we renew that trust that says that, with Your help, Lord, we can create a better world for all our brothers and sisters. We celebrate your coming among us, to help and guide us.

Amen.

THU 05:45 Farming Today (m000qkpl)
24/12/20 - The Community Farm at Christmas

It's been a busy few months for The Community Farm in Somerset's Chew Valley.

The social enterprise has a small team of staff supplemented by volunteers, who grow, harvest, pack and sell organic veg via a box scheme: a business that's grown massively since the pandemic hit.

But the farm also offers a range of educational and well-being workshops for children, adults and vulnerable people, which have this year been limited by coronavirus restrictions.

Now, thanks to a grant, the team is building a new outdoor shelter and fire-pit that will help them continue and expand their community workshops in safe, socially distanced fashion in the New Year - saying that now more than ever, people are recognising the mental health benefits of connecting with nature.

Lucy Taylor visits the farm as they finish up their festive orders; chatting to managing director Kim Brooks about the business and their veg box contribution to local charity schemes, and hearing from Antonia Cross from the homeless support organisation Caring in Bristol.

Lucy also meets some of the regular volunteers, led by Giles Atkinson - and talks to engagement manager Hatty Richards about their plans to get more people out on the farm in 2021.

Presented and produced in Bristol by Lucy Taylor.

THU 05:58 Tweet of the Day (b04mj32d)
Toco Toucan

Tweet of the Day is the voice of birds and our relationship with them, from around the world.

Chris Packham presents the South American toco toucan. Few of us are lucky enough to have seen or heard a Toco Toucan at home in its South American strongholds but its image will be familiar to drinkers of a certain age. Its pied plumage and sky-blue eye-rings are striking enough but it is the toco toucan's huge black-tipped orange bill that makes the bird instantly recognisable. Despite appearances this cumbersome-looking banana-shaped bill is really quite light. Under the colourful plates which cover the bill a matrix of horny fibres and air-pockets combines strength with lightness a formula which has caught the attention of light aircraft manufacturers. The bird's massive bills were prominent in advertisements for a well-known brand of Irish stout beer in the 1930s and 40s. In various poses, often with a pint pot perched precariously on its bill, toucan's, extolled the virtues of beer-drinking.

THU 06:00 Today (m000qjlz)
News and current affairs, including Sports Desk, Weather and Thought for the Day.

THU 09:00 The Reunion (m000qjg4)
Strictly Come Dancing

An all-star cast reunites to relive the early days of one of Saturday night TV's greatest success stories.

Many of those who took part in the very first series of Strictly in May 2004 had reservations about the idea of bringing ballroom dancing back to our TV screens. Dance consultant John Byrnes had to convince the other professional dancers that the programme would be a winner, even though he was not sure himself. Natasha Kaplinsky, who was at the top of her news presenting career, feared she would lose all credibility by agreeing to become one of the celebrity dancers. She finds out from judge Craig Revel Horwood that he thought her first routine was "dull, dull, dull". But Natasha went on to be the first winner and still has her prize glitter ball.

Celebrity dancer and star soprano Lesley Garrett loved taking part so much that she considered switching careers, although her training was so gruelling that she lost two stone. Her partner, Anton Du Beke, reveals how grateful he was to be paired with Lesley and says he may never have continued if the first series had not been such fun.

Executive producer Karen Smith knew the show would be a winner with Bruce Forsyth at the helm but reveals why a rhinestone-studded glove was needed to help with his cues.

It took a few weeks for the show to find its feet with the audience but, before long, viewers were spellbound by the transformations in the celebrities and the sheer fun on the dance floor. The withering remarks of the judging panel made it appointment viewing in millions of living rooms and a long awaited success story in the fight for Saturday night ratings.

Presenter: Kirsty Wark
Producer: Karen Pirie
Series Producer: David Prest
A Whistledown production for BBC Radio 4

THU 09:45 A Promised Land by Barack Obama (m000qjm2)
Ep 9 - In the Barrel

Barack Obama continues reading from the first volume of his presidential memoirs A Promised Land, which offers a unique and deeply personal account of his first term at the White House.

In today's episode, Obama is approaching the mid-term elections and must confront the fact that his popularity is draining away and the limitations of his presidential power are becoming all too apparent. The polls show that he has not transformed peoples' lives in the way voters had hoped and now he must pay the price. He's back on the campaign trail until Colonel Gaddafi orders his security forces to fire into a crowd of civilians. As the situation escalates Obama must make a very difficult decision, but a visit to see the statue of Christ the Redeemer in Rio de Janeiro with Michelle and the girls reassures him that all is not lost.

Elected in 2008, Obama became the 44th president of the United States and the first African American to sit in the Oval Office. This book documents the unrelenting demands of high office, and reveals intriguing glimpses of family life at one of the world's most famous addresses.

Abridged by Katrin Williams.
Produced by Julian Wilkinson; the editor is Di Speirs.

THU 10:00 Woman's Hour (m000qjm4)

The programme that offers a female perspective on the world

THU 10:45 The Mystery of Edwin Drood (m000qjm6) Part 4

By Charles Dickens

Edwin and Rosa come to a decision which will change their lives, while Neville Landless confides in his sister that he has fallen in love. And Edwin meets a mysterious stranger who appears to be on the trail of John Jasper.

Kate Dickens... Pippa Nixon
John Jasper... Joel McCormack
Edwin Drood... Iwan Davies
Rosa Bud... Isabella Inghald
Reverend Crisparkle... Damian Lynch
Neville Landless... Maanuv Thiara
Helena Landless... Halem Hussain
Princess Puffer... Rachel Atkins

Adapted by Mike Walker
Directed by Jeremy Mortimer
A BBC Cymru Wales Production

THU 11:00 Crossing Continents (m000qjm8)

The Mapuche - Fighting for their right to heal

The Mapuche are Chile's largest indigenous group – a population of more than 2 million people. And, they are fighting for their right to heal. They want Chileans to value their unique approach to healthcare and give them control of land and their own destiny. But, it's a tough sell when there's so much distrust and violence between the two communities. Jane Chambers travels to their homeland in the Araucania region in the south of Chile, where she's given rare access to traditional healers and political leaders.

Presenter / producer: Jane Chambers
Producer in London: Linda Pressly
Editor: Bridget Harney

(Image: Machi Juana at her home by her sacred altar. Credit: Jane Chambers/BBC)

THU 11:30 My Favourite Things (m000qjmb)

Andrew McGibbon explores how the song My Favourite Things from Rodgers and Hammerstein's The Sound of Music gained greater popularity through the intervention of jazz artist and pioneer John Coltrane.

Coltrane's version elevated the song to a stand alone masterpiece, contributing to the evolution of the jazz genre and bringing a new audience to the saxophonist's unique, progressive and electrifying sound.

Together with Chick Corea's bass player, John Patitucci, BBC Jazz Musician of the year, Xhosa Cole, Music Academic Lewis Porter, British jazz saxophonist Iain Ballamy and fellow musicians, Andrew examines how My Favourite Things was made into a hit by John Coltrane. The song was known to Broadway audiences from the late '50s but Coltrane's 1961 recording sold millions and introduced both the song and his soaring and ineffable interpretation of it to wider audiences, long before the musical had become a household name.

The song represents a significant milestone in the evolution of John Coltrane's musical legacy, from where he would continue to be inspired to greater heights of improvisation in his restless search for the presence of love found through the pursuit of musical perfection. Later in the '60s, fans would find it hard to keep up with his astonishing experimentation during live performances of My Favourite Things as he pushed the

boundaries of the saxophone with his relentless curiosity.

Written and Presented by Andrew McGibbon
Produced by Nick Romero

A Curtains For Radio production for BBC Radio 4

THU 12:00 News Summary (m000qjmd)

The latest national and international news from BBC Radio 4.

THU 12:04 An Almost Perfect Christmas by Nina Stibbe (m000qjmj)

Episode Four: Swim to Santa

Perennially dry turkeys, Christmas pudding fires, wonky Christmas trees and unreliable Santas - An Almost Perfect Christmas is a set of hilarious (and highly relatable) short stories and personal reflections on the joys and insanity of Christmas from the author of Love, Nina.

"The true heir to Sue Townsend" - Caitlin Moran
"Nina Stibbe is a national treasure" - Jon Ronson

Nina Stibbe was born in Leicester. She is the author of two works of non-fiction - Love, Nina and An Almost Perfect Christmas - and three novels: Man at the Helm, Paradise Lodge, and Reasons to be Cheerful, which won the Bollinger Everyman Wodehouse Prize for Comic Fiction 2019.

Abridged by Sara Davies
Read by Sally Phillips
Produced by Mair Bosworth for BBC Audio in Bristol

THU 12:18 You and Yours (m000qjmn)

News and discussion of consumer affairs

THU 12:57 Weather (m000qjms)

The latest weather forecast

THU 13:00 World at One (m000qjmx)

Analysis of news and current affairs, presented by Sarah Montague.

THU 13:45 Why Why Why? (m000qjn1)

Why worry?

Comedian Phill Jupitus searches for the answers to questions posed by songs. A song from the 1985 multi-million selling CD Brothers in Arms by Dire Straits provokes a discussion about the pros and cons of worrying and what to do when worry gets out of control.

Phill talks with Dr Olivia Remes, a mental health researcher at Cambridge University, and Professor John Crichton, Chair of the Royal College of Psychiatrists in Scotland.

Producer: Rosie Boulton
A Must Try Softer production for BBC Radio 4

THU 14:00 The Archers (m000qjn5)

[Repeat of broadcast at 19:00 on Wednesday]

THU 14:15 Drama (m0001p6w)

The Moon That Night

On Christmas Eve, delayed by the seasonal diaspora traffic out of London, a family of four arrives just in time for the Christingle service at the 14th century Anglican church beside their country cottage - a second home, where they plan to spend Christmas.

It's a cold night, but luckily the villager who is the key-holder, keeping an eye on the cottage on the 300 plus days they don't use it, will have turned up the Aga and lit the wood-burning stove.

Reaching the church as the service begins, they sing carols, including the one about King Wenceslas who, when "brightly shone the moon that night", gave hospitality to a poor man he saw in the snow. The Vicar takes that hymn as the gift for her homily, stressing the importance in these bleak and austere times of helping the poor.

After congratulating the vicar on her sermon and exchanging seasonal greetings, the family get to the cottage, surprised that the lights have been left on. The door is also, oddly, unlocked and, inside, they find that the key-holder, a single mother, and her child have moved in after being unable to pay the rent on their flat.

"You have two houses. We don't have one now. So..."

The family faces a clash between their Christmas plans and their liberal / Christian principles, with generational tension between the parents and children over the obligations of charity and equity. Are they prepared to share their home and hospitality?

Cast
ANTHONY – Tim McInnerny
EMILY - Juliet Aubrey
RUBY - Macy Nyman
RUFUS* - Tom Glenister
REV JULIE - Amaka Okafor
TESS - Jeany Spark

Written by Mark Lawson

Directed by Eoin O'Callaghan

A Big Fish Radio production for BBC Radio 4

THU 15:00 A Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols (m000qjn9) Christmas 2020

A live broadcast from the Chapel of King's College, Cambridge.

Once in royal David's city (Henry John Gauntlett, Sir David Willcocks, Arthur Henry Mann, Sir Stephen Cleobury)
Bidding Prayer read by the Dean

Adam lay ybounden (Boris Ord)
First lesson: Genesis 3: vv 8-15, 17-19 read by a Chorister

The Truth from Above (Ralph Vaughan Williams/ arr. Christopher Robinson)

Second lesson: Genesis 22: vv 15-19 read by a Choral Scholar
How shall I fitly meet thee? (J.S. Bach)

A tender shoot (Otto Goldschmidt)

Third lesson: Isaiah 9: vv 2, 6-7 read by the Chaplain
In the bleak midwinter (Harold Darke)

Of the Father's heart begotten (arr. Sir David Willcocks)
Fourth lesson: Isaiah 11: 1-4a, 6-9 read by a Fellow

The holly and the ivy (arr. Witold Lutoslawski)
A maiden most gentle (Andrew Carter)

Fifth lesson: Luke 1: vv 26-35, 38 read by a member of College staff

In dulci jubilo (Robert L. de Pearsall, arr. Daniel Hyde)
The angel Gabriel (Philip Moore)

Sixth lesson: Luke 2: vv 1-7 read by a representative of the City of Cambridge

Sussex Carol (arr. Ralph Vaughan Williams)
Away in a manger (arr. David Hill)

Seventh lesson: Luke 2: vv 8-17 read by the Director of Music
While shepherds watched (arr. Nicholas Marston)

The shepherds' cradle song (Charles Macpherson)
Eighth lesson: Matthew 2: vv 1-12 read by the Vice-Provost

As I sat on a sunny bank (Elizabeth Poston)
Ninth lesson: John 1: vv 1-14 read by the Provost

O come all ye faithful (arr. Daniel Hyde, Christopher Robinson, David Hill)

Blessing
Still, still, still (arr. Bob Chilcott)

Hark! The herald angels sing (arr. Sir Philip Ledger)
In dulci jubilo BWV 729 (J.S. Bach)

Daniel Hyde, Director of Music
Matthew Martin, Organist
Rev. Dr. Stephen Cherry, Dean

For millions listening on radio and online around the world, A Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols, live from the candlelit Chapel of King's College, Cambridge, marks the beginning of Christmas. It is based around nine Bible readings which tell the story of the loving purposes of God. They are interspersed with carols old and new, sung by the world-famous chapel choir. In a normal year the choir would also lead the congregation in traditional Christmas hymns, but this Christmas Eve there will be no congregation present. With Covid restrictions and the need for social distancing within the choir, a number of new arrangements have been made which capitalise on the rare opportunity to hear these ever popular hymns in versions for choir only.

As is so often the case, this year's service marks the musical contribution (through their arrangements and descants) of several former Directors of Music, including Sir David Willcocks, Sir Philip Ledger and Sir Stephen Cleobury, as well as the current Director, Daniel Hyde.

Significant twentieth century composer Elizabeth Poston features in the service, as well as arrangements by Witold Lutoslawski and former chorister Bob Chilcott.

Producer: Philip Billson

THU 16:35 BBC Inside Science (m000qjnc)

Dr Adam Rutherford and guests illuminate the mysteries and challenge the controversies behind the science that's changing

our world

THU 17:00 PM (m000qjnf)

Afternoon news and current affairs programme, reporting on breaking stories and summing up the day's headlines

THU 18:00 Six O'Clock News (m000qjnh)

The latest national and international news from BBC Radio 4.

THU 18:15 Excuse Me, Are You John Shuttleworth? (m000qjnk)
Episode 1

Radio 4 fans need no introduction to singer/organist John Shuttleworth, who has been a firm favourite on the station for some years now. But say the name Graham Fellows and many listeners won't know who you're talking about – including John Shuttleworth himself!

Graham Fellows is an actor, musician and character comedian who has been in showbusiness for 40 years and, after hiding behind the masks of made-up people, it's time he revealed himself.

This two-part series is an honest account of Graham's life to date - sometimes hilarious, sometimes moving and often disarmingly honest - which will give a real sense of the man behind the mask. Each show will be punctuated with witty and moving songs performed on pedal harmonium and Graham will share which songs he kept for himself and which he gave to his characters, and why.

There will, on occasion, be interjections from some of Graham's characters, particularly John Shuttleworth, as these lives are so intertwined. In fact, John is such a well-developed character that he can interject when Graham least expects it!

Part One finds Graham greeting John on Christmas Eve before he begins to share his story, although John doesn't know who he is or why he's there and assumes he's a carol singer. But Graham wants to take us back to 1977 when he first started Drama school and came up with a riff that led him to his first character – Jilted John.

From here we follow Graham's life as a jobbing actor in Coronation street, a theatrical landlord to Hollywood star Mark Rylance, and a role in the film *Morons from Outer Space*.

Then Graham lands a song publishing deal for his first solo album, *Love at the Hacienda*, and to celebrate the deal and amuse the record company he recorded a comedy demo tape, in which he pretended to be a naff singer/songwriter looking himself for a song publishing deal. His publisher loved it and the solo career was put on hold.

The show ends with the song that explains Graham's love for audio recording and, in particular, reel to reel tape recorders which is how he came to start talking to himself and eventually created the world of John Shuttleworth, his family and friends.

A Chic Ken production for BBC Radio 4

THU 18:30 The Missing Hancock's (m0001ksd)
Department Store Santa

The Missing Hancock's recreates those episodes of the classic Hancock's Half Hour that have been wiped or lost from the archive.

The first modern sitcom, Hancock's Half Hour made stars of Tony Hancock, Sid James and Kenneth Williams, and launched Ray Galton and Alan Simpson as one of the most successful comedy-writing partnerships in history. But 20 episodes of the show were missing from the BBC archives. Now, after three highly successful series, another batch of those episodes have been lovingly re-recorded in front of a live audience at the BBC Radio Theatre.

Tonight's episode: Hancock and Kerr are forced to stop claiming unemployment benefits by the Ministry Of Labour, so the Lad Himself takes on a job as Santa in Sid's department store.

Written by Ray Galton and Alan Simpson, and with the classic score re-recorded by the BBC Concert Orchestra, the show stars Kevin McNally, Kevin Eldon, Simon Greenall, Robin Sebastian and Margaret Cabourn-Smith. The Department Store Santa was first broadcast on the 14th December, 1954.

Produced by Neil Pearson & Paul Sheehan.

Written by Ray Galton & Alan Simpson

Music recorded by the BBC Concert Orchestra, conducted by Levon Parikian.

A BBC Studios Production.

THU 19:00 The Archers (m000qjds)

Writers, Naylah Ahmed & Tim Stimpson
Director, Marina Calderone
Editor, Jeremy Howe

David Archer Timothy Bentinck
Ruth Archer Felicity Finch
Clarrie Grundy Heather Bell
Eddie Grundy Trevor Harrison
Tracy Horrobin Susie Riddell
Jazzer McCreary Ryan Kelly
Kirsty Miller Annabelle Dowler
Philip Moss Andy Hockley
Gavin Moss Gareth Pierce
Freddie Pargetter Toby Laurence
Lily Pargetter Katie Redford
Oliver Sterling Michael Cochrane
Roy Tucker Ian Pepprell
Vince Casey Tony Turner
Tanners Jane Slavin

THU 19:15 Front Row (m000qjnm)

Live magazine programme on the worlds of arts, literature, film, media and music

THU 19:45 The Mystery of Edwin Drood (m000qjm6)
[Repeat of broadcast at 10:45 today]

THU 20:00 The Film Programme (m000qjnp)
Christopher Nolan & Tom Shone

With Antonia Quirk

Director Christopher Nolan and author Tom Shone discuss Tom's book *The Nolan Variations*, and the influence of artists Escher and Francis Bacon on movies like *Inception* and *The Dark Knight Rises*. And Nolan reveals why he has a favourite glacier.

Photograph: Oliver Nolan

THU 20:30 Iceland's Dark Lullabies (b09jcnp)
Dreaming of a Dark Christmas, in Iceland

At the darkest time of the year in Iceland scary creatures come out to play. Storyteller Andri Snaer Magnason used to be terrified by his grandmother's Christmas tales of Gryla the 900 year old child eating hag and her thirteen troll sons - the Yule Lads - who would come down from the mountains looking for naughty children in the warmth of their homes. These dark lullabies partly hark back to a pre-Christian Christmas when people worshipped the Norse gods.

As Iceland opens up to global influences after centuries of isolation Andri travels from farmstead to lava field and reflects on these traditions: whether the elves still crash your house to throw a Christmas party or the cows still talk on New Year's Eve; and what happens when you have to spend Christmas alone, locked inside Ikea?

Featuring the Graduale Nobile Choir conducted by Ámi Heiðar Karlsson

Partially recorded in Binaural Stereo. Listen on headphones for the best effect.

Additional sound design by Phil Channell

Producer Neil McCarthy

THU 21:00 Something Understood (m000qjqc)
Hope in an Age of Adversity

A special Christmas edition of Something Understood.

Towards the close of a difficult year, in which comfort has been in short supply for many, hope is a precious commodity. Unable to get into BBC studios in India because of Covid restrictions, Mark Tully returns to present this hour-long programme from his home in Delhi.

In this unique blend of music, interview and readings, he examines what strength can be taken from adversity, what comfort - both spiritual and psychological - can be used to soothe it, and how poets, philosophers, artists and thinkers have found the strength to create joy and light in times of darkness, both now and in the past.

Expect to hear the work of Wendy Cope, Denise Levertov and Albert Camus with music from Sam Cooke, Michael Praetorius and Aretha Franklin, and conversation with Ameeta Mehra.

race horse breeder and co-founder of the Gnostic Centre, just outside Delhi.

The readers are Polly Frame and Matt Addis.

Presenter: Mark Tully
Producer: Frank Stirling
A 7digital production for BBC Radio 4

THU 22:00 The World Tonight (m000qjnr)

In depth reporting, intelligent analysis and breaking news from a global perspective

THU 22:45 An Almost Perfect Christmas by Nina Stibbe (m000qjmj)
[Repeat of broadcast at 12:04 today]

THU 23:00 Once in Royal David's City (m0001r53)
Every Christmas Eve at two minutes past three, a choirboy steps up to a microphone and sings the first verse of *Once in Royal David's City*. For many people this iconic moment signals the start of their Christmas, as they wrap their final presents or rustle up some mince pies whilst listening to the Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols from Kings College Cambridge. The tradition of opening the service with a lone treble voice is well known. What is not so well known is the fact that the Musical Director chooses this soloist just before the transmission begins giving a twelve- or thirteen-year-old boy just minutes to compose himself before singing the solo live to an audience of millions across the globe.

This programme takes a look at the singing of this iconic solo as a number of former soloists talk about their experience. They include: Rupert Peacock (who is studying for his A levels), Rodney Williams (who sang the solo in 1954 and went on to sing in the Westminster Abbey choir for the funerals of Mountbatten and Princess Diana), Jon Wimpeney (now studying Computer Science) and composer Bob Chilcott (who sang the solo three times in the mid-1960s). In addition, we hear from 100-year-old David Briggs, who sang in the first broadcast Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols in 1928 and later became headmaster of the choir school.

Other contributors: the three Johnston brothers (only one of whom actually sang the *Once in Royal David's City* solo), Jill Etheridge (House Master for the choristers at King's College School and the mother of a former soloist) and retiring Musical Director Stephen Cleobury.

Producer: Helen Lee

THU 23:30 Midnight Mass (m000qjnt)

The Mass of the Nativity of the Lord, live from Manchester Cathedral. Carols and anthems include the seasonal favourite by Harold Darke - 'In the Bleak Midwinter' and the mass is sung to Mozart's elegant *Missa Brevis* in F K192. Celebrant - Rogers Govender, Dean; Preacher - Dr David Walker, Bishop of Manchester; Organist & Master of the Choristers - Christopher Stokes; Sub-Organist - Geoffrey Woollatt; Producer - Ruth Thomson.

FRIDAY 25 DECEMBER 2020

FRI 00:48 Shipping Forecast (m000qjnw)

The latest weather reports and forecasts for UK shipping.

FRI 01:00 Selection of BBC World Service Programmes (m000qjny)
BBC Radio 4 joins the BBC World Service.

FRI 05:20 Shipping Forecast (m000qjpo)

The latest weather reports and forecasts for UK shipping.

FRI 05:30 News Briefing (m000qjpp)

The latest news from BBC Radio 4

FRI 05:43 Prayer for the Day (m000qjpp)

A spiritual comment and prayer to begin the day with The Right Reverend John Arnold, Bishop of Salford

Good morning.

It's Christmas Day. We tend to have a rather frantic build up to Christmas, don't we? There are usually the office parties, the carol concerts, and the school Nativity plays. All that shopping and decorating. They all happen in the days approaching the Feast, although it is very unlikely that we have experienced any of those sorts of gatherings in these days. Then we actually get to the day, today, with all the presents and Christmas meal with

all the trimmings and then, suddenly, Christmas seems over and finished. But we need to remind ourselves of the enduring meaning of Christmas. For Christians we are celebrating the birth of Jesus, the beginning of His life among us. He is born into our world to bring us hope and to guide us by his mission and teaching. He said to us "I am the Way, the Truth and the Life". He remains present with us to show us the way.

At Christmas we are renewing that sense of the presence of Christ among us and our hope in the future. Nothing is finishing today – it is just getting started. I am speaking to you early on Christmas morning and I hope that the day ahead promises some celebrations for you – even if it has to be without all the family gatherings and usual freedom to celebrate but we can pray that this year our Christmas is a time of renewed hope.

Lord Jesus, we celebrate your coming among us. In these coming days, when decorations are packed away and we look to a new calendar year, may we remind ourselves that you are walking with us – every step of the way.

Amen.

FRI 05:45 Farming Today (m000qjp6)

25/12/20 Swapping an urban life for a future in rural farming

We meet the city dwellers who have gone back to the land and bought a small holding or farm. What was the driving factor that made them want to move into agriculture? What were their expectations, how has reality worked out and what have been the toughest lessons learned? And how do they react to accusations of merely being "hobby farmers"?

We hear the story of two very different families.

Former teachers Jon and Rosie are a couple with a very young family who had little hard cash and had to borrow from family and friends. They managed to secure 20 acres in Hertfordshire.

Meanwhile, Tim and Juliet sold their house in Fulham and were able to buy outright 200 acres in Oxfordshire.

Produced and presented by Howard Shannon.

FRI 05:58 Tweet of the Day (b040ly5)

Christmas Shearwater

Tweet of the Day is the voice of birds and our relationship with them, from around the world.

On Christmas Day, Sir David Attenborough presents the Christmas shearwater. 2000km south of Hawaii the highly marine Christmas shearwater is at home over the Central Pacific seas, tirelessly riding the air-currents, skimming wave-crests and hugging the contours of the sea looking for food. They rarely come to land as adults, but when they do, it is to return to their place of birth on remote oceanic islands to breed. Here they form loose colonies, laying a single white egg which is incubated for around 50 days. Inhabiting these far flung inaccessible islands means little is known about their biology, but that remoteness gives them protection from land based predators.

FRI 06:00 Something Understood (m000jqc)

[Repeat of broadcast at 21:00 on Thursday]

FRI 07:00 With Great Pleasure (m000qjcs)

With Great Pleasure at Christmas

Expect snow on the hills of Dorsetshire and a hot toddy in the Bull in this festive celebration marking seventy years of The Archers. Just as Ambridge hosts its own Christmas show, 'With Great Pleasure' brings you readings, music and anecdotes from the cast, one for each decade of existence of Radio 4's most popular drama.

Charles Collingwood (Brian Aldridge) kicks off with a comic poem on the hazards of being an actor on a long-running show. Specially written for Charles and his wife Judy (Shula) by their old friend Sir Richard Stilgoe, it asks: will this be the episode in which my character meets a surprising end in order to bump up the ratings?

The nations' beloved Gran and ace lemon-drizzle baker Jill Archer, or Patricia Greene in real life, reads from Stella Gibbons' Cold Comfort Farm. She is followed by Ben Norris, who plays grandson Ben. He reveals that Paddy is much more mischievous than Jill and says he has found particular joy in spending time with his on-air Gran after the loss of his own.

Katie Redford (Lily Partridge) remembers inviting all the neighbours round to see her Spice Girls' show as a child, without warning her mum, who was surprised when they all turned up. Trevor Harrison (Eddie Grundy) remembers his much-loved radio dad, Joe, played by Edward Kelsey, and

admits there's solidarity among the 'Grundy' actors and a tiny bit of rivalry with those who play Archers or Aldridges.

Ryan Kelly (Jazzer) sings an acapella version of Auld Lang Syne by Robert Burns that'll make the hairs on the back of your neck stand up and Susie Riddell (Tracy Horrobin) admits she wishes she was as fearless as the character she plays.

Festive delight; hilarious, revealing and moving stories from behind the scenes in Ambridge.

FRI 08:00 Desert Island Discs (m000qhg8)

[Repeat of broadcast at 11:00 on Sunday]

FRI 08:45 Short Works (m000qjcv)

Home

An original short work for BBC Radio 4 by the Irish author Christine Dwyer Hickey. Read by Michelle Fairley.

Christine Dwyer Hickey is an award winning novelist and short story writer. Twice winner of the Listowel Writers' Week short story competition and a winner of the Observer/Penguin short story award, her short stories have appeared in magazines and anthologies world-wide. Her most recent novel The Narrow Land was awarded the prestigious 2020 Walter Scott Prize as well as Novel of the Year at the Dalkey Literary Awards. Her novel Tatty was also selected as 2020 Dublin One City One Book Choice.

Reader Michelle Fairley
Writer Christine Dwyer Hickey
Producer Michael Shannon

A BBC Northern Ireland production.

FRI 09:00 Christmas Service: A Draught in the Stable (m000qjcx)

The Revd Richard Carter and the Revd Catherine Duce lead a socially distanced retelling of the Christmas story starting with a donkey in Hackney City Farm's most draughty stable. As mandated, angels appear at the Annunciation, shepherds "in-the-fields" and Joseph does finally agree to let everybody in, all in agreement with latest Church of England guidance! With St Martin's Voices directed by Gabriella Noble and St Martin's Brass. With organist Ben Giddens. Sermon: The Vicar, the Revd Dr Sam Wells.

Recorded in St Martin-in-the-Fields, Hackney City Farm and on location around Trafalgar Square.

Producer: Andrew Earis.

FRI 09:45 A Promised Land by Barack Obama (m000qjcz)

Ep 10 - The Raid

Barack Obama reads the final episode from his new presidential memoir offering a unique and very personal account of the highs and lows of life in high office and the landmarks of his first term.

In today's episode, Obama meets Donald Trump for the first time, and is compelled to deal with birthrightism - the movement brought about by Trump's questioning of his American citizenship. An early foreshadowing of a 'dark and alternative vision' he thinks, but there's no time to dwell, as his CIA advisors have a lead on Osama bin Laden's hideout. So begins the defining military action of his presidency, with Obama giving a blow by blow account of Operation Neptune's Spear as Navy SEALs raid the terrorist's compound in Pakistan and carry out their orders.

Elected in 2008, Obama became the 44th president of the United States and the first African American to sit in the Oval Office. A Promised Land documents the unrelenting demands on the President of the USA and presents intriguing glimpses of family life with Michelle, Malia and Sasha at one of the world's most famous addresses.

Abridged by Katrin Williams.
Produced by Julian Wilkinson; the editor is Di Speirs.

FRI 10:00 Woman's Hour (m000qjd1)

Christmas Day on Joy

Christmas Day programme about Joy. Jane Garvey is joined by the Rev Kate Bottley, who brings the Christian perspective of joy at Christmas and talks about her personal passion for ice water swimming. Natalie Maddix is the founder and creative director of the House Gospel Choir. She describes the joy of communal singing and shares some of the choir's uplifting music. Breast surgeon and breast cancer survivor Liz O'Riordan tells us the story behind her 'Jar of Joy'. Crime writer Sophie Hannah explains her theory of finding joy - even in the most

adverse of circumstances. Tonia Buxton is a chef and consultant at the Real Greek Restaurants. She gives details of her family's 'dirty' Christmas sandwiches and her family recipes for Greek Liver stuffing. Woman's Hour listener Joy Barnard tells her story of being adopted at Christmas in 1961, and Lynette and Daisy reveal what brings them personal joy.

Presented by Jane Garvey
Producer: Louise Corley

FRI 10:45 The Mystery of Edwin Drood (m000qjd3)

Part 5

By Charles Dickens

It is Christmas Eve in Cloisterham, and Edwin and Neville appear to have resolved their differences with John Jasper. But on Christmas morning the whole town learns that Edwin has disappeared. If a violent crime has been committed they think they know who is to blame.

Kate Dickens ... Pippa Nixon
John Jasper ... Joel McCormack
Edwin Drood ... Iwan Davies
Reverend Crisparkle ... Damian Lynch
Neville Landless ... Maanuv Thiarra
Geoff/JP ... Ian Conningham
Joe ... Wilf Scolding

Adapted by Mike Walker
Directed by Jeremy Mortimer
A BBC Cymru Wales Production

FRI 11:00 You're Dead To Me (p07x13bm)

The Victorian Christmas

Why do we celebrate Christmas with cards, crackers and a tree? Join us as we travel back and explore the weird and wonderful history of the Victorian Christmas.

Just who the Dickens had the idea to bring trees indoors? Can a soft-drinks firm really take credit for Father Christmas's red suit? And why did the Victorians send each other such bizarre Christmas cards?

Greg Jenner is joined in the studio by historian Dr Fern Riddell and comedian Russell Kane.

Produced by Cornelius Mendez
Scripted and researched by Greg Jenner

A Muddy Knees Media production for BBC Radio 4

FRI 11:30 Count Arthur Strong's Radio Show! (m000qjdb)

Poundsqueezers

In the words of Count Arthur, 'Christmas isn't just about charity, it is about baby Judas riding a donkey'. To celebrate in style, Arthur heads to the pound shop for his Christmas gifts.

Count Arthur and his erstwhile protégé Malcolm (Terry Kilkelly) are surrounded by a host of regular characters created by his Radio Repertory Company - Mel Giedroyc, Alastair Kerr and Dave Mounfield. Dave, who played among others the much-loved characters Jerry and Geoffrey, sadly died in March 2020. His final Count Arthur recordings were two Christmas specials recorded in Autumn 2019, the first of which aired on Christmas Day 2019 - the second airs this festive season. This 2020 hybrid return of the ever-popular family friendly sitcom is dedicated to Dave's memory.

The long running series first aired on BBC Radio 4 in 2005 and ran for seven series until the former variety star transferred to BBC TV in his eponymous sitcom in 2013. A TV series that started out on BBC2 and transferred to BBC1, running for three series until 2017. The 52 episodes of Count Arthur Strong's Radio Show! comprise seven series and ten specials since the programme first aired fifteen years ago.

Count Arthur Strong's Radio Show! recently rated in the Radio Times as one of the top twenty radio shows of all time. Other highlights include winning the Sony Radio Award for Best Comedy in 2009 and being voted as the Best Radio Sitcom by the British Comedy Guide in 2016, 2018 and 2019. The TV series also enjoyed wide critical acclaim and was nominated for the BAFTA for Best Sitcom and Best Comedy Writing, as well as getting the nod for three British Comedy Awards. In August 2019, Count Arthur Strong's TV sitcom featured in the top three of the Radio Times Most Missed TV Shows of the 21st Century. Since 2014, Count Arthur has returned to BBC Radio 4 annually with his celebrated Christmas specials.

A 7Digital Komedia production for BBC Radio 4

FRI 12:00 News Summary (m000qjdb)

The latest national and international news from BBC Radio 4.

FRI 12:04 An Almost Perfect Christmas by Nina Stibbe (m000qjdb)
Episode Five: Turkey and Me

Perennially dry turkeys, Christmas pudding fires, wonky Christmas trees and unreliable Santas - An Almost Perfect Christmas is a set of hilarious (and highly relatable) short stories and personal reflections on the joys and insanity of Christmas from the author of Love, Nina.

"The true heir to Sue Townsend" - Caitlin Moran
"Nina Stibbe is a national treasure" - Jon Ronson

Nina Stibbe was born in Leicester. She is the author of two works of non-fiction - Love, Nina and An Almost Perfect Christmas - and three novels: Man at the Helm, Paradise Lodge, and Reasons to be Cheerful, which won the Bollinger Everyman Wodehouse Prize for Comic Fiction 2019.

Abridged by Sara Davies
Read by Sally Phillips
Produced by Mair Bosworth for BBC Audio in Bristol

FRI 12:18 Pick of the Year (m000qjdf)
Pick of the Year 2020

2020! We'll certainly remember it, won't we? But what? Which bits of the year stand out for you? All through 2020, radio has been tuning into how people have coped, how we've struggled and how we've connected: we've put together a powerful and moving programme that captures this. We hear from footballer Ian Wright, we hear about the death of George Floyd, there's a kind of tribute act to Dolly Parton, and Joanna Lumley reads us a story. Join Michael Rosen in conversation with his son Joe as they discuss the radio highlights of an unprecedented year.

Presenters: Michael Rosen & Joe Rosen
Producer: Elizabeth Foster
Production support: Ellen Orchard
Studio Manager: Owain Williams

Photo: Elsie Rosen

FRI 12:57 Weather (m000qjdh)
The latest weather forecast

FRI 13:00 News Summary (m000qn97)
National and international news from BBC Radio 4

FRI 13:15 A History of the World in 100 Objects (m000qpnl)
A History of the World: Object 101

Ten years on from the ground-breaking Radio 4 series, "A History of The World in 100 Objects", former director of the British Museum Neil MacGregor looks back at the impact of the series, on how storytelling in museums has changed over a turbulent decade and asks which object from 2020 would best encapsulate our modern age.

Producer: Paul Kobrak

FRI 13:45 Why Why Why? (m000qjdm)
What's going on?

Comedian Phill Jupitus searches for the answers to questions posed by songs. A 1971 hit for Marvin Gaye provokes a discussion with historian and author Rutger Bregman about what's happening at the moment in our lives and in our world.

Producer: Rosie Boulton
A Must Try Softer production for BBC Radio 4

FRI 14:00 The Archers (m000qjds)
[Repeat of broadcast at 19:00 on Thursday]

FRI 14:15 Drama (m000qjdx)
Christmas by the Lake

Walter is 68 and Mary is 64. He is full of madcap ideas, she resists change. The only thing they have in common is they both hate Christmas.

A story with a twist on the Christmas theme and it's classic Rachel Joyce territory – relationships, loss and ordinary people doing extraordinary things.

Mary Niamh Cusack
Walter Robert Lindsay
Helen Cecilia Appiah

Directed by Tracey Neale

It is in the park that Mary first spots Walter. He's drowning in the Lake and she calls for help. When she returns a few days later, Walter is there and berates her for interfering - all he was trying to do was learn to swim. It's a bad beginning but then their conversation begins ...

Mary is played by Niamh Cusack. Her television work includes Heartbeat, Father Brown and The Virtues. Her film credits include In Love with Alma Cogan. Niamh played Lady Macbeth for the RSC and most recently Lenu in the National Theatre's production of My Brilliant Friend.

Walter is played by award winning actor, Robert Lindsay. His theatre work covers many roles for the RSC and musical theatre too. This includes Me and My Girl in which he played the lead role on both the West End and Broadway stage. His television work includes My Family, Citizen Smith and G.B.H. His most recent film role was playing King John in Maleficent 2.

The award winning novelist Rachel Joyce had her sixth novel published earlier this year - Miss Benson's Beetle. Her first novel - The Unlikely Pilgrimage of Harold Fry - began its life as a radio drama and was called To Be A Pilgrim. It won the Peter Timmiswood Award for Best Radio Drama. Her other novels include Perfect and The Music Shop. The Unlikely Pilgrimage of Harold Fry and The Music Shop are now in development with Netflix.

FRI 15:00 HM The Queen (m000qjfl)
The Queen's Christmas message to the Commonwealth and the nation, followed by the national anthem.

FRI 15:05 News Summary (m000qn99)
National and international news from BBC Radio 4

FRI 15:15 Gardeners' Question Time (m000qjfs)
GQT at Home: Merry Christmas

Kathy Clugston and her team of gardening experts answer your questions. Christine Walkden, James Wong and Bob Flowerdew tackle questions sent in by listeners and the virtual audience.

The panellists suggest vegetables to grow for next year's Christmas dinner, advise on caring for a Peace Lily and put a confusing conifer under the microscope. They also answer questions from some famous fans of the programme.

Away from the questions, Dr Chris Thorogood is talking all things mistletoe, and Advolly Richmond shares the history of the Clematis cirrhosa.

Producer - Daniel Cocker
Assistant Producer - Jemima Rathbone

A Somethin' Else production for BBC Radio 4

FRI 16:00 Drama (m000qjf9)
Star Child

A brand new nativity story. Award-winning dramatist Patrick Barlow's comedy drama tells the time-honoured nativity story in a fresh, compelling and unique way.

A magic star appears in the sky, a lonely village seamstress meets an anxious angel and a kindly donkey, two shepherds go on a dangerous mission, three bickering wise women bring news to a paranoid, psychotic king and a bolshie girl gives birth to a baby.

All feature as Patrick Barlow retells the Christmas story as we've never heard it told before.

Starring Jim Broadbent, Maggie Steed, Sophie Thompson, John Ramm and newcomers Robert Lennon and Nell Barlow.

All the joy and comfort of the Christmas story, with Patrick Barlow's own special twist - funny, original, touching. This is something special for all the family in these uncertain times. Star Child offers love, hope and light in a world of darkness.

Based on an original play by Patrick Barlow, adapted by Patrick Barlow with Clemmie Reynolds.

Cast:
God & Herod – Jim Broadbent
Gabriel, Innkeeper & Shem – John Ramm
Sara, Lilith & Angel – Maggie Steed
Mary & Shabnan – Nell Barlow
Joseph, Steward & Ham – Rob Lennon
Parsley, Sushila & Babbling Brook – Sophie Thompson
Children – Louie, Bonnie, Sonny, Noah & Beatrix Barlow

Director: Patrick Barlow

Producer: Liz Anstee

A CPL production for BBC Radio 4

FRI 17:00 Nature Table (m000qjff)
The Nature Table Christmas Special

In keeping with the show's 'show and tell' format, Sue will be joined by celebrity guests from the worlds of comedy and natural history. Expert guests for the festive special include: naturalist, presenter and writer Chris Packham, botanist, presenter and writer James Wong, wildlife presenter Michaela Strachan. And helping Sue to make sense of the amazing funny facts that the experts present is Tony-nominated comedy actor Stephen Mangan (Billy Elliot, I'm Alan Partridge, Green Wing, Have I Got News For You).

For the Christmas special, our experts will be presenting flora and fauna that all have a festive connection. These include: reindeers, robins, fly agaric mushrooms (that hold the key to why reindeers can fly and Father Christmas wears red and white), turtle doves, Christmas spiders (and their link to the history of Christmas tinsel), holly and partridges.

Nature Table positively celebrates our planet's wild flora and fauna, by making a show that's both informative and funny. The Christmas special will be a cheery sparkly humorous addition to Radio 4's Christmas schedule.

Written by: Catherine Brinkworth, Kat Sadler & Jon Hunter

Produced by: Simon Nicholls

Music by Ben Mirin. Additional sounds were provided by The Macaulay Library at the Cornell Lab of Ornithology.

A BBC Studios Production

FRI 18:00 Six O'Clock News (m000qjfk)
The latest national and international news from BBC Radio 4.

FRI 18:15 Excuse Me, Are You John Shuttleworth? (m000qjfp)
Episode 2

Radio 4 fans need no introduction to singer/organist John Shuttleworth, who has been a firm favourite on the station for some years now. But say the name Graham Fellows and many listeners won't know who you're talking about – including John Shuttleworth himself!

Graham Fellows is an actor, musician and character comedian who has been in showbusiness for 40 years and, after hiding behind the masks of made-up people, it's time he revealed himself.

This two-part series is an honest account of Graham's life to date - sometimes hilarious, sometimes moving and often disarmingly honest - which will give a real sense of the man behind the mask. Each show will be punctuated with witty and moving songs performed on pedal harmonium and Graham will share which songs he kept for himself and which he gave to his characters, and why.

There will, on occasion, be interjections from some of Graham's characters, particularly John Shuttleworth, as these lives are so intertwined. In fact, John is such a well-developed character that he can interject when Graham least expects it!

Part Two finds Graham a bit depressed and ready to quit showbusiness. After some counselling, he decides that what he really wants to do with his life is become a milkman! But after three months with not a single glimpse of a housewife in a nightie, he's offered an acting job in the Theatre. This renews his love of performing and he returns to John Shuttleworth, honing the character so that he's shortlisted for the Perrier awards and has his first series on Radio 4.

Graham soon feels ready to create a new character, and rock musicologist Brian Appleton is born: "I've been dumped upon from a massive height by so many rock stars, even Morrissey ripped me off. I wrote a song called My Turn to be Poorly."

John is ever present, and Graham reveals that such were the demands of Shuttleworth and the sheer quantity of songs the character needed for new tours and radio shows that he had to pass many of his own songs straight over to John, including She Lives in Hope and The Man who Lives on the M62. At which point, Ken Worthington appears and insists that John wrote all his own songs, unaided.

Graham reveals who voices the other characters in the Shuttleworth world before ending the show with a song that captures the truth of a simple event in HIS life – I Had an Egg with my Son.

A Chic Ken production for BBC Radio 4

FRI 18:30 Dead Ringers (m000qj6x)
Christmas Specials 2020

Episode 3

Normally a show of parody and spoof news programmes, this special episode goes behind the scenes to reveal how Michael Gove, Boris Johnson and Kier Starmer are spending Christmas.

Topical satire from Jon Culshaw, Jan Ravens, Lewis McLeod, Debra Stephenson and Duncan Wisbey.

The writing squad for the series: Tom Jamieson and Nev Fountain, Laurence Howarth, Sarah Campbell, Ed Amsden and Tom Coles, James Bugg, Jeffrey Aidoo, Alex Hardy and others.

Producer: Bill Dare. A BBC Studios Production

FRI 19:00 Front Row (m000qjfw)

Australian composer, musician and actor, Tim Minchin

Tim Minchin, the Australian stage performer with unkempt long hair and black mascara eyes, looks back over his career since his early days trying to scrape a living in Perth and Melbourne.

As he releases his first ever solo album Apart Together at the age of 45, he reflects on his early struggle to make a living through music, the success of his stage performances with a full orchestra, the RSC's Matilda the Musical for which he composed the score and wrote the lyrics, getting burned in Hollywood, writing, directing and starring in his TV drama series Upright, and his unsettling return to his homeland after four years in Los Angeles.

Presenter Tom Sutcliffe
Producer Jerome Weatherald

FRI 19:45 The Mystery of Edwin Drood (m000qjd3)

[Repeat of broadcast at 10:45 today]

FRI 20:00 Fortunately... with Fi and Jane (p090x3r3)

Cyprian Santas and Silhouettes, with Dawn French

In this festive edition of Fortunately, Fi Glover and Jane Garvey are joined by special guest Dawn French. The actor, comedian and writer discusses her new book Because of You and her return as The Vicar of Dibley. Dawn also tells Fi and Jane about a very memorable corporate dinner, how a meeting in a sunlit room changed her life and the time she spotted Santa Claus. Before their guest's arrival, Garvey and Glover reflect on the year gone by and go through a 'corking' bunch of listener emails.

Get in touch: fortunately.podcast@bbc.co.uk

FRI 20:50 A Point of View (m000qjg0)

Weekly reflections on topical issues from a range of contributors.

FRI 21:00 The Reunion (m000qjg4)

[Repeat of broadcast at 09:00 on Thursday]

FRI 22:00 Loose Ends (m000qjg8)

Music from Sting & Melody Gardot, Celeste, Jamie Cullum and more

Clive Anderson with a choice of some of the best music performances on Loose Ends this year, including Sting & Melody Gardot, Celeste and Jamie Cullum.

FRI 22:45 An Almost Perfect Christmas by Nina Stibbe (m000qjdb)

[Repeat of broadcast at 12:04 today]

FRI 23:00 Great Lives (m000qjgd)

[Repeat of broadcast at 16:30 on Tuesday]

FRI 23:30 Wireless Nights (m0001qwj)

Series 6

Destiny's Child

Jarvis Cocker hosts a special festive edition, telling stories of a shepherdess and a miracle birth, whilst a wise man looks out for bright lights in the Christmas skies.

On a cold and frosty Christmas night, a baby is set to enter the world in the most inauspicious circumstances, a pair of shepherds keep watch over their flocks and a star gazer scans the heavens for unusual signs.

Producer: Laurence Grissell