

soundcheck

Issue 51 | March 2026 | FREE

Reading's FREE live music guide



ONLY THE POETS



+ live gigs for March

Cover Photo: Dolores Schmidt

YOUR FRIENDS EYES ARE ENTRANCED
THEY KNOW THAT IT'S US

BEAT CONNECTION

BEAT CONNECTION

NEW MUSIC DISCOVERY

HotWax

MOULD
Modern Woman
Puma Theory

SATURDAY 28TH MARCH

SOUTH STREET ARTS CENTRE, READING, RG1 4QU

DOORS 6:00 PM

TICKETS: HEAVYPOP.CO.UK

AGES: 14+ (UNDER 18s WITH AN ADULT)

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HEAVY POP

DORK

Sound-check #51



Zenden Greenpurp
@ Radioactive Lemon, The Butler, 21.02.2026
Photo: Steve Axtell

Well, last month was a bit weird! Not just because it felt like it was about seven weeks long and maybe building some kind of an ark might be a good idea. No. It was also weird because I woke up one Saturday morning to find a half tonne of messages on my phone telling me there was a thing about Sound-check's 50th issue on the BBC News website. Crikey! A perfectly normal radio interview with Dave Gyleat had morphed into some words and pictures and popped up online at the Beeb. Needless to say, my mother was very proud.

The piece went out with a link in it to our new YouTube channel, though, which meant suddenly I was under even more pressure to finish editing the footage from the other weird bit of the month; filming episode one of Sound-checkTV. Alex Marlow did a blinding job filming it, Tape It Shut had written a theme tune which I quickly recorded live on the night, Grace Pounds was wonderful, Kia's hosting was fabulous... It was a right laugh and now, I think we've proved it works, we have to do it again.

In the meantime, there's a whole town full of gigs to get to on the following pages...

See you out there. - RiCH

f /soundcheckreading i /soundcheckrdg y @soundcheckrdg



Alex, Kia and Tape It Shut Photo: Andrew Merritt

ONLY THE POETS

Words and pictures: Dolores Schmidt

Only The Poets in Reading: From Purple Turtle energy to a 3Sixty peak

Reading began in soft focus. Outside the Purple Turtle, fans queued without much urgency – taking photos, catching up, replaying old gigs in conversation while speculating about what the night might bring. The mood hovered somewhere between relaxed and ready. Then the doors opened, and the energy tightened. Quiet anticipation didn't vanish so much as transform into a shared buzz that pulled everyone inside.



Purple Turtle: A rolling band battle, then a familiar spark

Inside, the afternoon moved like a scene already in motion. A rolling band battle set the pace: acts were announced from the signing table one by one, each name met with cheers and the reminder that the crowd's vote mattered. Between sets, people edged closer, swapping quick takes and halfformed predictions, attention fixed on the stage as if something could happen at any second.

Later, Only The Poets stepped up for a short set of their own – and the atmosphere flipped instantly. Familiarity hit first, then volume, then something celebratory. The crowd sang everything back, not as background noise but as a full presence, welcoming the band's new album with the kind of warmth their live shows consistently draw out.

3Sixty: VIP moments, signings, and an immaculate finale

By the time the day reached 3Sixty, the scale alone made it feel like the main event. Outside, the queue stayed calm – photos, recaps of the day so far, excitement building steadily in the gaps between sentences – until the doors finally opened.

Before the show, a VIP session gave fans the chance to put questions directly to the band, followed by two separate signing moments across the evening. Between sharpies, sleeves and quick conversations, it still managed to feel personal – small interactions held steady even as the crowd grew.



Then the show: immaculate. Tight, confident and emotionally charged, it landed like the culmination of everything the promo run had been building towards. Clem's movement brought restless energy across the stage, while Tom anchored the room with a clear, commanding vocal presence. Mid-set came a moment that pushed the room into something louder: the band announced the chosen support acts for their upcoming Brixton Academy show, met with immediate approval and real excitement.

By the end of the night, it didn't feel like 3Sixty was simply the last stop. It felt like the point where the whole day aligned – momentum, music and the people in the room briefly moving at the same speed.

The album at the centre

Across different rooms and formats, the new album remained the anchor point. When asked to choose a favourite lyric, each member picked a line from the record – a small detail, but telling.

No looking back, no easy nostalgia: every choice pointed firmly at the present, reflecting where the band is right now, musically and emotionally.

The chosen lines varied in tone, but together they sketched the same landscape: restlessness, intimacy, late nights and the pull of connection. Taken out of their songs and written down by hand, the lyrics became something quieter – fragments that lingered beyond the volume of the day.

Favourite lyrics (from the new album):

Tom chose *"Red wine, top of the shelf, drinking to be anyone else"* (Emotionally Hungover), while Clem scribbled down *"Midnight creature, got my fingertips on love"* (Bad) – a line officially written as "Midnight fever..." but captured exactly as he penned it. Marcus and Andy both leaned toward God Knows Where You Were, picking variations of *"I haven't had an early night in ages."*

Even without context, the words held their shape – a distilled snapshot of the album's core and the mindset driving this chapter.

What stayed with them

As the day closed, the focus moved away from schedules and signings and toward reflection. Asked what stayed with them most from the UK promo tour, the answers traced the arc of the week.

Clem pointed to the people *"meeting you lot,"* seeing and speaking to fans across each city. Marcus highlighted scale, describing Brixton Academy as both *"the most challenging and most fun thing we've ever done."* For Tom, there was no hesitation: Brixton was *"the best night of my life."*

Andy put it simply in writing: *"Seeing all our amazing fans."*

Different words, same thread – connection, growth and continuity. What lingered wasn't one announcement or one performance, but the sense of momentum carrying forward. In Reading, across venues and volumes, that feeling was unmistakable. It wasn't just another stop on the schedule, but a day where the album, the live show and the crowd briefly moved in sync. ■

Debut album *'And I'd Do It Again'* is out now all over the place or from onlythepoetsstore.com



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gigguide

SUN 1 MAR

PANGBOURNE JAZZ CLUB
**Debby Bracknell +
 The Terry Hutchins
 Quartet**
 £15.65 | 7:30pm
 skiddle.com

CRUMBS, WOODLEY
**Mordecai Smyth
 + Robert Sowden**
 £10.84 | 7:30pm
 ticketsource.co.uk

MON 2 MAR

PURPLE TURTLE
**Turtle Underground
 San Demas + The
 Straights + Villumier**
 Free | 7:30pm | 18+

WED 4 MAR

RISING SUN ARTS CENTRE
Icey Music presents...
 £3 | 7:30pm |
 16+(U18 w/adult)
*The home of urban music in
 RG! Featuring fresh acts every
 Wednesday!*

THU 5 MAR

SOUTH ST, THEATRE
**The Small Strings
 vs The Audience**
 £14.50 | 8pm
 whatsonreading.com

PURPLE TURTLE
**Nothing Rhymes With
 Orange + Radiator +
 Cheap Suits**
 Free | 8pm | 18+

SIP N SPIN
*Open Artists/Sip n Spin
 Under Covers*
**Stewart Campbell
 + Salvador + Gillie
 & The Darlings +
 James Kell**
 Free | 7:30pm

FRI 6 MAR

THE FLOWING SPRING
**Moonshine + Steve
 Morano**
 £10(cash), £12(card/online)
 theflowingspringpub.co.uk

PURPLE TURTLE
DV8
 Free | 8pm | 18+

THE BUTLER
**Otto and the Mutapa
 Calling**
 £10/£20 +bf | 8:30pm | 18+
*Celebrate the arrival of spring
 with Otto And The Mutapa
 Calling for a night of rhythm-
 filled joyous marimba music
 from Zimbabwe, South Africa
 and Botswana!*
 outsavvy.com

SAT 7 MAR

THE BUTLER
Shadow Promotions
**Lipsknot + Mercury's
 Well + Barbed Wire +
 Halloran**
 £13.20 | 6:30pm |
 16+(U18 w/adult)
 wegottickets.com

THE RETREAT
The Sidemen
 Free | 8:30pm

To list your gig here, for free,
 just email all the info to
 copy@sound-check.co.uk.
 Info is correct at time of going
 to press. Websites refer to
 where to get tickets.
 bf = booking fee
 old = on the door
 adv = advance
 tbc = to be confirmed

FACE BAR
**March Of The Mods
 The Highwasters +
 Paddington + The
 Skavengers + The
 Croupiers + Circa79
 + The New Highs**
 Early Bird £12 | 4pm | 18+
 after 9pm
*March of the Mods returns for
 another day raising funds for
 Teenage Cancer Trust.*
 e-tix.co.uk/MOTMreading

THE TURKS
Beware the Moleman
 Free | 8pm

SUN 8 MAR

WATLINGTON HOUSE
Readfolk
North Sea Gas
 £10, £5(U25) | 8pm
 Cash only, on the door.

Email listings info to copy@sound-check.co.uk

ARE YOU LISTENING? FESTIVAL

2026 • READING
 ESTABLISHED 2013



HEAVY OP

FRIDAY 8TH / SATURDAY 9TH MAY

First Twenty Artists Announced

**1-800 GIRLS • ADULT DVD • BLOOD WIZARD
 CHARTREUSE • DAN LE SAC • DAUFØDT • ELLIS-D
 GRACE POUNDS • LADYLIKE • LEMONSUCKR
 MURKAGE DAVE • MY LIBERAL PONY
 NO WORRIES IF NOT • PALE BLUE EYES
 PAN AMSTERDAM • PANIC SHACK • SCALER
 SLAG • THE BOROUGH • WHITELANDS**

25 more artists + Friday artists to be announced!

Venues across Reading
 AYL? HUB @ MARKET PLACE
 THE FACE BAR • MILK
 PURPLE TURTLE
 ST LAURENCE CHURCH
 SUB89

@aylfest



Tickets and info: areyoulistening.org.uk

Reading's independent
 Cocktail bar
 Great drinks, great music, great times
 Est 2012



8 Merchants Place Reading RG1 1DT
 www.milkreading.co.uk

Rising Sun Arts Centre
 30 Silver Street, Reading RG1 2ST
 risingsunartscentre.org

**Sunset Sessions
 open mic night**

Sunday 8 March 7pm - 10pm
*Unplugged and unhinged!
 Everyone welcome! Musicians,
 magicians, drag acts and poets. Rappers
 and singers, songwriters and bands.*

B.Alive Life Drawing
 Every Tuesday 7pm - 9:30pm £9 cash

*Draw from a life model. A variety of short and long
 poses in a relaxed atmosphere, suitable for expert
 and beginner alike.*

The Rising Sun Arts Centre is an award winning, independent arts centre, staffed and run by volunteers.

Turtle
UNDER GROUND
 3 BANDS EVERY MONDAY
 7.30PM FREE ENTRY

STRAIGHT INTO
CLUB RECKLESS
 PUNK, EMO, ROCK, METAL
 10PM TO 3AM, FREE ENTRY



Blackstar
 AMPLIFICATION

THE BERKSHIRE EMO
 SUNDAY 22ND MARCH
 FREE ENTRY // 5PM TO 10PM
 @THEBERKSHIREEMOMPROJECT



Turtle
UNDER GROUND
 EVERY MONDAY 7.30PM TO 10.00PM
 2ND MARCH
SAN DENAS
THE STRAIGHTS
STRUMMER
 STRAIGHT INTO
CLUB RECKLESS
 PUNK, EMO, ROCK, METAL, 10PM TO 3AM
 Blackstar
 FREE ENTRY // 18+ ID REQUIRED

NOTHING RHYMES WITH ORANGE
 with **RADIATOR**
 + **CHEAP**
Thursday 5th March
 8pm FREE ENTRY 18+ ID Required

Turtle
UNDER GROUND
 EVERY MONDAY 7.30PM TO 10.00PM
 9TH MARCH
SKUNK WORST
HONEYGLOW
ZAC BOX
 STRAIGHT INTO
CLUB RECKLESS
 PUNK, EMO, ROCK, METAL, 10PM TO 3AM
 Blackstar
 FREE ENTRY // 18+ ID REQUIRED

Turtle
UNDER GROUND
 EVERY MONDAY 7.30PM TO 10.00PM
 23RD MARCH
THE MONDAY SMILE
THE DIRTY SOCK PUPPETS
THROWN LIKE OWLS
 STRAIGHT INTO
CLUB RECKLESS
 PUNK, EMO, ROCK, METAL, 10PM TO 3AM
 Blackstar
 FREE ENTRY // 18+ ID REQUIRED

THE PINK DIAMOND REVUE
 with
DEZ DARE
Thursday 16th April

THE J:NS
 EUROPE TOUR 2026
 SUNDAY 26 APRIL
 with **SAD CULT** + **mindhigh**
 FREE ENTRY 5PM ALL AGES
 18+ MUST BE ACCOMPANIED BY AN ADULT

Turtle
UNDER GROUND
LO RAYS
 16 MARCH 2026
 PURPLE TURTLE READING
WIRE
THE GUILTY & THE DEAD

mood bored
 a bittersweet, cheeky, noisy mix of post-punk, dreampop, and grunge.
 with **DEEP MINDS**
WEDS 18 March
 8pm FREE ENTRY 18+

THE DEAD CAN WALK
TWO TON SHOES
STORM WYCH
THURSDAY 19TH MARCH
 8PM FREE ENTRY
 18+ ID REQUIRED

AS8502
999
 NINE NINE NINE

THURSDAY 14TH MAY
 FREE ENTRY 18+ ID REQUIRED
 WITH **RAGE DC**

The Purple Turtle is supported using public funding by the National Lottery through Arts Council England

PUNK PILE UP
SUNDAY 24th MAY
SPIZZENERGI
the DECKCHAIRS
VANITY ROSE
BRIDGE
BRICCHE
 2PM to 10PM FREE ENTRY

OPEN 7 DAYS A WEEK FROM MIDDAY - PURPLETURTLEBAR.COM

BAR // VENUE // NIGHTCLUB - PURPLETURTLEBAR.COM



The Bluepers
Purple Turtle, 05.02.2026
Photo: Andrew Merritt

SUN 8 MAR

THE BUTLER
Shadow Promotions
Drunktank + Tape
It Shut + Reason
To Leave + Launch
Control
£8.30 | 2pm | 16+
wegottickets.com

MON 9 MAR

FACE BAR
Heavy Pop
Bruise Control +
Masquerader
£13.20 | 7:30pm
14+ (U18 w/adult)
heavypop.co.uk

PURPLE TURTLE
Turtle Underground
Skunkworm +
Honeyglow + Zac Box
Free | 7:30pm | 18+

TUE 10 MAR

FACE BAR
Heavy Pop
Billy & Camille from
The Subways + tbc
£16.50 | 7:30pm
14+ (U18s w/adult)
Loud and Unplugged
heavypop.co.uk

WED 11 MAR

THE FLOWING SPRING
Electric Soul
Company
£12 cash/ £14.50 online *adv*
£18 *otd* | 6pm
theflowingspringpub.co.uk

WED 11 MAR

RISING SUN ARTS CENTRE
Icey Music presents...
£3 | 7:30pm |
16+ (U18 w/adult)

FRI 13 MAR

THE GOOD COMPANIONS
The Full Flavour Band
Free | 9pm

SAT 14 MAR

THE BUTLER
Hoopy Frood
+ Clip On Dreads
£8.80 | 7pm | 18+
wegottickets.com

ST MARY'S, PURLEY
Village Concerts
Annie Dressner
£16.50, £11 U17 7pm | 14+
wegottickets.com

THE LYNDHURST
Bareword
Free | 8pm

MON 16 MAR

PURPLE TURTLE
Lo Rays + WREX
Free | 8pm | 18+

WED 18 MAR

PURPLE TURTLE
Mood Bored +
The Dazed Minded +
Shallowdaze
Free | 8pm | 18+

THU 19 MAR

PURPLE TURTLE
The Dead Can wait
+ Two Ton Shoes
+ StormWytch
Resurrection
Free | 8pm | 18+

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100 badges £38

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Saturday 7th March
THE VAULT 10pm £Free

Friday 13th March
1BLOCK 10pm - 3am £8.50
SECRET GUEST, Pat2Cool, Samasama + Friends

Sunday 15th March
FIDDLE AND FENDER 8pm Free

Saturday 28th March
KILLAH KUTZ 8pm Free
Caribbean night

Mon closed
Tue - Thu 5pm - 2am
Fri - Sat 5pm - 3am
Sunday 5pm - 2am
231 London Rd
Reading RG1 3NY
18+

BAR · CLUB · VENUE
Book your event date now

HEAVY POP

LIVE MUSIC

READING AND OXFORD SHOWS

Bruise Control

Mon 9th Mar Face Bar, Reading

Billy & Camille

(from The Subways)

Tues 10th Mar Face Bar, Reading



Beat Connection

HotWax MOULD
Modern Woman Puma Theory
Sat 28th Mar South St Arts Centre, Reading

Vower

Fri 3rd April Face Bar, Reading



Brown Horse

Sun 12th April The Jericho Tavern, Oxford

Are You Listening? 2026

Fri 8th May - Sat 9th May
Reading Town Centre venues

Heavy Pop are Independent Reading-based live music promoters organising gigs across the South East, as well as Reading's annual Are You Listening? Festival and Down at the Abbey Festival.

For full gig listings and tickets: heavypop.co.uk

Contact: info@heavypop.co.uk

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THU 19 MAR

SPILL BAR
Jazz Night at Spill
Free | 7pm

FRI 20 MAR

THE BISCUIT FACTORY
Please Ban Music / Certain Sound
Surf's Up
Blue Spectre + Horse
Rock + Vinyl DJs
Free | 7:45pm

THE BUTLER
Friday Night Blues
The Mighty Howlers
£17.60 | 8pm | 18+
wegottickets.com

THE OAKFORD
Shadow Flowers +
Kill Committee +
Livestock
Free | 8pm | 18+

SAT 21 MAR

RIISING SUN ARTS CENTRE
Will McCrea Trio
£8adv | 7:30pm |
Exclusive preview of their new
album, 'Calling Dr Jazz'.
eventbrite.com

CASTLE TAP
Bouzouki Bellows
Free | 7:30pm

SUN 22 MAR

THE RETREAT
Low Key Sunday
Free | 3:30pm

MON 23 MAR

PURPLE TURTLE
Turtle Underground
The Monday Smiles
+ Thrown Like Owls
+ The Dirty Sock
Puppets
Free | 8pm | 18+

WED 25 MAR

THE RETREAT
Jazz Singers' Night
Free | 8pm

FRI 27 MAR

RIISING SUN ARTS CENTRE
Future Transmissions
23rd Birthday Party
Mr Fogg + Baby
Maker + Jess Tuthill
£11 | 8pm | All ages
wegottickets.com

THE GOOD COMPANIONS
The Side Project
Free | 9pm

PROGRESS THEATRE
Jazz in Reading
Small Blue
£20, £18conc, £10 U16s
7:30pm
ticketsource.co.uk

SAT 28 MAR

SOUTH STREET - THEATRE
Heavy Pop
Beat Connection
HotWax + MOULD +
Modern Woman +
Puma Theory
£30adv (Early bird) | 6pm
14+ (U16 w/adult)
heavypop.co.uk

THE LYNDHURST
Kiss on the Stairs
Free | 8pm

THE GOOD COMPANIONS
Vision
Free | 9pm

SUN 29 MAR

THE RETREAT
Sunday Jazz
Free | 3:30pm

WATLINGTON HOUSE
Readfolk
Milton Hide
£10 cash otd, £5 U25s

FRI 3 APR

FACE BAR
Heavy Pop
Vover+ tbc
£17.60 | 7:30pm
14+ (U18s w/adult)
heavypop.co.uk

WED 8 APR

FACE BAR
Future Transmissions
Dreaming Spires
+ Jess Tuthill
£13.20 | 8pm
14+ (U16s w/adult)
wegottickets.com

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sound-check

To advertise in Sound-check, email rich@sound-check.co.uk. Prices and ad specs are all at sound-check.co.uk.

We keep it as cheap as we can to just cover the cost of keeping this thing alive but this very much a 'use it or lose it' affair. Buying an ad is, allegedly, really good for you.

Reasonable efforts are made to ensure that all info in Sound-check is correct at time of going to press. If you're worried, though, please check with the relevant venue.

Designers: RiCH Lucas, Mike Parker

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sound-check.co.uk

Any questions, try me: rich@sound-check.co.uk

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FUTURE

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FUTURE TRANSMISSIONS.COM

TRANSMISSIONS

SHOWS AT THE FACEBAR READING 2026

MAR 29TH - DAY RAVE II BILLY NASTY + Nuts'n'Boers DJs

APR 8TH - THE DREAMING SPIRES + JESS TUTHILL

APR 12TH - SOUND OF THE SIRENS

APR 19TH - THE VAPORS + EDDIE ROXY & THE ADJACENT KINGS

AFTERNOON SHOW

In Association With Good Wrecking Tonight

APR 26TH - THE POLECATS

APR 30TH - HOUSE OF ALL + EUROPEAN SUN

MAY 1ST - CLASS OF '79 + THE DECKCHAIRS

MAY 14TH - HELICON + LIVESTOCK

MAY 16TH - INKUBUS SUKKUBUS + 1919 THE GO GO CULT

JUNE 18TH - THE MARCH VIOLETS @ THE BULLINGOON - OXFORD
+ FLOWERS OF SACRIFICE

JUNE 28TH - DAY RAVE III BLU PETER GRENZ
CHOCI BOB TROMBOSIS

JULY 10TH - THE CHORDS UK + THE HURRICANES

AUG 1ST - THE DOLLHEADS + 13 FEVERS
Xtine & The Reckless Hearts

SEPT 17TH - TV SMITH & THE BORED TEEAGERS + FRACTURED

NOV 19TH - ROSALIE CUNNINGHAM + THE ELECTRIC SHAKES

NOV 20TH - KING KURT + SURFIN' LUNGS

NOV 25TH - GUANA BATZ