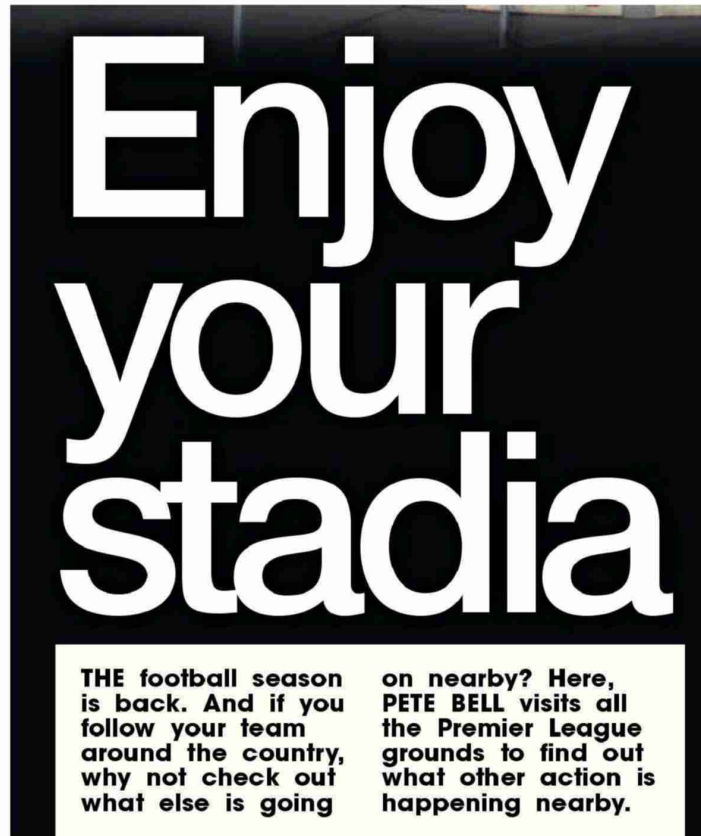


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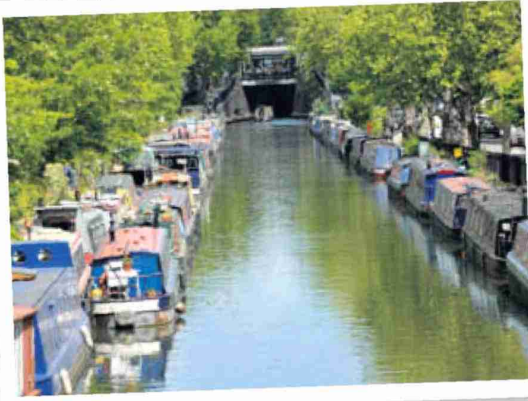


Enjoy your stadia

THE football season is back. And if you follow your team around the country, why not check out what else is going on nearby? Here, PETE BELL visits all the Premier League grounds to find out what other action is happening nearby.



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Arsenal

WHEN you're not at the Emirates Stadium, explore London along the Regent's Canal.

There's a half-mile tunnel taking it under Islington – which you can't walk through – but from the east of it, the towpath takes you via gritty parts of Hackney, along Victoria Park and down to the Thames at Limehouse.

From the west you'll pass through Kings Cross, Camden Lock Market and Regent's Park before Little Venice, where the canal meets the Grand Union and is full of beautiful waterside cafés, pubs and restaurants.

Stay at the [Great Northern Hotel](#), in vibrant Kings Cross. Rooms start from £125 per person, with breakfast. Head to [gnhlondon.com](#) for further details.



Aston Villa

JUST the other side of the mighty M6 is Witton Lakes, a pair of former drinking-water reservoirs – one of which is set aside for remote-controlled boats.

The other is a nature reserve and if you fancy doing a bit of exploring on two wheels, the North Birmingham Cycle Route runs by both.

Head south to Brookvale Park with its own, bigger lake. Or go north to find a lovely bike route, most of it off road and some of it on a canal towpath.

But stop before you get to Spaghetti Junction.

Stay at the [Aston Hotel](#), an old Edwardian pub just four minutes' walk from the Villa Park stadium. Rooms start from £40. Call 0121 328 2841.



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AFC Bournemouth

YOU can take advantage of one of the favourite seaside resorts at the start or end of the season.

Check out the Coastal Activity Park. It covers a seven-mile stretch of sandy coastline with loads of free activities including bouldering and a gym trail. There's also a musical trail with seaside chimes. See coastalactivitypark.co.uk.

Stay at Menzies East Cliff Court from £71 for a double room. See menzieshotels.co.uk or call 01202 554545.



Newcastle

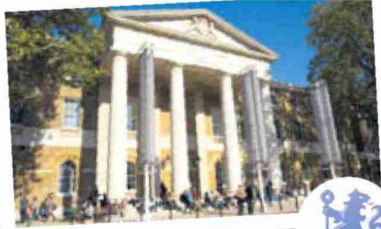
THE Victoria Tunnel was built under the city in the 19th century to transport coal by rail.

In 2008 it was repaired and opened for guided tours. You can now visit but don't go if you are enormous or claustrophobic – the tunnel is 6ft 3in high by seven feet wide. Tours cost £6 for adults and £3 for children. (Brave) under-fives go free. See ouseburntrust.co.uk.

Stay at the Malmaison Newcastle from £84 for a double room. See malmaison.com.



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Chelsea

CHELSEA may have lost its trendy crown to East London, but it still retains a bit of posh charm.

There are plenty of great pubs and restaurants around, but you could combine your football with a bit of culture at the Saatchi Gallery. It's in the fantastic Duke of York's Headquarters on the King's Road. See saatchigallery.com.

Stay at the Sydney House Hotel from £119 for a double room. See sydneyhousechelsea.co.uk or call 020 7376 7711.



Norwich

NORWICH Castle is one of the most solid-looking buildings you could possibly imagine, but it still manages to be beautiful.

Its museum has a huge art collection with work dating back to the 17th century. Entrance is £8.35 for adults, £6.25 for children. See museums.norfolk.gov.uk.

Stay at the Maid's Head Hotel – the oldest in the UK – from £92 for a double room. See maidsheadhotel.co.uk.



Crystal Palace

CRYSTAL Palace Park is a great place to visit even though the original building giving its name is no longer there. It was built for the 1851 Great Exhibition but burned down.

There are beautiful landscaped gardens, a maze, and a collection of life-sized dinosaur sculptures, guaranteed to enthrall any child.

Stay at the Euro Queens Hotel where double rooms start from £49. See euroqueenshotel.com or call 020 8653 6622.



Stoke City

SINCE Stoke City's nickname is the Potters, why not explore the industry it came from?

The Wedgwood Pottery has a visitor centre and a factory tour. You can even learn how to make pots yourself. Admission costs £7.50 for adults and £3.75 for children. See worldofwedgwood.com.

Stay at the Shawgate Farm Guesthouse from £80 for a double room. See shawgatefarm.com or call 01538 266590.



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  <p>Everton</p> <p>IT'S pretty hard to ignore The Beatles when you're in Liverpool, so why not embrace them? Visit The Beatles Story, the museum devoted to the history of the band. There's a replica of the Cavern Club where the Fab Four got their first break and loads of artefacts from their career. It's right in the Albert Dock area, so there are plenty of bars and restaurants. Stay at Hard Days Night hotel from £90 for a double room. See harddaysnighthotel.com or call 0151 668 0482.</p>	  <p>Leicester City</p> <p>HEAD to the King Richard III Visitor Centre which stands on the site of the friary where the king was originally buried more than 500 years ago. The centre tells the story of his life and death, the discovery of his remains and how scientists eventually identified the skeleton. You can also see the reconstruction of his face. Stay at Mercure Leicester The Grand Hotel from £59 for a double room. See mercure.com/Leicester or call 0844 815 9012.</p>
  <p>Manchester City</p> <p>WHAT better place to go before a match than the Rovers Return? Coronation Street the Tour, ends this December, so this is your last chance. Have your picture taken behind the bar on a 50-minute guided tour of the studio, then wander the cobbles and check out the rest of Weatherfield at your leisure. Tickets from £17 for adults. See coronationstreettour.co.uk. Stay at the Crowne Plaza Manchester City Centre from £85 for a double. See ihg.com.</p>	



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Liverpool



WELL, while you're in town, you really should take a Ferry 'Cross the Mersey. And back.

A 50-minute round trip takes in Woodside ferry terminal with the U-Boat Story submarine experience, the Pier Head Ferry Terminal by Albert Dock, the New Brighton Promenade, and Spaceport – the space exhibition at Seacombe Ferry Terminal.

You can get off the boat at any of those points. Tickets cost from £9 for adults and £5.50 for children. Under-fives go free. See merseyferries.co.uk.

Check in at the Hotel Anfield, 350 yards from the stadium. Prices start from £59 for a double room. See hotelanfield.com or call 0845 812 1234.



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  <p>Southampton</p> <p>THE SeaCity museum shows the history of Southampton and its people and how the city has been shaped by migration.</p> <p>Exhibits include a replica of RMS Queen Mary. It also tells the history of the Titanic, which sailed from the city with 500 of its residents as crew. Admission costs £10.50 for adults and £8 for children. See seacitymuseum.co.uk.</p> <p>Stay at the Elizabeth House Hotel from £80 for a double room. See elizabethhousehotel.com.</p>	  <p>West Ham</p> <p>THIS is the last season West Ham will play at Upton Park so why not head over to their new home at Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park?</p> <p>There's plenty to see and do – like taking a trip up the ArcelorMittal Orbit, the UK's tallest sculpture. Tickets cost from £10 for adults and £5 for children. See arcelormittalorbit.com.</p> <p>Stay at West Ham United Quality Hotel, which is in the existing home of the Boleyn Ground from £57 per person. See westhamhotel.co.uk.</p>
  <p>Swansea City</p> <p>SWANSEA is a great city for sport and leisure. It has Wales's only Olympic-sized swimming pool, a great range of restaurants and nightclubs, loads of golf courses nearby and plenty of watersports to try.</p> <p>Go surfing at The Gower Surf School. Supervised surf hire costs from £20. See surfgsd.com or call 07739 536122.</p> <p>Stay at the Dragon Hotel in the city centre from £75 for a double room. See dragon-hotel.co.uk.</p>	  <p>Manchester United</p> <p>AS fans of the neighbouring club never tire of pointing out, Old Trafford is not actually in Manchester, it's in Salford.</p> <p>So while you are there, check out the Lowry Building in Salford Quays. As well as a regularly updated exhibition of work, there are bars, restaurants and loads of other exhibitions and shows to check out.</p> <p>Stay at the Lowry Hotel from £108 for a double room. See thelowryhotel.com.</p>



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West Bromwich Albion

THE National Sea Life Centre has more than 60 displays of freshwater and marine life.

There's a huge ocean tank with a tunnel full of sharks, tropical reef fish and turtles. There's also a giant octopus and a seahorse breeding programme. Entrance is from £12.50 for adults and children. See visitsealife.com/Birmingham.

Stay at the Premier Inn West Bromwich Central from £50 for a double room. See premierinn.com.



Tottenham

THERE'S plenty to do away from the football. The 16th Century Bruce Castle Museum is in one of the country's oldest brick buildings.

It holds the archives of the local borough but is worth a visit for the building alone.

Entrance to the castle is free and it's open Wednesday to Sunday from 1-5pm. For more, see haringey.gov.uk.

Stay at the Travelodge Edmonton from £45. See travelodge.co.uk.



Watford

CASSIOBURY Park is just a short walk from the town centre. The River Gade flows right through the middle of the park and it is also bordered by the Grand Union Canal.

You can buy a day ticket to fish on the canal and the river or just wander around the nature reserve and take it all in.

Stay at the Best Western White House Hotel from £129 for a double room. See bestwestern.co.uk or call 0844 387 6197.



Sunderland

KEEL Square is in the heart of the city centre and was built to celebrate its ship-building heritage. It was only finished this year.

It is crossed by the Keel Line – which has the names of 9,000 ships built here engraved on it.

There are also fountains and artworks in the immediate area and plenty of shops, bars and restaurants close by.

Stay at the Sunderland Marriott Hotel from £79 for a double room. See marriott.co.uk.