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Closing the gender pay gap

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Editor's notes...



Nik Allen, Editor

Hello and welcome to this month's edition of **VISION**Brentwood.

We recently exhibited at the Brentwood Business Showcase, which launched last year at Brentwood School.

It was a fantastic event, with lots of Brentwood-based small, medium and large businesses exhibiting and many people in attendance. For a free event the quality of the speakers was excellent. A lot of time and effort went into arranging it and I hope this will follow on and be a yearly event as it's great to celebrate the town's local business as this is very much the ethos of **VISION** too.

Mayor Will Russell's charity event on November 12 will be raising funds for Mayors Community Trust Fund, which offers grants to small charities and individual cases of need. The Definitive Rat Pack will be performing live at the Brentwood Centre and **VISION** is one of the sponsors.

In local news this month, an animal sanctuary has been victim to a number of crimes, Travelodge has announced plans to open up a new hotel in the area, and the next generation of Essex police officers have raised thousands for charity.

Local news is important to us so if you have something to share, email editorial@visionmag.co.uk

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Let us know your thoughts on this month's edition.

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holly molley!



Photo credit: Gettyimages

she's got...

a fab new figure, a bumper pay rise, and has just released her second book. But don't ask Holly Willoughby how she does it, as she isn't sure herself...

She may have the face and figure of a 1950s pinup, but Holly Willoughby is a feminist in the very best and most modern sense. Having recently secured a rumoured £200,000 pay rise to match the salary of her co-host Phillip Schofield, the beloved *This Morning* presenter is making strides for women everywhere – someone who's keen to speak up, is proud of the way she looks and remains driven for equality in any environment. And while she will not disclose the details of her salary – the redtops were quick enough to do that for her – she made it clear the so-called gender pay gap is unacceptable, and that two equally qualified people should earn the same.

"I think there are so many parts of society today that have equality and where it doesn't exist, the gap is slowly narrowing," she said. "We've come a long way compared to where we were 20, even 10 years ago; but I think there is still a distance to go and women should be encouraged to stand up for themselves and their worth."

Strong words indeed, though the truth is few TV presenters – male or female – match up to Miss Willoughby, nor would feel comfortable arguing their own case for a pay increase by using her as a comparison. With an infectious warm personality, candid wit and stunning looks, the 36-year-old has won over the hearts of daytime TV aficionados, as well as enchanting the evening audience too as a team captain on *Celebrity Juice*.

When free time allows, modelling work has seen her represent a clutch of high street brands; she's also the author of two parenting books, the second of which, *Truly Scrumptious Baby: My Complete Feeding and Weaning Plan for 6 Months and Beyond*, came out in September.

But despite almost constant success, the blonde beauty admits it was never in her plan to be a career woman. "In my mind, I would stay at home, following in my own mother's footsteps," she says. "That, to me, was a life project and I would have been just as happy to do that." The opportunity was there, too, with Harry, eight, Belle, six, and Chester, three, the products of a decade of marriage to television producer Dan Baldwin. "Yet, for as long as I feel my children have my time and my love, I am happy to continue combining the roles, but if ever my work got in the way, I would change things."

Admitting that she feels "the luckiest person alive" to do a job she loves whilst also having time to spend with her children, Willoughby has become a poster girl for working mothers everywhere. And proving that even celeb mums sometimes struggle, the newly-slimmed star admits that her recent body transformation is simply down to having more time for herself now her kids are older.

Regardless, we say looking that good straight after the school run should always be something to boast about.



TA-RA VERA

Liz Dawn and the parting of a soap icon

In an era of wall-to-wall soaps, anyone who stands out from the crowd is probably at the top of their game. But in the case of Liz Dawn – or Vera Duckworth as we knew and loved her – being at the top table of UK entertainment for more than four decades speaks volumes of how a fictional, backstreet character crystallised the everyday lives of so many millions.

Vera Duckworth left our screens back in 2010 – her emotional passing captured brilliantly by the *Coronation Street* team as she gently slipped away in her favourite armchair – but as real life mirrored fiction and we said goodbye to Liz Dawn, the actress, on September 25 of this year, the sense is that Vera is still with us – the curly-haired, feisty, warring, caring, brazen and yet so delicately emotional character who was perfectly loyal to husband Jack and the cobbles of Weatherfield.

The tributes for the actress – who also appeared in *Open All Hours*, *Z-Cars* and *Emmerdale* – have been unrelenting, and in an era of largely diluted drama, you do now wonder how she will be replaced. Perhaps that's a task too far; perhaps we should be telling the next generation, 'don't try to be Vera... try to be half as good as Vera was, and you'll be doing well'.

What the stars said about Liz Dawn

Simon Gregson (Steve McDonald):

"She touched the hearts of everyone she met and gave so much back with her charity work."

Michael Le Vell (Kevin Webster):

"She took us under her wing and was the mother figure who helped guide us through the show"

Beverley Callard (Liz McDonald):

"Liz was a darling of a person and one of the kindest people I have ever met."

Barbara Knox (Rita Tanner):

"She was a joy to work with - you always ended up laughing as she had marvellous comic timing"

Antony Cotton (Sean Tully):

"A light had gone out in Weatherfield a few years ago, but now Manchester too has lost a little of its sparkle."

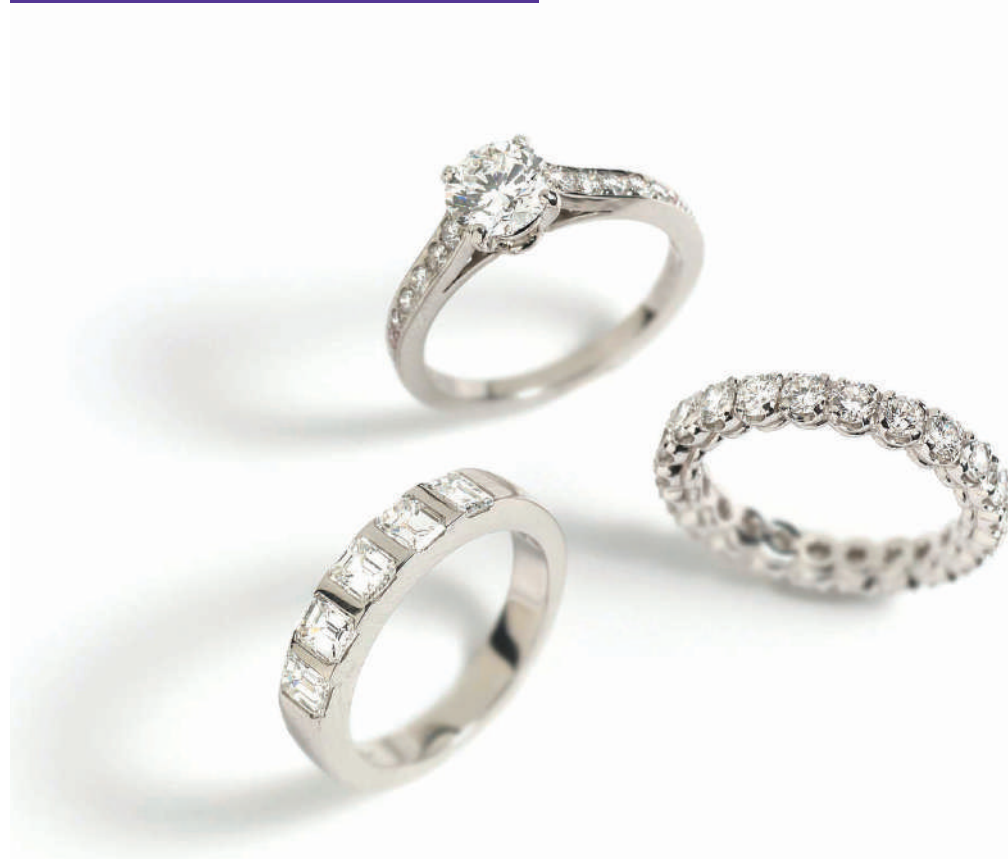
Elizabeth Dawn

November 8, 1939 - September 25, 2017

Photo credit: Gettyimages

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HOME & DIY

CHUNKY KNITTING

THE TREND THAT IS SWEEPING THE DIY WORLD

It's come to that time of year when staying indoors snuggled up in a blanket with a mug of hot chocolate sounds much more appealing than having to go to work in the cold weather. This is especially true if you have a chunky knitted blanket at home. The chunky knit trend has been huge in the DIY world recently and it's a lot easier to do than people may believe.

There are a couple of ways to create gorgeous big knits including using a basic arm knitting technique or giant circular needles. Whichever way you prefer, making chunky projects is the perfect challenge to set yourself this winter.

KNITTED BAG

For when you need to leave the house, why not take a knitted bag? This can also be used to store all your knitting patterns and projects.

SNOOD

Snoods are perfect for keeping warm on cold

winter days. They are also a simple first project for beginner chunky knitters. They are also great to make and give to your friends.

BLANKET

A blanket is the perfect way to keep warm in your home. They can be made in any colour, shape or size to suit you and your room. They can be a great addition adding a splash of colour to a dull day.

CHUNKY PUFF

Put your feet up in the evenings with a handmade puff. All you need to do is create the sphere shape, fill it, secure it and relax.

FINGER-KNITTED WREATH

With the festive season upon us, why not create this finger-knitted wreath? Challenge yourself to learn a new way of knitting and show off your creation over Christmas.





HOME & DIY

MEMPHIS HUES

Bring a dash of colour and playfulness into your home with a little inspiration from the Memphis Group – though chances are, you’ve already got some...

Memphis interior style is a tough one to get your head around. Firstly, it was founded in Milan and secondly, its aesthetic is less Graceland, more Legoland. So what on earth is it?

Founded by the modernist architect Ettore Sottsass, the Memphis Group started as a design collaborative and went on to become an Eighties cult phenomenon.

The group’s name is said to have come from a record that was playing on repeat at their first meeting in 1980: Bob Dylan’s Stuck Inside of Mobile with the Memphis Blues Again. But even that knowledge gives no hint to the aesthetic, which is derivative of both Art Deco and Pop Art.

It comes as no surprise then that Memphis style is

gloriously bright and playful: all acrylic lamps and bold, geometric glass coffee tables, futuristic bookshelves and unabashedly kitsch sofas. That said, not everyone finds it agreeable – it has been referred to in the past as being “bizarre”, “loathed”, and “a shotgun wedding between Bauhaus and Fisher-Price”.

And yet, despite its critics, Memphis style lives on. Go to any high street furniture shop and there is evidence of the group’s influence everywhere. Those aluminium dining room chairs with bright cushions and curved metal arms; that corner sofa, all arcs and soft edges; and almost every modern standing lamp.

So, if you want to brighten up your home with a look that is both playful and sophisticated, why not give Memphis style a go? After all, it was good enough for David Bowie, whose Memphis Group collection was auctioned off posthumously at Sotheby’s for a whopping £1.4million. Not bad for something so ‘bizarre’.



Photo credit: www.dezeen.com



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5 different ways to use...



...a tension rod

A tension rod, unsurprisingly, uses tension to stay in place – no screws, hooks or other fasteners of any kind are required. While they are usually used to hold curtains without causing material alterations to the wall, tension rods are highly adaptable and can be used for much more...

The beauty of tension rods is in their durability and versatility: because they are spring-loaded, they can be adjusted to fit any width or height. Rubber tips on either end help to keep the rod from slipping and also serve to protect your wall or trim from damage. Best of all, they're affordable and can be moved around the house as needed. Here are five interesting ways to get the best out of your tension rod...

1. Place one under the sink to create a rail across the cupboard from which cleaning supply sprays can be hung by their triggers. Not only does this mean you can still fill the bottom of the cupboard as you please, but all your sprays are kept in a neat line so you know which ones are nearing the end

of their use.

2. A quick and affordable combination of a tension rod fitted in a window frame and some hanging baskets can create a lush spot for sun-loving greenery that's perfect for the thrifty home horticulturalist.

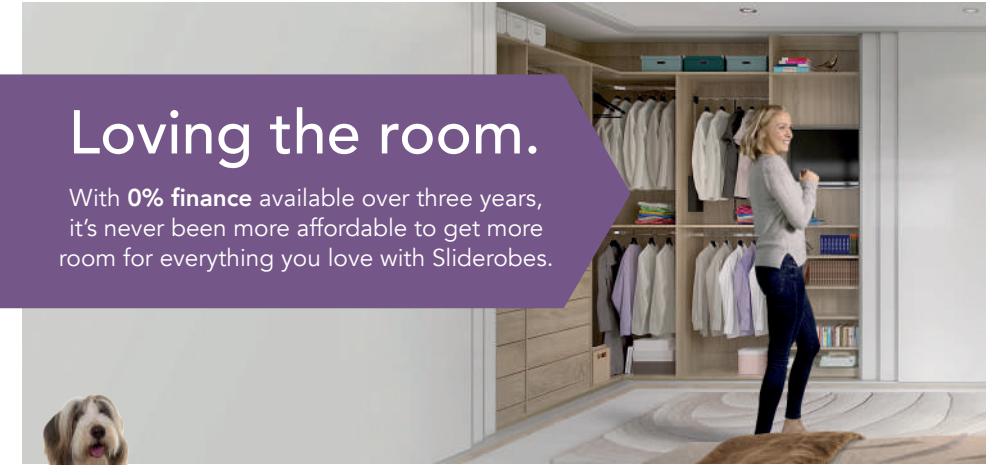
3. If your kitchen cupboards always seem cluttered, tension rods can be inserted vertically to create separate spaces in which to store your chopping boards, baking trays and even cookery books.

4. Tension rods can also come in handy for fashionistas. In a similar manner to storing cleaning sprays in the kitchen, a horizontal tension pole (or three) can be put into a wardrobe and used to hang high-heeled shoes from the gap between sole and heel.

5. For crafty customers who despair of keeping their materials neat and tidy, a fitted tension rod can provide a bar from which to hang rolls of ribbon, tape, wrapping paper and other useful items.



Photo credit: Martha Stewart, A Loyal Love, JillM, A Thousand Words, Eloise's Novel Nook



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The Perfect Finish

When it comes to paint, there seems to be a baffling array to choose from. It's essential, therefore, to know which paints do what so you can choose one that's definitely up to the job.

MATTE

The most common of interior wall paints. There's no shine or sheen to the finish, making it ideal for walls and ceilings where you don't want any visual distractions. On the downside, matte paint is easily marked. Although some marks can be removed with a damp cloth, matte paint needs regular retouching.

MATTE ENAMEL

Matte enamel is very much like matte paint, but tends to be far more durable. It's much easier to clean and rarely needs retouching, meaning it's great for the kitchen or kids' bedrooms. The visual effect is very similar to matte paint and it can be applied in the same way.

SATIN

Satin finish is somewhere between matte and gloss and produces a low, soft sheen. This makes it ideal for areas where you'll need to clean the

walls regularly; however, you shouldn't use a satin finish where you have a wall with imperfections because it will make them more apparent.

EGGSHELL

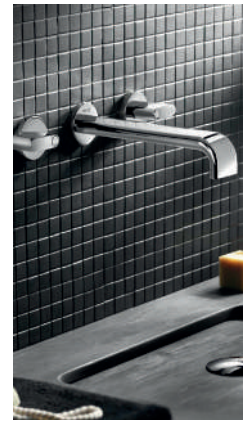
An eggshell finish has a shine that's extremely subtle, but without the same smoothness as a satin finish. It doesn't highlight imperfections as much, making it a more suitable interior wall paint. It's easy to apply and can often cover well with a single coat, making it a better choice for many people.

SEMI-GLOSS

Semi-gloss offers a hard finish, is suitable for heavy use and is easy to clean with just soap and water. The shine produced is less than full gloss paint, but it's usually easy to achieve a good covering with just a single coat.

GLOSS

Gloss paint can be used on most walls, although some prefer to use it on woodwork because of its high shine. It also shows all the imperfections on a wall and achieving an even coverage will often need more than a single coat.



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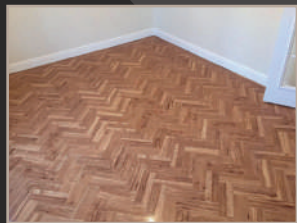
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LOCAL NEWS

from your neighbourhood



LOCAL NEWS



Animals tormented at sanctuary

An animal sanctuary in Brentwood has been the victim of a number of crimes in recent months.

Over the past few months, Hopefield Animal Sanctuary, on Sawyers Hall Farm, Sawyers Hall Lane, has been victim of three acts of trespassing, theft and animal abuse.

In August, three youths entered the sanctuary out of hours and took videos of themselves pulling a goat called Nathan onto an electric fence and tormenting him. They continued to push a pig over and their horses were also extremely distressed.

Most recently, when sanctuary workers arrived, the tearoom had been vandalised and items stolen. The whole room had to be closed off while time was spent fixing it.

Posting on their Facebook page, the sanctuary wrote: "We are heartbroken that such cruel people

exist and are here within our community. Our animals at Hopefield have been through so much already and are rescued from neglect and abuse cases, to come here where they should feel safe and loved and to then endure more cruelty at the hands of these truly awful people is unthinkable.

"We are asking our community for help in this official public appeal for information. At times as vulnerable as this in the world we need to look after each other and come together more than ever to protect our fellow beings from evil."

As a charity, Hopefield Animal Sanctuary has started a Money Giving page to raise money to ensure they are able to get the best security possible at the sanctuary.

To donate, visit uk.virginmoneygiving.com/SomeoneSpecial/hopefieldsecurity

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Photo credit: ITV



LOCAL NEWS

X Factor hopeful knocked out of competition

An X Factor hopeful from Brentwood couldn't do enough to keep her place and was knocked out of the competition.

Taliah Dalorto impressed mentor Sharon Osbourne with her performance of *Let It Go* by James Bay.

Fellow judge Simon Cowell even confessed he knew who he would swap out following her performance.

Sharon gave Taliah a chair, but she only got to sit

for a few moments before she was replaced by Alisah Bonaobra.

Taliah has had plenty of support from the people of Essex including reality TV stars such as Gemma Collins and Zahida Allen.

Tweeting following the six chair challenge being aired, Taliah said: "Thank you so much for all your support. Love you all."

Local councillor the best in Essex

A councillor from Brentwood is one of the top council leaders in the UK.

Brentwood Borough Council leader, Cllr Louise McKinlay, made the shortlist for the Council Leader of the Year title.

The prestigious Local Government Information Unit (LGIU) award saw 200 council leaders' nominations submitted, but only seven were chosen for the shortlist.

Cllr McKinlay is the only leader from an Essex Local Authority to feature.

She said: "Brentwood is an exceptional place to live and work so I feel particularly honoured to serve this borough and also to represent residents at a broader Essex County Council level. This is reward in itself, but I was thrilled to hear that I had been shortlisted

for the Leader of the Year Award.

"All leaders work hard, have to juggle many different demands and be resolute in their ambitions to produce the best they can from members and officers for residents. I personally have been fortunate enough to lead a council that reflects its residents' spirit.

"Balancing the books is one thing, but to adapt nimbly and to continually raise the bar on the projects and goals we will achieve is another. I congratulate all those who have been shortlisted and thank the LGA for such a fabulous opportunity for the work of my teams to be recognised."

The winner will be announced at the LGIU event on November 7 at London's Guildhall Livery Hall, which Cllr McKinlay is required to attend.

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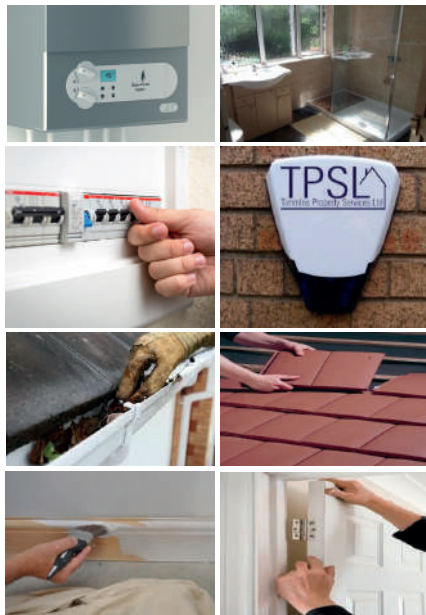
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Man charged with murder



A man has been charged with murder following the death of Dean Jose.

Nathan Turner, 23, Brentwood, was charged with causing grievous bodily harm with intent following the alleged incident in Kings Road, Brentwood at 12.45am on Monday, August 28.

Following the incident, 47-year-old Dean Jose suffered head injuries and sadly died on Saturday, September 2.

Turner appeared at Basildon Crown Court on Friday, October 6 where, following a decision by the CPS, the charge of GBH with intent was amended to murder. He pleaded not guilty and was remanded in custody.

At the time of going to print, he was due to appear at Chelmsford Crown Court for a case management hearing in the week commencing October 23. An exact date was not yet set.

#Noplace2hide for drugs and gangs

Essex Police want there to be #noplace2hide for those involved in gang, drug-related and violent crime.

In the first six months of this year, nearly 300 suspected drug dealers and street gang members were arrested by Essex Police's Operation Raptor teams for offences including possession with intent to supply, being concerned in the supply of drugs, possessing a variety of offensive weapons, allowing a premises to be used for drug supply and a host of other offences.

During the same period, Operation Raptor teams have charged 130 people and put them before the courts and seized more than £100,000 of cash, believed to be the proceeds of their criminal activity.

Essex Police are now stepping up their action against those involved in gang crime and the illegal drugs trade even further with the launch of Operation Essex.

Teams from across the force will come together

to specifically target those involved in drug supply in Essex as well as the associated violent offences which often go hand in hand with the illegal substance trade.

Chief Supt Paul Wells, Essex Police's lead for Operation Raptor, said: "Operation Essex will see us putting even more resources from a number of our specialist teams on to the streets to target those involved in the most serious of crimes.

"We want those involved in drug and gang-related crime and associated violence to know that there will be no place for them to hide in Essex."

Hello... it's Tom Cruise



Mayors are expected to rub shoulders with the great and good but few are called personally by Hollywood A-listers.

That's exactly what happened to Brentwood Mayor Will Russell last month when he fielded a call from megastar Tom Cruise, who had been filming scenes for *Mission: Impossible 6*. He was spotted jumping out of a helicopter in the town's Thorndon Country Park.

Speaking to *The Sun*, Cllr Russell admitted that, at first, he thought the call was a prank.

He said: "I asked who he was and he told me it was Tom Cruise. I didn't quite believe it at first and I became very guarded. Then I thought that I had no reason to doubt it. It sounded like him and he wasn't being ridiculous. He wanted to thank the people of the town. He wanted to say what a lovely forest we have and what a wonderful time he had in Brentwood and it was a great town."

It's fair to say that Brentwood in Essex has little in common with its American counterpart in Los Angeles. The suburb can count Gwyneth Paltrow, Arnold Schwarzenegger and Harrison Ford among its residents.



LOCAL NEWS

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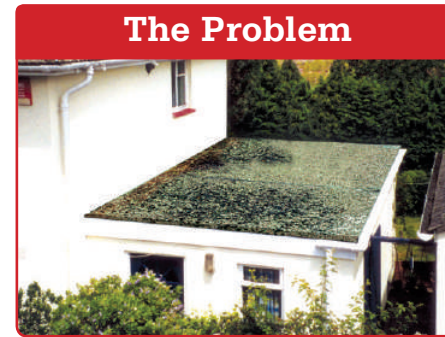
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ON PATROL WITH... THE PASTORS



LOCAL NEWS



October has been a busy month so far for Essex Street Pastors. It started off in Colchester where we trained eight people in roles and responsibilities. It is very important to us that when we recruit new volunteers they understand the ethos and history of what the project is all about. For nearly 15 years Street Pastors have been patrolling various towns throughout the UK looking to help, listen and care for anyone who is or becomes vulnerable in our night time economies. We currently patrol 12 towns and are looking to launch new projects in Rayleigh and Maldon.

Street Pastors are all over 18 years of age, are regular church attenders, have a Christian faith, ready for training and a challenge to help people.

We had the privilege of being invited to visit our local John Baron MP at the Houses of Parliament and it was a great morning spent on a tour of the historic houses and then a meeting in private chambers where John Baron MP explained how supportive he was of our efforts and thanked us for taking part in the Billericay Fun Walk at Barleylands.

We have also trained and recruited 24 response

pastors. These are experienced trained Street Pastors who now have the ability and passion to be able to deploy at short notice into the community after any significant major local trauma, e.g. bomb, air crash or terrorist incident. We have previously been deployed to Westminster, Manchester and Grenfell Tower where we spent eight days caring for the displaced people.

This month we have had very exciting meetings about launching a new project in Essex called Schools Pastors. We hope to be able to deploy small teams into Billericay and Brentwood to help with some of the pastoral needs of our young people whilst supporting the schools' ethos of caring for all in their respective communities.

Next month I will update on how rail pastors is coming to Essex to support Samaritans and our rail networks in relation to suicide.

If you want more information then please look at our Facebook page at Billericay Street Pastors or email Billericay@streetpastors.org.uk if you would like to come out on patrol with us to see what exactly it is we do.

Travelodge set to open new hotel

Travelodge has announced it is looking at opening a new hotel in Brentwood as part of its plans to expand the group's portfolio of hotels in Essex.

At the opening of the Romford hotel, Travelodge announced that Essex is a key growth area for the company and it's looking to expand with a further 11 new hotels in the area.

The company is looking at a number of locations within the area. The expansion programme represents an investment value of approximately

£88million for third party investors.

Bryn Taylor, Travelodge regional director for the South-East, said: "The Essex economy is growing at pace with increasing visitor numbers to the area. However, there is still a shortage of good quality accommodation at a great value price. Therefore, to meet this growing consumer demand we are looking for new hotel. This expansion programme will boost Travelodge's portfolio to 25 hotels in Essex and create an additional 350 new jobs."



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BURGHART for BRENTWOOD



Alex Burghart MP for Brentwood and Ongar



LOCAL NEWS



Both my parents were teachers and I spent some years teaching too, so finding myself in a classroom environment is always comfortingly familiar.

This month I have been to visit Shenfield St Mary's Primary School, St Martin's School in Hutton and St Peter's School in South Weald and I met a number of highly motivated and enthusiastic young students and their teachers. I've been asked if I've been to "that green place, where they all shout at each other", otherwise known as the House of Commons, and I have been helped across the road by St Peter's School headteacher, Iain Gunn, who is on lollipop duty while the school's much-loved school crossing patrol officers are unwell.

There is no doubt all schools have some concerns about funding, and where the issue has been raised by the headteachers, I have relayed their views back to my colleagues in government. Latest Department

for Education figures show that as a result of the proposed National Funding Formula, schools in Brentwood and Ongar will receive a total increase in funding of £2million, an additional 3.6 per cent.

In the Year 4 classes at Shenfield St Mary's Primary School there is little thought given to where the school gets its money from, but great enthusiasm about the Friday treats of extra PE, 'Friday Boogie' and, rather charmingly, my visit to talk to them about my history specialism, the Anglo Saxons.

We talked about how the Anglo Saxons influenced the language we speak today, where the Angles and Saxons came from and discussed the artefacts the children had seen during a school trip to Sutton Hoo in Suffolk. The children's knowledge of the subject was extensive and I was impressed by their enthusiasm, especially when they donned the replica Sutton Hoo helmets they had made for the project.

www.alexburghart.org.uk



Events held to celebrate World Mental Health Day



A series of events were held last month by Brentwood Borough Council to mark World Mental Health Day.

This year's theme was workplace wellbeing and the council's community services department encouraged staff to be healthier.

The team provided a healthy drop-in breakfast for staff followed by Time to Talk sessions – a chance to talk openly about mental health issues.

Throughout the day, some staff carried out a step challenge and some tried out a plank challenge.

Since signing up to the national Mental Health Challenge in 2014, the council has been committed to promoting and supporting local mental health services, whilst taking residents' views into account.

The council was the first in the country to have all 37 councillors become Mental Health Champions in 2014.

It involves raising awareness of mental health among staff and the local community, whilst making some changes that will help people with mental ill health find accessing council services easier.

Town Hall to be remodelled

The Town Hall in Brentwood will be revamped to update facilities and make it more cost-efficient.

Brentwood Borough Council has vacated the Town Hall whilst work takes place on the building.

The existing space within the Town Hall can no longer be used to maximum effect due to the outdated internal infrastructure and age of the building.

The remodelling includes a new roof, new windows, new boilers, new lifts, the opening up of the office floors and residential units on the top two floors.

A community hub will be central in the new look Town Hall and the police will be moving to the lower ground floor.

The project is expected to take two years, but council services will not be affected. The council's reception has been relocated to 1-2 Seven Arches Road. All appointments will be held at this site, as well as general reception services, including self-service positions and document scanning.

Leader of Brentwood Borough Council, councillor Louise McKinlay, said: "Externally the transformation will be sympathetic to Brentwood's historic Town Hall. The building will be far more accessible for community use, with proper mobility access, and we will be creating opportunities for small businesses to come in and grow their companies. It is an exciting project that will result in a building for many generations to come."

Police take on firefighters in football match



Photo Credit: Essex Police

More than £550 was raised for charity following a thrilling football match between Essex police officers and firefighters.

The 10th Silent Witness match at Canvey Island Football Club's ground in Park Lane saw Essex Fire and Rescue Service beat Essex Police 9-3.

Funds raised went to Changing Pathways, a domestic abuse charity working across the areas of Basildon, Brentwood, Castle Point, Rochford and Thurrock.

Castle Point Council Mayor, councillor Brian Wood, presented the Silent Witness trophy following the game before a raffle was held.

The event was first launched by local domestic abuse specialist officers, PC Caroline Cudby and PC Nicola Pain, with partner agencies in 2008.

PC Pain said: "The match was played in good spirits with plenty of goal mouth action.

"It was a great way to raise vital funds for Changing Pathways while raising awareness of domestic abuse ahead of Domestic Abuse Awareness Week next month.

"I would like to thank all the players, supporters and organisers involved for their commitment throughout this event, members of Canvey Island Football Club for their hospitality and Cllr Wood for supporting the event."

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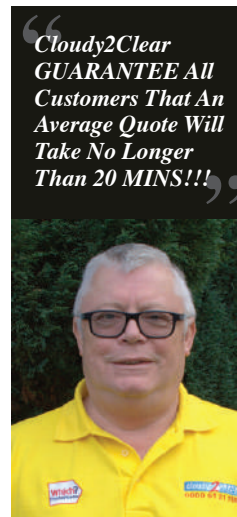
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A SUMMER GARDEN IS MADE IN

Winter

Whilst it may look as though everything in the garden is at rest, winter is the perfect time to begin making that summer garden you've had your eye on.

With gardening being one of the few forms of exercise you can take part in throughout all stages of your life, why stop when the winter weather comes creeping in? It's time to put the gardening gloves back on and make changes that you will benefit from all year round.

MAINTENANCE

Grass does not grow in cold conditions, but following a mild start to winter, mowing the lawn is a good way to keep it at bay until spring. Be sure to mow when the grass is dry and soil has thawed out to avoid damage.

Removing any fallen branches and debris will save underlying plants and grass. Tender plants such as dahlias will benefit from a layer of mulch which helps to protect their roots from frost, while a potassium-rich fertiliser will give apple trees the nutrients they need to flourish.

PLANTING

There is no need for your garden to be bare throughout winter. Evergreens provide colour all year round, and come in a variety of colours. Not only will evergreens bring a fresh appearance to your winter garden, they will also add colour throughout the year.

Winter is the perfect time to begin growing your own vegetables, as many thrive in cooler temperatures, including carrots, garlic and broccoli. Vegetables can concentrate their sugars in the cold, resulting in improved flavour.

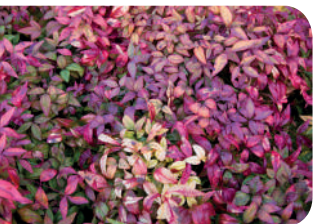
WILDLIFE

As winter sets in and we all appreciate the warmth of our own homes, birds would love to do the same. Why not build a bird house to help combat the cold?

While planting evergreen trees and bushes is an easy way to provide shelter; brush piles, roost boxes and bird houses can be an inexpensive project, providing secure, comfortable protection from the elements.

TOP TIPS:

- Putting a ball in any water source will allow airflow when it freezes over, keeping water oxygenated for pond life, and making a natural drinking fountain for birds when the ball is removed.
- A 2 to 3 inch layer of mulch is the most effective in winter.
- Elevating flower beds and adding a sloped edge aids drainage as rainfall increases.



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TRANSFORM YOUR GARDEN INTO A WINTER

Wanderland

As the festive season approaches, it's time to start thinking about decorating your home. This year, instead of just decorating the inside, think about the outside too. Passers-by will stare in delight at your winter wonderland as you celebrate the true spirit of Christmas.

If you have a colour theme, match the decorations on your wreath to the colours in your garden.

Spruce up your fence

If you have a fence around your garden, bring some life to it by adding a Christmas garland and some lights. To add a splash of colour, add some giant bows just like on the tree.

Decorate a tree

Who said Christmas trees are only for inside? If you want a traditional Christmas tree these can easily be bought in local stores, or transform the trees you already have in your garden. Cover them in LED string lights and add shatterproof giant baubles and giant bows.

Add some lights

Christmas lights are a must to make your own winter wonderland. White icicle lights are simple yet stylish and eye-catching. They can be placed all around the outside of your house and will instantly light up your garden.

You can also spray branches of trees in gold or silver to add some extra sparkle. Alternatively, spray some pine cones and hang them on trees around your garden.

Santa, stop here

Line your pathway with lanterns and light them up when the darkness sets in. You can use battery candles or ones you light with a match. When Christmas approaches, put out your 'Santa stop here' sign to ensure he doesn't miss you.

Christmas wreath

No front door is complete during the festive season without a wreath. You can make one of these yourself or they are easily available in



SEE NEXT MONTH'S ISSUE TO LEARN HOW TO MAKE YOUR OWN CHRISTMAS WREATH...

JAMIE'S 'MEALS ON WHEELS'

From geezer to nutrition guru, Jamie Oliver has always loved a big adventure, and his latest one is the wildest of them all.

When 'the naked chef' was first dished up back in 1999, this new brand of TV cook was a revelation. A cheeky, charismatic chappy who reinvigorated the nation's passion for home cooking by making it accessible and affordable, his first cookbook became an instant bestseller, and 'pukka' was everyone's favourite culinary catchphrase.

Now, almost two decades later, Jamie Oliver's vim and vigour has diminished none. And while he has perhaps lost some of the charming naivety that made him so instantly likeable, the second helpings of experience and wisdom has set him on a lifelong path towards improving eating habits everywhere.

His mission started in earnest with Fifteen,

the Shoreditch restaurant where disadvantaged young people received the ultimate culinary leg-up. Then, in 2005, Oliver launched his first campaign to improve school lunches, a project that formed Channel 4 four-part documentary, *Jamie's School Dinners*. But while the assault on our loved ones' lunchboxes was arguably successful – with the British government pledging to address the issue in parliament – Oliver was left frustrated by the wider public's reluctance to change habits. "It seems that in many cases eating well is still viewed as an indulgence of the middle-classes," he said, "and I don't believe that should be the case... it baffles me; it makes me sad."

Undeterred, the 42-year-old has ploughed on, even earning a Masters degree in nutrition as a way of furthering his knowledge of the intricacies of food. And under the umbrella

of the Jamie Oliver Food Foundation, he has sparked another food revolution which calls on us all to provoke, debate and inspire real, meaningful, positive change in the way our children access, consume and understand food.

His latest cookbook, *5 Ingredients: Quick & Easy Food* – his 20th since *The Naked Chef* – focuses on delivering tasty, nutritious food without breaking the bank. And when it comes to feeding a brood, Oliver ought to know, as last year he and wife Jools welcomed their fifth child, a son called River Rocket, to join Poppy, 15, Daisy, 14, Petal, eight, and Buddy, seven.

With such responsibility on his recently slimmed-down shoulders, one might expect Oliver to have given up on some of his more freewheeling, laddish endeavours, but when he recently appeared in a video showing off his

new mobile kitchen Land Rover, it was evidence enough that the naked chef inside Oliver was alive and well.

The impressive off-road vehicle bundles a bevy of impressive kit, the like of which you wouldn't find in your average kitchen. In the minute-and-a-half long clip, we see Oliver spit-roast entire chickens on a front-mounted rotisserie, churn butter using a device hidden in one of the car's wheels, and produce baked beans from a slow cooker hidden under the hood. Best of all is the toaster built into the centre console; perfect for peckish passengers.

"I dreamt big and asked for a lot," Oliver admitted. And yes, it's fine to be inspired by the stylish chef – but while healthier school lunches were within our collective grasp, you can't but help wonder if this 'meals on wheels' creation is a journey too far.



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Stay healthy AS WINTER SETS IN



HEALTH & FITNESS

As the days become shorter and the cold sets in, it can be extremely tempting to come home from work and put on your comfy clothes, put your feet up and enjoy a hot chocolate. But instead of hibernating this winter, keep fit and healthy whatever the weather.

BANISH WINTER TIREDNESS

It's no doubt that many people feel tired and sluggish during the winter months. This is due to lack of sunlight which can make it seem like you are waking up in the dead of the night, which disrupts sleep and waking cycles.

To tackle this, the NHS is encouraging people to get outdoors in as much natural daylight as possible, get into a good sleeping pattern by going to bed and waking up at the same time every day and destress with exercise or meditation.

GET YOUR FIVE-A-DAY

Unhealthy comfort food is often a go-to option during the winter. However, it's important to continue to eat fruit and veg to keep healthy. If your body is healthy, it will also help you to fight off any winter bugs.

DRINK MORE MILK

You are more likely to become ill during the winter so it's important to look after your immune system. Milk and dairy products are good sources of protein, vitamins A and B12 and calcium.

TRY SOMETHING NEW

Get out with the family and try out a new activity. Winter is the perfect time to go ice skating or on a winter walk. Regular exercise helps to control weight and boost the immune system.





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What is the Secret to Finding Contentment?

Everyone wants to have peace of mind and feel content.

Many books and teachings will have us believe that these are something we must strive for – that they are somehow the result of doing stuff and achieving more. They become like a reward for accomplishing results in the world.

For many years, I too believed that doing well at work and being a good person would bring me contentment and peace of mind.

After trying various things to help me get that elusive 'inner peace' and contentment, I had the realisation that both of these are much closer than most people think.

Peace of mind isn't a by-product of adding, achieving or accomplishing anything. It's a process of deleting, of reducing the noise, of taking away what gets in the way and what isn't relevant; and a lot of the time, what gets in the way is our own thinking – it's actually an inside job!

Contentment, with ourselves and with life, is what's already there inside us when we stop thinking that we're not enough or that we need to be more, have more or achieve more.

Peace of mind is what's always there behind those thoughts of inadequacy and self-doubt.

To feel peaceful, happy and content can actually be quite effortless. It's a matter of spending a little time understanding how to reduce all the thinking we are doing and the ideas about ourselves that we've innocently been holding on to that keep us from feeling great and enjoying life unconditionally.

So before you go and seek contentment by changing your job, your car, your house or your partner, book in on one of our "Clean Up the Inside First" sessions – it will be less costly and probably easier than you think!



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FAT? Thin? FICTION.

The question whether you can be fat and fit or thin and unfit has loomed for years. Researchers have been trying for decades to prove their viewpoint. But is it really a myth or a reality?

The term 'obese' is often used to describe a person who's overweight, with excess body fat. According to the NHS, obesity is a common problem in the UK and it's estimated that around one in four adults and around one in five children aged 10 to 11 are considered obese.

Body mass index (BMI) is often used to determine whether someone is of a healthy weight for their size, but calculating this doesn't always give a true representation. If someone is very muscular, having a high BMI doesn't mean that they have excess fat. These people could be considered healthy as they regularly train and so the 'fat and fit' assumption could be deemed as true.

However, many argue that someone could never be fat and fit. Being overweight can lead to several health problems including type 2 diabetes, coronary heart disease, some types of cancer and the risk of having a stroke is greater. This is still the case even if the person exercises regularly and eats a balanced diet.

On the flip side, is it possible to be thin and unhealthy? Many people think that being skinny is good as you haven't got excess fat, but it is actually just as bad for your health to be underweight. Weighing too little can contribute to a weakened immune system, fragile bones and feeling tired.

Some people simply can't put on weight due to a high metabolism, so they eat junk food as they think it isn't affecting them. In the long-run, these decisions will have impacts on the person's health.

It is also important for thin people to exercise to tone their muscles and get rid of any fat deposits that they might have.

To ensure you are healthy, take part in regular exercise, eat a healthy and balanced diet and keep an eye on your weight. There isn't a perfect weight or size for a healthy person, but the BMI calculator can be used as a guideline.



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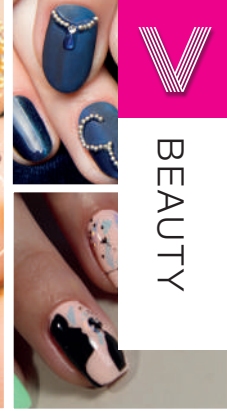
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Nailed It



There was a time when nail salons offered two kinds of manicures: French, where they were painted pale pink with a white tip; or a block colour with gloss finish. But thanks to nail art pioneers like Sharmadean Reid, who founded London's WAH Nails, it's now more common – and much cooler – to have emojis, gems and even 'galaxies' adorning the tips of your fingers.

But you don't need to go to an expensive salon to bling up your tips, as there are many looks you can master at home. Nail glitter, for example, comes in an array of dazzling colours, sizes and shapes, like hearts or stars. There is also glitter dust, which can be applied with stencils to create a shimmering pattern, chrome powder to create a flawless metallic sheen, and stick-on jewels to create a snazzy 3D effect. If nails are long enough, you can even pierce the tip and attach a charm.

When it comes to nail art, not even the sky's the limit – as the 'galaxy' trend proves, where varnish is layered with glitter and swirled until the nails twinkle like the Milky Way. Another fantastical phenomenon is the rise of the 'unicorn' nail, where digits are magically transformed to resemble the horn of the mythical creature.

To recreate these looks at home, it's wise to enlist the aid of the many YouTube tutorials on the subject, or simply go to a dedicated salon and let the pros work their magic, leaving you with the arduous task of choosing what design you want.

Chevron and Ombre are both impressive, but somewhat subtle designs. Or if you really want your tips to do the talking, it's got to be the emoji mani.



BEAUTY

A Spot of Relief



If you suffer from bad skin, it can be tempting to bombard it with all manner of over-the-counter treatments in a bid to blitz your face. But what your skin needs to do is heal – and some simple products you already have at home can be just what the doctor ordered.

Healing mask

Honey has antibacterial and probiotic properties, making it an all-natural skin-saving hero. Mix one dessert spoon with two of natural yoghurt – loaded with lactic acid which refines pores – and a pinch of cinnamon. Apply for 10 minutes, then rinse with warm water. Raw honey works better than processed as it's more potent, and it can even be used alone as a gentle morning cleanser.

Easy exfoliant

Scrubbing with harsh exfoliators can strip your skin of its natural oils, which in the long-term will only make the problem worse. Instead, remove dead cells gently with unground sea salt, milled oats or brown sugar, and mixed with enough coconut oil or honey to form a paste. Apply in a circular motion before rinsing.

Terrific toner

Apple cider vinegar makes a great skin toner and is far more affordable than one from

the pharmacy. The vinegar contains gentle exfoliating acids which calm and balance your skin's pH.

Specific treatment

If you've got one or two pimples which require immediate attention, don't squeeze, but dry them out with a cotton bud dipped in tea tree oil – a natural way to unblock sebaceous glands without the risk of scarring.

Inside out

They say beauty's only skin-deep, but for a truly glowing complexion you need to start on the inside. Cut out foods which spike your blood sugar and can lead to hormone imbalance, like processed white bread and cakes. Begin taking a daily probiotic and include at least one portion of oily fish, like salmon, in your diet. The benefits won't be instant, but they will be worth it.



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LONDON / NEW YORK

THE BEST OF FASHION WEEK

Fashion week is one of the most talked about events on the fashion calendar. Designers and fashion lovers from all over the world come together to share and appreciate the designs and trends for the next season. Spring 2018 was no different with each fashion week bringing something unusual and individual to the cat walk.

LONDON

London fashion week was full of satin, mixed prints and pastel colours. Bold prints were one of the main trends to hit the catwalk. From polka dots to floral designs and everything in between, prints were mixed and matched to create striking and in-your-face designs. Pastels are also going to feature highly this for spring. London took a softer approach when it came to colour with romantic shades, even in bold print designs.

Satin was a huge hit on the London catwalk.

From dresses to trousers and skirts, the sleek material is being used for anything and everything. The light and airy material flows when you move and the light bounces off everywhere you turn.



NEW YORK

New York fashion week was a complete contrast to London. Americana was often a theme with red, white and blue colours featuring heavily in the designs. Statement colours were vital with bright, saturated hue colours. There was no hiding when these garments were on.

Anoraks were also a hit. From baggy garments to midi length macs, they are sure to be everywhere next season.

Sheer skin revealing fabrics also often featured in the designs on the catwalk. These garments are sophisticated, yet leave little to the imagination.



Photo credit: wwd.com



JEAN GENIES

From big bums to short legs, here's how to pick jeans that compliment every body shape.

A LARGER MIDDLE

If you've got a little extra weight on your tummy, go for a high-waisted cut. Not only is this look naturally slimming as it pulls everything in, it's also very on-trend. In terms of colour, darker shades like indigo are always going to be a little more slimming than, say, white, but if you feel comfortable and body-confident in a lighter shade, that's all that matters.

if you love to show off your booty, there is no need to fear a high-waisted skinny fit.

PERFECTLY PETITE

If you're small in stature, go for the crop. Cropped boyfriend jeans are ideal for a laid-back sexy look, or if you're lucky enough to be petite and slender, skinny cropped denims with heels look killer. Perfect for that hot date.

SHORT LEGS

If you want to elongate your pins then channel your inner Jane Birkin and dare to flare. This is another style that has come back into fashion in recent times, and thank goodness it has, as the silhouette that flared jeans create is super-flattering. Also, you can wear them with towering heels and no one will know.

CURVY

If you'd rather hide your bumpy bits, jeans with a cigarette leg is perfect for balancing out curves. This basically applies to all straight-legged trousers; not skinny, not flared, just right.

THE LONG STRETCH

If you're still confused about what pair of jeans to buy, why not invest in some elastic? Stretch denim basically flatters every single body type and best of all is super-comfy. Perfect for when you're going for a big Sunday lunch.

BIG BUMS

Large pocket details are great for taking the attention away from generous bottoms. However,



Photo credit: Lorna Roberts/Shutterstock.com

As street photographers unite over their photos being used without permission, it raises once again the question of who owns content on social media.

At major fashion events, it is not uncommon to see a well-heeled woman or nattily dressed man being followed by a herd of street photographers yelling for their attention. The payoff? If one nabs the perfect shot of one of these so-called style influencers, they will have the honour of featuring on said blogger's Instagram, hopefully garnering the attention of a major brand. But the increase in influencers, editorial sources and even brands using these images for free – often crediting the person in the pictures and the clothes they are wearing, but not the photographer – has led to a call for change.

Since Milan Fashion Week

in September, when a group of around 40 photographers came together to publicly protest against the unauthorised use of their street style photography, members of the group – an “unofficial union” named The Photographers – have begun adding the hashtag #NoFreePhotos to images uploaded on their Instagram accounts.

But while images printed in magazines are often copyrighted and protected by laws, the rules governing social media and online content are blurred. It goes right back to the issue of how the internet has altered the value of media, which has affected everything from music to pornography.

Another argument of course is that it is nothing new to work for very little money when starting out in the fashion industry, with the emphasis being more on building a relationship and association with a brand bigger than your own in the hope of attracting paid work in the future. And with so many photographers and influencers all jostling for space in an overcrowded scene, it seems that for the time being at least, there will always be someone willing to work for free.



#NOFREEPHOTOS

70 years of wedded bliss

The Queen and Prince Philip will reach a new milestone in their remarkable lives this month with their 70th wedding anniversary.

Her Majesty, 91 and the Duke of Edinburgh, 96, are the first British royal couple to reach a platinum celebration.

They said “I do” on November 20, 1947 in front of 2,000 guests as they married at Westminster Abbey in a service that was broadcast live to 200 million radio listeners.

The wedding came at an austere time for Britain, just two years after the end of the Second World War.

In the grim post-war era, the Queen famously saved ration tokens to buy the material for her Norman Hartnell dress and she did her own make-up on the big day.

The couple's love story began when the Queen was 13.

The distant cousins had been at the same gatherings on a number of occasions, but had their first publicised and pivotal meeting at the

Royal Naval College in Dartmouth, Devon, in July that year when King George VI and Queen Elizabeth visited with their two daughters.

Dashing, blond-haired, athletic Philip caught Lilibet's eye as he entertained her by jumping over tennis nets.

The then Princess Elizabeth fell head over heels in love, and remained devoted to Philip, writing him letters throughout her teens. Her father, King George V, agreed to the couple's marriage in 1946 but requested that they wait to get officially engaged until she had turned 21.

In April 1947, Philip proposed to Elizabeth as they walked together in the grounds of Balmoral. He presented his bride with a square cut diamond and platinum ring, which was created using stones from one of his mother's tiaras.

But the official announcement of the engagement came on July 10, 1947 as Princess Elizabeth and Lieutenant Philip Mountbatten, as they were then, were pictured arm in arm at Buckingham Palace.



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FOOD & DRINK

Making sense of BREAD

Wholewheat, wholegrain, rye, gluten-free – the world of bread is becoming a confusing place indeed. Here's the lowdown on which breads are which, and what you should be feeding your family.

WHITE BREAD offers a soft slice with less flavour to compete with fillings. It doesn't have the fibre of wholegrain, but it's a good source of protein and carbs. It's fortified with thiamin, iodine and folic acid too. But the additives that make the dough rise rapidly also make the glycaemic index (GI) go up, so the energy you get from white bread won't last.

WHOLEMEAL BREAD has a similar nutritional value to wholegrain bread. However, most packaged wholemeal is made by recombining white flour with the bran and wheatgerm removed during milling. This creates a longer-lasting flour, but doesn't provide the same nutritional balance. Wholemeal bread has more fibre, vitamins and minerals than white, plus it's fortified with iodine and folic acid.

WHOLEGRAIN BREAD has grains (and often seeds) added to wholemeal flour for extra nutritional value. Wholegrain breads (including rye and sourdough varieties) have up to four times the fibre of white breads, making them one of the healthiest options.

RYE BREAD has a heavier texture than other breads due to the lower gluten content. Light rye, made from rye and wheat flours, comes in half way between white and wholemeal for health, but wholegrain rye, with added grains, comes top for its fibre and vitamin content. People with coeliac disease, however, must avoid all rye bread.

SOURDOUGH rises for up to 18 hours, giving it more flavour and a lower GI. Vitamins, minerals and fibre levels vary depending on the flour, but one thing's for sure: wholegrain sourdough wins across the board for nutritional value.





FOOD & DRINK

Anyone for CRICKET?

Ground-up crickets might sound like something you eat for a dare, but the reality is that products made with cricket flour are quickly gaining popularity and could be the eventual solution to global hunger. But if you're on the squeamish side, you may be wondering why on earth we would want to eat insects.

For starters, crickets are super-nutritious and have an incredibly high protein-to-weight ratio. They are 69 per cent protein by dry weight while chicken breast (31 per cent) and sirloin steak (29 per cent) are significantly lower. This makes them 20 times more efficient as a source of protein than cattle, while also providing 80 times less methane – good news for global warming! They are also uniquely sustainable as they require a fraction of land, water and feed to livestock.

If the thought of eating bugs has you squirming

like a mealworm, the good news is that manufacturers have strived to make them taste delicious. If you didn't know better, you might mistake one for an ordinary protein bar. London-based company Eat Grub offers bars in two flavours: Coconut and Cacao, and Cranberry and Orange, and for those seeking an alternative beer snack, it even sells salt and vinegar roasted crickets. The firm also offers a cook book and a range of unseasoned, freeze-dried critters so you can whip up buffalo worm macaroni cheese at home.

The downside of these creepy crawly treats is that they don't come cheap – a taster pack of four bars from Eat Grub will set you back six quid – but it is hoped that as our perceptions towards eating insects in the UK change, they will become a dietary staple. So altogether now, 'I don't like cricket. I love it...'



Photo credit www.eatgrub.co.uk

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Potato Stamp wrapping paper

Christmas is one of the best times of year to get crafty. This year, instead of buying wrapping paper, why not create your own? All you will need is some brown paper for the base, some good-sized potatoes (yes, potatoes), paint, a paint brush and a knife.

Step one: Cut your potato in half ensuring you get a clean cut.

Step two: Using a knife, slice in the shape for your stamp making sure you only go part of the way down. Roll the knife around the edge of the potato where the slices end and lift out the pieces you don't want.

Step three: Paint your potato stamp.

Step four: Stamp your potato onto the paper.

Leave for a few hours to dry to ensure that it doesn't smudge when you wrap your presents.

For Christmas...our favourite Christmas stamps include Christmas trees, stars, stockings, candy canes, snowflakes and holly. You could also create snowmen and baubles and once dried, decorate them with felt tip pens.



Christmas crafts

Christmas is the perfect time of year to get the children involved in doing crafts. With the cold weather and dark nights setting in, it can be difficult to keep the children occupied, but these Christmas craft ideas are sure to do the trick.



Pine cones

When walking to school or out on winter walks, why not look around for some pine cones? They are so easy to paint and decorate and look great as winter decorations. They can be put into a bowl, placed in a display or just hung on the Christmas tree with a piece of string.



Reindeer flower pots

These reindeer flower pots are perfect for gifts, as well as using yourself. All you need is a flower pot, red pom-pom for the nose, goggle eyes, brown felt, brown pipe cleaners and anything else you want to decorate with. Simply stick on the eyes, nose and pipe cleaners. Cut the ears out of the felt and stick on. You can then decorate the reindeer as you like.

Snowmen paper chains

Paper chains are great for putting up around the house and are so easy to make. Children can decorate them any way they like. Fold a piece of plain paper in half, then in half again. Unfold and re-fold on the folds to create a concertina accordion fold. Draw your snowman design lightly onto the paper. Carefully cut out the design making sure there's still a bit of paper at each edge to hold the chain together - this is usually done using the hands of the snowmen. Unfold and design.



WHAT'S ON

in your area

Halloween Spec-Dracula

Brentwood Theatre, 15 Shenfield Road, Brentwood, CM15 8AG

Saturday, November 11, 4.30pm and 7.30pm

Join us if you dare for a Halloween scare... We're calling all goblins, ghosts and creatures of the night. So creep, float, or crawl on over to our Halloween Spec-Dracula.

A fun evening of spooky songs, drama pieces and dance, showcasing the talents of local students from Occasional Dance Theatre School.

You'd be ghoulish to miss this party.

Tickets are £12, under 16s £10 and babes in arms £3. Tickets are available from Brentwood Theatre online or by calling 01277 200305.

Christmas Networking

Slug and Lettuce Brentwood, 78-82 High Street, Brentwood, CM14 4AP

Wednesday, November 15, 10.30am



FREE monthly networking with a fast and focused format for those that want to help each other in business simply by spreading the word and remembering who you know.

This will be the final meeting for this year so be sure to come along and tell everyone what you are up to. Businesses, charities and community organisations all welcome as usual.

The Definitive Rat Pack and Friends

The Brentwood Centre, Doddinghurst Road, Brentwood, CM15 9NN

Sunday, November 12

The Mayor of Brentwood has formed the Mayors' Community Trust fund, a new charity, which aims to promote community cohesion through public events. The original cast of Rat Pack will be performing at the Brentwood Centre for this one-off show. Tickets are £20 per person. For tickets, visit www.ticketsource.co.uk/event/201534

Lighting Up Brentwood

Brentwood High Street, CM14 4RH

Saturday, November 25, 1pm – 5.30pm



A popular event attracting thousands to witness the Christmas Lights being turned on. There is entertainment throughout the day, stalls, rides and a great Christmas atmosphere.

Stallholders applications have now closed. Local performers interested in helping us to entertain the crowds should email events@brentwood.gov.uk

Antiques, Vintage, Retro and Collectors Fair

The Brentwood Centre, Doddinghurst Road, Brentwood, CM15 9NN

Sunday, November 26, 10am – 4pm

The fair will feature dealers from all over the UK selling a huge selection of items including jewellery, ceramics, glass, pottery, small furniture, vintage bags and scarves, memorabilia and much more.

Special winter admission price: all adults £3.50, seniors and students £2.50, accompanied under 14s free. Early entry 9am: £5.00

J & J Webb Toy Fair

The Brentwood Centre, Doddinghurst Road, Brentwood, CM15 9NN

Saturday, December 9, 10am – 2.30pm

J & J Webb wish to welcome you to their toy fair. Whether you are a seasoned collector or if you are considering visiting a toy collectors fair for the first time, it's all here.

If you need any additional information, have any specific questions or would like to make a booking, then just give them a call on 01522 880383. Ticket prices: Adults £3, Seniors £2.50, Children £2.

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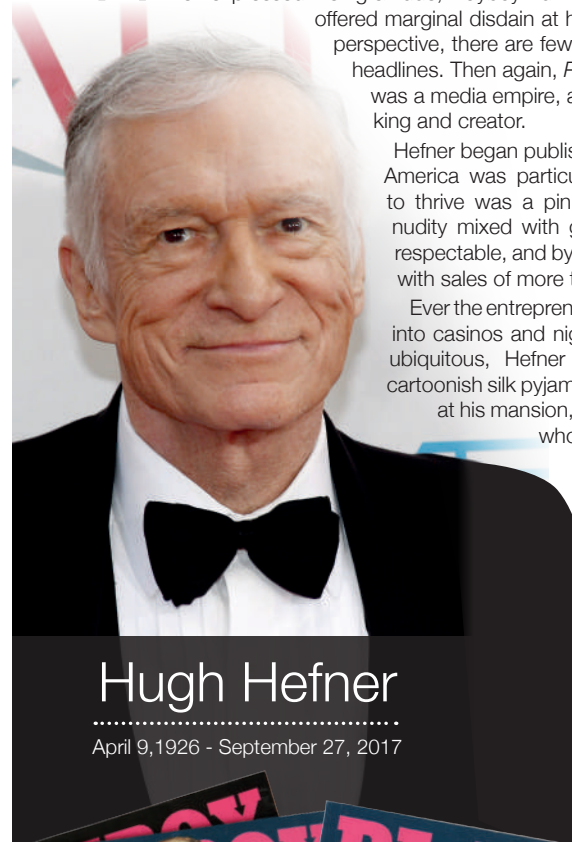
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The Ultimate 'KID IN THE CANDY STORE'

Remembering Hugh Hefner and his impressive legacy

When Hugh Hefner passed peacefully away at his home – the iconic Playboy Mansion in Los Angeles, on Wednesday, September 27 there was a wide outpouring of emotion, and most of it positive. Men expressed their gratitude, Playboy Bunnies set about their mourning and, yes, some feminists offered marginal disdain at his somewhat controversial legacy. But whatever your perspective, there are few magazine founders whose death would make global headlines. Then again, *Playboy* was always much more than an adult mag - it was a media empire, a money-spinning brand and a lifestyle, with Hefner its king and creator.



Hugh Hefner

April 9, 1926 - September 27, 2017

Hefner began publishing *Playboy* from his kitchen in 1953, a period when America was particularly prudish, and the last thing you would expect to thrive was a pin-up magazine. But somehow the glossy images of nudity mixed with genuinely insightful features made it seem suddenly respectable, and by the Seventies it was the world's best-selling magazine with sales of more than seven million copies a month.

Ever the entrepreneur, ambitious Chicago native Hefner began expanding into casinos and nightclubs, and as those iconic Bunnies became more ubiquitous, Hefner too embodied his brand. An exaggerated, even cartoonish silk pyjama-clad cad who threw exuberant, star-studded parties at his mansion, he dated an unfathomable number of Bunnies, two of whom he married along the way.

After suffering a stroke in 1985, Hefner changed his lifestyle significantly, leaving charge of his empire to his daughter, Christie. And over the years *Playboy* too has had to move with the times as values shift, and what was once seen as admiration for the female form has become, some say, perverse and misogynistic.

But love him or loathe him, Hefner's phenomenal success and contribution to modern culture is impossible to deny, and we are reminded of one of his most famous quotes: "I am a kid in a candy store. I dreamed impossible dreams and the dreams turned out beyond anything I could possibly imagine. I'm the luckiest cat on the planet."





PUZZLES & TRIVIA

PUZZLES

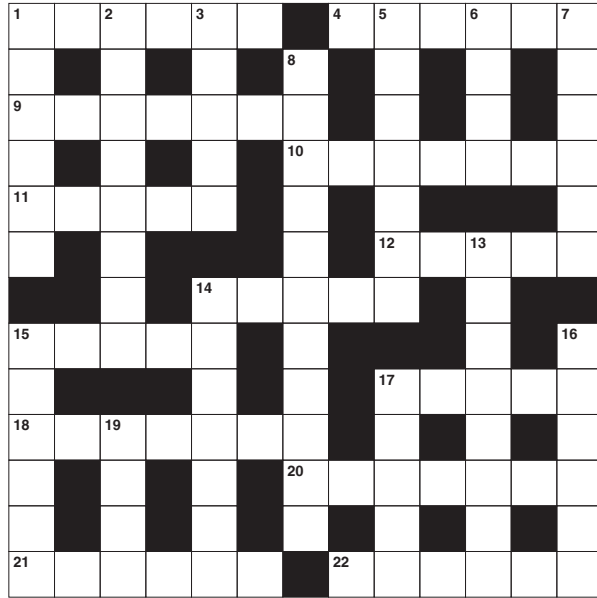
Answers can be found on the Contents Page 4

ACROSS

- 1. Covered in flowers (6)
- 4. Remain (anag) (6)
- 9. Eg use a towel after showering (3-4)
- 10. Salt lake in the Jordan valley (4,3)
- 11. Lucid (5)
- 12. City in Bolivia (2,3)
- 14. Unsuitable (5)
- 15. Device that splits light (5)
- 17. Destroy (3,2)
- 18. ____ Day: Shrove Tuesday (7)
- 20. Open-meshed material (7)
- 21. A husband or wife (6)
- 22. Stick to a surface (6)

DOWN

- 1. Continent (6)
- 2. Opera texts (8)
- 3. Smell (5)
- 5. Attack (7)
- 6. Pubs (4)
- 7. Not real or genuine (6)
- 8. Unconcerned (11)
- 13. Type of employment (4-4)
- 14. Diacritical marks (7)



- 15. Small songbirds (6)
- 16. Climax or culmination (6)
- 17. Quoted (5)
- 19. Emperor of Rome 54-68 (4)

DID YOU KNOW

- ▶ At birth, Dalmatians are always pure white - their black spots come later.
- ▶ Fish and insects do not have eye lids - their eyes are protected by a hardened lens.
- ▶ If you lift a kangaroo's tail off the ground it can't hop - they use their tails for balance.
- ▶ At a rate of eight to 10 beats per minute, the blue whale's heartbeat can be heard from over two miles away.
- ▶ Horses have 16 muscles in each ear, allowing them to rotate their ears 180 degrees.
- ▶ The only animals to undergo menopause are elephants, humpback whales and human females.

SUDOKU

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

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At Any Little Thing Ltd we are very proud of ourselves for being passionate about offering reliable and trustworthy assistance to those in need. No matter what your state of mind or abilities, EVERYONE appreciates a helping hand!

We cover a whole multitude of services and our team approach is to help where we can, for as long as you need us to.

Our company offer help and assistance with a variety of jobs for anyone, including older people needing an extra pair of hands, new mums struggling to juggle home life, those with mental health challenges, for carers or for those that just simply struggle to manage their time.

We can carry out basic gardening, basic cleaning, check on your home whilst you are on holiday. We can stay in for packages too if you know you will not be available for your delivery slot. Other services also include, ironing, day trips, accompaniment to appointments, picking up prescriptions as well as shopping and odd jobs around the house. We can also offer dog walking services & can check on any other furry friends you may have throughout your working day or whilst you are on holiday.

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Festive FINANCE

HOW TO NOT MAX OUT OVER THE HOLIDAYS

The worst thing about Black Friday is that it inevitably leads to Blue Monday. That dreaded day of the new year where you've already given up on your diet, it feels like forever since you were last paid and you're acutely aware of both your overdraft and credit card bill. But while mince pie binges and payday impatience are inevitable, debt isn't, and with a bit of planning you could have your most financially-sound Christmas yet.

The first rule of a frugal festive period is to start planning early. Scout out the good deals as shops just start ramping up their festive promotions and are eager for a promising early sales boost, particularly on non-perishable items like alcohol, wrapping paper and gifts. Set a budget for presents and purchase everything as early as possible to avoid the Christmas Eve panic-shop. If you're feeling crafty,

you could even gift homemade items like jam and cookies.

It's obvious to say you should only spend what you have saved, but this isn't always possible. So, if you must borrow, then at least find a credit card that has a good rate, and perhaps even a cashback offer, rather than signing up impulsively to a high-interest store card. You should also do everything in your power to stop 'post-Christmas party' 1am spending - £100 on a novelty jumper is not a smart investment.

Lastly, remember the point of Christmas is not just about drinking too much mulled wine, show-off gifts and looking cute in your Christmas Day onesie. Although these things are important, it's primarily about spending time with those you love and who love you...honestly.

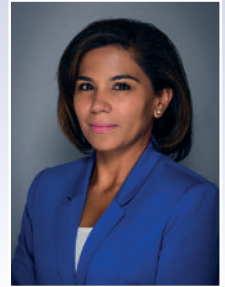


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CARDLESS CASH

Gone are the days when you were required to carry wads of notes on your person at all times – and now even debit cards are falling by the wayside in favour of new mobile technology. In future, being caught in a bind without cash or card won't be a problem – if you've still got your phone to hand, your cash reserves can be replenished in no time.

Life doesn't wait for you to prepare yourself before it throws a curveball, and being stranded someplace without any money is a thought to send shivers down the spines of even the most resourceful of people. But while in days gone by it was necessary to have at least a debit card to access funds at an ATM, more and more banks are giving customers the tools to get cash out with the sole help of a simple code sent straight to their mobile phone.

The service, named GetCash, allows users to take out up to £130 per day. Customers can use their banking app to request a six-digit pin number which is then sent to their phone and can be entered into the cash machine in order for the money to be released.

The pin codes issued are valid for three hours and added security is provided by the fact that customers can only make use of their GetCash app twice a day to deter fraudsters looking to drain your cash quickly.

In an era where phones can double up as debit cards, and pin numbers are becoming a thing of the past, will the advent of GetCash prompt a rise in people leaving home without liquid cash, safe in the knowledge that they'll be able to access their funds come rain or shine? It just might... although remember to keep your mobile phone charged.

ROAD TO RUSSIA: ACCESS GRANTED

World Cup qualifying has been secured, and as a nation, we have never been less excited. **VISION** looks at the teams England will be battling with for global glory.

After another untroubled qualifying campaign, England secured their berth at next year's World Cup in Russia, yet uninspiring performances mean the Three Lions' chances of emerging as top dogs in July 2018 matches every bit the 25/1 odds most bookies are offering.

Of course, we have many to raise our game, but just as Rome wasn't built in a day, nor will Moscow be conquered in a month of the world's biggest sports tournament; that is, unless drastic improvements can be made in all areas of the England team.

And manager Gareth Southgate's formation headaches will be made all the worse when he looks at the sides we might face. Consider World champions Germany, Euros winners Portugal, the might of Spain, the technical wizardry of France. Mull over Belgium's golden generation, and while Brazil and Argentina had very different qualifying campaigns, both will be there and both always perform on the biggest stage.

Of the others – England included – who consider themselves in with an outside chance, Colombia, Poland, Mexico, Nigeria and Uruguay can give anyone a good game, and let's not talk about Iceland... let's just not do that.

At the time of going to print, the play-offs and remaining African fixtures left the fortune of some sides still in the laps of the football Gods, and divine intervention is certainly something England will be hoping for if next year is to blow the full-time whistle on more than five decades of hurt.

QUALIFIED: Russia (as hosts), Belgium, Germany, England, Spain, Poland, Serbia, Iceland, France, Portugal, Brazil, Uruguay, Argentina, Colombia, Mexico, Costa Rica, Panama, Iran, Japan, South Korea, Saudi Arabia, Nigeria and Egypt.

PLAY-OFFS: Switzerland, Italy, Croatia, Denmark, Northern Ireland, Sweden, Republic of Ireland, Greece, Peru, Honduras, Australia and New Zealand (with three African groups yet to be decided).



Photo credit: Gettyimages

WINTER WARMERS

The spectator sports to look out for as the cold weather sets in.

ICE HOCKEY

In the US ice hockey is so popular it is referred to simply as 'hockey', but despite receiving very little attention in the media, Britain's Elite Ice Hockey League is alive and pucking. With teams like the Guildford Flames and Milton Keynes Lightning in action every weekend, ice hockey makes for a fun and reasonably cheap night out.

SNOW POLO

If you fancy a day out in the new year that combines snow, people-watching and rugged men bashing around balls while on horseback, then you'd best head to St Moritz in January for the 34th Snow Polo World Cup... or, err, catch it on the telly.

Since 1985, teams from around the world have competed for the coveted Cartier Trophy on little more than a frozen lake – upper-class sporting debauchery at its finest.

CURLING

When Team GB's women glided their way to victory at the 2002 Winter Olympics at Salt Lake City, it reinvigorated the nation's interest in this

historic sport.

Curling, invented in medieval Scotland and often referred to as 'chess on ice', makes for a surprisingly nail-biting watch, and could become your guiltiest of pleasures.

CRICKET

Alternatively, if none of that warms the cockles, why not ward off the cold chill this winter by getting stuck into the Ashes. In typical style, the England squad has been beset by problem, from a lack of form by its top order batsmen to a lack of control by all-rounder Ben Stokes on a night out in Bristol. If we stand any chance of retaining the Ashes and avoiding a similar 5-0 whitewash to the one we experienced 'down under' in 2013/14, we'll need to start well at The Gabba in Brisbane.

The Aussies, displaying all their usual humility, are confident of home success, but should perhaps look at their own recent Test record, included in which is an embarrassing defeat in Bangladesh, before claiming the Ashes will have a new home come January 2018.



Good Little

RUNNER

Forget the Ferrari and let go of your Lamborghini dream – sometimes you just need a nice little motor that can clock the miles without causing a car crash in your wallet. And when it comes to affordable automobiles in the UK, you can't go wrong with any of these new and bank account-friendly vehicles.

The **VAUXHALL VIVA** places the same emphasis on value for money as its predecessors. With every model costing less than £10,500, you get important features like modern safety systems and an economical engine with even the cheapest model, yet not superficial things like alloy wheels.



Even if the **KIA PICANTO** isn't the cheapest model on the list – air-con, Bluetooth and an upgraded engine will all add to the bill – it does have some advantages over its contemporaries: alongside being cheap to run, it has space for four adults and decent boot room left over, making it the ideal city car.



If you can manage without air-con, electric windows and other niceties, a **HYUNDAI i10** could be yours for less than £9,000, and for that amount of cash

you'd be securing a five-door, five-seater vehicle that's perfectly sized for the city dweller.



The cheapest car on this list, the entry-level **DACIA SANDERO ACCESS** costs a shade less than £6,000, but it's by no means skimping. Bigger than a Ford Fiesta, but costing less than a Ford Ka+, the Sandero may not be extravagantly equipped – with even a stereo reserved for the options list – but it does offer robust construction and modern engines with decent fuel economy and impressive reliability.



The **DACIA DUSTER**, meanwhile, comes in at less than half the price of similar-sized SUVs. There are precious few luxuries on board – you won't find air-conditioning or a DAB radio – but with up-to-date safety and security features the Duster may well be the best-rounded and most affordable car currently on Britain's lots.



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