

WORDS
DITCHED
FROM THE
DICTIONARY

ANT & DEC

The dynamic duo back on top

HARRY STYLES

From boyband heartthrob to individual stardom



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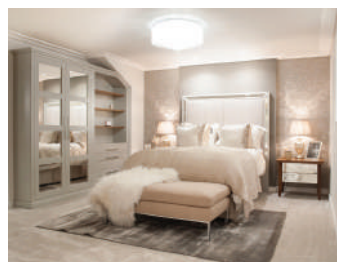


KITCHENS



BATHROOMS

BEDROOMS



INTERIOR FURNISHING



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ACROSS
1. BUMP, 3. GLASSFUL, 9. CANTATA, 10. RABBIT, 11. STRAIGHTAWAY, 13. ABACUS, 15. MERINO, 17. ADVANTAGEOUS,
20. ENNUJ, 21. OBELISK, 22. GUERNSEY, 23. X-MEN
DOWN
1. BACK SEAT, 2. MINOR, 4. LOATHE, 5. SPREADEAGLED, 6. FERRARI, 7. LARK, 8. MANIPULATION, 12. FORSAKEN,
14. ANDANTE, 16. STROBE, 18. ODUM, 19. BERG

Editor's notes...



Nik Allen, Editor

Hello and welcome to this month's edition of **VISION** Billericay.
I took my wife Kathleen away for a romantic weekend to celebrate Valentine's Day recently. We're newlyweds having only tied the knot last year, and with both of us being short of time due to work, we headed to the Cotswolds.
It was during a leisurely lunch in a village pub that I got talking to a friendly landlord. We discussed all manner of things from football to family before he began telling me about the demise of his village's post office.
It was a little sub post office and it closed its doors for good due to people not using it. It was a classic case of 'use it or lose it'.
This is a common tale across the country. If we want our towns to prosper I think it's important that we shop locally wherever possible.
This magazine features many fantastic family run, independent local businesses that bring money back into the local economy.

When you choose them you're doing something positive for the local community.
In this month's local news, rail commuters faced lengthy delays after balloons got caught on overhead wires, a young boy is set to become Formula 1's next star and Billericay Swimming Pool will be getting a £9million refurb.
I hope you enjoy this month's magazine.

Nik



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They may have had their ups and downs over a long and impressive tenure in the spotlight, but devilish duo Ant and Dec are still going strong, with their sights set firmly on the future.

It's easy to forget that Ant McPartlin and Declan Donnelly started out on the children's television show *Byker Grove* in the early 1990s playing PJ (Ant) and Duncan (Dec) – the names they would adopt for their short-lived pop career. But more impressive than the fact that those two young upstarts have slowly and steadily become television royalty – building an impressive fortune along the way – is how they have maintained their friendship, which shows no sign of waning, even in the face of events that have threatened their superstar careers.

The most recent dramatic turn is the coming to light of Ant's very public struggle with alcohol and prescription drug addiction, along with news that he is to divorce his wife of 11 years, Lisa Armstrong. Naturally, such

a high-profile split has garnered almost daily attention from the press, with rumours abound that his estranged wife is demanding half of his estimated £62million fortune, with other more inflammatory headlines suggesting the TV presenter has already moved on with someone else.

Not even a life crisis can keep the dynamic duo down however, with their relentless work schedules sending the clear message that it is business as usual at Ant and Dec HQ.

In fact, just weeks after leaving rehab Ant was winging his way out to the Australian outback to film *I'm a Celebrity... Get me Out of Here!*, and with the duo's hugely popular *Saturday Night Takeaway* currently in its 16th year, it's clear they are back in the game.

In January, Ant and Dec were the big winners at the National Television Awards as they collected their 17th presenting prize in a row. They also won the inaugural Bruce Forsyth Entertainment Award in memory of the late entertainment icon who died last year, dedicating their accolade to him.

Though visibly delighted to have such an honour bestowed upon them, the bittersweet element of their glory was impossible to hide with Ant holding back tears as he thanked his "best mate" for helping him through a tough 12 months. "I love working with him and that was the one thing... I had a very tough summer last summer, I had to face up to a lot of things and my one thing was just getting back to work and getting back to work with my best mate, and we did it," he said.

This spring, Ant and Dec will return for a landmark 12th season of *Britain's Got Talent*, which will see a whole host of new wannabes fighting for a spot at *The Royal Variety Performance*, along with a sizeable cash sum.

But no dancing dogs, dazzling gymnastics or magic tricks can outshine the true stars of the show – two lads, now in their early forties, who have shown that nothing, not fame, wealth or addiction can stand in the way of true friendship. Take a bow.



NATURAL DISELECTION

THE WORDS BEING DITCHED FROM THE DICTIONARY

It's no secret that children have become technology wizards, with many choosing to play on an iPad or their laptop rather than reading a book or going outside.

The Oxford Junior Dictionary has recognised this change and a panel of experts have decided to remove some words in order to make way for modern technology terms. Several of the words that have been removed are nature related, including otter, acorn and buttercup.

A petition was started by Terry Jackson to get these words reinstated and at the time of going to print had more than 190,000 signatures. He argued that by removing words to do with nature, children will, rather than care for the earth, be more insular and lead to less healthy lives.

The debate made national TV with teacher Samantha James and broadcaster Yasmeen Khan appearing on *Good Morning Britain* to debate the subject. Samantha supported the removal of the

words and said we need to move with the times. Whereas Yasmeen argued that children need to know these words in order to connect with the outside world rather than technology and social media.

The words we use are changing, with several slang and technology-focused ones becoming widely used.

Some of the words being removed from The Oxford Junior Dictionary

Acorn, adder, ash, beech, bluebell, buttercup, catkin, conker, cowslip, cygnet, dandelion, fern, heron, ivy, kingfisher, lark, mistletoe, nectar, newt, otter, pasture

Some of the words being added to The Oxford Junior Dictionary

Blog, chatroom, attachment, block graph

heron
cowslip
newt
mistletoe
otter
nectar
catkin
bluebell
cygnet
dandelion
Acorn
adder
fern
beech
conker
lark
pasture
ash
kingfisher
buttercup

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HOME & DIY

Home Spa

TIPS TO TURN YOUR HUMBLE BATHROOM INTO A SPA RETREAT

DIGITAL SHOWERS

Electric showers have come on a long way from those bulky white boxes that promised a rainstorm but delivered a trickle. Nattily disguised in a simple chrome fixture, nowadays these high-tech beauties have a built-in thermostat for exact temperature control, with some even boasting LED lights which correlate to the temperature.

WET ROOMS

Ideal for a small bathroom and far more attractive than a cubicle, wet rooms transform an average second bathroom into something really special. Yes, there is a lot to be done in terms of waterproofing, tiling and the instalment of a very good drainage system, but it's worth it for the wow factor alone.

MARBLE TILES

If you're in the market for something really luxurious, it has to be marble. Once prohibitively expensive, you can now buy large format marble tiles which are easy to install and look superb.

HIS & HERS SINKS

Be the envy of your friends with a set of 'his and hers' sinks - perfect for the couple who love to glam up and go out together, or even a large family always fighting for bathroom time.

WHIRLPOOL BATH

If you've got the space, go for a corner jacuzzi bath - plenty of room for two. If you're a bit tighter on square inches, even a regular-sized tub which bubbles and massages on demand is almost as good as a spa jacuzzi... without the faint chlorine smell and hairy strangers.

SHOWER STEAM ROOM

Possibly even more luxurious than the whirlpool bath, a steam shower cabin is as close as you will get to a genuine spa experience. If you have the space, pick a model which is big enough to house a stool or built-in bench; but equally, one which is no bigger than a regular cubicle will still offer you hours of steamy pleasure.



HOW TO BUILD A



Gallery walls have been taking the design world by storm recently. Whether it's big or small, creating a gallery with your favourite photos or prints can instantly change the feel of any space. But what's the best way to design a gallery for the space you have and how do you put it up?

Putting up a gallery wall isn't a quick five-minute job. It takes time, preparation and patience to get the perfect finish. You don't want any wonky frames or huge gaps.

First, you need to decide on the space you want to use for your gallery wall and choose your frames. If you have a smaller space it would be best to buy smaller frames in a few sizes. However, if you have a larger space, you can buy a couple of larger frames mixed with some smaller ones.

Once you have your frames, get a roll of craft

paper and make templates of each of the frames. Then, use Blu Tack to put them up on the wall. You can then move them around to your heart's content until you are happy with the overall look. This way, you won't be making hundreds of holes in the wall unnecessarily.

Next, fill your frames with your chosen prints or photos. To make sure your images work together, choose pieces with a theme. This could be a certain colour for example. But remember, the most important thing is that you love it. Gallery walls are unique and reflect the personality of the person who created them.

Hanging your frames on the wall is the most important part of this process. It's recommended that you always start by hanging the largest piece first. Once you've done that, build off from the centre outward with the smaller frames.



Photo credit: www.indoorlyfe.com



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HOME & DIY

Photo credit: www.irenebydesignblog.com

WHY WE'LL ALL BE GOING ULTRA VIOLET, PANTONE'S COLOUR OF THE YEAR

Pantone describes ultra violet as a "provocative and thoughtful purple shade", which, given how surreal the year has been so far, makes it the ideal choice for 2018. Chosen by the colour experts at the Pantone Colour Institute, who spent months analysing everything from fashion, art and entertainment, to design and even food, it is predicted that this will be the shade we'll mostly be rocking until 2019 rolls around.

Purple tones have long been associated with creativity and spirituality. And moving into the specific detail, Pantone 18-3838, to give it its full name, is a cosmic, rich and regal tone - a blue-based shade evocative of galaxies, wild flowers... and also the purple one in Quality Street.

Laurie Pressman, Vice President of the Pantone Colour Institute, said: "The Pantone Colour of the Year has come to mean so much more than 'what's trending' in the world of design; it's truly a reflection of what's needed in our world today."

Though it is a bold colour - Prince being the ultimate purple poster boy - it also has a certain depth and luxuriousness which belie its cool tones. In the home, consider ultra violet upholstery, carpets, vases, lampshades and bed linen, extending the theme to your garden with clematis, verbenas and the odd pot of lavender.

The good news is, unlike last year's chosen colour 'Greenery', Ultra Violet is a fab shade to not only decorate with but wear also. In fact, the catwalks were already awash with ultra violet at the spring/summer shows, so you can expect to see it making its way to the high street very soon - think heavy knits, patent boots, shimmery nail varnishes and anything velvet.

PANTONE 18-3838 Ultra Violet symbolises "experimentation and non-conformity, spurring individuals to imagine their unique mark on the world, and push boundaries through creative outlets", so go big, go bold, go Ultra Violet.



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IMPORTANT – ALL PROPERTY OWNERS PLEASE BE AWARE

When a flat roof is replaced there are Part L Building Regulations that the homeowner and the contractor must comply with. **Please call for free information regarding the Part L Law.** The homeowner should also be made aware that insurance companies will no longer accept any liability for any external or internal damage caused by a leaking flat roof which is over 10 years old.

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BAUHAUS IS A VERY FINE HAUS

Get radical with your home interiors by indulging in Germany's pre-World War II design revolution.

If an understanding of the term 'Bauhaus' doesn't spring immediately to mind, being told that it was a radical German art and design school founded in 1919 probably isn't going to help much either.

But in reality, you are already well-versed in Bauhaus design, for it is in the very bricks and mortar around you, and much more besides.

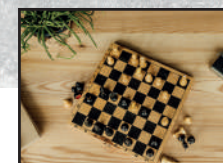
Helmed by Walter Gropius, who had a vision of bridging the gap between art and industry by combining crafts and fine arts, what began as a small private school turned into a movement which laid the foundations of modern design as we know it today. Gropius wanted designers and architects

to embrace the age of the machine, rejecting fussy ornamentation for mass-produced simplicity with an appreciation for raw materials. This led to the use of steel frames in chairs and tables, exposed marble and brickwork, the popularity of sans-serif typefaces, and the trend for geometry (curves are a waste of space apparently).

But despite the popularity of the movement, not everyone was a fan, and as the school thrived it caught the attention of the Nazis who forced it to close in the 1930s. Little did they know though, that the fleeing of all those innovators and teachers only spread the word of Bauhaus across Europe, ensuring its enduring legacy today.

How to be more Bauhaus:

- > Go monochrome
- > Reveal your home's raw materials (floor boards, brick, cement)
- > Keep decoration simple with splashes of colour
- > Buy a geometric shelving unit
- > Put up a Bauhaus-inspired poster
- > Add whimsical embellishments like a chess set or spinning top – for as Bauhaus teacher Johannes Itten once said: "Play becomes celebration; celebration becomes work; work becomes play."



HOME & DIY

Photo credit: Gidon Levin/www.dezeen.com



LOCAL NEWS

from your neighbourhood

Beau's in pole position to be a racing great



Britain's next Formula 1 star could be from Billericay if the exploits of 12-year-old Beau Sullivan are anything to go by.

Last month, the budding Jenson Button, who is Beau's favourite driver, won two championships in a go-kart.

Beau's father Stuart said his son has always wanted to be a Formula 1 driver and, once he was big enough to get in a go-kart at the age of 10, his parents took him to Brentwood Karting Development Club.

He said: "They teach you how to handle a kart and, in each session, you go out three times – for a practice, timed qualifying and then a race. Once you're good and quick enough, you're invited to join the junior race league. Last year, he was named Brentwood's rising star out of all the cadets and seniors."

Keen to build on his son's talent, Stuart took his son to Rye House, where Lewis Hamilton began his career and Beau finished second in the club championship. He also competed in Buckmore Park's summer championship last year, finishing in third place.

Stuart cannot wait to see how his son develops, even if he has some safety worries.

Stuart said: "He has had a couple of accidents where he has come off with a bruised back or leg. It can be a dangerous sport but he loves doing it, he's good at it and he's happy so that's the most important thing."

Beau will soon be driving his own kart and is looking for sponsorship. Anyone interested should contact Stuart on 07080 461549.

Swimming pool to be improved as part of council budget

Councillors have approved £9million for an improved Billericay swimming pool as part of Basildon Council's budget.

A £700,000 investment programme for local communities has also been approved as well as action to protect frontline services and modernise residents' services.

Cllr Callaghan, chairman of Basildon Council's policy and resources committee, said: "We are committed to shaping strong communities and vibrant town centres, and to promoting the wellbeing

of our residents.

"We understand that the facilities on offer contribute to how attractive the borough is to live and spend time in, which is why we're committed to investing in a swimming pool which will serve residents for generations to come."

The 2018/19 budget was set at the full council meeting held on February 8.

It is balanced with savings and income generation measures totalling £4.1million and a rise in council tax of 2.98 per cent.



Photo credit: Basildon Council

New outlet opens to drop off unwanted electrical items

A new outlet has been set up in Billericay for residents to drop off unwanted electrical items.

Outlets have been opened across the borough where people can donate unwanted electrical items for refurbishment and reuse.

An outlet has been set up in Billericay library, on the High Street, for small electrical items, including mobile phones and chargers, CD players and radios, and irons and toasters.

Larger items such as fridges, freezers and cookers must be taken to the recycling centre at Barleylands.

Cllr Alan Ball, Basildon Council's chairman of the

regeneration and environment committee, said: "By providing these outlets for unwanted electrical items we will reduce the need and cost of repairable and reusable electrical items needing to be processed for recycling."

"Any items donated that cannot be reused will be recycled. By working with the Lighthouse charity we hope to minimise this and give people the opportunity to purchase these items from lighthouse at reasonable prices."

For more information, visit www.basildon.gov.uk/reuse

Balloons halt trains in their tracks



Photo credit: Twitter Greater Anglia

A bunch of balloons caused long delays on the trains during rush hour recently.

A bunch of gold and black balloons got caught in the overhead wires in the area of Billericay on the morning on February 9 and forced trains to come to a stop while they were removed.

Greater Anglia tweeted a photo of the balloons and said: "Here are the balloons that caused the line blockage this morning."

They later replied to frustrated commuters: "We understand customers are frustrated, we do what we can with informing them etc. Unfortunately, we cannot help if something does get caught in the overhead wires. We have no option other than to remove it safely."

Disruption to the trains started just after 8am and lasted until around 10.30am.



Photo credit: Twitter Hannakins Farm FC

Travellers moved on for third time in two weeks

Billericay has been subject to a number of traveller encampments recently.

A group of travellers were moved on from Crays Hill Recreation Park on February 9.

They vacated the site peacefully overnight after a Section 61 was served.

Since January 29, there have been travellers at Hannakins Farm, Radford Crescent and at the Crays Hill Recreation Park.

Superintendent Nick Morris said: "We continue to offer our thanks to members of the community for their patience.

"I fully understand the frustrations that many members of the public feel, especially in relation to the considerable damage that was caused at Hannakins Farm.

"As I have said previously I would encourage those that witnessed the damage being caused to come forward so that my officers can locate and arrest those that were responsible.

"Whilst I appreciate that the thought of giving evidence may be daunting, it is only by working together that we can take positive action.

"I had officers at Hannakins Farm ready to make arrests but at the time the witnesses were unwilling to identify to us those that were responsible.

"I would like to thank our partners, Basildon Council, for their work with us in securing the Section 61 notice quickly through the courts."

Anyone with information should contact Basildon police station on 101 or Crimestoppers anonymously on 0800 555 111.



Photo credit: Essex Fire

Two dogs die in Grade II listed building fire

Two dogs have died following a fire in a Grade II listed building.

Firefighters were called to the building on Laindon Road on January 21 in the early hours of the morning.

Six fire engines, including one from Billericay, an aerial ladder platform and a water bowser were sent to the scene.

On arrival, firefighters reported that around 20 per cent of the ground floor, first floor and roof were alight and the whole property was filled with smoke.

Watch manager Scott Fretton was one of the first

on the scene.

He said: "Our main priority was to stop the fire spreading.

"Once the fire was out our crews worked to pinpoint hotspots to ensure the scene was safe, and by 6.40am we were sure that the fire had been completely extinguished.

"The house has suffered around 30 per cent fire damage as well as smoke and water damage.

"Unfortunately, two dogs were in the property at the time of the fire and sadly died during the incident."

BILLERICAY TOWN FC

New signing strengthens side

Ambitious Billericay Town have continued strengthening with the signing of Luke Rooney.

The 27-year-old joins the Isthmian League leaders from Phoenix Rising – Arizona's only professional soccer franchise – where he played alongside Chelsea legend Didier Drogba in the United Soccer League – the second league of US football.

Rooney progressed through the youth system at Gillingham, turning out over 50 times for the Gills before he signed for a six-figure fee for Swindon Town.

The winger also played for Maidstone United, Luton Town and Ebbsfleet United at non-league level before returning to the league with Crawley Town in 2015. Rooney crossed the Atlantic in 2016.

It is hoped that Rooney will be a key player as the Blues fight for glory on four fronts.

Elsewhere the club have also secured the services of midfielder Calum Butcher on loan from Mansfield Town until the end of the season. He spent time with Ipswich Town and Southend United before joining Tottenham, all at youth level.

Butcher spent a season in Danish football before joining Hayes & Yeading and then moving to Dundee United. He returned to England with Burton Albion and spent last season with Millwall where he made 30 appearances.

Finally, the club are hoping for a bumper turn out as the season draws to a conclusion. Glenn Tamplin's men are in action five times at the AGP arena and also have the tantalising prospect of a cup final to look forward to when they take on Chelmsford City at Colchester United's Community Stadium in the final of the Essex Senior Cup. The Blues crushed Romford 6-1

with a hat-trick from Billy Bricknell to book their final date.



Photo credit: Nicky Hayes Photography



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GOING UP

IN STYLE

With a host of music awards, a new solo album and a high-profile Hollywood debut to his name, former boyband heartthrob Harry Styles' showbiz career is only moving in one direction.

Given his lengthy stint in music, it's easy to forget that former One Direction member Harry Styles is still just 24 years old. But ever since *X Factor* judge Nicole Scherzinger suggested that the floppy-haired teen get together with a quartet of fellow singing scamps for the reality show's seventh series, Styles' career has taken off in a way most people – even those making their mark in showbusiness – can only dream of.

Those memories of One Direction as a fresh-faced fivesome may well have been dashed by the 2014 exit of Zayn Malik in pursuit of edgier audiences. And while Malik's former bandmates – Styles, Louis Tomlinson, Liam Payne and Niall Horan – have all each gone their separate ways, there's little doubt that it's Styles who has risen highest from the ashes of contemporary pop's most well-loved boy band.

Despite leaving his solo resurgence a little later than the others, Styles' self-titled debut album came hot on the heels of the chorus-heavy ballad *Sign of the Times* – his first individual music offering since 1D's split. With his glossy shoulder-length hair and perfect pout emulative of rock legend Mick Jagger, Styles established himself as the fashion-conscious soft rock balladeer, compared to the acoustic or R'n'B leanings of his past bandmates.

Not content with his established place in the global music industry, however, in 2017 Styles began to look further afar in his search for entertainment domination. That chance came as part of Christopher Nolan's epic World War Two drama *Dunkirk*. Starring opposite Hollywood heavyweights

such as Mark Rylance, Cillian Murphy and Tom Hardy, Styles proved a natural fit on the silver screen.

Director Nolan even remarked on how the aspiring leading man had won the role by virtue of the audition process – and that he was unaware of the level of fame courted by One Direction members until Styles was on-board, where red carpet events were mobbed by his legions of fans. But some die-hard Styles aficionados were shocked to see their hero shear his trademark tresses in preparation for the role.

With his foot firmly in the films industry's door, 2018 looks to be shaping up as the year that Styles takes things to the next level. After embarking on a world tour that hits Europe, Australia, Asia and the Americas, it's widely thought that Styles will return to the studio to prepare his sophomore album. But as with the protracted release of his debut – or indeed the extent of his role in *Dunkirk* – there's sure to be an element of secrecy surrounding the star's upcoming plans.

One thing, however, is for sure. As with the rest of his former bandmates, Styles' unstoppable trajectory from One Direction's simple harmonies into the upper echelons of individual entertainment royalty looks set to outstrip even early defector Zayn, and could well scoop major plaudits from both the music and film world alike.



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GOOD Scents

HOW TO DESIGN YOUR VERY OWN AROMATHERAPY GARDEN

The word aromatherapy may evoke luxurious but pricey massages, decadent bath oils, and tiny bottles of precious elixir, but in reality it's very easy to plant and grow your own aromatic herbs and plants, creating a space that is fresh, fragrant and inexpensive.

To decide what vegetation suits your needs, think about the space you have and what kind of fragrances will bring you the most pleasure. If you have an abundance of land you can create a colourful carpet of plants and flowers, offering a wealth of therapeutic properties. Basil, mint, rosemary, chamomile, lemon balm and thyme are all herbs that will thrive given enough room. You can also include fragrant shrubs like lilac, rose and mock orange, along with vines such as honeysuckle, jasmine and wisteria, which are great for generating different layers of scent and colour.

For those who have less space, it is still easy

to grow a wealth of perfumed plants in a window box. Just choose a spot which receives at least six hours of sunlight a day, keep them well watered and regularly pruned, and select plants which have similar needs in terms of water and sunlight. Great options for your window box include basil, lavender, rosemary, mint, jasmine, oregano and rose.

Once your plants are flourishing all you need to decide is what to do with them. The easy answer is 'nothing', for even a stroll through a garden fragrant with honeysuckle and rose, or a gentle waft of jasmine through the window, can be soothing in itself. Herbs like rosemary and basil of course are great to use when cooking; chamomile and mint can be steeped in hot water as tea, while lavender is ideal for a relaxing bath.

By the end of summer it is possible to have a veritable apothecary on your doorstep, which can be harvested and dried to enjoy when the cold sets in.



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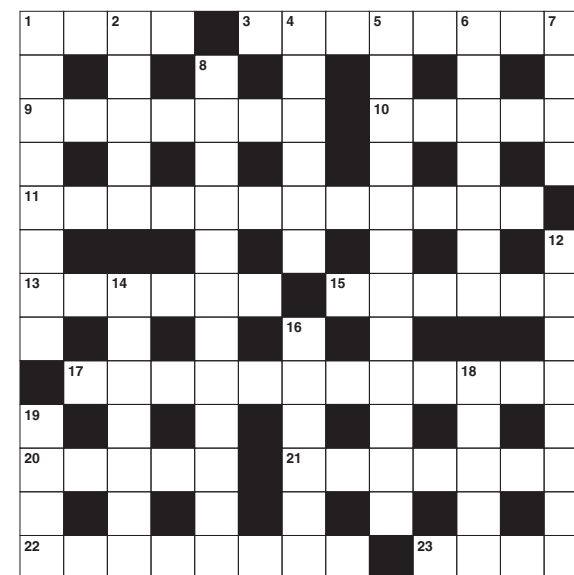
ACROSS

1. Collide with (4)
3. Full measure of a drink (8)
9. Short musical composition (7)
10. Less common (5)
11. Immediately (12)
13. Calculating machine (6)
15. Sheep known for its wool (6)
17. Beneficial (12)
20. Feeling of boredom (5)
21. Tapering stone pillar (7)
22. One of the Channel Islands (8)
23. Superhero film based on comic characters (1-3)

DOWN

1. Chair at the rear of a vehicle (4,4)
2. Lesser (5)
4. Hate (6)
5. Stretched out completely (12)
6. Italian sports car (7)
7. Engage in spirited fun (4)
8. Act of influencing someone deviously (12)
12. Abandoned (8)
14. Moderately slow tempo (music) (7)

16. Flashing light (6)
18. General hatred (5)
19. Mass of floating ice (4)



DID YOU KNOW

- Coca Cola originally contained cocaine
- In eastern Africa you can buy beer brewed from bananas
- Apples are more effective at waking you up in the morning than coffee
- Plastic bottles were first used for soft drinks in 1970
- Hawaii is the only state in the US that grows coffee
- Wine is sold in tinted bottles because it spoils when exposed to light
- Instant coffee was invented in 1901
- After petrol, coffee is the largest item bought and sold
- Diet Coke was introduced in 1982

SUDOKU

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

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KIDS

5 ALIVE

It can feel like an uphill struggle getting your children to consume their 'five a day', let alone actually enjoy the experience. But give these handy tips and tricks below a try, and see if they don't help your little one stave off hunger and keep healthy at the same time.

1. HEALTHY JUNK FOOD

Try making your own healthy junk food using good quality lean meat for burgers; and swap desserts that are high in refined sugars with easy-to-make fresh fruit ice lollies made from fruit juice and pureed fruits.

2. PROPER PROVENANCE

Some kids can spot a hidden mushroom a mile off, so sometimes it's best to be upfront about fruit and vegetables. Explain to them where their food has come from, explaining why each thing is so good for them, and you may well get them more interested in what they are eating.

3. APPEARANCE

Try to make sure your child's food not only tastes good but looks good too. Mini portions, chicken skewers or bite-sized pieces of fruit will look enticing, whilst keep your kids healthy at the same time.

4. THE FRIDGE SHELF

Avoid empty calorie snacks like crisps or soft drinks and keep a supply of healthy snacks on hand. A low shelf in the fridge with cut-up fresh fruit and other healthy foods means that hungry children have somewhere to go that's easy to get to and packed with nutritious nibbles.

5. GET INVOLVED

Children love the thrill of assembling their own food, so why not lay ingredients out in bowls and let your youngsters fill and fold their own wraps, or choose their favourite toppings for tasty homemade pizzas.

Most children adore cooking, and tasks like squeezing fresh orange juice or cracking eggs are well within the capabilities of a budding Jamie Oliver, no matter how young. It's amazing how being involved in the planning and preparation of a meal can stimulate a child's appetite.



HEALTH & FITNESS

Gorgeous GUTS

Feeling bloated and under the weather? Well look to within for the answer, as here are the dos and don'ts of balancing your internal bacteria.

DO fill up on fruit and veg, particularly those that are prebiotic and contain ingredients that bacteria feed on. These include asparagus, bananas, garlic, Jerusalem artichoke, kiwi, mushroom and onions.

DON'T overdo the antibiotics. Not only does taking too many antibiotics make you more susceptible to certain bacterial infections, they also disrupt the integrity of the intestinal microbiome which can leave your immune system even more vulnerable.

DO consider a probiotic supplement.

But **DON'T** be fooled by marketing. Some brands would have you believe the best supplement is the one with the most bacteria, but actually the strains of bacteria are more vital. So choose ones that contain *L. acidophilus*, *B. longum* and *B. bifidum*, and offer an effective delivery system.

DO load up on probiotic foods. Probiotic-rich foods, unlike prebiotic, actually contain new bacteria to boost your gut microbes. These include cultured dairy products like buttermilk, yogurt, kefir and cheese, along with fermented vegetables such as kimchi, sauerkraut and lacto-fermented pickles.

DON'T overdo the junk food. Unsurprisingly, highly-processed foods don't encourage a healthy gut, and often contain ingredients which suppress 'good' bacteria, or increase 'bad'.

DO stay hydrated. When it comes to keeping everything healthy in your tummy, water is your friend, helping food move effectively through your intestines and maintaining an optimum environment for bacteria.

DON'T fear the four Ks. Like the Kardashians of the fermented food world, Kefir, Kombucha, 'Kraut and Kimchi are a formidable probiotic force. Having said that, some may find the idea of fermented spicy cabbage (Kimchi), fizzy fermented tea (Kombucha) and slightly sour-tasting yogurt drink (Kefir) a little overwhelming. However, once over the initial shock, these all taste delicious and will do wonders for the digestive system, leaving you with a glow and sparkle to rival the real Kardashian ladies... like, literally.





make up HACKS

GET NATURAL CONTOURING THE EASY WAY

Find the perfect spot every time for your blush or bronzer by placing an eyeliner pencil just below your cheekbone to get the right angle, and brush above that line. Instant accentuation.

MAKE YOUR OWN LIP GLOSS

Never throw away a broken eyeshadow powder again; simply mix it with Vaseline for an 'on the spot' lip shine.

TURN A PENCIL EYELINER INTO GEL

This may sound crazy, but if you hold an ordinary eye pencil in a lighter or candle flame for one second, then let it cool down for 15 seconds, you will end up with a deep, smudgy gel effect. Black magic.

REVIVE DRIED-UP MASCARA

Don't bin that dried out tube just yet, simply add a few drops of saline solution for instant va-va-voom.

MAKE LIPSTICK LAST LONGER

Tired of your lipstick letting you down? Simply cover your finished lips with a tissue which you then dust with translucent powder to set the colour.

WING IT

If you struggle with steady hands when applying eyeliner, simply employ the help of a teaspoon to create a wonderful wing effect. Start your eyeliner as you would for a cat eye look, pressing the rounded side of the spoon against your eyelid, moving it outwards to create your fab flick.

COVER UP DARK CIRCLES LIKE A PRO

Rather than follow the crescent line of your eye bags, draw a triangle shape with concealer from the edges of your lashes down to your cheekbone and blend, blend, blend.

NEVER HAVE LIPSTICK ON YOUR TEETH AGAIN

Have gorgeous dark lips and an equally lovely smile by popping your finger in your mouth after applying lipstick, close your lips around your finger and pull it out.

CURL YOUR LASHES IN NO TIME AT ALL

Make lash curling a doddle by heating your curler up with a gentle blast from a hairdryer. Not too hot though.

NAIL THAT CUPID'S BOW

For shapely lips, 'X' marks the spot. Use your lip liner to draw an 'X' on your upper lip, apply your lipstick using the cross as a guide and prepare to be kissed.

SMELL LIKE AN ANGEL ALL DAY LONG

Quit dousing yourself in scent, and instead apply to your pulse points for all-day aroma. These include: behind your ear, your wrist, base of throat, inside elbow and behind your knees.

CREATE CONTOURS WITH JUST BLUSH

If you're not ready for full-on contouring, you can still enhance your face's natural shape by applying pink blush on cheekbones, temples and brow bones.

CONCEAL THOSE PIMPLES

Make spots disappear by applying concealer, topped by foundation and finished with a touch of powder. Abracadabra, gone.

BOOST YOUR MANICURE

Forgo the layer of clear base and instead apply white nail varnish followed by your colour of choice. You'll be amazed at how the colour pops with this simple trick.





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LUNCH



A LA CARTE



SUNDAY

fine dining

Impress your dinner date(s) with these tips on how to tackle a restaurant wine list like an expert. Cheers!

Never choose the second bottle on the list

It's a well-known fact that the second wine on any list usually has the highest price margin. So, either go for the cheapest bottle which may be slightly less quality but better value, or splash out on something a bit pricier.

Familiarise yourself with regions

Fancy something bold and fruity? Go for an Australian wine. Or if you're feeling a little more restrained and subtle, select a sophisticated French Merlot or a dry Italian Gavi. South African Sauvignon Blancs are known to be gorgeously zesty and bright, while you can't beat a robust Chilean red.

Consider buying by the glass

In general, it is better value to buy by the bottle over the glass. However, if you're in the kind of establishment that has more expensive wine available by the glass, it's more pleasurable to have one glass of dazzling wine over an entire bottle of mediocre plonk.

Go by your coffee tastes

If you like espresso, opt for an oaked Chardonnay or Cabernet Sauvignon. If you're crazy for

cappuccinos, you're more likely a Merlot or Sauvignon Blanc quaffer. And if you love a latte, you'll love a Pinot Grigio.

Don't be afraid to try something new

Wine lists are in general fairly predictable, so if you're in a French restaurant and nestled among the usual suspects is an unusual non-appellation Chenin Blanc from the Loire, chances are that someone simply loves it enough to stick it on the list.

Consult your waiter

Don't be afraid to ask. It doesn't make you look like you don't know what you're talking about; in fact, it shows you care enough to find the perfect wine for your other half's double cheeseburger with extra fries. How impossibly romantic.



Experience a real Mediterranean welcome

Just off from the main buzz of Billericay High Street sits this welcome new restaurant serving traditional Turkish cuisine.

What sets Mirabel apart from the other Turkish restaurants popping up across Essex is it's laid back and family friendly atmosphere. There is no stuffiness and you immediately feel welcome.

The setting is perfect for large groups as well as being intimate enough to enjoy great food and company for couples, as well as families.

Serving up large portions of all the favourite Turkish dishes including Chicken Shish, Moussaka

and Iskender, there is sure to be something for everyone.

There is an extensive drinks and cocktail menu, and the restaurant welcomes diners to enjoy the bar after their meal – where of a weekend there is a DJ and belly dancers for a real Mediterranean feel!

Mirabel would be the perfect place to treat someone special for Valentine's day, or to dine out with the family for Mother's day.



CHIN OR BIN?

We've all chanced our hand on a bit of grub that may have crept a day or two over that hallowed 'Best Before' date – but what do these dates mean, and are they arbitrary or actually all-important?

USE BY The 'use by' date is about safety and the most important date to take note of. Foods can be eaten (and most can be frozen) up until the use by date, but not after. You will see use by dates on food that goes off quickly, such as some meat products or ready-prepared salads. For the use by date to be a valid guide, you must carefully follow storage instructions.

BEST BEFORE The 'best before' date is about quality, not safety. The food will be safe to eat after this date, but may not be at its best. Its flavour and texture might not be as good. The best before

dates appear on a wide range of frozen, dried, tinned and other foods, but will only be accurate if the food is stored according to the instructions on the label.

FREEZING Many people believe food can only be frozen on the day of purchase, but you can safely freeze most foods right up to the use by date – although it would be good to freeze it as soon as you know you aren't going to use it before that date expires. Do not eat, use or freeze any food after the use by date.

THE SNIFF TEST Unfortunately, you can't decide whether to trust out-of-date food just by sniffing it. Food can look and smell fine even after its use by date, but that doesn't mean it's safe to eat – it could still be contaminated. You cannot see, smell or taste the bugs that cause food poisoning.



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WHAT'S ON *in your area*



WHAT'S ON

High Street Litter Pick

Billericay Town Council, The Loft, Crown Yard, High Street, Billericay, CM12 9BX
Saturday, March 3, 9.30am – 11am



Billericay Town Council will be holding a Litter Pick in the High Street, as part of The Great British Spring Clean.

If you would like to take part in our High Street litter pick then please meet us at the Town Council Offices at 9.15am - all equipment will be provided.

Charity Lunch

Billericay Methodist Church, Western Road, CM12 9DT

Saturday, March 10, 12.30pm – 1.30pm

A snack lunch and drink for £4.50. The proceeds will be divided between Prostate Cancer UK and SNAP (Special Needs and Parents). There is no need to book.

Billericay Ladies Probus Club

The Mount Avenue Banqueting Suite, Mount Avenue, CM13 2NS

Monday, March 12

We meet on the second Monday of the month for lunch at The Mount Avenue Banqueting Suite, Hutton. We have speakers, quizzes, day trips, holidays, coffee mornings and garden parties, weather allowing.

For details please call Jenny on 01277 633115.

Charities Table Sale

Mayflower Hall, Chapel Street, Billericay, CM12 9LR

Saturday, March 17, 9.30am – noon

Billericay United Reformed Church is holding a Charities Tables Sale. There will be items for sale to raise money for local and national charities.

Items for sale will include cakes, jams, handicraft, toiletries, jewellery, books, bric-a-brac and greetings cards. Refreshments will also be available.

Gone Too Soon Bereavement Support Group

Reids, 66 - 68 Laindon Road, Billericay, CM12 9LD

Monday, March 19, 7pm – 9pm

Gone Too Soon is a monthly bereavement support group for parents who have lost a son or daughter. During the meetings there will be at least one counsellor to facilitate and support the sessions. For more information, please contact Linda on 07387 805406 or email lyn-currie@hotmail.co.uk

Men's Comedy Night with Paul Kerensa

Billericay Town Football Club, Blunts Wall Road, Billericay, CM12 9SA

Monday, March 26, 8pm – 10.30pm



Paul is an award-winning stand-up comedian and comedy writer. He writes for TV including *Miranda*, *Not Going Out* and *Top Gear* and is a regular on BBC Radio 2 with Chris Evans.

Bring a friend and get a half-price ticket. To purchase tickets, visit www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/mens-comedy-night-forging-men-billericay-tickets-42418965267

Easter Tea Party

Chantry Way Community Centre, Chantry Way, Billericay, CM11 2BB

Thursday, March 29, 2pm – 3.30pm

Forget Me Not Memory Café is a free not-for-profit community group that offers mind stimulating activities for those diagnosed with dementia and other memory problems related to a stroke, depression, loneliness and their carers.

Join us for a musical afternoon with entertainment from The Ladybirds, plus refreshments.

For tickets, visit www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/easter-tea-party-tickets-42592175343

Going, going, GONE

FIVE PLACES YOU SHOULD VISIT BEFORE IT'S TOO LATE

You may think you have your whole life to travel the world and see all that it has to offer, but you might need to hop on a plane sooner than you think. Global changes are causing some of the most magnificent sights to vanish. It's time to start planning your trip to bucket list destinations before it's too late.

The Maldives

The Maldives are one of the most picturesque locations in the world with its crystal-clear waters and soft sand. It is also one of the lowest nations in the world with more than 80 per cent of the island less than one metre above sea level. The islands are in danger from the rising waters and could soon cease to exist.

The Alps, Europe

Winter sports fans will need to get their skis on if they want to visit The Alps. The mountains could soon be devoid of snow and ice due to climate change.

Great Barrier Reef, Australia

The largest coral reef in the world is under threat. Environmental changes have been steadily damaging the Great Barrier Reef for years and it's thought the natural wonder could be destroyed within the next 100 years.

Cape Town, South Africa

Cape Town is facing a huge water crisis and could eventually run out completely. 'Day Zero', the date when they might have to turn off most taps, has been set for April 16 this year in a bid to tackle the shortage.

Venice, Italy

Known as one of the most romantic cities in the world, Venice is recognised for its canals and bridges. However, reports indicate the city is sinking five times faster than anyone thought. Rising sea levels and waves of tourists are also speeding up the damage.



SMART MOTORWAYS

Driving on the motorway during rush hour can be a driver's worst nightmare at times. Congestion and accidents can all equate to miles of standstill traffic and long delays, but smart motorways could be the answer. Reducing speed limits to ease congestion and closing or opening lanes to allow for the traffic to flow freely are some of the many ways smart motorways use technology to avoid congestion.

A smart motorway is a section of a motorway that has traffic management methods to make your journey a little more bearable when it's busy. These include using the hard shoulder as a lane and setting variable speed limits to control the flow of traffic and reduce the risk of standstill traffic.

Drivers face stricter fines, however, as

permanently switched on speed cameras were recently launched on the new M1 smart motorway. The cameras have been installed in a bid to crack down on speeding, after one driver was caught travelling along the stretch at 128mph last year. It's the law that wherever a speed limit is displayed, it is adhered to, even on the motorway.

The first smart motorway scheme opened on the M42 in 2006 and has proved to ease traffic and create a better driving experience. Analysis of data showed that journey reliability had improved by 22 per cent and accidents had reduced by more than half.

Parts of the M25, M1, M4 and M6 to name a few have already been converted into smart motorways with another 480 miles of smart motorway lanes being planned.



THE SPORT RICH LIST



SPORT

The big earners from the last year revealed... "Getting paid £250,000 a week, for kicking a sheep's means its stars are now being paid more than ever before, and truly astounding amounts for what prowess to entrepreneurial levels?

1 Cristiano Ronaldo
(non-mover)
Earnings for the year: £69million (£43m through sport, £26m through endorsements).

Like him or loathe him, it was an astounding year for Ronaldo. Off the back of Portugal's unexpected Euro 2016 triumph, Ron became the most marketable sportsman on the planet, with a wage packet to suit. He also clinched La Liga and Champions League glory with Madrid, but no money in the world will ever compensate for that dreadful bust unveiled at Aeroporto Cristiano Ronaldo in his native Madeira Islands.



2 LeBron James
(up 1)
Earnings for the year: £63million (£23m through sport, £40m through endorsements).

NBA star LeBron James is always near the top of rich lists, and 2017 was another stellar year for the 33-year-old.

Interestingly, the Cleveland Cavaliers hotshot earned almost twice as much from product endorsements in 2017 than he did from basketball itself, further evidence, as if it was needed, of the power of sports brands.



3 Lionel Messi
(down 1)
Earnings for the year: £59million (£39m through sport, £20m through endorsements).

A quiet year for Messi on the pitch, relatively speaking, as Barcelona and Spain failed to shine, though his status as a sports icon – with a wage packet to match – only heightened last year.



4 Roger Federer
(non-mover)
Earnings for the year: £47million (£4m through sport, £43m through endorsements).

A couple of years ago people observed the Swiss tennis star's slide from the top, but they reckoned without the battling brilliance of the eight-time Wimbledon champion, and his first victory in SW19 in five years helped cement his place at no.4 on the rich list, even in a sport where endorsements are king.



5 Kevin Durant
(non-mover)
Earnings for the year: £44million (£19m through sport, £25m through endorsements).

Another basketball star sits in the top five, with Kevin Durant of the Golden State Warriors proving the sport's status as the money leader in the US.



THE REST OF THE TOP TEN...

6. Andrew Luck
(American football) (new entry)
Earnings for the year: £37million (£35m through sport, £2m through endorsements).



7. Rory McIlroy (Golf) (new entry)
Earnings for the year: £37million (£12m through sport, £25m through endorsements).



8. Stephen Curry
(Basketball) (new entry)
Earnings for the year: £35million (£9m through sport, £26m through endorsements).



9. James Harden
(Basketball) (new entry)
Earnings for the year: £35million (£19m through sport, £16m through endorsements).



10. Lewis Hamilton (F1) (new entry)
Earnings for the year: £34million (£28m through sport, £6m through endorsements).



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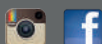
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