

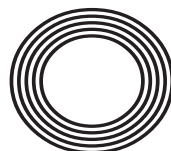
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INVESTMENTS**

**HOWZAT**  
England win nail-biting  
Cricket World Cup

**POP THE PROSECCO**  
*Recipes to help celebrate Prosecco Day*

# *Dame* **MAGGIE SMITH**

The actress still in the limelight at 84



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Vision Magazine Essex

FOUNDER | Nik Allen CREATIVE DIRECTOR | Misha Mistry

CO-ORDINATORS | Rebecca Fryer, Amy Pollard

CONTRIBUTORS | Tabatha Fabray, Dean Shaw, Amelie Gregory

# Editor's notes...



Nik Allen, Editor

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

We now publish magazines in six areas across Essex. All the areas have their own characteristics, but all are facing the same challenge - the battle to save the local high street and shopping centres from extinction.

The problems that the high street is facing were brought home to me when I was visiting a business in one of our areas. A great little store, with very good products and fantastic service.

The family told me their landlord was trying to increase their rent by £4,000 a year - effectively the increase will force this shop to close.

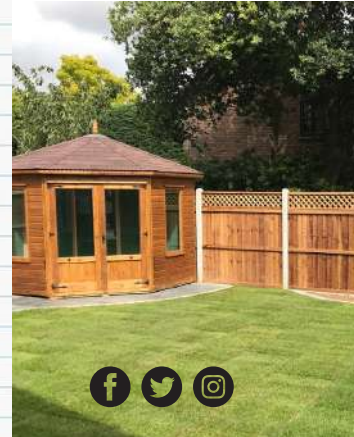
I really don't understand what landlords gain by increasing rent. Surely, they don't want empty units? From the outside looking in, it seems like commercial suicide for landlords.

The demise of the high street isn't solely down to greedy landlords in my opinion. I think that shops may need to look at their opening hours - perhaps adopting a more continental approach of opening later and staying open longer.

It certainly isn't all doom and gloom out there as daily I come across retail businesses doing really well and they tend to be excellent at customer service and have a loyal, local client base.

I'm unashamedly pro-small businesses. They are the heartbeat of our towns and villages and without them we'd all lose something.

Nik



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*"there's a*

# WICKET

*at the cricket..."*

HOW ENGLAND'S INCREDIBLE DEBUT WORLD CUP TRIUMPH WILL GALVANISE OUR YOUNG CRICKETERS OF THE FUTURE

To put England's brilliant cricketing success into perspective, consider this fact – the last time we won a World Cup on home soil in a major sport was way back in 1966 when the men's football side were triumphant.

During that tournament, BBC Sport commentator David Coleman was astounded by a little genius player from Portugal, Eusebio, saying: "Oh my word, have you ever seen anything quite like that?"

Well, the watching audience may have been muttering the very same words on that balmy mid-July Sunday afternoon at Lord's, after an unbelievable climax to a match which reinforced cricket's reputation as a sport that combines docile, statistical nerdery with power-packed nerve-jangling edge-of-seat drama.

And what made this showpiece event a true celebration for the nation was the decision to make the final free-to-air on Channel 4 after a deal was struck with host broadcaster Sky. That meant that all those fans – both young and old – who may normally only have been able to listen to coverage on the radio or catch highlights later on, were able to witness the action unfold, from start to finish.

It swelled the viewing figures to 7.9million in the UK, and while in the short-term the immediate effect will be a surge in interest in the upcoming Ashes series against Australia – which starts on August 1 – the longer-term impact is certainly the more profound, with the success of the Three Lions certain to inspire more youngsters to pick up bat and ball.

The unfolding of events and the lifting of the trophy in final-ball super-over drama will also quieten those whose impression of cricket is stuck somewhere in the W.G. Grace era. Cricket, these days, is a fiercely competitive, modern, fashionable sport. While that familiar clack of leather on willow is a traditional sound that we'll always come back to, there is a drive towards technology that football is only just catching up with.

ICC CRICKET WORLD CUP 2019





HISTORY

# 100 years of WOMEN POLICE OFFICERS

This year marks a century since women police officers were allowed to join the Met, and it's safe to say the force hasn't looked back since.

While many assume it was the capital city that led the way in changing perceptions and levelling inequality as regards the gender of police officers, by the time the Metropolitan Police were assembling their Women Police Officers (WPOs) for duty, the Grantham constabulary had been sending a woman out on the beat for four years.

Edith Smith is officially titled the first female police constable in the UK, and was given her role in August 1915. She had been part of a group called the Women Police Volunteers (WPV), who took it upon themselves to protect the large number of prostitutes who had congregated in the Lincolnshire town, attracted there by the nearby army base.

Duties involved any cases where women, or children were involved, and news of the success of her work quickly spread to London,

where the Met were keen to replicate the positive results.

Smith had to combine police work with duties as a matron nurse in a care home and eventually left the WPV through exhaustion in 1919. Five years later, aged just 44, she was dead from a morphine overdose.

Regardless, her legacy lives on nationwide, and the Met's centenary celebrations have unearthed a number of gems from the archives; notably, a photo from February 1919 showing the first female police officers assembled on Clive Steps in Westminster.

The Met decided to replicate that original image, including recreating the outfits worn by those pioneering ladies. The project took six months to complete, with researchers and modern-day designers needing to use protective gloves when handling the fragile uniforms.

Today, there are almost 8,000 policewomen in the Met, and 40,000 nationally; many still encouraged and inspired by those women who broke the mould 100 years ago.



## the Classic Door company

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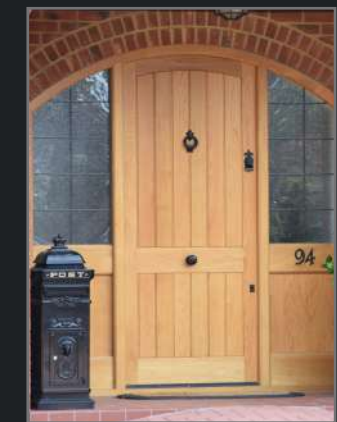
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# Keep the fires Burning

UNDERSTANDING THE OLIVER BURNS WAY



HOME & DIY



The complex, sometimes convoluted language used by interior designers can often result in a reader running for the hills... which rather defeats the object.

So while design house Oliver Burns aren't bereft of overdone adjectives when it comes to offering their clients a taste of ambition and opulence, they are at least fixed in the MO of their craft – namely when you employ these most talked about interior experts, you will get an end product that echoes art, luxury, originality and detail.

The team work with a cross-section of international clients, which itself poses its own problems... after all, the tastes of an LA rap star are quite different from that of a Middle Eastern Sheikh. But in combined ethical design, expert sourcing of materials, and working within a property's shape and image in complementing interior to exterior, the agency have become renowned as one of the very best in their field.

The good news for those of us who are more television set than jet set is that the classic Oliver Burns look is more than achievable, and on a rather more modest budget. Here are five Oliver Burns ideas you might want to consider...



- 1 Mix contemporary finishes with splashes of colour – Walnut wood plus accents of yellow and turquoise offer incredible transition
- 2 Lighting should come from all around – Spread direction of light and use dimmers to create a mellow glow to your room, hiding away extreme brightness or desperate darkness
- 3 Combine textures and be brave – A polished desk will work brilliantly next to a fluffy sofa
- 4 Double stack – A small painting on a unit in front of a large wall print can create a brilliant contrast of emotions and visuals
- 5 Go against convention – A regal table in a modern kitchen can create an effect that is resplendent and rebellious







# ANIMAL MAGIC

If the phrase 'animal print' evokes images of Scary Spice dancing around in leopard-patterned lycra, you may feel some reluctance in embracing the very forward-thinking trend of using this sort of art around your home. But think again, for a tease of zebra stripes or a hint of python scales can really scream 'luxury' in a sea of dull beige and grey colour schemes.

But how do you end up with a home that looks tasteful and inviting, as opposed to one used as a set in *Ace Ventura: Pet Detective*?

The answer is to keep your main palette neutral, while indulging in some pretty wild flourishes of colour. In short, less is more.

Think more in terms of accessories, rather than the main event - a lion rug for example, cheetah print upholstery, or a zebra print bedspread. Another tip is to surround your animal-themed items with materials that hold the natural aesthetics. A leopard print throw teamed with pink velvet curtains is perhaps a step too far, but that same throw surrounded by wood, leather and bamboo creates a sophisticated and luxurious atmosphere.

Animal lovers wishing to embrace this trend need not fret, for no one is expecting you to head out on safari to score any rare skins. Many high-end brands do quality animal print fabric which is entirely synthetic. Though if you would like something more realistic, you can also find cow rawhide which has been printed with another animal's livery.

It goes without saying, this trend is not for the faint of heart, but for those who want to be the king or queen of the jungle, follow your animal instinct.



Photo credit: Shirley Messias/www.houzz.co.uk



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## COLOUR me content



HOME & DIY

Colours have a clever way of making you feel different emotions. That is why it is so important that you pick the right shades when decorating your home.

### The Kitchen

Depending on what you want for this communal space, you can either go with warm or cool tones. Reds and oranges are ideal for those who want this room to be a hub of conversation and laughter whereas blues and whites are more suited to those wanting a clean and calm space.

### The Living Room

Clearly this is a room that you want to feel warm and inviting so earth tones are ideal. Think brown, beige or orange shades that will make people feel welcome and relaxed.

### The Bathroom

The most obvious requirement for a bathroom is that it looks clean and fresh so cool colours are recommended. Try painting the walls white but to avoid the space feeling sterile, inject some colour by using a turquoise shade for your accessories.

### The Bedroom

This is the one room where you want to be able to feel the most relaxed but in a different way to the living room as you also want to be able to feel rejuvenated in the morning when you wake up. Go for calming lavender or pale blues.

### The Dining Room

A space where you want to entertain perhaps? Or simply share your day with your loved ones. Warm tones are essential for this space as colours like red actively stimulate conversation and make people feel relaxed and ready to eat.

### The Study/Home Office

Working from home can be extremely challenging as the urge to simply kick back can become overwhelming. Psychologically, green is the go-to colour for those wanting a space to concentrate in as it is known to boost productivity and creativity.





**W**e've all cleared out coat hangers from the backs of our wardrobe - some, virtual antiques given the length of time they've been there.

But before you throw them away, consider what other uses they may have...

#### ANTI-STATIC STUNNER

Too much static in that jumper? Just slide it through the body of a wire coat hanger. The metal discharges the electricity in the garment and the static is no longer.

#### SUPERB SHOES

Hang not just clothes, but shoes. For this, you will require pliers to snip the bottom, horizontal part of the wire. Then, create a loop in each of the two remaining ends and bend them upwards. Each shoe can then rest on the peaks with the hanger being placed on a rail.

#### BIG BUBBLES, NO TROUBLE

Make a homemade bubble wand. Using a set of needle nose pliers, you need to straighten out and untwist your wire hanger, then work it into a

desired shape. Something circular usually offers the best effect, and consider too it needs to be able to fit into a bucket or flat tray which will hold the bubble mixture.

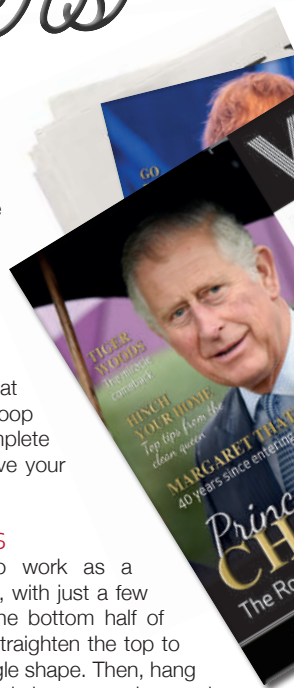
Then, cut a 20-inch piece of twine and wrap that around the edge of the loop to assist absorption. Complete with a handle and you have your bubble wand.

#### MAGNIFICENT MAGAZINES

A coat hanger can also work as a magazine rack on the wall, with just a few bends and a nail. Twist the bottom half of the hanger upwards and straighten the top to match it, creating a rectangle shape. Then, hang the hook part on the wall and place magazines and newspapers in the middle.

#### JEWEL OF THE NAIL

Finally, wooden coat hangers are great for presenting your jewellery. You can use the horizontal wooden rod to wrap over items such as necklaces and bracelets. Then, just pop a nail in the wall to display your treasured accessories for all to see.



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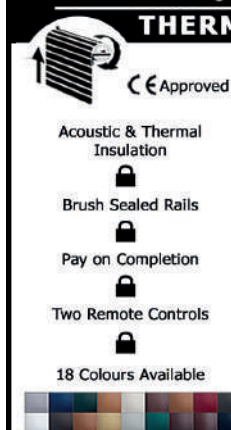
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# 7 weird ways to get a LUSCIOUS LAWN

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in order to thrive, and a few old rusty nails are the perfect solution for any deficiency your lawn may have. Just add a few nails to a full watering can and sprinkle liberally.

## 1 GARLIC CLOVES

Not just for warding off vampires, tossing a few garlic cloves across your lawn will also scare off pesky parasites who will try to destroy the roots.

## 2 APPLE CIDER VINEGAR

If weeds are driving you to despair, try dousing them in apple cider vinegar. Vinegar contains acetic acid which can help prevent weeds from growing but without the chemicals that can harm the quality of your soil.

## 3 ASPIRIN

Use this method sporadically, but by dissolving two aspirin into a watering can of water and sprinkling over your grass, you can help your lawn fight off bacteria and also insect infestations.

## 4 RUSTY NAILS

Just like us, grass needs iron

## 5 COPPER COINS

Grass is prone to infections which can affect its health and overall appearance. A simple trick to boost your lawn's immunity is to bury a few copper coins in the ground.

## 6 GRASS

Next time you mow your lawn, make sure that you leave the clippings on the surface rather than throwing them away as they will act as a natural fertiliser.

## 7 URINE

Unfortunately for animal owners, this has to be human urine and it has to be diluted as to not kill the grass, but it is a very effective and completely free remedy. Simply mix one part urine with ten parts water and apply directly across your whole lawn.



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# LOCAL NEWS

*from your neighbourhood*



## 13-year-old currently ranked number one junior kart racer

A 13-year-old from Billericay is currently ranked number one junior karting racer in the UK despite being knocked off the track during the Sodi World Finals that took place on Friday, July 12.

Everything was going to plan for Beau Sullivan whilst he was competing in the competition's junior cup until he was knocked off the track at the third corner.

With a rough start, Beau recovered and was back on the tracks, overtaking 10 racers in his stride, putting him ninth until he was knocked off once again.

Beau said: "I felt mixed emotions, coming straight off the track I was really annoyed, but I got myself back

on and I controlled what I could control.

"It gave me more of a reason to push and I am excited to get back on the tracks."

Beau's dad, Stuart Sullivan, said: "We are so proud of him and how he drove over the three days.

"Out of over 1,200 drivers from all over the world that were in the rankings last year, Beau came 10th in the world and first in the UK.

"If anyone is interested in sponsoring Beau in the future, you can contact us via Beau's Facebook page."

For more information, visit [www.facebook.com/beausullivanracing/](http://www.facebook.com/beausullivanracing/)

## Man charged with attempted rape

A man has been charged with attempted rape after reports a teenage girl was grabbed from behind and attacked.

The incident happened in Stock Road at around 8.40pm on Friday, June 28.

Jamie Sharpe, from Billericay, has been remanded to

appear at Chelmsford Magistrates' Court.

Anyone with information is asked to call Essex Major Crime Team on 101 quoting 42/101995/19 or Crimestoppers anonymously on 0800 555 111.

At the time of going to print, Sharpe was due to appear at Chelmsford Crown Court on July 29.

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## Children from Chernobyl visit Billericay Fire Station

Billericay firefighters have welcomed 12 children from Ukraine, who are visiting Essex as part of a project run by the South Essex Chernobyl Children's Lifeline charity.

The charity supports children and their families who have been affected by the Chernobyl nuclear explosion in 1986. The charity has visited Billericay Fire Station every year since 2012.

As well as bringing child victims of Chernobyl to the UK for recuperative breaks, the charity also provides vitamins and healthcare products to affected children and chemotherapy medicine to those suffering cancer.

Due to the radioactive fallout from the explosion, thousands of children are born every year with, or

go on to develop, thyroid cancer, bone cancer and leukaemia.

As part of their visit to Billericay Fire Station, the children, all aged 10, spent some time with the firefighters, had a tour of the fire station and had a go at building a dam and squirting water with fire hoses.

Watch Manager Dave Archer said: "It was an absolute pleasure meeting the children and an honour to welcome them to our fire station once again.

"It was a really fun day and there was lots of laughter from the children and firefighters.

"The children visit a number of attractions and landmarks during their visit to the UK, but they told us that coming to the fire station is one of their favourites."

## Essex-based experienced reporter needed

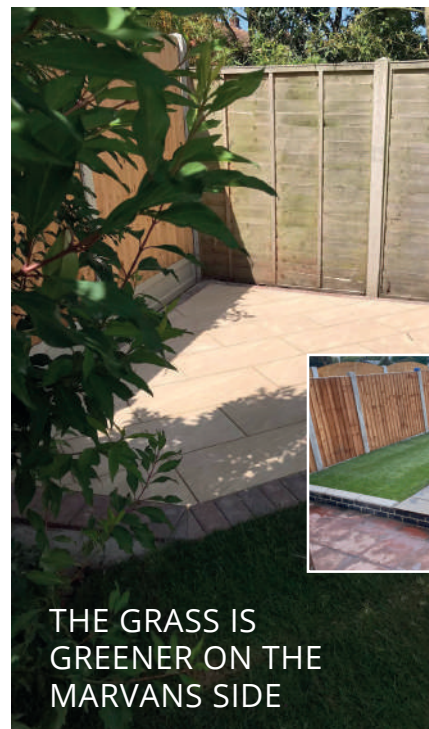
Are you a journalist with an eye for a story? Are you a good talker, but an even better listener? Are you as in touch with the parcel delivery lady as you are the town mayor? And most importantly, can you sort the wheat from the chaff? If so, you could be the Essex-based journalist we are looking for.

**VISION** magazines' rapidly expanding Home Counties portfolio means we need even more journalists at the heart of communities ready to put into print the stories that matter. Whether breaking

news, reporting community updates or discussing upcoming issues, our writers are thirsty, dedicated and well rewarded.

At first, this will be a part-time/freelance position – perfect for the kind of flexibility needed in local journalism, but with a view to scaling up as our network of titles continues to increase.

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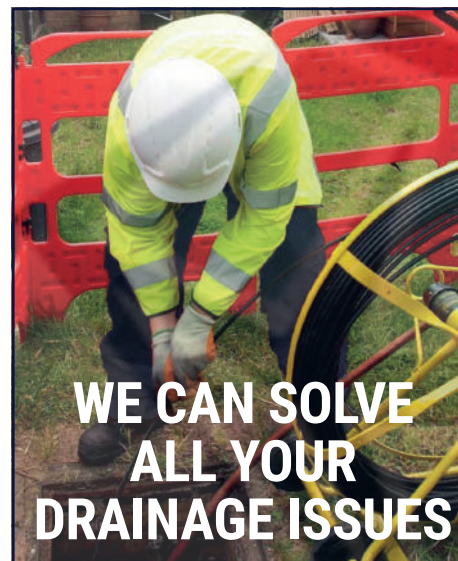
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## ON PATROL WITH... THE PASTORS



Street Pastors in Essex continue to look out for people who are out and about in our towns during the night-time economy on Friday and Saturday nights. We patrol in a blue uniform looking out for people who may be vulnerable, need a bit of help or someone to talk to.

We have recently attended several public events to spread the message of what we do.

Billericay Summerfest was a great time for us as we pitched our gazebo next to a fellow Christian stall called Revive Spiritual Spa. We shared a lot that day and managed to recruit new volunteers.

We also had some key strategic conversations about launching School Pastors in more Essex senior schools. We currently volunteer at William De Ferrers and Billericay School. To support any senior school in their pastoral work is exciting for us.

Rail Pastors is growing and we are excited to think we are to launch our third project across the Greater Anglia rail network in September with seven more volunteers.

If you want to know more, follow us on Facebook or Twitter or email [Billericay@Streetpastors.org.uk](mailto:Billericay@Streetpastors.org.uk)

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## Help make Lake Meadow the best park in the UK



Lake Meadow park has been nominated for the UK Park of the Year Award 2019 by one of its users.

Lake Meadow is one of the nominated parks for the prestigious award, with residents urged to vote before the deadline of August 19.

The park is maintained by the Friends of Lake Meadows (FOLM) who are an independent local charity, with volunteers working in partnership with Basildon Council and Billericay Town Council for the benefit of the community.

They help to care for the park, to promote its benefits, improve its facilities and encourage conservation and wildlife.

Speaking about the nomination, Rosie Novis from FOLM said: "It really is great for the park to be nominated for this award and it would be amazing for Lake Meadows to win. The park is owned by Basildon Borough Council, with whom the Friends work in close partnership.

"Funding for parks throughout the country has been cut in recent years, so the FOLM helps in a number of ways. A team of 15 volunteer gardeners meet every week for 46 weeks of the year to look after all the gardens. The Friends also assist with some maintenance and find funds to make additions to the park and the provision of information about wildlife in the park."



LOCAL NEWS BILLERICAY





## Swimming pool works underway



Work has started to refurbish Billericay Swimming Pool after an electrical fire put it out of action last September.

Chairman of Basildon Council's neighbourhoods and public spaces committee councillor David Harrison said: "I am delighted to hear that pool operator, First Stokes, has begun work to bring the pool back into use.

"The pool is used by hundreds of local children to learn to swim and is a popular and much-loved local facility."

Work is scheduled to be completed this autumn.

## Family mess as pair convicted of fly-tipping

An uncle and nephew from Billericay have been convicted of dumping waste from household refuse on derelict land in north London.

Thomas Stokes, 51, and Brian Stokes, 32, discarded several van-loads of construction material between them at Stonehill Business Park in Edmonton in 2017.

The Environment Agency prosecuted the pair after they were caught on CCTV ditching the waste on open land close to the North Circular Road.

Thomas Stokes towed a caravan onto the land on November 11. Later that month, Stokes unloaded waste from his black and white tipper van at the former auction site twice in barely more than an hour.

A fortnight later, on December 5, with the van again full of waste, he dumped it like he had done before.

In January 2018, crime officers from the Environment Agency followed Stokes's van to another address in Edmonton where they identified him on security cameras.

Emma Viner, area enforcement manager for the Environment Agency, said: "Thomas and Brian Stokes clearly didn't care, knowing full well they were taking advantage of unoccupied land on which to dump rubbish.

"The waste came from innocent members of the public, unaware the rubbish from home improvements was dumped illegally.

"Our conviction of Thomas and Brian Stokes shows we pursue lawbreakers from the crime to the courtroom."

Sitting at Ealing Magistrates' Court on June 11, deputy district judge Martin Steen sentenced Thomas to 16 months in prison, suspended for a year.

He was also ordered to complete 100 hours unpaid work and pay £500 in costs and a £85 victim surcharge.

Appearing at the same court, Brian was told he faced prison if he visited any illegal waste site before 2029, or offered to take away someone's waste in the same period.

Like his uncle, he was ordered to pay costs of £500 and a victim surcharge of £85.

## Win tickets to Soul Spirit & Wellbeing Festival 2019

Soul Spirit & Wellbeing Festival 2019 are offering the chance to win one of 20 pairs of tickets to the event.

You can discover how a host of therapies, as well as good-for-you food, crystals, spiritual art and kinesiology can help you have your best autumn ever at the event on September 1 being held at the Ramsden Bellhouse Village Hall from 11am to 4pm.

Tickets are priced at £3.50 each available on the day. The first 50 guests will receive a healthy goody bag along with special offers at the stands.

There is free parking at the venue which is fully accessible to all users.

To win tickets, email [billericay@visionmag.co.uk](mailto:billericay@visionmag.co.uk) stating where the event is being held by August 18.



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# BILLERICAY TOWN FC



Photo credit: Nicky Hayes Photography

## Town set to kick off season at home to Eastbourne

Billericay Town will kick off their 2019/20 National League South campaign at home to Eastbourne Borough after the league announced the fixtures.

Three days later, Billericay will make the 25-mile trip north to Crossing Road where they will face Braintree Town.

The August Bank Holiday will see Town and their fans travel to Hertfordshire to play Hemel Hempstead.

As usual Boxing Day and New Year will be spent in Essex. Concord will be the hosts on December 26.

The last match of 2019 will be at The AGP Arena with a visit from Chelmsford City before Concord Rangers will make the short trip to Billericay on New Year's Day.

Town fans looking forward to a trip to the seaside at Weymouth will need to wait until February 22, 2020.

The league season will come to a close on Saturday April 25, 2020. Town's season will finish with a home fixture against Hampton & Richmond Borough.

Ahead of the league

campaign starting, Billericay will play Hendon, Borehamwood and Hornchurch in pre-season fixtures.

Town have already beat an All Star XI and lost to Southend United in readiness for the 2019/20 season.

Elsewhere, Blues boss Harry Wheeler has welcomed some more new faces to the AGP Arena.

Gavin Gunning and Craig Robson move to Essex from Forest Green Rovers and Barnet respectively.

Meanwhile former Port Vale captain Doug Loft has already turned out for the Blues in the pre-season friendlies against All-Star XI and Southend United.

Harry Wheeler said he was delighted with the new additions.

He commented: "Gavin has lots of experience in the Football League.

"Craig is a National League player at the very least.

"Doug was never on trial with us, he has been training with the team whilst resolving contractual obligations with other clubs, we expect to have it all finalised in the coming weeks.

"He came into train and he has also played in our two pre-season games so far."



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LOCAL NEWS BILLERICAY



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## Council announce 'no libraries will close within five years'

Campaign group Save Shenfield Library say they will "keep fighting" following Essex County Council (ECC) publishing the Essex Future Libraries Strategy.

In the announcement, ECC stated that "no libraries will close", however Save Shenfield Library is still concerned that the facility is at risk.

A spokesperson from the group said: "Sadly, the mood was less upbeat when campaigners read the ECC library strategy published last month.

"We are very disappointed as we had been led to believe that Shenfield Library would retain ECC funding, but this doesn't seem to be the case.

"We feel we are very much still in the dark. There is no specific mention of individual plans for libraries, even though we had been promised detail."

Following the announcement, the group marched down to the library with banners and whistles to

protest the decision.

The spokesperson continued: "Save Shenfield Library will be closely monitoring the decisions made by ECC as these could have a serious impact on the long-term future of our library. We will keep fighting to maintain an ECC-run and funded library in Shenfield."

ECC cabinet member for customer, corporate, culture and communities councillor Susan Barker said: "The strategy now commits to no libraries closing within five years. By working with communities, we can now keep a library service in every current location. The strategy also aims to revitalise the service through investment. The service in its current form isn't working and we know that there are better ways to run it."

The Essex Future Library Services (FLS) Strategy 2019-2024 was due to be decided at a Cabinet meeting on July 23.



# High school praise former pupil's success



Photo credit: Peterborough United

Shenfield High School feel "very proud" of former pupil Frankie Kent after the 23-year-old defender secured a transfer to League One side Peterborough United. The former pupil has recently signed a three-year deal with the side for an undisclosed fee.

Director of sport at Shenfield High School, Garry Sapsford said: "All of the staff at Shenfield High are very proud of Frankie's progress within football.

"He was a model student on and off the sports field and we are not surprised that the positive attitude and talent he always had has allowed him to excel at Colchester United which alerted the interest from Peterborough United.

"We wish Frankie all the success at Peterborough, we are confident that they have made a very good signing."

# Man seriously injured after being found on train tracks

Commuters faced severe delays last month after a man was found on the tracks at Shenfield Station.

Police were called to the scene at around 3.30pm on Thursday, July 18.

Paramedics also attended and the man was taken to hospital via air ambulance.

A spokesperson from the East of England Ambulance Service said: "An ambulance crew, an ambulance officer and the air ambulance from East Anglian Air Ambulance were dispatched to help.

"At the scene they assessed and treated a man with a serious limb injury. The patient was sedated and taken by air ambulance to The Royal London Hospital in a serious condition."

Police are now appealing to the public for information.

Anyone who witnessed the incident is asked to contact BTP by texting 61016 or by calling 0800 40 50 40 and quoting reference 347 of 18/07/19.

# Charity receives Queen's Award for Voluntary Service

A charity that provides counselling to bereaved children across Brentwood and Havering held an event recently to celebrate its 30th anniversary.

During the evening, HBBS Counselling (also known as Havering and Brentwood Bereavement Service) was also awarded the Queen's Award for Voluntary Service (QAVS) - the highest accolade for voluntary organisations.

Sue Newth-Gibbs, chair of trustees at HBBS Counselling, said: "We were one of only nine voluntary organisations in Essex to receive the QAVS. It is a great honour and testimony to the hours of selfless work volunteers have given to our charity over 30 years.

"It is also recognition of the many thousands of adults and children we have been able to support through the grieving process since we began in 1989 and the demand for our services is now higher than ever so our work must continue far into the future.

"But as a charity, of course, we must find the funds to pay for it."

The charity made an appeal at the fundraising event, held at Ingatestone Hall on July 5, to seek partnerships with local businesses to help fund its counselling programmes for children in primary and secondary schools going forward.

As time of publication the event had raised £5,300, which equates to specialist counselling for another ten children at HBBS counselling.

If you own or work for a business who would be interested in working with HBBS Counselling contact louise.mundy@hbbscounselling.org



Photo credit: Richard Burch



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 Alex Burghart MP for Brentwood and Ongar



**LOCAL NEWS SHENFIELD**



In the last few weeks I've been getting a flavour of the extraordinary skills and courage shown by our emergency services in the course of their day-to-day work.

Essex Police took me with them when they made a series of raids on properties in the constituency using carefully gathered intelligence to target locations linked with drug supply and use. It was just after 4am when I found myself packed into a briefing room with some of Essex's toughest police officers.

I've seen drugs raids on TV, and they are every bit as well planned, effective and loud in real life. A number of people were arrested and charged on suspicion of dealing drugs in the Brentwood area and are now waiting for their time in court.

My visit to Brentwood Fire Station to talk to Green Watch was a rather quieter affair, with the team providing me with a welcoming cup of tea in the kitchen while we discussed call outs, fire cover and a pilot scheme using fire officers as first responders to medical emergencies, like cardiac arrest. The idea makes excellent use of the fire officers' training, but

they are concerned about the effect of trauma calls on their mental health and wellbeing. I have brought their concerns to the attention of the Essex Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner Roger Hirst.

Dealing with trauma and medical emergencies on a day-to-day basis can lead to burn out and issues which the doctors and paramedics of the Essex and Herts Air Ambulance Service are all too well aware. Recently I was invited to visit their HQ to see how this team of medics, pilots, fundraisers and support staff run and fund this £9million a year operation. The medics are some of the most highly skilled in their field and can undertake operations, amputations and critical care procedures by the side of a road if that's what it takes to save someone's life. Their time with the helicopter teams is limited because emotional burn-out is all too easy to suffer, although there is nothing but thanks for them from the patients and families they help.

We are fortunate in having such strong teams of emergency workers in our midst, keeping us safe and picking us up when things go wrong. They deserve our deepest gratitude and support.

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# MAGNIFICENT *Maggie*



NAME Maggie Smith's place as a British drama institution is unquestionable, and her return as Violet Crawley in this year's *Downton Abbey* movie, at the ripe old age of 84, will give her box office acclaim she has perhaps never before experienced.

.....

And yet away from the red carpets, the flashbulbs and the seemingly endless press junkets, this is someone ill at ease with the demands of fame, as **VISION** discovers.

"I really don't like to watch myself," she begins, with typical bruising honesty.

"You are helpless to do anything to stop it once it's out there, and that has always terrified me.

"In the theatre things are a little different because you can say to yourself 'I'll have another go at that tomorrow night... I'll change that, alter that...', but with cinema it is there forever.

"Sometimes you are forced to see yourself at a premiere, and you think, 'Why on earth did I do it like that?'. You would suppose that after all this time I might have got used to it, but I haven't".

Twice-married Smith's working life has a longevity that's difficult to fathom. First stepping into the spotlight in 1952 under the auspices of the Oxford University Dramatic Society, she appeared as Viola in *Twelfth Night* at the Oxford Playhouse.

Switching between theatre and film – from a first Oscar nomination in 1965 opposite Laurence Olivier in *Othello*, to an Academy Award for Best Actress for the title role in 1969 film *The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie* – her work has only ever disappointed one person... herself.

"People have said I am too hard on myself, but it just goes with the territory.

"The truth is I'm critical of everything because I care and worry too much. I'd love to be more relaxed, but after all this time I don't think I'm going to change now."

From intense drama to rich comedy, Smith has circumnavigated a cross section of work that diversifies from *Hook* and *Sister Act* in the 1990s through to the *Harry Potter* movies over the past two decades. And while many saw her place in *Downton Abbey* as being perhaps a gentle sojourn into retirement every bit as decorated as the lady herself, the popularity of Highclere Castle and all those who reside in and around it has seen her star glide higher than ever before.

"It's ridiculous - I was able to live a somewhat normal life until I started doing *Downton Abbey*," she laughs.

"I know that sounds funny, but I am serious. Before that I could go to all the places I wanted and see all of the things that I like, but now I can't, which I find incredibly awful... flattering, but awful."

Smith admits she has never watched a single episode of *Downton Abbey* – "and I don't plan on starting now" – but is thrilled something as traditional as a period drama has engaged a watching audience that might otherwise be distracted by CGI, green screens and special effects so readily used by today's studios.

"It's very easy to get carried away by the technology that's available these days, but when people can invest in the honesty and simplicity of great scriptwriting, it restores your faith in what it is we do."



# Style and taste

Brushed concrete walls, clean lines and elegant lighting bring an atmosphere of calm and reflection to this stunning space, mirroring that of a high end Mayfair gallery.



It is clear that attention to detail and ensuring the customer 'an experience' was not lost on collectors, entrepreneurs and founders of Piece Gallery, Grant and Stacey Fernley. But what truly sets Piece apart from other galleries is the warm welcome that greets you at the door. Staff are informed and accommodating and whether you are searching for inspiration, a new addition to your home or simply having a post brunch browse, the vibe is relaxed and friendly. The art is a mixture of globally sourced, cutting edge contemporary art, with a nod to the more traditional masters.



The vision behind Piece Gallery was to bring art from across the globe to seasoned and first-time collectors, interior designers and those with a desire to bring expressive pieces into their home. The works of Piece speak to you regardless of your style or taste.

The additional allure of the gallery is not only the visual pleasure provided by the artwork, but also a unique collection of exquisite homeware accessories.

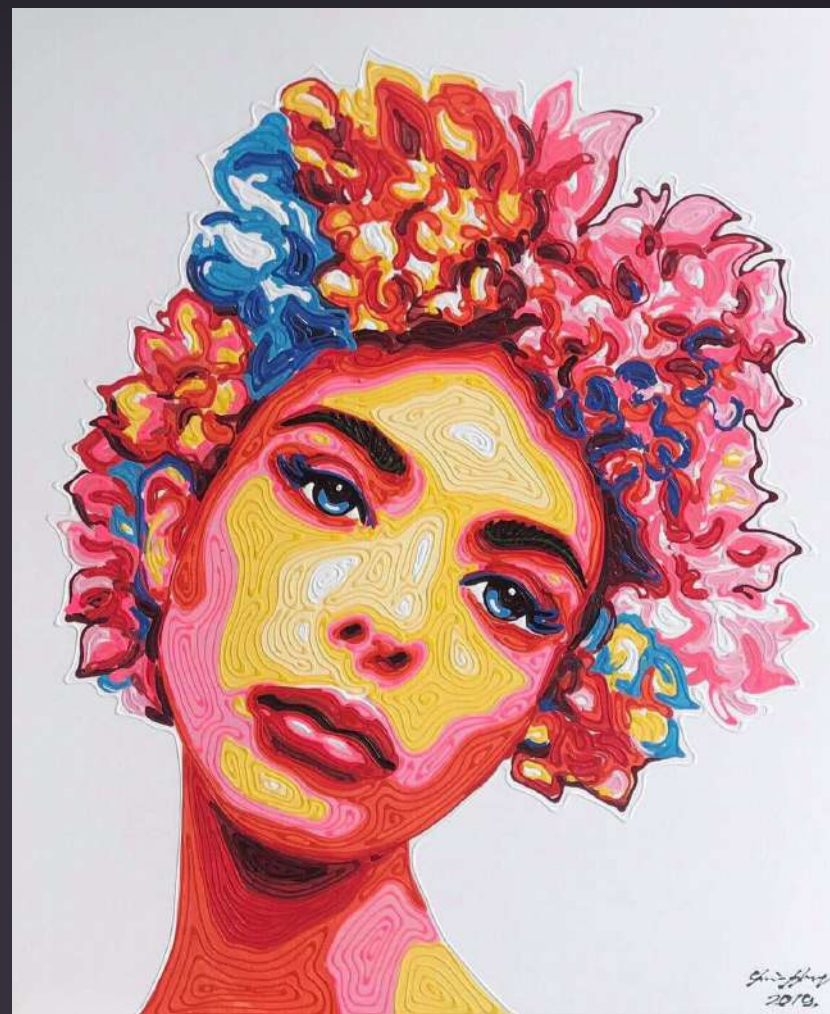
Firm favourite, Emily Crook, marries nostalgia, fashion and fun with cartoon icons. Asian artist Klinkulab looks at life through a lens with his illusionist pieces of the great artists, musicians and sirens of the silver screen. Amy Louise brings some humorous furry folk to the party, while Chaiya's Blossom (featured right) celebrates femininity with striking colour and technique.

Whether you are searching for a gift as special as your friend or something sentimental for a family member, Piece will help with your selection and package it beautifully.

The team will happily assist with a commission, so you can add a personal touch to any piece. Pop up evenings will feature existing

and local artists and works are on rotation, so there is always a reason to stop by. What was once reserved for a trip to London or overseas can now be found on your very own doorstep.

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# PUZZLES & TRIVIA

PUZZLES

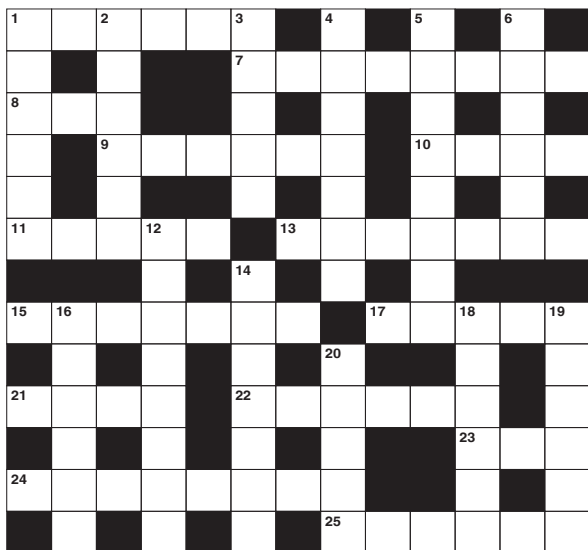
Answers can be found on the Contents Page 4

## ACROSS

1. Mete out (6)
7. Come before in time (8)
8. \_\_\_ Thurman: actress (3)
9. Remould; allocate parts to different actors (6)
10. Flightless birds (4)
11. Harsh and serious in manner (5)
13. Angled; biased (7)
15. Terrible (7)
17. Allow in (5)
21. Link a town with another (4)
22. Country in N Europe (6)
23. \_\_\_ Thumb: folklore hero (3)
24. Highly seasoned smoked beef (8)
25. Browns bread (6)

## DOWN

1. Mature people (6)
2. Deprive of food (6)
3. Pertaining to warships (5)
4. Majestic (7)
5. Showed a TV show (8)
6. Advance evidence for (6)



12. Evoke memories (8)
14. Motor-driven revolving cylinder (7)
16. Archer (6)
18. Eg. March and May (6)
19. Outdoes (6)
20. A sum owed (5)

## DID YOU KNOW?

- There are more stars in the universe than there are grains of sand on all the beaches on Earth
- You would not be able to walk on Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus or Neptune as they are 'gas giants'
- Comets are bits of solar system material that date back to the formation of the Sun and the planets
- Over one million Earths could fit inside the Sun if they were squashed in, or around 960,000 if it kept its shape
- It took New Horizons, the fastest spacecraft to leave Earth, nine and a half years to reach Pluto

## SUDOKU

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# goat for it

*The advantages of keeping a pet goat*



PETS

A bit of land, a passion for animals and the world's cheapest lawnmower, but surely there must be more to it than just that when it comes to keeping a goat?

A key factor in nurturing these inquisitive, largely friendly animals is to consider the fact it needs to exist in what resembles its natural habitat. That means room to roam – around 200sqft per goat – plentiful natural food supplies and fresh air. If you can provide that, you're halfway there.

Consider too whether the goat you're thinking of bringing into the family likes to be in a herd, or does it seem contented being independent? The chances are it will require company, so perhaps your solitary pet has already turned into a pair.

It (or they) will require adequate shelter from the elements, as well as a constant supply of clean water. When it comes to food, you might want

to add to what's on offer in fields by supplying a mix of grains. While these aren't essential for the survival of your pet, they will add vitamins, minerals and protein into your four-legged friend's diet.

Veterinary bills are rarely cheap and you'll also need to consider hoof trimming, deworming and a few other animal care elements to preserve a happy homestead.

But in return, your animal's manure can act as a brilliant fertiliser, and if you're not afraid to extend your reach, mating will not only add new faces, but can provide you with a supply of milk up to a year after giving birth.

More than that though, goats are characterful, affectionate, unusual and a lot of fun. They require attention, patience and love, but will give back as much as you give them.





# Live long & prosper

Did you know that the average life expectancy in Japan is 84.2 years old? The highest of any country. In the UK the average for men is 79.2 and for women 82.9.

So, what can we learn from this long-living nation?

## 1. THE PERFECT PORTION

You will never see a Japanese person pile their plate high with food. A Japanese meal is as much about the socialising and sharing of one's day as it is about the actual eating. They eat slowly and use smaller plates so that their brain has time to recognise that they are full.

## 2. FANCY A CUPPA?

Japanese really love drinking tea, and Matcha tea in particular which is full of antioxidants and other nutritional valuable properties. And unlike us, they don't add milk, two sugars and half a packet of digestive biscuits.

## 3. NO SKIPPING BREAKFAST

We've heard this one before, but breakfast really is the most important meal of the day, at least to the Japanese it is. But no sugar laden cereal for them. Instead, they are more likely to tuck into Okayu (rice porridge), Gohan (steamed rice) and broiled fish.

## 4. CRASH DIETS ARE OFF THE MENU

This nation is definitely not a fan of dieting, not that they need to if their waist lines are anything to go by. Their typical diet includes plenty of rice, fish and pickled vegetables combined with plenty of exercise.

## 5. CLEANLINESS IS NEXT TO GODLINESS

If you think you are hygienic because you carry a hand sanitiser with you, then you are in for a shock if you visit Japan. Japanese people are obsessed with cleanliness and they are extremely disciplined with keeping themselves clean and healthy.



# Blurred Vision?

## WHAT IS AGE RELATED MACULAR DEGENERATION (AMD)?

AMD is the most common cause of visual impairment in the UK. It is more common as you age, with over 10% of those aged over 65 years affected in some form.

Dry AMD is the most common type of AMD and is caused by the macula wearing away. Wet AMD is caused by abnormal blood vessels under the macula leaking fluid and bleeding into the macula.

## WHAT IS THE MACULA?

The macula is the central part of our retina and is responsible for detailed vision such as reading and seeing clearly in the distance. The retina is the inside layer of the eye, like the film of a camera.

## HOW WOULD AMD EFFECT MY VISION?

Dry AMD can lead to a slow deterioration and blurring of central vision. This usually occurs over many years. Wet AMD is a more rapidly progressing form of AMD which distorts the central vision; commonly making straight lines appear kinked or wobbly.

## HOW CAN IT BE TREATED?

Presently Dry AMD cannot be treated directly. A healthy diet and protection from UV light can help keep the macula healthy.

Wet AMD is most commonly treated with injections of special medication into the eye. These injections need to be given repeatedly with regular review and is known to be very successful in improving and maintaining vision.

The effectiveness is individual to every patient. It is important for patients with Wet AMD to have individualised treatment for their condition and be under the care of an eye doctor with a special interest in macular degeneration.



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# FIT

at



HEALTH & FITNESS

Even with the best of intentions day-to-day life can get in the way of sticking to a fitness routine. The good news is that it is never too late to get back on the saddle, whatever your age. All you need is determination.

## MAKE A COMMITMENT

Whether that be 10 minutes a day or an hour; make a commitment that suits your current lifestyle and stick to it. It can be less daunting to commit to a smaller daily workout than one long mammoth session weekly.

## JOG YOUR MUSCLE MEMORY

Start back at the beginning. You may have previously been able to lift a very heavy weight or run a very long distance, but your body is no longer used to this level of activity or strenuousness. Set your ego aside and start small.

## BE REALISTIC

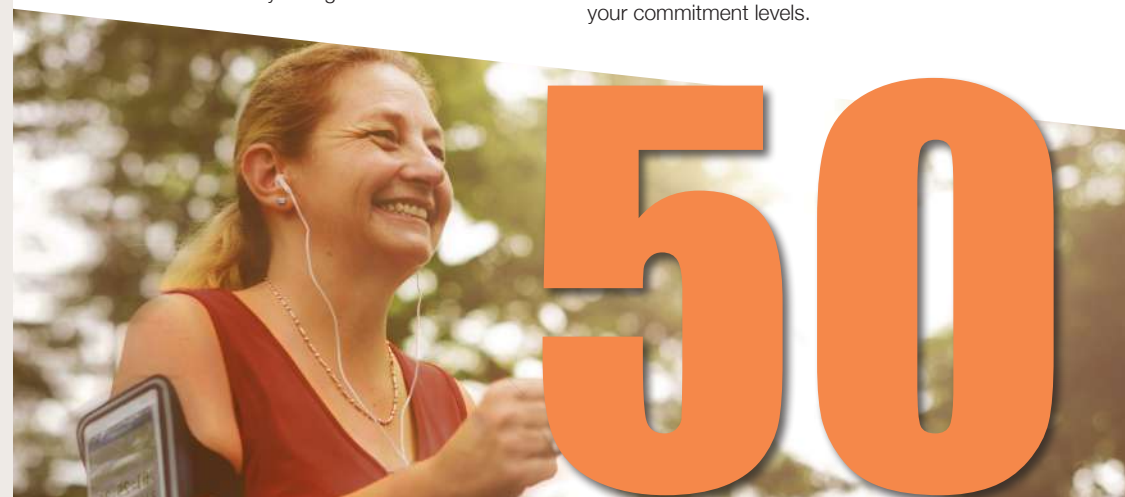
Once you hit 50, it can be a lot harder to stay fit and if you have not trained for more than three years then it is unlikely that you will be able to achieve the same level of fitness that you previously had due to muscle and mobility deterioration. That being said, that doesn't mean you can't get results.

## CONSIDER AN EXERCISE BUDDY

If you struggle with motivation, working out with a friend or trainer can work wonders for keeping you on track. Try and find someone who shares the same fitness goals as yourself.

## SET UP A ONE MONTH CHALLENGE

There is nothing like a challenge to kick start a new fitness routine and setting a monthly target can seem more manageable if you are worried about your commitment levels.







**W**e brush our hair to make it look appear glossier. We brush our teeth to make them look whiter. So why shouldn't we also brush our skin to make it look better? Well, apparently, we should be.

#### How to dry brush your skin

1. Invest in a firm and natural bristle brush
2. Make time for dry brushing in the morning before you shower
3. Start at one knee as this is where your lymph nodes are
4. Apply pressure to the area but not so much that it causes pain
5. Brush upwards towards your heart in small, circular motions
6. Be quick and fairly vigorous
7. Move onto your thigh, then your calf and finally your buttock area
8. Repeat on the other side
9. Shower to wash away any impurities
10. Finally, moisturise as you usual for soft skin

#### Why is it good for your skin?

Dry brushing helps to stimulate circulation as well as acting as an exfoliant by removing any dead skin cells. It can also help give your skin a natural glow and can even tone your legs and bum area. Plus, it is extremely effective at removing ingrown hairs.

#### How often do you need to do it?

For optimal results, spend five minutes dry brushing your skin at least two days a week. If you are wanting to try dry brushing in preparation for a holiday or special event, start at least 30 days prior to the occasion for the most noticeable difference.

#### And the most important question, can it get rid of cellulite?

Although the verdict is still out, many fans of dry brushing swear by its effectiveness in reducing cellulite. Most likely due to the fact that regular brushing can help boost circulation and lymphatic drainage.



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# THE PERFECT TEE

Is there anything worse than taking your favourite T-shirt out of the washing machine to find that it has been completely ruined? Oh no not our beloved Hard Rock Café one. How can we stop this from ever happening again?

## AVOID WASHING TEES WITH OTHER ITEMS

Keep one wash cycle purely for your delicate and much-loved T-shirts as washing them with other fabrics can cause permanent damage. Particularly avoid any items with zips or buttons that could catch onto your tees.

## BEWARE THE BOBBLE

You know that dreaded bumpy effect that appears on your clothes once you have washed them too many times? Counteract this T-shirt destroyer by turning your tees inside out before washing. This will also help them retain their original colour for longer.

## KNOW YOUR COLOURS

Dark coloured tees should be washed at lower temperatures as this will help them retain their colour, whereas whites benefit from higher degrees in order to stay stain free.

## SHIRK THE SHRINK

If you want to avoid shrinking your favourite T-shirts then the tumble dryer should be avoided at all costs, as should drip-drying. Instead, lay your tees out on a dry towel, roll and then squeeze out any excess moisture. Leave to air dry on a flat surface.

## NEVER USE HANGERS

These metal contraptions can be the death of the T-shirt; stretching the material and leaving the item out of shape. Ideally you should keep your tees neatly folded their own drawer, separate from other items.

## PUT THEM ON WITH CARE

Probably the simplest rule, if you want your T-shirts to last then treat them well. Do not pull your T-shirt off by the neck but remove it by gently taking the hem and pulling the tee over your head.



FASHION







# Sleep Tight:

*Weird and wonderful hotels to visit*

Many of us crave the thrill of going away on holiday simply to sample the style, character and culture of a new city, town or wilderness. Yet more and more these days, hotels are becoming just as much of a draw as the places they serve. Here are four weird and wonderful hotels ready to invite you in:

## The Big Idaho Potato Hotel

You may suppose starchy bedsheets are a guarantee with this curious hotel based in Idaho. You'll be chipping in for a decent night's sleep inside this terrifically tuberous crop (in everything but its colossal size). This voluptuous vegetable once travelled the states promoting the Idaho Potato Commission, but now has taken root back in its homeland.



## Jumbo Stay Hostel

If jetting away takes your fancy then head to Stockholm where you can spend the night... in a jet. This converted Boeing 747 has two suites, each offering natural night-time views over the city's Arlanda airport... just don't get too close to the controls or your experience may take off in a way you hadn't planned.



## Hotel de Glace

While ice hotels are nothing new, the Hotel de Glace in Quebec has shimmering, frosty elegance in abundance. In fact, the only things not made of ice or snow are your duvet and pillows. Hairdryers are strictly banned.



## Crane Hotel

Popping out for a loaf of bread isn't an option at the Crane Hotel in Amsterdam, for the principal reason that you're 50ft up in the air. This converted piece of industrial elegance contains three suites, includes an outdoor jacuzzi and even has a bungee jump. And unlike the view from your window, the prices aren't sky high.



Photo credit: Otto Krisinger/AP Images for Idaho Potato Commission, @JocRousseau

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# WHAT'S ON in your area



WHAT'S ON

### Summer Space Crafts Events Shenfield Library, Hutton Road, Shenfield, CM15 8NJ

Every Wednesday, 2pm – 4pm

Join in with block building, badge making, knitting and paper crafts.

Running every Wednesday during the summer school holidays.

Suitable for children aged three and over.

### Family Fun Day

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

August 11, 12pm – 9pm



Family BBQ with indoor inflatable, music and laughter for the whole family.

Grab a bite from the BBQ and choose from a Bud Light/medium house wine or a non-alcoholic slushie, for £5.

### Brentwood Wine Society

Shenfield Parish Hall, 60 Hutton Road,  
Brentwood, CM15 8LB

August 13, 8pm – 10pm

The Society's aim is to help members improve their experience, understanding and enjoyment of wine.

Invited wine experts present samples of wines

from a country or region of the winemaking world.

Through these tastings, we have a broadened interest which has led to a deeper knowledge and love of wine.

If you would like to come along in the first instance for a free tasting contact us on [enquiries@brentwoodwinesociety.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@brentwoodwinesociety.co.uk)

### Bat Walk

Mill Meadows Nature Reserve, Greens Farm  
Lane, Billericay, CM11 2EX  
August 28, 7.30pm – 9pm



A chance to explore the reserve at dusk and possibly detect bats flying overhead.

This event is weather dependent.

For more information go to [www.facebook.com/events/338916570377912](https://www.facebook.com/events/338916570377912).

### Soul, Spirit and Wellbeing Festival

Ramsden Bellhouse Village Hall, Church  
Road, Billericay, CM11 1RH  
September 1, 11am – 4pm

A chance for you to discover all that's new in the world of spiritual health, wellbeing, nutrition and fitness in time for you to recharge after a busy summer.

### Jack and Friends' Charity Cabaret

Canon Roche Church Hall, Laindon Road,  
Billericay, CM12 9LL  
September 7, 7pm – 10pm

A charity cabaret night in support of charity MIND. Bring some drinks and snacks, sit back, and enjoy performances from a range of extremely talented performers. Tickets are available to buy from [www.ticketsource.co.uk/cabaret](http://www.ticketsource.co.uk/cabaret)



? ABC

# Breeze BACK TO SCHOOL

$$2 + 2 = 4$$



You have just started to settle in to the summer holidays, enjoying the flexibility that they bring and then all of a sudden, it's nearly September.

Panic sets in. As does the dread of getting the kids back into a set routine.

#### START A CONVERSATION

The best way to ease your child back into a school routine is to start off by talking to them about it. This is especially important if your child is starting a new school or a new year that will require them to do something new or unknown, whether that be joining a breakfast club or having someone else pick them up.

#### GRADUALLY START REELING IN BEDTIME

More than likely you have relaxed with your attitude to bedtime, and you may find your child is going to bed several hours later than normal. At least a week

prior to them going back to school, more if their bedtime has become really late, start sending them to bed 10-15 minutes earlier each night so that they can gradually adjust.

#### GET BACK INTO SET MEALTIMES

We all know that in the holidays our children seem to be hungry every five minutes, and this can result in a grazing style of eating with little or no set mealtimes. Start getting them used to structured mealtimes again as the holidays draw to an end.

#### ENCOURAGE INDEPENDENCE

The end of the summer is the ideal time to start a set of new routines with your child; whether that be allowing them to make their own packed lunch, clearing away after breakfast or laying their school clothes out for the next day. Not only will this encourage independence, but also make the morning routine easier for you as a parent.



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# Pop the PROSECCO

Prosecco lovers rejoice for National Prosecco Day takes place this month on August 13. Yes, it falls on a Tuesday which isn't ideal, but that doesn't mean you can't celebrate this fabulous fizz with a few sensational seasonal cocktails.

## PEARSECCO

YOU WILL NEED: 1 tbsp caster sugar 🍏 Pear juice  
½ tsp ground cinnamon 🍏 1tsp ginger syrup 🍏 Prosecco

### HOW TO MAKE:

- 🍏 Mix the sugar and cinnamon in a small dish
- 🍏 Take a prosecco flute, dip the rim in water then dip in the sugar mixture
- 🍏 Pour the ginger syrup into the bottom of the glass
- 🍏 Top with equal amounts of pear juice and prosecco

## SOUR FLOWER POWER PUNCH

YOU WILL NEED: 100ml pink grapefruit juice 🍷 100ml prosecco  
50ml elderflower cordial 🍷 25ml pink gin (regular gin is fine too)

### HOW TO MAKE:

- 🍷 Mix together the pink grapefruit juice, gin and cordial in a glass
- 🍷 Add a few cubes of ice (you can make elderflower ice cubes)
- 🍷 Top with prosecco

## STRAWBERRY SLUSH

YOU WILL NEED: 1½ cups frozen strawberries 🍓 300ml prosecco  
1 tbsp honey

### HOW TO MAKE:

- 🍓 Simply place all the ingredients in a blender and blitz until smooth
- 🍓 Serve in a frosted cocktail glass and garnish with a fresh strawberry

## BERRY PROSECCO ICE LOLLY

YOU WILL NEED: One bottle of prosecco 🍷 Fresh strawberries and raspberries  
½ lemon 🍷 1 tbsp caster sugar 🍷 Lolly moulds

### HOW TO MAKE:

- 🍷 Open the prosecco and leave to stand for 1-2 hours
- 🍷 Chop the berries into small pieces
- 🍷 Mix the prosecco, sugar and juice of the lemon in a jug
- 🍷 Pour the liquid into the moulds until around two thirds full
- 🍷 Add a few pieces of fruit to each mould
- 🍷 Add the lolly handles and leave to freeze for 24 hours



FOOD & DRINK



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### GOAL-BASED INVESTING EXPLAINED

Although it might be tempting to think that investing is just about getting the best possible return on one pot of money, goal-based investing, structuring your investment around your specific financial aims, has become a widely used way of helping people plan their financial futures.

#### THINKING THINGS THROUGH

One of the most significant benefits to a goal-based approach is that it encourages us to think about what we want our money to achieve in a tangible way, across a range of time horizons. No two investors have the same financial aims, and meeting different goals means using a variety of investment strategies.

This approach starts with the investor defining their objectives such as saving for school fees, a child's wedding, a deposit on a home or a comfortable retirement. These goals then become the building blocks of an investment plan. The information gathered is used to define the right level of savings and the most appropriate mix of funds to meet the investor's goals and will also take account of all available annual allowances and employ taxation-saving strategies too.

For instance, a retired couple might typically want

an income stream now to boost their pension, but also want to invest some of their capital to fund the likelihood of care costs later in life. In this instance, a portfolio can be tailored to meet each specific goal.

A younger investor may want to structure their investments to cover school fees from nursery to graduation for their children, whilst at the same time building up a substantial pension pot for retirement.

#### GAUGING YOUR ATTITUDE TO RISK

Being clear about your goals will make it easier for us to tailor your risk profile to different investments. Each goal may have its own risk tolerance and time horizon. Naturally, over time your goals may change as your life and circumstances change, and your attitude to risk may alter too, that's why we always recommend regular Reviews

As part of the service at DGS, we take the time to understand our client's unique planning needs and circumstances, so that we can provide you with the most suitable solutions in the most cost-effective way. For a free review of your current financial situation, please contact Andy Costin on 01277 654153.

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# Your DRAGONS' DEN moment...

## HOW TO GET SOMEONE TO INVEST IN YOUR BIG IDEA

### ORIGINALITY

While having a new idea isn't essential – you may just want to improve on an existing product or service in the market – having an edge, or a USP (unique selling point) will certainly lead your investor to believing there is a gap to be exploited.

### ENERGY

Investors love to see energy, enthusiasm and a willingness to go the extra mile. Many are investing in the person rather than specifically the idea. Subsequently, that's where organisation and ambition will succeed, while bolshiness, arrogance or ignorance will quickly see you turned away.

### TRACK RECORD

While showing a track record isn't always possible – for instance, if your business is a start-up – most investors will want to see evidence that the idea works. It may be that you have to go it alone, prove your market exists, then go back in looking to scale up. If that's the case, having had an initial

conversation should guarantee you getting back through the door further along the line.

### KNOW YOUR NUMBERS

It's been the downfall of so many budding young entrepreneurs – see any episode of *Dragons' Den* as evidence – but if you don't know the nuts and bolts of your own business, how can an investor be expected to put their cash forward? In addition, know the size of your market, the strength of your competitors and how conditions will evolve over the years to come. You should be able to reel these statistics and projections off in your sleep – if you can't, don't even step foot inside an investor's office.

### DON'T GIVE UP

Sometimes an investor won't reach for their wallet simply because their portfolio is too big or the proposal isn't in their sphere of interest. That doesn't mean your idea is a bad one, it's just pitched to the wrong person.

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Angela Sharma  
Senior Associate Solicitor  
[angelasharma@mplaw.co.uk](mailto:angelasharma@mplaw.co.uk)



Jessica Thrower  
Associate Solicitor & Mediator  
[jessicathrower@mplaw.co.uk](mailto:jessicathrower@mplaw.co.uk)

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TECHNOLOGY

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*The gadgets that clean  
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We all remember Alesha Dixon and her constant claims that "the boy does nothing". He didn't wash up, he didn't clean up; he couldn't even be bothered to brush up. Well, Alesha, the good news is that now you don't have to either, providing your song royalties will stretch as far as picking up some of these incredible gadgets.

**IROBOT BRAAVA JET 240 ROBOT MOP**

If you have wooden floors then the constant challenge of picking up dust is akin to painting the Forth Bridge, yet with iRobot's natty motorised mop, this little bod will zip about the place, spraying and sparkling the floor as it goes.

**LITTER ROBOT III OPEN AIR AUTOMATIC SELF CLEANING LITTER BOX**

In the grand scheme of things, remembering to empty out your cat's litter tray shouldn't be one of the week's most arduous tasks, but the reality is we all lead busy lives, and if there's a robot that can separate out the, erm, 'clumps', neatly storing away your feline's little presents in a carbon-filtered drawer, then you should probably let the computerised colossus have its day in the sun, or bin.

**GERMGUARDIAN 3-IN-1 AIR PURIFIER**

This one won't win any prizes for innovation, but in capturing 99.97 per cent of dust and allergens, as well as beaming out UV-C light to kill airborne germs, this is a cleaning genius that keeps you in tip-top condition.

**ALFAWISE MAGNETIC WINDOW CLEANING ROBOT**

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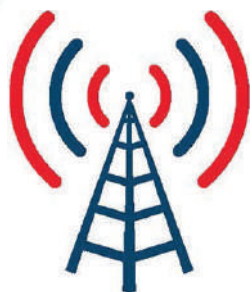


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# NetGAIN



SPORT

ENGLAND'S WORLD CUP HEROES ARE READY FOR THE NEXT LEVEL

Has the game of netball ever enjoyed a greater stage? Brilliant television coverage, fantastic role models, a successful home side, and a 44 per cent increase in participation over the last year.

While it's easy to define success purely on trophies, what surely counts more is that a sport most people forgot about no sooner had they left school is now fully reborn and ready for the next chapter.

For the uninitiated, the Netball World Cup was a flurry of nimble, energetic, highly-skilled sportswomen at their peak. Not only was the movement, precision and craft little short of artistic, but we were witnessing a sport our heroes can claim almost purely as their own.

Netball is as predominantly female as maxi dresses, childbirth and Take That reunion gigs,

and while the recent women's football World Cup came with almost constant comparisons to the men's game, what we witnessed in Liverpool across July was a celebration of a sport that women alone have conquered. And our English girls almost conquered the world.

While semi-final defeat to New Zealand saw Tracey Neville's players fall agonisingly short when it appeared they might just go all the way, at least their third-place play-off win against South Africa presented them with bronze medals – just as they achieved in Australia four years ago – and hope for the future.

That they have now cemented their place in the world's top order gives the Roses something to build on, even if the next major tournament is three years away, as the Commonwealth Games come to Birmingham in 2022.

That's three years for a new coach to get her feet under the table, three years of further increases in participation, and three years to work out how to defeat those dominant Southern Hemisphere sides.

Photo credit: Paul Greenwood/BPI/Shutterstock





# PREMIERE.

## THE MINI ELECTRIC CONCEPT.



Photo credit: eads/Shutterstock.com, Gishna Bruew/Shutterstock.com

# MAXIMUM CHARGE

## FOR MINI COOPER

Will electric vehicles ever fully catch on? Well, one of the most iconic car brands in Britain certainly hopes so as they release their most eco motor yet.

As little as five years ago, there were no new plans for a totally electric Mini. The company had declared combustion engines were the way to go after a largely underwhelming experiment with the BMW-envisioned test car, the Mini E.

They also experimented with the plug-in electric-petrol hybrid Countryman, but the technology necessitated a reduction both in boot space and in the number of seats (the rears were gone), plus hardware needed to run the vehicles swelled the car's weight by a third of a tonne.

But plans for a totally electric Mini Cooper SE kicked off again in 2015, and the iconic British brand believe they have found the sweet spot with drastic

improvements in performance, reduced costs and better efficiencies. The weight distribution, for instance, is only a third of the previous increase, added to better acceleration and braking.

If you charge overnight – around 12 hours – on a domestic three-pin socket, that will get you 80 per cent battery, while it will only take a quarter of the time to do the same using an 11.2kW AC charger. If you can locate a 50kW DC version, it will take just 40 minutes.

Mini are taking orders now for what will surely be the most efficient run-around on the market. You'll need to hand over the best part of £30,000 for your new set of wheels, though a government grant will see you reimbursed for £3,500 of that figure. Delivery is expected in March 2020, meaning you'll be the talk – and the eco-toast – of the town by Easter next year.

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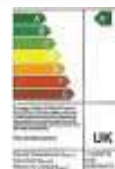
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