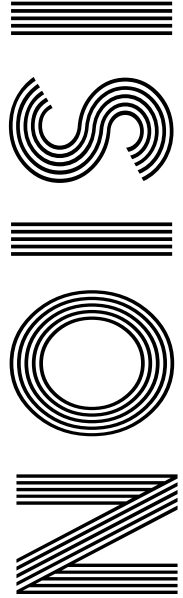


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At the time of print all content in **VISION** was relevant and up to date according to COVID-19 government guidelines

Editor's notes...



Nik Allen, Editor

Hello and welcome to this month's edition of **VISION** BillericayShenfield. I hope you are all keeping well. As the world starts to open up for business again, don't forget that face mask.

I must say, when my family and I have ventured out into shopping areas, I've been intrigued by the approaches of various businesses to enforcing COVID-19 regulations.

Companies, leisure spaces and retail outlets of all sizes have come up with practical, innovative and smart ways of adapting what they offer, while still being as accessible as they possibly can. In many ways these act as a metaphor for all of us - each doing what's necessary, all pulling in the same direction to ensure we have no second wave of coronavirus over the winter.

My own adaptations have been more on a parental level over these past two months as my family has expanded... think nappies, Sudocrem and 3am Feeds.

As many of you know, working from home more requires a lot of structure and balance between work time and play time, and having your own space is crucial. Happily, **VISION** continues to thrive with our **VISION**ChelmsfordBeaulieu edition, the second of three new launches, meaning that despite the uncertainty we have had to live through recently, 2020 could yet be a good year.

I truly, profoundly hope the light is there at the end of the tunnel for you too.

Nik

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Kate's RETURN

How the UK has rallied behind Kate Garraway and stricken husband Derek Draper

Kate Garraway has lived a very public life – she has been on our screens for more than three decades having first appeared on regional ITV news back in 1989. Being such a recognisable face means that when tragedy strikes, that same, visible presence is played out to the gaze of tens of millions of people.

Yet while such intrusion is often unwelcome, by the broadcaster and journalist's recent admission, the empathy, warmth and support that has come her way in light of husband Derek Draper's illness has helped her through the very toughest of life experiences.

Derek was struck down with coronavirus at the end of March. He was admitted to intensive care and spent a concerted period battling the illness. While many overcome symptoms quickly, in the first week in July, Kate revealed her husband had been close to death on six separate occasions owing to his organs failing. She also said that a doctor in charge of Derek said the former political advisor was as ill as anyone he had treated in more than 35 years on the front line of medicine.

At the start of June, Derek was deemed COVID-free but remained in intensive care. While many overcome the disease in a couple of weeks before entering a gradual phase of recovery, for others the intensity of the illness is much more profound and can go on for months, as has been the case with Derek.

'One of the wonderful things is that they've changed medical practices, they have changed pathways because of Derek'

Regardless, the positive news of his slow improvement encouraged Kate to return to *Good Morning Britain* on Monday, July 13. At the end of an emotional few hours in front of the cameras, during which she was admirably supported by co-host Ben Shephard, she tweeted: "Thank you for all the messages – much like you I thoroughly enjoyed it, especially the hair chat. And I'm looking forward to tomorrow. #katesback"

Kate and Derek married in September 2005. They have two children together – Darcey, 14, and Billy, 10. None of the family has been able to visit him in hospital, so weak was he, and so great was the risk of further infection.

"His lungs are starting to recover – his kidneys are doing better, his liver, but they don't know how much better he can get," Kate said, adding that although her husband was slightly overweight when he contracted the illness, they were unsure as to why he was so badly affected by it.

"I think what's happened is at every stage they've been learning," she told viewers. "One of the wonderful things is that they've changed medical practices, they have changed pathways because of Derek. I keep telling him on Facetime he should be very pleased about that."

Kate's willingness to open up about her own experiences is certain to have elevated further the love and affection she already holds from a nation also still battling the fallout from the pandemic. "This isn't about me, or Derek," she said. "This is about all of us getting through these times together, and we will..."



Plenty of TWENTIES

HOW THE OLD £20 NOTE WILL BE RECYCLED

The new £20 polymer note is gradually creeping its way into our pockets, and it says a lot that for a society edging its way towards cashless operations that we're still thrilled to see the shiny, shimmering beauty of these works of art... even if the time they spend in our hands is all too brief.

As the old £20 notes are worked out of circulation, it's interesting to see what becomes of them.

Firstly, the bad news – anyone hoping to dive head first into a pool of cash in a back room at the Bank of England is to be disappointed.

That said, prior to 1990, all notes were incinerated at the building itself, with the heat being used to warm its corridors. By 1995, operations went off-site, though again the energy created went to good use as homes felt the benefit of perhaps the most expensive heating system ever.

At the turn of the millennium, and with the process of seeing currency going up in smoke starting to be frowned upon given society's desire to push forward with rather more eco-friendly approaches, the Bank of England started to explore alternative methods.

As a result, notes began to be recycled using a soil composting treatment. The technique adopts a similar process to the way food waste is handled, with the resulting mix being used in agriculture operations, such as on farms.

So the next time you find yourself in the country, gazing across freshly ploughed fields, consider just how rich that soil may be.

Photo credit: www.britishnotes.co.uk © Bank of England [2015]



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TAKE YOUR CUES FROM THE ABSTRACT EXPRESSIONISTS FOR A LOOK THAT IS BOTH CHEERY AND MODERN

There are a multitude of reasons to invite abstract art into your living space – after all, you'll be hard pushed to tour London's art galleries with all the freedom of old.

Where art is concerned, colour, texture and design are known to lift spirits, provoke creativity and stir interaction, so with that in mind you may as well surrender and let a little weirdness into your home.

For the likes of Jackson Pollock and Mark Rothko, abstract expressionism was a way to defy the confines of post-war time life in 1940s New York through an art form which was deeply personal, spiritual and often unfathomable to anyone but the artist. Similarly, getting a little abstract with your décor can be a great form of escapism and personal expression, and, of course, to your guests you will come across as profoundly arty and cool.

If your current colour scheme feels a little neutral, adding a bold print – be it a throw, cushion or framed picture – is a great way to apply a little abstract flair.

If patterns aren't your thing, consider livening up your lounge with block colours – perhaps a Rothko-inspired wall of two shades or a brightly coloured velvet sofa (citrus hues are particularly hot right now).

The beauty of this trend is that it requires no ambitious makeovers, and can be achieved with the addition of a few key pieces. Let a simple geometric print or a statement piece of furniture become the star of an otherwise forgettable room. Alternatively, dedicate an entire space to retro hues, bold designs and metallic highlights.

Either way, the invigorating energy of the abstract movement is bound to fill your heart and your home with joy.





FOUR winning wine bottle CRAFTS

Whether you favour a dry white, a robust red or a fruity rosé, as a wine lover you will no doubt have one or two, or five, empty bottles taking up valuable space in your recycling bin each week.

So why not use these bottles to create something beautiful?

ART DECO VASES

All you need for this super-quick craft is a few bottles, white spray paint and three different colours of acrylic craft or chalk paint.

- Start by spray painting the bottles white; you will need to do this three times for full coverage.
- Next paint the top of each bottle in one of your chosen colours, adding vertical brush strokes around the neck.
- Finally paint around the base, adding vertical strokes up the sides.
- Leave to dry.

BIRD FEEDER

What could be better than sitting in your garden listening to the sweet song of the surrounding birds?

All you need is an empty wine bottle, a few pieces of wood, a hose clamp and some acrylic paint in your preferred colour to create this stunning garden feature.

MINIATURE PLANTER

Unfortunately, you can't use a regular wine bottle for this project, but it is so impressive that we decided to include it anyway.

- Purchase a wine bottle planter.
- Fill the planter with soil.
- Arrange a selection of succulents.
- Leave for 2-3 days without water to allow roots to heal.

CHEESE BOARD

To make this craft, you will first need to flatten your wine bottle. This involves using a kiln – you can find a simple tutorial for this online.

You can then add your preferred decorative touches.



Photo credit: greenhouseglassworks via gifttrends.com, Belle Vous via amazon.com, guidepatterns.com, thecrazycraftlady.com



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MOOD *for thought*

Creating a physical mood board may seem a little old-fashioned when you have the likes of Pinterest allowing you to collate all of your interior design inspirations at the touch of a button. That being said, there is nothing quite like the feel of fabric and the touch of textures to get your creative juices flowing.

WHAT IS A MOOD BOARD?

A mood board is a collection of items that offer you inspiration for your next design project within your home. The purpose of the board is to help you choose which specific items and styles you want included in your design.

STEP ONE: CONSTRUCT YOUR MOOD BOARD

Although you can make a mood board from any material, your best bet is to use reusable cork or foam board as you can then easily pin your samples on to it.

STEP TWO: COLLECT IMAGES

Look through interior design magazines to help cement your vision for your design and to gain insights into trending interior design styles.

STEP THREE: GATHER ACTUAL SAMPLES

Collecting samples of your preferred materials is vital if you want to really get an idea of how the space will look and feel. Look for fabric swatches, carpet samples, tile samples and paint colours, all of which will act as a guide for both the texture and colour of your newly decorated space.

STEP FOUR: ARRANGE YOUR BOARD

You want to arrange your mood board so it is simple to see the correlation between colours, styles and textures. It can also be useful to sort samples in relation to each other, such as a carpet sample next to a sofa fabric sample.

TOP TIP: Only include items you truly love to avoid an overcrowded board that pulls you in different design directions.



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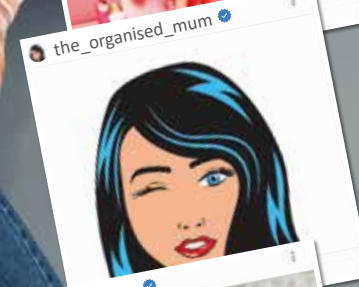
Four CLEANFLUENCERS

to follow on Instagram

While some people have used lockdown as an excuse to completely transform their homes, clearing out cupboards and casting out clutter, others might need a little bit more encouragement before donning their yellow gloves and starting to scrub.



LYNSEY QUEEN OF CLEAN @lynsey_queenofclean
If you favour a more natural way of cleaning your home then this is the Instagrammer for you. Educating her 192k followers on how to use store cupboard staples to remove stubborn stains and eliminate odours, Lynsey also tests out cleaning products, so you don't have to. Don't miss "Cleaning Tip Tuesday".



THE ORGANISED MUM @the_organised_mum
For those who hate housework and want to get it done as quickly as possible, Gemma Bray, aka The Organised Mum, is the ideal Instagrammer. Coining the phrase TOMM (The Organised Mum Method), this lady believes that life is for living, not for housework. She splits household tasks into three groups – daily jobs, daily specific tasks and Friday focus – and each chunk of chores is never more than 30 minutes long.



STYLE SISTERS @styleisters
If you are wanting to inject a little bit of glamour into your home, then the Style Sisters can help you. Most famous for overhauling the wardrobes of the likes of Amanda Holden and Millie Mackintosh, sisters Gemma and Charlotte have now turned their attention to helping their followers detox, organise and restyle their homes and wardrobes. Be sure to check out their space-saving tips.



CLEAN MAMA @cleanmama
Clean Mama, aka Becky, has been keeping a little corner of the internet clean since 2009 with her simple routines that promise to eliminate working-week household chaos. With tips on organising and decluttering your home, as well as her signature cleaning schedule, you will never again have to dedicate your entire weekend to housework.

Photo credit: Facebook



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5 alternative uses for HAIRSPRAY

A can of hairspray is just one of those beauty essentials that you always seem to have in the cupboard. Fortunately, even if you aren't trying to create a firm hold hairstyle, there are many other uses for it.

TO PROLONG THE LIFE OF CUT FLOWERS
If you have been gifted a bouquet of flowers but are worried about them wilting sooner than you would like, simply spray the underside of the cut stems with hairspray. This will help seal in the moisture and keep your flowers fresh for longer.

TO TIGHTEN SCREWS
Loose screws can be incredibly annoying, and tightening them is just another household task that you could do without. Fortunately, you can keep your screws more secure with just a few sprays of hairspray once every month or so.

TO KEEP CURTAINS CLEAN
If you are fed up with seeing dust all over your curtains but can't cope with having to take them down to thoroughly clean them, all you need to do is spray hairspray from top to bottom and enjoy dust-free curtains for longer.

TO REMOVE PET HAIR
As much as you love your cat or dog, pet hair can be an absolute nightmare to remove from furniture and clothing. However, by simply spraying hairspray on a towel and then rubbing it on the affected areas, you will find it much easier to pick up the hair.

TO REMOVE INK OR HAIR DYE
Ink stains are notoriously difficult to remove, yet hairspray can handle it. Just spray directly onto the stain and gently blot. The same process can be used to remove hair dye from clothing – simply spray and blot away.



HOME & DIY



DESK DESIGNS FOR SMALL SPACES

Working from home is not without its challenges, with distractions seemingly coming from everywhere and the work/life line becoming severely blurred. Fortunately, we have your desk space covered, thanks to the super space savers below, so that's one less thing you have to worry about.

TRANSFORM A CORNER

If you have an open-plan kitchen or living room, you are in the advantageous position of being able to convert a spare corner into a secluded and compact home office space. Focus on creating an area that complements your existing interior design and make sure you add as much storage space as possible.

OPT FOR AN ALCOVE

Alcoves in the home are very seldom used, and even though they are small, with a bit of imagination you can convert this wasted space into your own working retreat. If you can't fit in a

desk, why not instead mount a work surface and a light fitting to the wall?

GO TEMPORARY

If you really do not have any spare space that can be purely dedicated to working from home, you can still create a designated working area. Simply choose a room that offers you some solitude and add a fold-down workspace. An ottoman is a great investment, doubling up as seating and storage.

CONVERT YOUR SHED

If you are planning to work from home in the long term, you may want to consider converting your shed or perhaps even your loft into a spacious working area. Think of this as an investment and remind yourself of all the money you are saving on commuting.

PLUMP FOR THE RIGHT OFFICE CHAIR

Make sure you treat yourself to a proper office chair that offers back support, helps you to concentrate and instantly puts you in work mode.

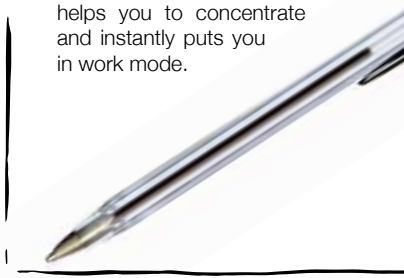
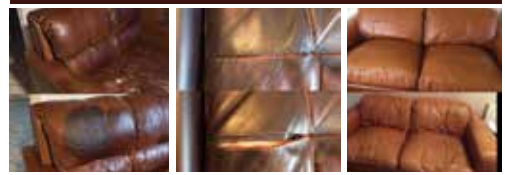


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JUNGLE FUN

HOME & DIY

Ever dreamed of turning your bedroom into a boudoir worthy of Borneo or adding an Amazonian twist to your home? Never fear – giant house plants are all the rage when it comes to interior design. These fabulous flora will turn your house into a rainforest haven in no time.



Swiss Cheese Plant

This plant gets its brilliant name from the elegant gaps between its expansive leaves, resembling the holes in a slice of Swiss cheese. The once popular monstera deliciosa has made a comeback in UK interiors due to its ability to revolutionise a room with its social media-ready, dramatic but understated presence in the corner of the room. In its native Mexico, the monstera can reach heights of 20cm, with dinner plate leaves stretching up to 75cm.



Fiddle Leaf fig

Anyone who owns the fickle fiddle leaf fig knows it requires quite a bit of TLC to survive. Keep your fiddle leaf fig in bright, indirect light. When roots begin to grow out of the bottom of the pot, either re-pot into a container that's a couple of inches bigger or trim the root-ball, being sure not to reduce the roots by more than 20 per cent. Because of their large surface, leaves tend to collect a lot of dust which can block light absorption, so to keep the plant healthy, regularly wipe those tops with a soft cloth. If properly cared for, the fiddle leaf fig can hit heights of up to three metres.



Jade Plant

This elegant, succulent plant requires very little care and is easy to grow in pots, but with an ability to adapt itself to differing light conditions and a maximum growth of up to three metres, a jade plant can create a real focal point in any room. Jade plants do best in temperatures of one to 24°C during the day and 10 to 13°C at night, with fertiliser being applied every six months or so. With a little TLC, however, your pretty jade plant might one day become a pretty jade tree.





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Photo credit: Jo Madders

Queen thanks boy after he creates word search to cheer her up

A seven-year-old boy from Billericay received a special letter from the Queen after he created a word search to "cheer her up".

Schoolboy Timothy Madders was worried lockdown might make the Queen sad, so he made a happiness-themed word search and puzzle to keep her occupied and bring a smile to her face.

The Queen thanked him for his thoughtful puzzle.

Speaking to *ITV News*, Timothy said: "It's a happiness word search and I thought it might cheer her up so that's why I did it."

"I was worried she might be getting bored and because she runs the country and stuff – she needs to be happy and good."

"Because she liked the word search so much, she asked her lady-in-waiting to write back to me."

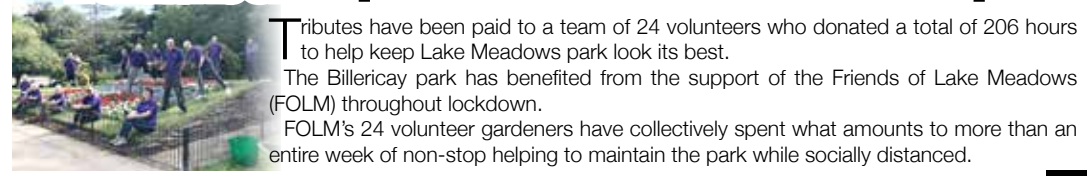
"I was a bit shocked at first when I saw the letter and it makes me really happy that she likes it so much."

Jo Madders, Timothy's mum, said: "I am really proud and he's a really thoughtful little boy. We are so pleased that she sent a letter back."

The letter from Windsor Castle said: "Dear Timothy, The Queen wishes me to write and thank you for your kind letter, and for the puzzle you have created especially for Her Majesty."

"Your thoughtfulness is greatly appreciated, and The Queen hopes that you too are keeping safe and well in the current situation."

Volunteers spend hundreds of hours at park



Tributes have been paid to a team of 24 volunteers who donated a total of 206 hours to help keep Lake Meadows park look its best.

The Billericay park has benefited from the support of the Friends of Lake Meadows (FOLM) throughout lockdown.

FOLM's 24 volunteer gardeners have collectively spent what amounts to more than an entire week of non-stop helping to maintain the park while socially distanced.



Salon owner accuses the government of being sexist

A salon owner from Billericay has accused the government of being sexist as the easing of lockdown restrictions benefited men more than women.

"In the lash, brow and face industry we are fuming; you can get your beard trimmed but we can't work from behind.

Laura Grant, who owns Ooh la Lashes in Norsey Road, appeared on ITV's *This Morning* on July 14 after new rules meant men could have their beards trimmed but women couldn't have their eyebrows waxed.

"It's sexist – they can get their beards trimmed, they have got their football back, they have got the pubs open so why are we not back at work?"

"It means some girls are offering beauty services on the black market and it's not safe; at least in the salons we are set up for it.

That was because barber shops could open but beauty salons had stricter measures which prevented them from providing services.

On the show and in response to Laura's claim, Caroline Nokes MP, who is also chair of the Women and Equalities Committee, said: "Laura is right and we need to press the case with ministers that it's just not fair.

"It just seems wrong."
Services for which Laura has campaigned to be available again will be allowed from August.

Laura told presenter Eamonn Holmes on *This Morning*: "When we were told we could reopen on July 4 we were ecstatic, but we were then told we couldn't do face-to-face services despite working from behind the client.

Going out 'not worth the risk' for cancer patient



A 21-year-old cancer patient from Billericay says going out is "not worth the risk" as she's not convinced the risk of coronavirus has gone away.

Michelle Rowe was re-diagnosed with blood cancer during lockdown and has been shielding at home with her girlfriend, parents and two older brothers. She spoke openly about her struggles with loneliness and anxiety during the pandemic, which has seen her cut off from family and friends and left her dependent on the kindness of others.

She said: "As I was still high risk after treatment, I had to self-isolate just a few days after I got the all clear in March this year, and never got the chance to properly celebrate remission.

"Just a month later my cancer returned, which has to have been one of the lowest points in my life. Now I can't leave the house unless it's to go to hospital, and I've lost count of how many months I've been indoors.

"The changing shielding guidance just adds to the panic and stress that is already going on for me. The virus isn't going to evaporate overnight, so I feel it's just not worth the risk of going outside."

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Life-saving device donated to salon for the community



Photo credit: Simon O'Connor

A Billericay salon has been donated a defibrillator as part of the one-year anniversary of the death of former Tottenham Hotspur player Justin Edinburgh.

The automated external defibrillator (AED) will be housed at Toni & Guy on the High Street for the benefit of customers and the wider community.

It was donated by the Justin Edinburgh 3 Foundation to Jim Shaw, who owns Toni & Guy Billericay, and was the former business partner of Edinburgh.

Edinburgh went on to manage Billericay Town and Leyton Orient, and it was his son, Charlie, who led the donation alongside trustees of the charity.

The salon was one of three venues to receive this piece of equipment and was chosen because of the special place it held in Justin's heart.

Jim Shaw said: "Justin was not just a business partner; he was a friend and an idol.

"His family has done him so proud with this charity and I can't thank them enough for choosing the salon to be gifted this piece of equipment which will help us to save lives in the local community."

Attacker avoids prison but must pay victim £10k

A man was handed a suspended prison sentence and told to give £10,000 to his victim after an attack outside a bar in Billericay.

Andrew Santry, of Billericay, was sentenced on July 6 for the unprovoked attack, which took place outside French Martini in Western Road as his victim was holding a door open.

The victim was left with a broken jaw in two places, which required metal plates to be inserted and his jaw to be wired shut.

This meant he was unable to have planned surgery on his knee, because his jaw could not be opened long enough to be put under anaesthetic.

The victim had gone outside for a cigarette and was talking to people in the smoking area.

Neither the victim nor anyone he was talking to knew Santry before the incident.

Despite this, the 27-year-old hit the victim once from the side, which knocked him out cold.

Santry walked away from the bar after the attack on October 26 last year, and he was later arrested.

He had previously admitting causing grievous bodily harm without intent before his sentencing at Basildon Crown Court.

Santry was handed a 16-month suspended prison sentence and ordered to pay £10,000 to his victim within six months.

Josh has lofty ambitions as he returns to the club

Billericay Town FC bolstered their ranks ahead of the new season with the signing of a former player.

Josh Hutchinson has returned to the club, having played for Ricay in the 2012/13 season when he helped them to promotion to the Conference South, as it was called then.

More recently he played for Potters Bar Town in the Isthmian Premier League, where he scored 16 goals last season before the campaign was cut short by coronavirus.

The 27-year-old is already looking ahead to the new season.

He said: "I'm buzzing to be involved with this kind of club.

"I'm looking forward to getting the season going, especially after the way last season ended.

"This club is definitely moving in the right direction and I think this is going to be a great opportunity for me.

"I want to cement a place in the side, and as a team we'll be looking for promotion."



Photo credit: Nicky Hayes Photography







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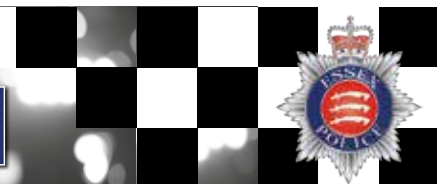
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**NEWS FROM YOUR LOCAL
 POLICE TEAM**



LOCAL NEWS BILLERICAY

Billericay police officers and PCSOs have been busy this month addressing issues you have highlighted to us. We have also seen the reopening of our licensed premises and officers have been on patrol making sure we keep people safe. As new rules regarding face coverings come into effect, we will continue to support retailers across the town and hope shoppers will do their part in keeping retail safe. Operation Oxygen continues across Billericay and we will target those engaging in antisocial behaviour in parks and open spaces. We will also be carrying out speed checks on local roads. As lockdown eases, more of you will be heading into work and leaving your properties empty. While Billericay has a low rate of burglaries, you can help by doing the following when you go out:

- > close and lock all your doors and windows, even if you're only going out for a few minutes
- > double-lock all doors

- > make sure that any valuables are out of sight
 - > keep handbags away from the letterbox or cat flap and hide all keys, including car keys, as a thief could hook keys or valuables through even a small opening
 - > never leave car documents or ID in obvious places such as kitchens or hallways
 - > in the evening, shut the curtains and leave lights on
 - > if you're out all day, then it's advisable to use a timer device to automatically turn lights and a radio on in the evening
 - > make sure the side gate is locked
 - > lock your shed or garage
- Let us know about issues by emailing basildoncommunitypolicingteam@essex.police.uk or via our website essex.police.uk

How to live a planet-friendly life



An impressive one in five of us aspires to live a greener lifestyle, and at the second annual Soul Spirit and Wellbeing Festival you'll pick up plenty of inspirational ideas on how to live in a more planet-friendly way.

The event will take place at the Ramsden Bellhouse Community Centre on September 13.

There will be eco-fashion, animal-kind skin and health products as well as tips on how to limit food packaging – you're invited to bring your own containers to decant foods such as pasta, rice and cereals plus herbal blends to make you happier and healthier this autumn.

You can take the time to focus on your health and well-being with more than 30 stalls offering a whole range of stress-easing, mood-boosting therapies, including crystal therapy and massage, Latin Dance-Fit, crystal healing, Menocize, plus the latest CBD products.

The first Soul Spirit and Wellbeing Festival was a great success, with guests and stallholders alike commenting on the peaceful, happy vibe, and this time round it will be bigger and better, with doors open from 11am to 4pm.

There will also be some of the UK's finest tarot card readers and psychic mediums, and book signing with local spiritual author Dodie Hamilton.

Healthy food and drinks will be available throughout the day.

Tickets are priced at £3.50 each, available on the day. The first 50 guests will receive a healthy goody bag worth more than £100, along with special offers at the stands. There is plenty of free parking at the fully accessible venue.

For more information, visit the Soul Spirit and Wellbeing Festival on Facebook www.facebook.com/events/s/soul-spirit-wellbeing-festival/2404484026499711



LOCAL NEWS

from your neighbourhood



Virtual Strawberry Fair was hailed a great success

This year's annual Strawberry Fair was a huge success, despite having to be staged virtually.

The annual event is one of the most popular events in the local calendar, and organisers, Brentwood Baptist Church, were not fazed by the pandemic.

A family fun activity pack was provided for residents to download so they could join in with home activities and games, from strawberry bobbing to making their own cocktails and recipes.

A week before the event children could also follow Pip, the cuddly Strawberry Fair mascot, as he visited a number of mystery locations in the borough, and a video was shown by local charity SNAP who wrote and performed a song for the event.

From the comfort of their own homes, families were able to enjoy performances from Dreams Theatre school and Razzamataz Theatre Schools: *Cantando* and *Stuck in the Middle*.

There was even a strawberry-themed face painting tutorial from Curly Cloud Face Painting and a video

from Exotic Explorers.

Brentwood Borough Council's community, health and leisure committee chair, councillor Cliff Poppy, said: "It is fantastic to see how everyone rose to the challenge of doing this event in such a different way and so I would like to thank everyone who took part, including the families who posted images of themselves enjoying the activities and strawberries in their homes.

"We felt it was even more important, given the last few months, that people came together to celebrate and enjoy a day like this.

"The Strawberry Fair is a highlight for all our residents each year and by doing it this way we were able to ensure all the organisations got plenty of coverage for the wonderful work they are continuing to deliver in such difficult circumstances."

Pictures from this year's event can be found at www.facebook.com/events/s/brentwoods-strawberry-fair-at/-284381856016204

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Annual model railway exhibition cancelled

LOCAL NEWS SHENFIELD



A popular annual model railway exhibition set to take place in Shenfield has been cancelled because of COVID-19.

For the last 42 years the Mid Essex Model Railway Club has been running the annual Model Railway Exhibition in September within the Brentwood and Shenfield areas.

The club has had various different venues over the years, but for its 43rd annual show it was set to use a new venue.

Unfortunately, because of the ongoing coronavirus pandemic and social distancing regulations, it will be unable to hold the exhibition.

Club secretary David Zelly said: "We are very sorry to have to disappoint our usual 1,000 plus visitors with this postponing but we will be back next year on Saturday, September 18 at the Adult Community College in Hutton with our usual selection of railway layouts from around the country, supported by local and national model shops and suppliers."

For further details of the show and information on the club, contact club secretary David Zelly at secretary@midsexmrc.org or by calling 01277 216098.

Teenage boy arrested after High Street fight

A 15-year-old boy from Hutton was among four people arrested after a fight in Brentwood High Street.

The teenager was the youngest of the four people arrested on the evening of Saturday, July 4.

On arrival, police arrested four people, including the boy from Hutton, who was held on suspicion of affray.

The three others to be arrested were from Edmonton and are between 19 and 21 years old.

Following the incident, several local residents expressed concern that the lockdown easing would lead to more trouble on the streets.

One local resident, who wishes to remain anonymous,

said: "I hope this isn't the start of disturbance on our streets.

"I also doubt people are socially distancing, especially after a few drinks. It's not acceptable and not fair on the police, who are busy enough."

Festival set to go ahead thanks to committee

This year's popular South Weald Festival will go ahead, thanks to the extraordinary effort and commitment shown by organisers.

The event, which has been running for 57 years, has been rearranged to run between September 8 and 13.

The newly arranged dates are testament to the festival committee who have worked non-stop to ensure the event can go ahead, with the programme for the festival still promising to have something for everyone.

As well as being a major event in the local calendar, it supports St Peter's School and Church in South Weald village, with £28,000 raised last year.

Chris Luck, the festival coordinator, said: "We initially thought that we would have to cancel everything, but my extraordinary committee felt that we should press on and offer hope and expectation to all with something of a celebration of our school, church and village.

"They have come up with a slimmed-down version which is still well within the current guidelines.

"This year is special in many ways, as the theme is 2020 Vision not only as we celebrate those wonderful people who assist us with our sight but also as we develop our vision of Earth as we would wish to see it.

"The festival will, yet again, offer something for everyone, with most of the usual events taking place but some in a revised form.

"My repeated thanks must go to Nik Allen of VISIONBillericayShenfield and to the festival committee, as well as to the individual events coordinators who do such a wonderful job every year.

Visit www.southwealdfestival.co.uk for more information on the event.



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ACROSS

1. Make fun of (4)
3. Consecrate (8)
9. Behave well (7)
10. Of the nose (5)
11. Contradictory (12)
13. Consent to receive (6)
15. Person to whom a lease is granted (6)
17. Showing total commitment (12)
20. Ancient measure of length (5)
21. Waterproof fabric (7)
22. Stretched out (8)
23. Solely (4)

DOWN

1. State of the USA (8)
2. Comedian (5)
4. Real (6)
5. Significant (12)
6. Disparaging remarks (7)
7. Ivy League university (4)
8. Worldly (12)
12. Inclination (8)
14. Live together (7)

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16. Royal chair (6)
18. Spoken for (5)
19. Pinnacle (4)

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- ▶ In winter, bowhead whales sing for almost 24 hours a day to attract mates
- ▶ Walrus mothers and calves recognise each other by their voices
- ▶ The underwater noise from ships is doubling every decade
- ▶ Common dolphins are usually seen in large groups of up to 1,000
- ▶ A basking shark can be up to 11 metres long
- ▶ Jellyfish have been around longer than dinosaurs and have survived five mass extinctions
- ▶ Dolphins sleep with one eye open

SUDOKU

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PET Sounds



How our pets communicate with each other, and what it is they say

While the very fabric of our society is built on the way we communicate, scientists have always been rather less certain when it comes to the animals we share our lives with. What is clear is that cats and dogs have methods of conversing with each other which, while not breaking into full conversation, does imply a heightened sense of intelligence and social awareness compared to the likes of hamsters, rabbits and goldfish.

While the trademark meow and bark sounds do not convey definitive messages as do the words we use as humans, the vocalisations are known to reference and communicate such things as pain, fear, relief, satisfaction and, of course, aggression.

In other actions – from rubbing noses to wagging tails and lifting paws – there are unspoken gestures that pattern emotions, while any snuggling up together, grooming or even lying near to each other implies obvious comfort and contentment.

It's also worth keeping an eye on a pet's ear position, where surprise, alertness, curiosity and danger can be detected by position and angle.

Perhaps, however, the most advanced form of communication between animals of the same species comes as pheromones. Evolved over thousands of years, these odourless and colourless secretions are the most calming method of letting another animal know they are not under threat.

As for our other household pets, hamsters have scent glands and the ability to detect a friend by the odour of its breath, while rabbits use smell and physical cues. Finally, bird call notes and song can be a tremendously effective method of conveying anything from danger to an alert to food, perhaps a mating call or just a nod to others that they are present and have survived the night.




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BACK TO
nature?

FOUR TOURIST SPOTS YOU REALLY SHOULDN'T VISIT IF YOU CARE ABOUT THE NATURAL WORLD



Our passion for exploring, adventuring and seeing the world has never been so great, which makes the travel limitations of the coronavirus all the more frustrating.

On the plus side, though, our lack of movement this year will undoubtedly aid the green shoots of recovery – or at least halt the destruction – for a host of popular destinations gradually being destroyed by our wanderlust.

Fjaðrárgljúfur Canyon, Iceland

Made famous by a Justin Bieber pop video and ranging, panoramic shots in *Game of Thrones*, the spectacular canyon has become a hotspot, with tourists desperate to trace the steps of their high-profile heroes. However, with an estimated 750,000 people visiting in 2019, pathways and access routes have deteriorated fast, leading local authorities to impose temporary bans.

Komodo Islands, Indonesia

Curiosity about the Komodo dragon, the largest living lizard, has attracted tourists and poachers alike to the island, which in 2019 led to it being shut to tourists. Still home to 1,800 of the reptiles, numbers had started to fall alarmingly, leading to desperate measures having to be implemented.

Machu Picchu, Peru

The world-renowned village had a 2,500/day limit set by UNESCO around a decade ago, but tourist numbers are expected to be treble that. With pathways and walls under threat, tourists run the risk, literally, of eroding the very history under their feet.

Galapagos Islands

Perhaps the go-to destination for over-tourism, the Ecuadorian government has recently taken strict measures to limit visitor numbers for fear that the habitats of the estimated 9,000 species present on the island and in surrounding waters are severely under threat.

While Sir David Attenborough's intentions were to celebrate a place that inspired Darwin's theory of evolution, no less, ease of travel (COVID-19 notwithstanding) has actually threatened the very species he was celebrating.

Maya Jama

MAKING WAVES

WHY MAYA JAMA NO LONGER HAS A FACE FOR RADIO

When Maya Jama announced at the end of last summer that her four-year romance with rapper Stormzy had come to an end, it brought to a conclusion a relationship during which the careers and statuses of both stars had elevated to levels previously unimaginable.

She, the model, fashion designer and presenter whose opportunities now encompass both broadcasting and retail in equal measures; he, the urban musician whose impact on the charts was, if anything, topped by his accidental appointment as a political campaigner, notably for the rights and career opportunities of black youngsters in inner-city areas.

When the announcement came that the pair had separated so as to “focus on their careers”, there were the usual Twitter-led sniggers and sneers, declaring that this much overused excuse was just a front for troubled termination of a previously happy partnership. However, on this occasion, and considering the professional pathways both have taken since, we may well take the statement at face value.

Certainly, from Maya’s perspective, she is someone who has cultivated a clutch of positive headlines throughout her time in the spotlight, during which she rarely passes up an opportunity to extend her reach. While she’s sexy, confident and unafraid of controversy, the bigger part of who she is involves taking risks – her breakthrough came soon after she moved to London from Bristol aged just 16 in order to set up her own YouTube channel alongside landing a gig as a presenter for JumpOff.TV.

MTV spotted her talent and she became host of MTV Base show *The Wrap-Up*, before moving on to *MTV Essentials* and *MTV News*.

Next, finding herself in the gaze of sports directors, she fronted Copa90’s 2014 World Cup coverage, before being invited to host Radio 1’s weekend morning shows.

TV projects for Channel 4 and Channel 5 have followed, but her status has been elevated mainly by her engagement across social media – not least her 1.6 million Instagram followers. She regularly opens up to her wealth of supporters about topics including mental health, fitness, relationships and minority rights.

Yet fans of her Radio 1 shows were stunned in June this year when she chose not to renew her DJing contract – instead she can be found co-presenting the Saturday night BBC1 show *Peter Crouch: Save Our Summer*.

And from wowing admirers with a revealing Brit Awards dress to Kurt Geiger fashion campaigns that leave even less to the imagination, it seems Maya’s future is certainly being mapped out with style in mind.

“For me it’s always been about grabbing as many opportunities as I can,” she says. “I don’t want people to get bored of my face but, at the same time, I do want to challenge myself, and have fun along the way.”

Sure enough, Maya’s appeal is widespread and showing little sign of abating. “I want to do this for myself, but I want to do it for all the other teenagers sat at home dreaming of big things. That was me... and if I can do it, then anyone else can too.”

“
For me it's always
been about grabbing
as many opportunities
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people to get bored of
my face but, at the
same time, I do want
to challenge myself, and
have fun along the way.”

”



GARDENING

AUGUST BIRTH FLOWER OF THE MONTH:

Gladiolus



If you were born in August, your birth flower is the bold and beautiful gladiolus. Instantly recognisable by its long, skinny shape and vivid colours, this flower symbolises strength of character. Easy to grow and wonderful to cut, gladiolus should be a go-to flower for beginner and expert gardeners alike.

WHAT DOES THE GLADIOLUS SYMBOLISE?

Gladiolus is the Latin word for "little sword". Greek warriors would wear this flower in battle to protect themselves from harm and death. The flower has long been associated with strength of character, remembrance and sincerity, as well as infatuation. Nowadays, the gladiolus is commonly given on fortieth wedding anniversaries.

WHAT DOES THIS BIRTH FLOWER SAY ABOUT YOUR PERSONALITY?

If you were born in August, you are said to be an intellectual who will do whatever it takes to succeed in life. You thrive in leadership roles at work and, like your flower, you are known for your strength and integrity.

HOW DO I GROW GLADIOLI IN MY GARDEN?

This flower flourishes in rich but well-drained soil, but if you have another soil type such as clay in your garden, it can be planted in a pot. Gladioli need plenty of water if you want them to flower well, so it is advisable to dig a trench and add plenty of well-rotted manure. It is a good idea to purchase plenty of gladiolus bulbs and to plant 10-15 every couple of weeks to enjoy a succession of flowers throughout the summer and autumn.

DO GLADIOLI GROW BACK EACH YEAR?

Gladiolus bulbs are not hardy enough to survive the cold winter months. Therefore, you should dig them up and store them ready to be replanted in the spring.



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ALL AREAS COVERED

HORTICULTURE HEROES:

Carol Klein

Carol Klein is a true gardener of the soil – a presenter, author, columnist and former teacher still going strong at 75 but who could comfortably pass as someone two decades younger... it must be all that fresh air.

A tour de force in gardener terms, Carol has lived and worked through various horticultural revolutions, presented for 20 years on *Gardener's World*, as well as fronted a number of other BBC series such as *Life in a Cottage Garden*.

The Manchester-born gardener simply loves being outdoors.

"It's always such a breath of fresh air," she says, "and I'm just lucky I've had a career that's afforded me that privilege."

Colour is a big part of what stimulates the horticulturalist, with the plant or flower guiding ideas, rather than her shaping it to what she wants.

"I think we have to let everything flourish in the way that is most natural," she says. "Sure, you're going to have to cut back and tidy up, but for the most part you have to let your garden express itself; so if that means a few rough edges or loose beds, then let the garden have that... let it breathe. It will be all the better for it in the long run."

Klein is also a big advocate of growing your own produce, something that feeds into the ethos of the garden having its own life and its own bounty.

"The fact that the garden can produce so much beauty, yet something that fuels and nourishes us too, is incredible," she says. "It is such a versatile thing that we always need to appreciate and respect."

Her advice for converting your gardening space into something that might fill gaps in your weekly supermarket shop is to only grow what you like eating.

"We sometimes end up sowing a vast array of seeds out of curiosity. While that can be fun, there is ultimately most satisfaction in growing something that's simple, but done well. Who'd have thought a small carrot could be so satisfying?"



GARDENING





GARDENING



CREATE YOUR OWN

With many of us spending a lot more time in the garden than usual, what better time to decide to produce your own compost?

Green materials include:
Vegetable peelings | Used teabags | Dead flowers and houseplants | Grass cuttings | Nettles

Brown materials include:
Eggshells | Newspapers (not glossy magazines) | Toilet roll tubes | Shredded plain paper | Dry leaves and small twigs | Young wood garden prunings

WHERE SHOULD I START COMPOSTING?

You have two options when it comes to composting: you can use a compost bin, or you can choose an open compost heap. A bin will allow you to make compost more quickly, but both options will result in compost eventually.

When choosing the site for your compost, you need to ensure that it is not subjected to extreme temperatures or excessive moisture. Opt for a shady area of the garden that provides good drainage.

HOW TO CHOOSE COMPOSTING MATERIALS

As a general rule, your compost should be made up of a 50/50 mix of green and brown materials.

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF COMPOSTING?

Composting enriches your soil, suppresses plant diseases and pests, reduces the need for chemical fertilisers, encourages the production of good bacteria and fungi and helps to lower your carbon footprint.

ARE THERE ANY DRAWBACKS TO COMPOSTING?

There are a few downsides to home composting, namely that it requires quite a lot of effort on your part to see the right results. You also need to commit to creating quite a lot of compost if you want to fertilise your entire garden.



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FOOD & DRINK



Cool AS A CUCUMBER

FIVE FOODS TO DEFEAT THE HEAT THIS SUMMER...

Most of us seem to spend the whole winter yearning for the summer, but when it arrives we are always poorly equipped to deal with the sudden increase in temperature. Not any more. Keep reading to discover five not-so-obvious food choices that will help you beat the heat.

1. CHILLI PEPPERS

No, we are not completely crazy. Eating a meal that contains chilli peppers will trick your body into thinking that it is hotter than it actually is, resulting in immediate sweating. And when you sweat, your body starts to cool down.

2. SPINACH

Fresh spinach is available all year round and has the unique ability to be able to balance out your blood pressure which in turn will help you to feel cooler.

3. A BOWL OF SOUP

In the same way that chilli peppers work, a bowl of hot soup will force your body into cooling itself down. A great option if you are not a fan of spicy food but need a quick way to relieve the heat.

4. FENUGREEK TEA

Fenugreek is a natural detoxifier and will help your body to get rid of any excess fluid. For best results drink it hot, but if you cannot manage this, simply chill in the fridge for an hour before consuming.

5. TURMERIC

Turmeric has a number of health benefits including boosting your immunity and being a great source of antioxidants. However, not many people know that it can also naturally cool the body. If you don't fancy a curry, add this spice to a couscous salad or enjoy a glass of "golden milk".

FOODS TO AVOID:

- > Carb-rich foods such as rice or grains
- > Foods that are high in protein, such as meat



3 BOOZY

Ice lolly

RECIPES

There is nothing quite like a cool and refreshing ice lolly on a hot summer's day, and what could be better than indulging in a home-made one that comes with a bit of a kick?

Why not give these three boozy ice lolly recipes a try and enjoy your favourite tippie in frozen form?

Mango & Tequila Spice

YOU WILL NEED: 50ml tequila ■ 3-4 small ripe mangoes ■ juice and zest of 2 limes ■ 140g sugar ■ ¼ tsp chilli powder

HOW TO MAKE: Blend the mango until smooth ■ Pour the puree through a fine mesh strainer ■ Add the lime juice, sugar, chilli and tequila and mix well ■ Pour the mixture into 10 ice lolly moulds, leaving ½ cm at top for expansion ■ Put in freezer for 45 minutes and then add lolly sticks ■ Freeze for a further 4 hours

Cider & Black

YOU WILL NEED: 1litre dry cider ■ 100ml apple juice ■ 150g blackberries ■ 1 tbsp crème de cassis ■ 2 tsp lemon juice ■ 4 tbsp sugar

HOW TO MAKE: Simmer the blackberries in a pan with 1 tbsp sugar and 50ml water until soft ■ Pour through a sieve and stir in the crème de cassis ■ Pour the syrup into your moulds and put in freezer ■ Reduce cider in pan for 10 minutes, add 2 tbsp sugar and dissolve ■ Add apple

juice and lemon juice and leave to cool ■ Pour into lolly moulds, leaving ½ cm at top for expansion ■ Freeze for a further hour before adding lolly sticks ■ Freeze for 6-8 hours until solid

Strawberry Fizz

YOU WILL NEED: 400g strawberries ■ 2 tbsp sugar ■ 2 tsp lemon juice ■ 4 tsp elderflower cordial ■ 200ml Prosecco

HOW TO MAKE: Whizz strawberries in a processor with sugar, elderflower cordial and lemon juice ■ Pass through a sieve and add Prosecco ■ Pour into lolly moulds, leaving ½ cm at top for expansion ■ Freeze for an hour before adding lolly sticks ■ Freeze for a further 6-8 hours

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Going back 120 years to trace the roots of our most famous drink import

You wouldn't ever think to label Coca-Cola a 'slow burner'. Whether it's the hit of the bubbles or the sugar rush that accompany the world's best-selling soft drink, it's immediacy is a big part of why we love it so much.

Yet wind back 120 years when Coca-Cola hit UK shores for the first time, and uptake of the famously fizzy drink was, shall we say, rather flat.

The fact Coca-Cola came to the UK was down to Charles Candler, the son of founder Asa Candler. Upon a trip to London in the year 1900, he brought with him five gallons of syrup. It was the first time this American staple had made it here, and it was something never before experienced by Londoners.

The initial limited quantities were lapped up by those who tried it in specialist outlets, but then more than two decades passed without any particular Coca-Cola revolution.

That was, until 1920, when the corporation arranged a deal that would see the soft drink go on sale at Selfridges, the London Coliseum and a few other high-ranking stores. Suddenly, with a bigger platform, with bottling plants in Paris and Bordeaux, and the buzz of the capital in the early post World War I years where renewed freedoms and new tastes were all the rage, the UK public found a new flavour to savour.

Sales rose gradually, although it wasn't until the 1970s that the first canning plant was opened in Milton Keynes. This facility was at the forefront of technology, capable of filling 1,500 cans a minute.

A drink that appealed to young people as well as acting as a mixer for adults was always going to have a sustainable shelf life, but the expansion of the key product (into diet versions as well as flavour additions, such as cherry) ensured our interest held.

The brand, as a whole, is now responsible for the likes of Fanta, Dr Pepper, Sprite, Lilt, Oasis, Smartwater, Schweppes, Powerade and even tinned Costa Coffee products, and the evolution continues into vegan drinks and zero-sugar products.

And of course, these days, Coca-Cola in the UK is more than just a drink. The marketing whizzes have turned it into a byword for sustainability, the environment, leisure and societal values.

When Charles Candler stepped off his ship in 1900 he couldn't possibly have imagined that the modest five gallons he carried with him would have such a

galvanising effect on our lives, our lifestyles and our passions, permeating everything from simple hydration to the most recognisable brand colours of them all, right the way through to the way Santa Claus is dressed.

Coca-Cola's start to life in the UK may have been slow, but its elevation in the last 100 years has been nothing short of thirst-quenching.



KIDS

BACK TO SCHOOL after lockdown

If your children have been at home since lockdown began, the thought of sending them back to school in September will most likely bring about feelings of anxiety, fear and, let's be honest, a little bit of relief.

You have all been in your own little family bubble for so long that adjusting to a school routine will be a challenge for everyone involved.

Fortunately, there are steps you can take to help your kids mentally prepare for this big step.

Openly discuss concerns

Taking the time to talk to your child, in an age-appropriate way, about any worries or concerns they have about going back to school can help to alleviate their fears and reduce any stress that they may be struggling with.

Share your own feelings

It can be a good idea to let your child know that they are not alone when it comes to worries about the "new normal". Be open and honest about your emotions and encourage your child to share theirs.

Ask the school for help

Do not be scared to ask your child's school for help if you are concerned that your child will struggle on their first day, or even during their first few weeks back. They may be able to offer additional support during the initial transition period and be able to check on your child throughout the day.

Get back into a bedtime routine

The importance of ensuring your child is getting enough sleep should never be underestimated, both physically and mentally. In the weeks ahead of their first day back, gradually start getting your child to bed earlier each night so that they wake up fresh and rested on the big day.



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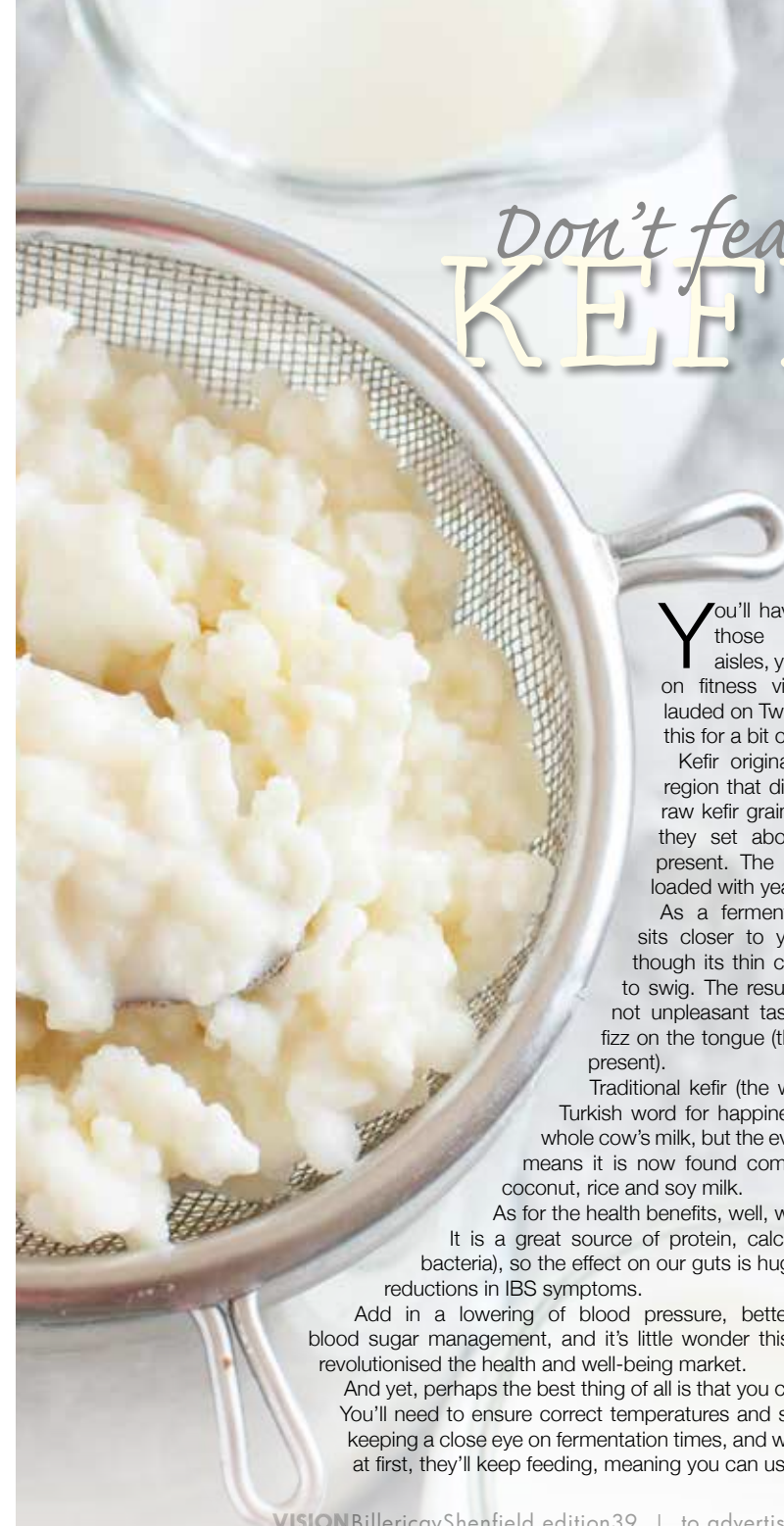
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Don't fear KEFIR



You'll have seen kefir in and around those uber-healthy supermarket aisles, you'll have heard it mentioned on fitness videos, you'll have seen it lauded on Twitter and Instagram... and all this for a bit of cultured milk?

Kefir originates from the mountainous region that divides Asia and Europe. The raw kefir grains are added to milk, where they set about consuming the lactose present. The result is a fermented drink loaded with yeast and healthy bacteria.

As a fermented milk liquid it probably sits closer to yoghurt than anything else, though its thin consistency makes it perfect to swig. The result is a tart, slightly sour but not unpleasant taste that features a lingering fizz on the tongue (thanks to the carbon dioxide present).

Traditional kefir (the word comes from 'keif', the Turkish word for happiness) uses grains mixed with whole cow's milk, but the evolution of our dairy products means it is now found combined with goat's, sheep's, coconut, rice and soy milk.

As for the health benefits, well, where do you want to begin? It is a great source of protein, calcium and probiotics (friendly bacteria), so the effect on our guts is huge, with better digestion and reductions in IBS symptoms.

Add in a lowering of blood pressure, better cholesterol balance and blood sugar management, and it's little wonder this 'whole grain solution' has revolutionised the health and well-being market.

And yet, perhaps the best thing of all is that you can make it yourself at home. You'll need to ensure correct temperatures and sterile equipment, as well as keeping a close eye on fermentation times, and while the grains are expensive at first, they'll keep feeding, meaning you can use them over and over again.



BREATHE IN THE VAPORS

HOW THE NIKE VAPORFLY RANGE IS CHANGING SPORT AND FITNESS

In an era when the simplicity with which sportswear and leisurewear cross over can leave some brands struggling to stand out from the crowd, Nike's recent pursuit of record-breaking greatness is another step beyond.

claims, with Kenyan runner Eliud Kipchoge achieving what many thought would never be possible when he completed the iconic marathon distance in 1hr 59mins 40secs.

However, there was a twist in the tale. World Athletics, the governing body, quickly banned the shoe for its unfair structural and bounce advantage offered over competitors, with excessive carbon and a super-thick sole said to offer propulsion well beyond a fair standard – indeed, there was an estimated four per cent uplift in performance.

Nike's hopes of making a shoe that will truly transform the sports record book may have been dashed, but its advancements have at least brought about a firmer set of regulations that all athletes must adhere to.

And as far as the impact the shoe has had on the brand's reputation – well, given that sales of the Vaporfly have been accelerating quicker than Kipchoge in the final few yards on Mall, Nike has undoubtedly reinforced its reputation as race leader.

The launch of its Vaporfly range, accompanied by some truly ambitious moves to fuel the company's marketing machine – not least a sub two-hour marathon – has seen the world's largest footwear and sports brand stylishly swagger through the finish tape, albeit while courting a fair amount of controversy in the process.

The furore began as soon as Nike launched the Vaporfly. As if running footwear wasn't already beefed and buffed up enough, the boffins from the Beaverton HQ produced a shoe enriched, enhanced and engineered to the hilt. It promised to better the performances not just of the world's elite runners, but also of those pounding the pavements for 'fun'.

And the science unequivocally backed up the



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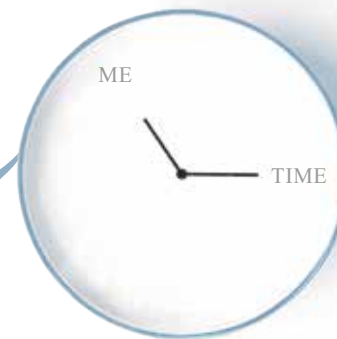
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ME, myself AND I



Whether you are a stay-at-home parent, a working professional or a combination of the two, finding time for yourself before lockdown was hard. Since the COVID-19 pandemic, it has become almost impossible; from trying to work from home, to attempting home schooling, to being on top of your partner 24/7.

However, taking the time to focus on yourself and your individual needs is crucial for maintaining good mental health.

WHY IS "ME TIME" SO IMPORTANT?

If you are the kind of person who is used to always putting others first, then even the concept of making time for yourself may seem strange. However, failing to adequately care for your own personal needs can lead to a lack of concentration, reduced stamina, feelings of anger and resentment and even total burnout.

HOW TO TAKE "ME TIME"

It's all well and good us saying that "me time" is important, but if you have a spouse, two kids,

a dog and a boss who rely on you every single day, the logistics can be a challenge. That being said, once you start taking, rather than asking for, a minimum of 30 minutes alone time, you will soon find that it becomes a seamless part of your daily routine.

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF "ME TIME"?

Taking the time to be kind to yourself can result in you feeling more energised and refreshed and can help to improve your overall self-esteem. It can also allow you to think more clearly and to make better life decisions both for yourself and for your family.

POSITIVE "ME TIME" ACTIVITIES:

- > A relaxing bubble bath
- > A workout or yoga session
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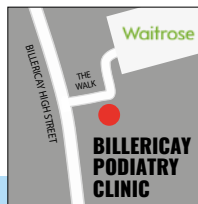
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CHECK OUT THIS

chic CHIGNON

HOW TO CREATE THE
PERFECT CHIGNON BUN



BEAUTY

If you need an updo for a formal occasion, then the chic chignon should be your go-to hairstyle. It's classic, elegant and even has a bit of a vintage feel to it; just perfect for oozing glamour and sophistication.

HOW TO ACHIEVE THIS LOOK

- Step 1:** Part your hair and then section off the front portion.
- Step 2:** Create a firm ponytail with the rest of your hair.
- Step 3:** Tighten the ponytail and check that the strands above it lie flat and smooth.
- Step 4:** Backcomb the ponytail, strand by strand, for added volume.
- Step 5:** Spritz with a light- to medium-hold hairspray.
- Step 6:** Lightly comb the top of your hair to smooth any flyaway strands.
- Step 7:** Make a simple loop out of your ponytail, using a clear elastic band to hold in place.
- Step 8:** Loosely wrap the free-hanging end of hair around the base of your ponytail.
- Step 9:** Fan out the end of the wrap and arrange it to cover the base of the looped ponytail.

- Step 10:** Pin in place securely.
- Step 11:** Divide your front section of hair into two sections.
- Step 12:** Tease the hair from the roots and lightly comb through to smooth.
- Step 13:** Bring one section to the chignon and cover its base with it. Pin to secure.
- Step 14:** Wrap the hanging strands loosely around the chignon a few times and pin.
- Step 15:** Repeat with the other section.
- Step 16:** Optional – gently loosen the hair above the chignon for a slightly messier look.

TOP TIP: Remember that a chignon should always be low, sitting at the nape of the neck or at the back of your head.



How to
 .ZIT.
 .ZAP.

THE WAY TO DEAL WITH SPOTS LIKE A SKINCARE PRO

When it comes to skincare problems, there is no one-size-fits-all method for tackling them as the causes can be anything from hormones to our diets, and even the weather.

A stubborn reality of angry pustules is that picking or popping them will go against every natural instinct you have, while reaching for your foundation risks irritating them further.

There is also the assumption that the way to tackle oily skin is to dry it out by bombarding it with all manner of potions and harsh exfoliators. However, when irritated, your epidermis will only put up more barriers to defend itself, leading to further blocked pores and more spots. Instead, see your acne as something more aligned with eczema and take a gentler approach.

Not surprisingly, a cleansing routine is very important, but it should only be twice a day and with products that are soothing but which also contain salicylic acid to gently remove dead skin and excess sebum. Once or twice a week you may want to treat your skin to a good-quality charcoal mask to deep clean your pores, or even a very gentle scrub.

Occasionally, you might find yourself dealing with sebaceous cysts which are hard, sore bumps buried deep under your skin. A good daily routine will help keep these at bay, but you can also apply a warm compress to help open the pore.

Moisturising is actually a vital part of rebuilding your skin's natural barrier, so invest in a lotion designed for oily skin and use it religiously. The same goes for sunscreen, which should be worn daily to protect against UV damage and further irritation.

While there is no quick fix, good habits will help you control your complexion, rather than your complexion controlling you.



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FASHION

Pleats

FOR ALL OCCASIONS



Pleats are officially back in style for summer/autumn 2020 and we couldn't be any more excited about this surprising resurgence. Flattering, versatile and offering a sexy yet understated vibe, you can wear a pleated skirt anywhere, as long as you know how.

How to wear the pleated skirt:

Whether you are invited to a party, are heading for a picnic in the park or have an important meeting at work, you can find the perfect pleated skirt outfit combo for you.

Daytime chic – Team a pastel-coloured midi pleated skirt with a stripy blazer and ankle boots for a smart yet effortless look that will work just as well for lunch with the ladies as it will for a presentation with the boss.

Evening glam – Opt for a black satin pleated skirt that cinches you in at the waste and gives you killer curves and team it with a cropped top and a pair of stiletto heels for an instant vampish vibe.

Casual cool – Who says you can't wear a skirt for a stroll in the woods? The trick to toning down the pleated skirt is to add a simple fitted tee, an oversized denim jacket and a pair of fresh white trainers.

Choosing the right pleat for your shape:

Regular pleat – Depending on where the skirt is pleated, you can choose to emphasise your hips, waistline or bottom, making this pleat ideal for most body types.

Box pleat – Best for those with narrow hips and slender waists.

Kick pleat – Normally found on shorter skirts, this style is ideal for apple body shapes.

Inverted pleat – Most often worn at knee length, the inverted pleat is best suited to pear-shaped women.

Knife pleat – Another mini style; if you don't mind showing off your legs.

Accordion pleat – Full and feminine, this style suits everyone.

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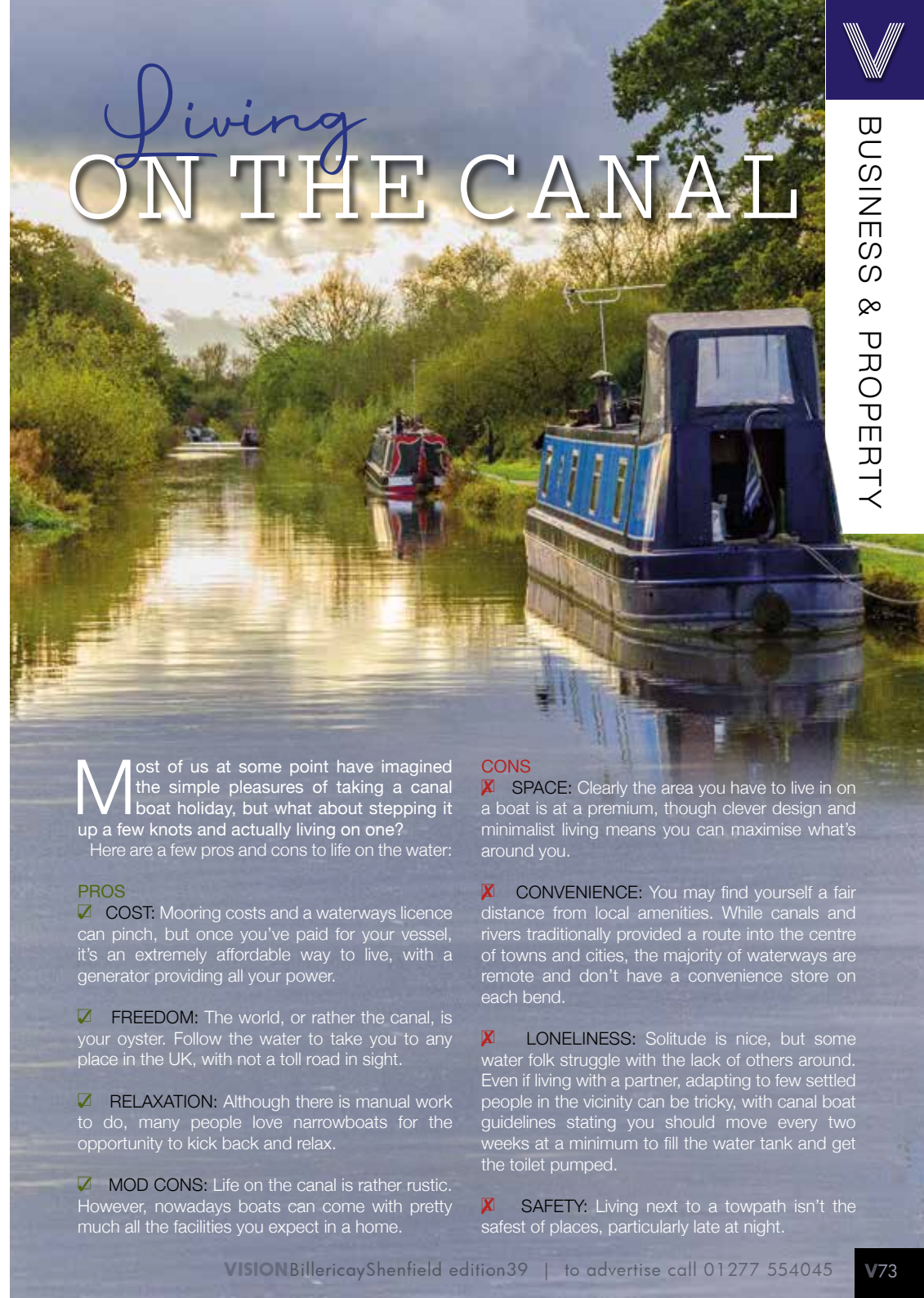
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Living ON THE CANAL

BUSINESS & PROPERTY



Most of us at some point have imagined the simple pleasures of taking a canal boat holiday, but what about stepping it up a few knots and actually living on one?

Here are a few pros and cons to life on the water:

CONS

✗ **SPACE:** Clearly the area you have to live in on a boat is at a premium, though clever design and minimalist living means you can maximise what's around you.

✗ **CONVENIENCE:** You may find yourself a fair distance from local amenities. While canals and rivers traditionally provided a route into the centre of towns and cities, the majority of waterways are remote and don't have a convenience store on each bend.

✗ **LONELINESS:** Solitude is nice, but some water folk struggle with the lack of others around. Even if living with a partner, adapting to few settled people in the vicinity can be tricky, with canal boat guidelines stating you should move every two weeks at a minimum to fill the water tank and get the toilet pumped.

✗ **SAFETY:** Living next to a towpath isn't the safest of places, particularly late at night.

PROS

✓ **COST:** Mooring costs and a waterways licence can pinch, but once you've paid for your vessel, it's an extremely affordable way to live, with a generator providing all your power.

✓ **FREEDOM:** The world, or rather the canal, is your oyster. Follow the water to take you to any place in the UK, with not a toll road in sight.

✓ **RELAXATION:** Although there is manual work to do, many people love narrowboats for the opportunity to kick back and relax.

✓ **MOD CONS:** Life on the canal is rather rustic. However, nowadays boats can come with pretty much all the facilities you expect in a home.

PENSION WOES: THE TALE OF GEN X

The changing financial pressures facing members of different intergenerational groups has been a recurring theme in recent years, with the narrative usually proclaiming how younger generations have lower income, assets and prospects than their older counterparts. However, there has been relatively little consideration of the potential retirement woes facing people born between 1966 and 1980 – Generation X.

LIMITED TIME TO PLAN

Members of Generation X have between 12 and 28 years left to work and build up a sufficient pension pot to fund their post-working years. A recent report suggests this group is at greater risk of reaching retirement with insufficient income. This partly reflects an array of changes in the labour market and pension landscape, as well as a challenging economic climate, which have combined to increase the complexity of preparing for later life.

CHALLENGES

A number of specific issues have also placed them at risk of reaching retirement with inadequate

funds. The decline in private sector defined benefit provision means a large proportion of this group will rely on defined contribution schemes, while they are also likely to receive a lower State Pension income than their predecessors. Additionally, automatic enrolment came too late for this group to benefit fully as most were in their late thirties or over when it was introduced.

STILL TIME FOR ACTION

While it's imperative to make time to consider your pension needs, it's never too late to start saving for retirement. Diligent planning now could make all the difference to securing a comfortable future. So, if you have concerns about the adequacy of your pension, get in touch.

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**BRITAIN'S BREXIT
BOOM**



While it's too early to gauge the effects Brexit has had on the country, experts believe our departure from the EU will soon show a positive impact on a number of business types:

1. TURNING TO TECH

The tech sector has always been particularly strong in this country, and with freer conditions, the retention of skilled entrepreneurs plus the bouncebackability of the UK from what might be a COVID-19 global economic downturn, our digital boffins are expected to flourish in making up ground on global heavyweights China and the US.



2. MEDICAL MASTERY

The EU has frequently held back medical advancements and new technologies amid a flurry of admin and red tape. Its slow-moving approach has meant non-member countries have been able to steal a march on new medical developments, but this is expected to change now the UK has matters back under its own control. Combined with the world's finest health service, companies here in the 'life sciences' sector are expected to boom.



3. FISHING

UK fishermen have long bemoaned the EU's Common Fisheries Policy for the restrictions it has caused, even around our own shores.

While the complexities of the industry are plentiful and the protecting of fish stocks is important, our hardworking seafarers appear certain to profit from Brexit as Brussels' stranglehold on how our coasts operate is removed.



4. AGRICULTURE

While our binning of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) – which has been in place since 1973 – has so far produced more questions than answers for our farmers, the government is optimistic that substantial improvements can be made for land workers who currently see 70 per cent of the UK geography under agricultural management.

Shedding the 'direct payment' aspect of the CAP where land prices were pushed up, causing a barrier for young farmers to get into the industry, could stimulate innovative and inventive UK farming, the like of which we've not seen in centuries.



ANOTHER BIG BITE

The latest Apple innovations were unveiled at the start of the summer, and in light of a global trend to eliminate infection, there was good news for handwashers...

In launching 13 exciting technological innovations across iPhone, Mac, iPad and Watch, Apple has proved itself capable of upping the ante again, even when its boffins have been locked down. Here are some of our favourites:

macOS Big Sur

A big update that powers Safari like never before, with customisable start page and backgrounds, faster speeds and better extensions.

iOS14

The new operating system brings a raft of improvements, including grouping of apps in folder categories and the ability to open a small part of an app to fulfil a specific task, such as purchasing a coffee or paying for your Deliveroo delivery.

Apple Pencil

This neat tool means a message written on your iPad can be converted automatically into typed text.

Cycling directions

Getting from A to B on your bike has been made

easier with an enhanced map tool that takes into account road traffic and other obstacles not conducive to an efficient cycling experience, such as steps. Your Deliveroo man will be grateful.

Handwashing wonder

An upgrade to Apple Watch means it can detect when a user is washing his or her hands and will start a 20-second countdown timer. Stop scrubbing early and you'll be prompted to keep washing – patronising, but useful.

Sleep tracking

The Watch also provides better sleep tracking after many called into question the accuracy of this being done on the iPhone. It does, however, mean you need to sleep with your watch on.

TvOS

HomeKit-enabled video cameras can now broadcast alongside programmes you are watching. That means you can still watch Gordon Ramsay on screen while an image appears of Gordon Ramsay at your front, presumably delivering your Deliveroo dinner.



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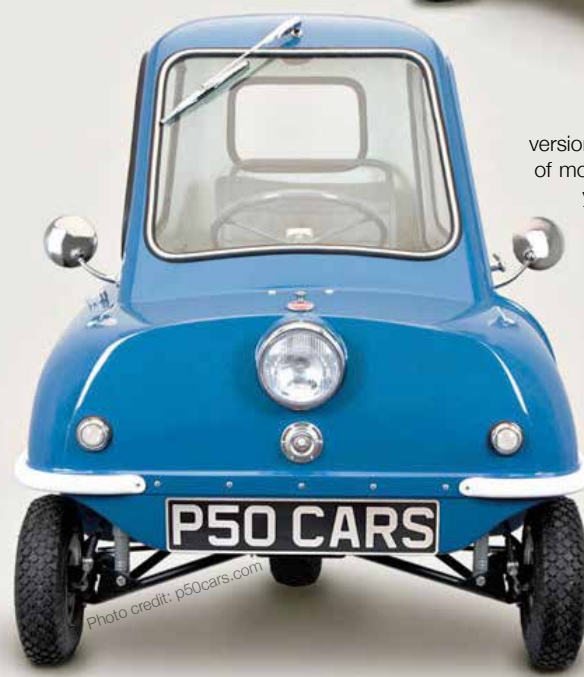
CAPTAIN SLOW

James May stated he'd be proud to own a Peel P50 (even if it was Jeremy Clarkson who got to test drive one on *Top Gear*); after all, the so-called 'Captain Slow' would be right at home in a car recently dubbed the slowest ever.

The P50 was recently listed at an eye-watering £90,000, although previously it has sold well into six figures. Already the smallest production car in history at just 54 inches long, the car, manufactured on the west coast of the Isle of Man at the start of the 1960s, is distinguishable by its single-seat capacity.

Operated off one cylinder and balancing somewhat precariously on three wheels, it offers virtually no luggage space and has a top speed of around 35mph (depending on the model).

Yet for all its impracticalities, the Peel P50, with its Standard, Touring and beefed-up 125GT



versions, is breathlessly iconic. It represents an era of motoring versatility, freedom and innovation, and you only have to look at the recent spate of smart car models to realise its creators were not so far off track when they sketched out the blueprint... perhaps in a 1960s design era of cars increasing in size, they just went a bit too far in the other direction.

Being marketed as a car that cost the same as a moped (£199 when new) stretched as far as the performance – even a 50cc motorbike has more oomph compared to the basic model – but while only 50 were made across a three-year period, its iconic legacy has lasted more than half a century. Even Aston Martin and Jaguar have toyed with their own versions of a car that sways between novelty and intelligent innovation, not least in an era of overcrowded roads.

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MOTORING



Bid farewell TO THE COVID MOT

THE CORONAVIRUS MOT HOLIDAY'S FINAL DAYS... OR ARE THEY?

August 1 has never been a particularly notable date in the diaries of car mechanics, though COVID-19's six-month MOT extension made it significant in 2020 like in no past year.

Depending on when you are reading this, you may well consider the moment to have passed. That 'moment' was essentially a six-month extension to the date of your car's MOT throughout the time the pandemic caused complete shutdown in the UK.

The logic when this unusual measure was announced back in April, when COVID-19 was really taking hold in the UK, was that the public should not be encouraged to venture out in their motors, neither for servicing nor for leisurely drives. Now, with coronavirus under control and various social restrictions eased, it's the right time

to lift these measures, as well as stimulating the economy again... car mechanics included.

The criteria was that any car due to have an MOT after March 31 would automatically have an additional six months added to its certificate. Naturally, in coming out of lockdown, that concession has been relaxed, so any cars with MOTs in August or thereafter will have to play by the old rules – get it MOT'd or stay off the roads.

That seems cut and dried, but perhaps it's not. For those of us not quite as up to speed as we should be with mechanical matters, it could be you've accidentally missed the date of your MOT. If this is the case, and it was actually due between April and the end of July, you will now have an additional six months from the listed date to get things checked, but this time, make sure you do.

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...but not as we know it

HOW COVID-19 HAS CHANGED OUR CONSUMPTION OF SPORT

The elation many of us felt at the restart of Premier League football was soon replaced by a sort of bewilderment at a peculiar, slightly perverse, reconstructed version of the game.

Turn on the television to catch a Premier League game and, in many ways, it feels as if we are watching our favourite stars operate in something of a parallel universe – a contact sport played with social distancing (at least as far as goal celebrations are meant to go), drinks breaks, countless subs (all huge distances from one another) and, most crucially of all, zero fans in attendance.

Our broadcasters' move to dub in fake crowd sound has largely been deemed a success, and with studio-based expert summarisers every bit as pointed and punchy as before, this 'new normal' is at least watchable... but it's still very strange.

Of course, as a first phase of life post-COVID-19, it is the best we can do, and other sports

are following suit to get seasons finished and tournaments played.

As reported cases continue to decrease, the expectation is that full-contact sport (for us mere mortals as well as for the Premier League millionaires who, let's face it, are only back playing because of sponsor revenue) may return around September. The government knows it needs to stimulate grassroots and amateur sport, as well as open up the pathways to people attending events again – thousands of businesses, clubs and societies rely on it, and for those who do survive, it may take up to five years to fully recover from the effects of the 2020 coronavirus pandemic.

Yet as far as seeing capacity crowds at our sports arenas goes, we still appear some distance away, with few confident enough to stick their necks out in stating we may see everyday folk back in stadiums before Christmas.

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