

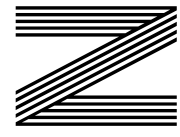
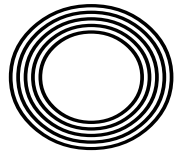
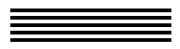


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J.K. Rowling
The author's success with Harry Potter



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Editor's notes...

JUNE 2021



Nik Allen, Editor

Hello and welcome to this month's edition of **VISION** BillericayShenfield. It's a beautiful day. Shops, pubs, restaurants, soft-play areas and endless others in the hospitality sector are open; we can mix, gather, hug and interact with more freedom than we've had in a long time. We hope and pray we are in the final throes of the COVID pandemic, yearning for a return to normality and a life that, by our own admission, a lot of us took for granted.

So what have we learned during the past year and a quarter? For me, I'm in awe of how we have all become such versatile creatures, adaptable to new conditions - from how we work to how we socialise.

At the heart of it for me is resilience, and that is no better exemplified than by our local businesses. From the clever ways they interact with customers, new products and services, delivery initiatives and a stubbornness to make it through the mire, they deserve the good times that we hope are coming their way. So, as readers, I implore you to channel this admiration by getting behind those shops, trades and services in our square mile. Please support hyper-local and, in doing so, tighten even further the grip our community has gained. It may yet be a year we cherish.

Nik Allen

This is your town's hyper-local magazine, delivering to homes and businesses every month.

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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 Inside pages recyclable

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- Mechanisms
- Faulty Hinges
- Draughty Windows

Under your spell

A decade since the final Harry Potter film was released, we look back on the success of a fantasy character who has shaped a generation.

Thinking purely in fantasy fiction terms, it's difficult to comprehend what the literary landscape was like pre-1997. Okay, so such a statement will attract clamouring voices extolling the virtues of the likes of Terry Pratchett, Douglas Adams and Robert Rankin, but few will dispute the impact J.K. Rowling OBE's first novel had on the book world, the film industry and the sensibilities of a whole generation of children – and adults – who could once again revel in the fantastical delights of wizardry.

For that reason, the date of June 26, 1997, should be referenced on the scribble books of every aspiring author. It was then that a tired, forlorn and wholly unappreciated author finally saw her prized character, Harry Potter, come to life.

No sooner had *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone* hit the shelves than a revolution in fantasy storytelling gathered pace. And this wasn't a movement catapulted into the ether by mass promotion, social media or overhyped YouTubers – the internet was still in its infancy. Instead, this was a word-of-mouth, page-turning trend that lured a nation – and beyond – to platform 9¾, to Hogwarts, and on into a realm of magnificent mystery.

Rowling, who was 31 at the time and a single parent, had battled tirelessly over the preceding decade to be taken seriously. Her image of a young wizard and his fresh-faced cohorts finding their way at a school of witchcraft and wizardry that creaked and crackled with intrigue had been rejected by 12 major publishers.

That her persistence was rewarded by stratospheric acclaim is undoubtedly a victory for belief more than anything else, a quality Harry Potter himself has had to master on numerous occasions across seven book instalments and eight films, as our loveable hero has leapt out from inked pages to become the most successful film franchise star on the planet.

At the last count, the Harry Potter books had sold 500 million copies worldwide; while the proceeds from the immaculately styled film series top £7.7 billion.

As well as creating and shaping the careers of stars Daniel Radcliffe, Rupert Grint and Emma Watson, the books – concluding with *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows* in 2007 – have also stimulated a breathless array of other fantasy stories, constantly refreshing our appetite to escape into other worlds.

As for Rowling, the seat she previously occupied in the window of The Elephant House coffee shop in Edinburgh remains, and is perhaps the simplest tie she has back to uncomplicated days. In recent times she has discovered that not even the greatest fantasy author of a generation is immune to the melting pot of social media, after her comments on gender courted approval and upset in equal measure.

Whether someone who has acquired a fortune in the region of £500 million really cares is for J.K. Rowling to know and for us to speculate, though only the most critical Harry Potter commentator would suggest, on balance, her output has been anything short of spectacular.

To an author, a wizard and a wonderful fantasy world, we continue to fall under your spell.

“That her persistence was rewarded by stratospheric acclaim is undoubtedly a victory for belief more than anything else.”



Photo credit: NEIL HALL/EPA-EFE/Shutterstock

CELLmate

HOW THE SPECTRE OF COVID-19 COULD, EVENTUALLY, START TO SAVE LIVES

While in the short-term at least it feels as though the coronavirus pandemic has restricted and impacted the lives we for so long took for granted, scientists believe the messenger ribonucleic acid (mRNA) technology used to create the COVID-19 vaccine may have truly ground-breaking effects on our ability to fend off fatal diseases in the future.

At the heart of this theory is the way mRNA vaccines are being regarded as a breakthrough in modern medicine. This is because the mRNA works in a different way from traditional vaccines – namely that instead of implanting a tiny piece of the virus for our bodies to counter, it simply supplies information about what the virus looks like.

The body is told what the spike protein resembles, and it is this spike that provides the route for

COVID-19 to infect our cells.

The mRNA vaccine subsequently gives our body the information which teaches our cells how to make the protein that triggers an immune response inside our bodies. Extending the usefulness of this means personalised vaccines can, in theory, be developed so our immune systems can attack and kill off an illness that is specifically ours. So that could mean the potential to be able to cure everything from cancer to HIV to autoimmune diseases.

Scientists have been cautious not to overstate the theory, particularly because cancer, for instance, constantly mutates, and no two cancers are the same.

What is clear, however, is that this could be a major game-changer for the preservation of life... and we would have COVID-19 to thank for it.



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HOW TO CLEAN

Blinds



LAST MONTH WE SHOWED YOU HOW TO CLEAN YOUR CURTAINS. THIS TIME WE TURN OUR ATTENTION TO YOUR BLINDS.

Whatever style blinds you have, and in whichever material, discover how to banish dirt and dust without breaking a sweat.

FABRIC BLINDS

Start by dusting your fabric blinds from top to bottom. You can use a vacuum cleaner to save time. Next, spot clean your blinds using a mild detergent solution. If your fabric blinds are really grubby, you may prefer to take them down and soak in the bath with three tablespoons of washing-up liquid. Leave to soak for half an hour to an hour and then clean with a soft brush.

Suitable for vertical, roman, roller, panel and pleated-style blinds.

WOODEN BLINDS

Real wood blinds do not like moisture so you should focus on maintaining a consistent dusting routine above all else. If your wooden blinds do

require more than just a dust, use a very slightly moist cloth to remove any dirt or grime. Be sure not to rub the slats too aggressively as this can ruin the wood stain.

This method is suitable for both vertical and horizontal slats.

FAUX WOOD BLINDS

The good news is that faux wood blinds are made from plastic and are therefore not susceptible to water damage. This means that once you have dusted your blinds, you can wash them thoroughly with a bowl of warm, soapy water and a cloth. Blot dry with a soft cloth or kitchen roll.

METAL BLINDS

The easiest way to clean metal blinds is by taking them down and placing them in a bathtub filled with warm water, a few squirts of washing-up liquid and a cup of baking soda. Leave to soak for about an hour and then rinse with warm water.



Soften UP YOUR HOME



SIX ALTERNATIVE USES FOR FABRIC SOFTENER AROUND THE HOME

Although its main purpose is to condition your clothes, fabric softener has the ability to facilitate many other household tasks. Check out our favourite ways to use this cheap and cheerful liquid below.

1. TO STRIP WALLPAPER

Once you have scoured your wallpaper, mix one cap full of fabric softener into ¼ litre of water and apply with a sponge to the wall. Leave to sit for 20 minutes and then you should be able to scrape off the wallpaper with ease.

2. TO ELIMINATE HARD-WATER STAINS

If you struggle to remove hard-water stains from your glassware, apply undiluted fabric softener to the stain, leave for 10 minutes and wipe off

with a cloth. Wash and rinse before use.

3. TO REMOVE BURNT FOOD

To remove burnt food without ruining your pots and pans, fill them with warm water and then add a few drops of fabric softener. Let them sit for an hour and any burnt food should wipe straight off. Wash and rinse before use.

4. TO CLEAN PAINT BRUSHES

Fabric softener is a surfactant, meaning it makes water wetter, and is therefore ideal for removing water-based paint from your brushes. Mix one cup of water and one teaspoon of fabric softener and dip your brushes in for up to 30 seconds.

5. TO MAKE HOME-MADE ROOM FRESHENER

Save money on room fresheners by mixing one part fabric softener and two parts water with two tablespoons of baking soda. Pour into a spray bottle and spray liberally around your home. This can also be used to repel insects.

6. TO BANISH DUST

Hard surfaces in your home are prone to dust. Minimise these pesky particles by creating a spray solution that is made from ¼ cup of fabric softener and one cup of water. Spray onto the surface and wipe away with a dry cloth.



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Hoover user



The mistakes most of us make when hoovering. How many are you guilty of?

Setting it right

The settings on your Hoover are there to improve its efficiency on a range of different surfaces, be that hard floor, low pile or a thick rug. If you've got your Hoover on the wrong setting, you'll be leaving dirt behind or, worse still, damaging your floor.

Skirting around the problem

Most modern Hoovers will get up close to skirting boards, leading us to believe our wall-to-wall work is done; yet it's the dust residing on the skirting boards that's going to leave your floor coated in another layer of horridness. Wipe down wooden boards before plugging in the vacuum.

Top form

Many of us store the Hoover on the ground floor, therefore it makes most sense to get started straight away, right? Wrong. The falling of dust down and through the house means if you start from the

bottom and work up, you're simply coating your pristine floors in a new layer of dust. Start at the top and work down.

The same rule applies for removing dirt from non-floor surfaces. Dust first, let the room settle, then Hoover.

Bagging it out

Regular changing of the Hoover bag and clearing out (or replacing) the filter are two essentials in ensuring a proper flow of matter through your Hoover.

It's behind you

The temptation when Hoovering is to see a floor and Hoover it; yet most dust and dirt gets blown under sofas, units and tables. Therefore, for a full-on freshen, move furniture and vacuum behind and around.

And remember, a Hoover isn't just for the floor – use your connectors to rid a room of corner cobwebs and dust around windows.



HOME & DIY



SUPER SOLAR

Are solar panels really the future for all homes?

There was a time when it seemed everyone was investing in solar technology. The premise was simple – instal solar panels on your roof, often with the aid of a decent government subsidy, and within a few years you'd have saved on electricity costs to the extent that your investment would be paid off.

Thereafter, any energy pulled into the panels would be sold to the national grid and you'd be quids in.

Homeowners rushed in their hundreds of thousands to attach the cumbersome, shiny panels to their rooftops or across garden spaces, with many finding the initiative was true to its word, but has it worked out that way?

THE GOOD:

- ✓ Solar panels genuinely do make money, reducing bills by anything from £60 to £250 per year
- ✓ As well as generating free electricity, they potentially raise the resale price of a house
- ✓ No planning permission required
- ✓ Low maintenance and rarely go wrong

- ✓ Easy-to-read devices that let you know how much electricity is being generated
- ✓ The Smart Export Guarantee (SEG) features a number of different tariffs, so homeowners can shop around in order to get the best price for their electricity

THE BAD:

- ✗ Unless you have a south-facing roof, you may find the rate at which you earn back your investment is highly impacted
- ✗ Similarly, better weather conditions in the south meant our northern cousins were less incentivised to take part
- ✗ Back to house sales, and some potential buyers have been known to be put off by the sight of solar panels on rooftops
- ✗ Some people have discovered it will take more than two decades for them to make their money back – those at home all day (and with higher electricity costs) will benefit more

As with most things, it's a case of doing your maths to see if the idea of solar panels shines brightly for you.



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Luke Arthur Wells

INTERIOR INSPIRATIONS



HOME & DIY



Photo credit: lukearthurwells.com

Who is interior designer Luke Arthur Wells? Find out more about the interiors expert who's taken social media by storm – your new interiors inspiration.

Luke Arthur Wells has emerged as one of the most influential designers of 2021, following a year when various lockdowns and being asked to 'stay at home' have really shone the spotlight on interior design. But who exactly is Luke Arthur Wells?

Based in the South West of England, Luke is an interior designer, stylist and writer, helping to style homes all over the world. He's a former *Great Interior Design Challenge* contestant, with a classic, timeless taste that's accessible and incredibly stylish.

With more than 70,000 followers on Instagram and a successful blog, Luke has amassed a dedicated following. He recently moved into a Victorian terrace in need of freshening up, and interiors enthusiasts have been following his incredible transformations over the past year. From the art of styling a room to creative DIY tutorials such as simple, custom radiator covers, Luke provides plenty of inspiration to those who seek it.

To bring Luke's classic style into your own home, here are some tips:

- Incorporate neutral tones against beautiful textures and striking accessories.
- Light tones don't need to be boring. Use them to flood light into the room, and bring in contrasting accent colours like black and charcoal to make your home's features pop.
- Mix high-street items alongside upcycled pieces and the perfect finishing touches to create a look that's accessible, timeless and beautiful.
- Love accessories. From prints and floral displays to statement vases and plant pots, accessories add colour and character to your home.

Want to recreate Luke's incredible home styling? Covering everything from creating mood boards to on-trend DIY panelling, check out Luke's projects at www.lukearthurwells.com/blog for inspiration.

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How to Create a SMART KITCHEN

Embrace innovation with the latest smart kitchen devices that will revolutionise this pivotal room in your home. Enjoy enhanced convenience, save money and have fun, all at the touch of a button or using just your voice.



INVEST IN A SMART FRIDGE: How often have you gone to the supermarket unsure about what exactly you need? Eliminate this problem with a smart fridge that boasts built-in cameras that allow you to see its contents wherever you are.

Other features include: Adjustable storage spaces that can be used as a fridge or freezer | Sensors to open and close the door hands-free | Artificial intelligence that detects maintenance issues

INSTALL SMART LIGHTING: The beauty of smart lighting is that it allows you to add the wow factor to your kitchen without blowing your budget. From smart dimmers that can be controlled from your phone or your smart speaker, to smart bulbs that plug into your existing light fittings and boast an adjustable colour temperature.

Other features include: Control individual bulbs, groups or your whole home's lighting | Set light themes to create different atmospheres | Motion-sensing lights



COOK WITH A SMART OVEN: Whether you love to cook or see it as more of a chore, a smart oven will revolutionise the way you feed your family, providing you with the means to control your cooking from your smartphone or tablet, whether you are in your home or not.

Other great features can include: Voice control | Automatic setting selection | In-oven camera

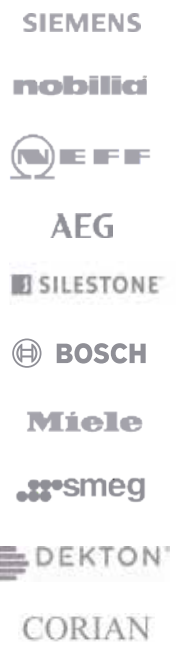
ADD A SMART TAP: No kitchen is complete without a sink, and for times when your hands are either full or dirty but you need water, a smart tap offers the perfect solution. Choose from a touchless faucet that works by waving your hands in front of the sensor or a voice-enabled tap that can be customised with your preferred commands.



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ARE YOU READY TO

Wabi-sabi

YOUR HOME?



HOME & DIY

Although it may sound like that spicy green paste that you get with sushi, wabi-sabi is actually a Japanese term that means “finding beauty in imperfection”.

The perfect interior design trend for people who prefer their house to look lived in rather than like a showroom, wabi-sabi is all about embracing authenticity, flaws and all.

Showcase homemade décor

Whether you are an artist yourself or not, homemade décor items or things that you have collected over the years on holiday or at local craft fairs are ideal for creating a wabi-sabi home. Allowing you to foster feelings of warmth and originality, even just proudly displaying your children's artwork contributes to the characteristics of this Japanese philosophy.

Clear away clutter

Just because wabi-sabi values imperfection, that doesn't mean you can let your home become a cluttered and chaotic mess. To achieve wabi-sabi, your home should be a calm and peaceful place where you and your family can relax, so make sure you stick to your cleaning regime.

Embrace nature

With a focus on simplicity, bringing elements of the outside into your home is a key component of wabi-sabi. Whether you choose to put some freshly cut flowers in a vase, invest in a house plant or two, or you decide to incorporate natural materials into your home such as stone or wood, nature will always be able to lift your mood.

Be a partial minimalist

Although a wabi-sabi home is not fully minimalistic by nature, it does invite people to keep their possessions to a minimum by only allowing things in their home that offer nostalgia, beauty or utility. This means that you can keep an item that does not necessarily match the décor of your home, as long as it makes you happy.

Photo credit: David Brittain via idealhome.co.uk, home-designing.com, Simon Scarborough via idealhome.co.uk, behance.net



LOCAL NEWS

from your neighbourhood



Labour leader steps down after Tory election success

The Conservative Party had a successful campaign last month and has taken several areas from Labour after residents went to the polls for the local election on May 6.

Former council leader, councillor Gavin Callaghan (pictured inset), stepped down from his role as leader of Basildon Labour Group as a result, calling the election results a "bitter blow" for the borough.

On Facebook, he said: "I would like to thank the residents of Pitsea North West who re-elected me for a third consecutive time. I promise to carry on working hard for you and your families.

"However, the overall results are a bitter blow for Basildon and it means I will no longer be the leader of our council."

Councillor Jack Ferguson has replaced him as the

leader of Basildon Labour.

The Tories began the day with 18 out of 41 seats on Basildon Borough Council and now hold a majority of 22.

Billericay East saw the re-election of Conservative councillor Stuart Sullivan, who received 2,412 votes compared to Labour's candidate, Tracy Hilton, who received 585.

Conservative councillor Phil Turner was re-elected to the Billericay West seat, receiving 1,885 votes, compared to the Liberal Democrats' candidate, who received 1,687.

The Conservative Group of Basildon Borough Council held its Annual General Meeting on Monday, May 10, over Zoom and celebrated taking back control of the council.



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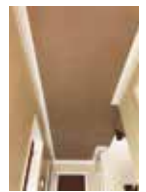


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Martial arts school offers free self-defence classes



A martial arts school in Brentwood has offered free self-defence classes to women in response to the tragic death of Sarah Everard earlier this year.

Meridian Kung Fu Billericay & Brentwood announced on its Facebook page that it was reaching out to women to show support and help them feel safer on the streets.

Ben Richardson, who runs the school, told VISION Billericay Shenfield that he was eager to give something back to the community.

He said: "We wanted to try and do something that would help women feel safer, after the news of Sarah Everard really worried a lot of people.

"We're going to be running the sessions over three days, with trained instructors, to give an insight into the importance of self-defence."

Around 400 people from Billericay and Brentwood expressed an interest in the offer.

Ben added: "The response has been fantastic and we're really thankful that people want to come along to take us up on the offer. It's not just about kung fu; we want to teach people how to be safe and more streetwise."

For more information, head to the Facebook page: www.facebook.com/kungfubillericay

Monthly meetings take place at The Chantry Centre from 7pm to 9pm, but Lyn encourages those who are new to the group to give her a call, as she knows it can be daunting to share personal stories with strangers.

The aim is to keep the meetings interesting and informative, with different speakers and wellbeing activities.

Lyn said: "Talking to someone who can relate to and understand your feelings helps you realise you are not alone.

"The death of a child is probably the most devastating experience any parent can go through. It's not something you get over – but in time you can come to manage it."

For more information, including meeting dates, give Lyn a call on 07387 805406 or email lyn-currie@hotmail.co.uk.

You can also visit www.gone-too-soon.online

Restaurant trials social distancing solution

A restaurant in Billericay is one of three businesses in Essex that are trialling a clever solution to help customers and waiting staff communicate while adhering to social distancing rules.

Beauvoir Arms is using Table Tap, which allows customers to inform staff when they are ready to order, pay the bill, or call for the waiter's attention, all through the single tap of a button.

The button uses radio frequency and transmits a signal from a button placed on the table, which connects to a watch on a waiter's wrist.

James Miller, managing director at Brentwood Communications, explains: "Thanks to this innovative solution, customers can remain seated, stick to social distancing rules and still experience quality service."

The technology is also being trialled at The Horseshoes Country Pub in Upshire and DUSK in Brentwood.

Bereavement support group to restart monthly sessions

A Billericay-based bereavement support group for parents who have lost a child is restarting its monthly sessions.

Lyn launched Gone Too Soon in 2017 after losing her son, Tony, to a brain tumour at the age of 35. She wanted to talk to parents who were in a similar situation.





Lukombo signs Blues' first team contract

LOCAL NEWS BILLERICAY



Photo credit: Billericay Town FC

Billericay Town Football Club have announced the signing of academy graduate Henry Lukombo after he impressed during last season in the Under-23s campaign.

More than seven months ago, Lukombo was invited for a trial game at the club. He started out at Tottenham-based Sunday League club, Chettle Court Rangers, before going on to represent the youth side of Uxbridge FC.

Lukombo mentioned his surprise at the quick progression.

Via the club's website, he said: "I didn't think it would happen so quick. I thought it would be about a year before I got to train with the first team, but, in football, sometimes everything happens with a click of a finger."

"Stepping into the first game, you always have doubts because of the pressure. I feel like I dealt with it well. I just believed in myself and I looked on it as another Under-23s match. I trusted in my ability, trusted in the team, and I think that is what brought me through."

Win tickets for the Billericay Food & Drink Festival

Residents can sample some of the finest food and drink in the local Essex area at the first annual Billericay Food & Drink Festival on Sunday, July 25, from 11am to 6pm, at Billericay Town Football Club, Blunts Wall Road, Billericay, CM12 9SA.

There will be more than 45 stands showcasing food and drink, including champagne, oysters, baked goods, real ales, cocktails, Pimm's, cheese, chocolate and more.

There is space to picnic and eat, plus a DJ and

inspiring workshops. The first 100 festival-goers will also receive a free gift. Tickets include a raffle ticket for the chance to win a £500 luxury hamper of goodies, in support of Billericay Food Bank and British Heart Foundation.

Limited free car parking is available on the day. Entry is £5 on the door and under-12s go free.

VISION BillericayShenfield has 10 pairs of tickets to give away for free. Simply email your name and phone number with the subject line 'Billericay Food & Drink Festival' to billericay@visionmag.co.uk by June 25.

For further information and for updates on the exhibitors, search 'The Billericay Food & Drink Festival' on Facebook.

Charity receives big funding boost from estate agency

The Beresford Foundation has given Baby Basics Billericay a welcome funding boost to help support mothers and families who are struggling to cope with the financial pressures of looking after a new baby.

The charity, which was only recently established, is already proving to be of huge benefit to local families.

The Beresford Foundation was set up by Beresfords, the award-winning estate agents, in 2015 and is managed by the independent charitable trust, Essex Community Foundation (ECF).

A grant of £800 will help the charity buy essential items, including shelving, storage boxes and bags, as well as enable it to produce leaflets and a banner to help publicise its work.

Jane Robb, team leader at Baby Basics Billericay, said: "We are delighted and grateful to receive this funding, which has helped us to get properly set up and promote our services."

"It is thanks to support from local companies like Beresford, who are working with ECF, that we are able to support families who are finding it difficult to cope. We help mums in all manner of circumstances; they can be young teenagers as well as women fleeing domestic abuse or trafficking."



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NEWS FROM YOUR LOCAL POLICE TEAM



One of the most important tasks of the Officers in our Basildon District is to respond to emergencies. Any calls received are handled by the control room at our headquarters in Chelmsford; the trained call handlers decide on the response required based on the circumstances reported. If there is a risk to life, a threat of serious violence, serious injury to a person or serious damage to property, then the incident will be classified as requiring an emergency response.



Stock image

Our agreed targets are to respond to emergency incidents in an urban area within 15 minutes and in a rural area within 20 minutes. Over the last year, our local team have responded to nearly 9,000 emergency calls, with the average time taken to respond just eight minutes 11 seconds. We always strive to attend every incident as quickly as we can, and the response times in the Basildon District are among the best in Essex.

When they are not dealing with emergency incidents, the local team are busy investigating crimes and missing people, carrying out patrols and proactively targeting suspected criminals. Their work is extremely varied. It is a challenging but rewarding role, and if you or anybody you know would be interested in joining, either as a regular officer or as a special constable, we are currently recruiting. For more information, visit www.essex.police.uk

Free computers donated to pupils

The Billericay School was among the schools in Basildon to receive laptops from Every Child Online, which seeks to support schools throughout the country in helping to give children online access while they are at home.



The initiative, which has been backed by Basildon Council, means The Billericay School was able to receive 30 donated computers.

A spokesperson for The Billericay School said: "We would like to extend our thanks to Every Child Online, who recently donated 30 PCs to the school as part of its initiative to provide every child with the equipment needed to progress."

Co-founder of Every Child Online, Mike Tabard, added: "With the backing of Basildon Council, its ongoing donations of preloved computer equipment and commitment to supporting our charity's growth, Every Child Online will be able to support every school in the borough in future.

"It is vital to address the issue of digital isolation, not just for our children's education, wellbeing and mental

health, but for everyone in our community who feels alone and disconnected from the world. Providing computer equipment and training can only benefit an individual who wants more from life."

To find out more about Every Child Online, visit www.everychildonline.co.uk

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LOCAL NEWS

from your neighbourhood



LOCAL NEWS SHENFIELD



Amateur filmmakers win top award at film festival

Local filmmaking group Brentwood Movie Makers, which is based in Shenfield, is celebrating after scooping a top award at the British International Amateur Film Festival, which was held on April 16–18.

The group's 10-minute short film, *The Chain*, received critical acclaim from festival judges and won the coveted Best British Film of the Year award as well as a £250 cash prize, beating stiff competition from groups from all over the UK.

The film, which cost just £30 to make, was conceived and created during the first lockdown last year and was filmed in July 2020.

It tells the story of an online blind date which heads in an unexpected direction.

Director Michelle Devadas said: "We're overwhelmed to receive this award from such a prestigious festival. It goes well beyond our expectations, and just shows what can be achieved when a dedicated team come together, even when they have little or no money to spend."

Producer Dave Watts said that it is hoped *The Chain* will go on to have further success at other film festivals.

The Chain is available to view for free online via the group's YouTube channel: www.youtube.com/channel/UCEUJWEnYtHKRltUHMNeCCBA/videos

For more information about the group, email brentwoodmoviemakers@gmail.com or visit www.facebook.com/brentwoodmoviemakers



Teacher slams plans to cut funding for arts subjects

The deputy head teacher of Shenfield High School slammed the government's decision to impose a 50 per cent funding cut for arts subjects in universities as "disgusting and disastrous".

Education Secretary, Gavin Williamson MP, said: "The government proposes that the courses are not among its strategic priorities, covering subjects in music, drama, dance and performing arts, art and design, media studies and archaeology, which are to be subject to a reduction of 50 per cent."

Jonathan Sands, deputy headteacher at Shenfield High School and a Royal Opera House learning and participation committee member, gave his response on Twitter.

He said: "This is a disgusting and disastrous move by your government."

"You've already cut numbers studying the arts [and] now this."

"Your 'priorities' are out of touch and simply wrong. Enough of this nonsense."

Boy raises £5k to support epilepsy charities

A seven-year-old Shenfield resident has raised more than £5,000 for epilepsy charities by completing a 5km run.

Freddie Barnes (pictured) took on the challenge on May 30 to show support for his 12-year-old cousin, George, who is suffering with epilepsy. The money raised was used to purchase a watch that can detect seizures. Any spare funds will be donated to George's local epilepsy charity in Gloucestershire.

On Freddie's fundraising page, he reveals that he recently witnessed George having a seizure, leading to him wanting to help his cousin.

His mother, Sian Barnes, thanked everyone for their "unbelievable support".

She said: "Thank you all so much for your generous donations. The amount of money raised so far is unbelievable and is so appreciated to help raise money and awareness for epilepsy and help other families and children."

"The main aim of the fundraiser was to be able to get George this life-changing watch to be able to detect his seizures. We're so thankful for this piece of equipment."

To donate, visit the fundraising page at gofund.me/8dc03e65



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While the supposition – usually by members of the party in opposition, predictably – is that modern politics is decorated with elected representatives engaged in poor behaviour, underhand dealings and general miscreant activity, the reality is that this has been going on for centuries – all the way back to the time of Sir Robert Walpole.

“Who is he?” you ask. Well none other than the United Kingdom’s first Prime Minister. This year marks the 300th anniversary of his appointment – a stirring rise to the top for someone born in 1676 to a wealthy landowning family in Norfolk.

Cambridge-educated, Walpole was named member of parliament for Castle Rising in 1701 for the Whigs; and while he briefly lost elected power when the Tories won a General Election in 1710 – at which point he was imprisoned briefly on charges of corruption – he returned to front-line duties when George I came to the throne in 1714.

His ascent was built on a desire for peace abroad, low taxation and a reduction of the national debt; and while he became embroiled in various scandals as First Lord of the Treasury, Chancellor of the Exchequer and Paymaster General, his ability to speak for both the people and the upper-class elite who ran the country ultimately preserved his time at the top table. It also ensured a gift from George II of 10 Downing Street, where the current Prime Minister still resides today.

Walpole was comfortable in his role until the late 1730s, when pressure began to build from within his party. A poor election result in 1741 followed and he resigned from his post shortly afterwards. Within three years he was dead, though his political legacy lives on.

Photo credit: Granger/Shutterstock



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It's arguably the most advanced piece of everyday technology ever invented, yet the demands we place on it mean our phones are always in use, always on the move and forever susceptible to damage. Our humble devices endure a lot, and we often fail to give them the protection they deserve. Here are five sure-fire ways to preserve the usefulness (and cosmetic appearance) of your cherished mobile phone.



ONE: ON THE CASE

It's the simplest advice you'll ever receive, but adding a protective case to your phone will preserve its life like nothing else. A tempered glass screen will ensure you lose no performance from your device while saving on scratches and impacts on the front. It can also be replaced cheaply, quickly and easily.



Remember, though, bashes, knocks and drops on the sides and corners can travel across the outer shell to create cracks, so investing in an all-over protective case is smart.

TWO: POCKET ROCKET

What's in your pocket that may scratch or make other abrasions on your phone? Keys and coins are the biggest culprits, and scratches usually occur when we're in a hurry, or are distracted by friends (or alcohol). Keep pockets clear of debris if you want to preserve your mobile's aesthetics.



THREE: GRIPPING STUFF

Mobile phone holders and grips have grown in popularity over recent years. They prevent gadgets from slipping through fingers and aid functionality when we're using them. What's not to like?



FOUR: WATER AND TEMPERATURE

Phone malfunctions often have a lot to do with water, heat and extreme cold. Exposing your device to any of these will speed up its deterioration.

FIVE: CURIOSITY KILLED THE... PHONE

The other enemy to mobile phone health is of course leaving it unattended. Small kids, toddlers and even pets can wreak massive damage, so keep it under a watchful eye at all times.

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We all know dogs are man's best friend... and they need to be, given some of the prices currently being asked for some of the UK's most sought after breeds.

In 2020, the average price of a puppy came in at around £1,750, an amount that soared during lockdown as the demand for companionship – and our ability to look after a pet, given people were either furloughed or working from home – skyrocketed.

Remembering that puppies should always be acquired from registered, verified breeders, here are the top six most expensive breeds:

Chow Chow: This Asian breed looks compact, sturdy and full of personality, yet is actually shy, stubborn and independent. And that comes at a cost – around £4,000 for a puppy.

English Bulldog: Fun-loving dogs who convert playfulness with courage and strength. Now fetching more than £3,000, your bulldog is a full-on investment in every way.

Goldendoodle: A cross-breed that has risen to prominence over the past few years, the Goldendoodle is patient, gentle and cheerful, and will cost upwards of £2,750.

Golden Retriever: Traditional, gentle and friendly, this dog's reputation as a perfect family dog means it carries a price tag to match, often in excess of £3,500.

Miniature Schnauzer: If ever a dog's looks matched its personality, then the Schnauzer is the one. Intelligent, smart, wise and often cautious, your invested £2,500 is probably in good hands (or paws).

Cavapoo: Finally, another trendy cross between a Cavalier and a Poodle, this designer dog regularly fetches more than £3,000 by way of its playful, semi-scruffy and buoyant personality, which comes complete with a teddy bear-esque coat.

Of course, at the heart of dog ownership is love, fun and the acceptance of looking after your new member of the family over a concerted period. That could mean upward of 15 years, and at an estimated total outlay of more than £30,000, so choose wisely.



MY MUM SAVED MY LIFE...

PRESENTER AND BROADCASTER ROMAN KEMP ON A MENTAL HEALTH CAMPAIGN
FROM THE HEART

The spectre of suicide in young people is one that looms large over modern society. Not in 20 years have so many people in the UK felt so low as to want to take their own lives, with men accounting for three-quarters of those.

Capital FM radio DJ Roman Kemp is not someone you would typically expect to want to talk about the subject. The son of Spandau Ballet icon Martin Kemp, the 28-year-old has grown up in the calm and comfort of a privileged life, has been afforded avenues into the entertainment world, and goes about his daily presenting duties with a breezy brand of optimistic irreverence that's fashionable and carefree.

Yet Kemp harbours a more solemn side, one that has driven him to campaign and champion mental health awareness. He brings an honesty and humility to his work that's been well-received, not least because of the struggles we have all encountered over the past year or so in light of COVID-19, lockdown, recession and the impact on our daily lives.

"At the heart of it is using a platform to do something worthwhile and meaningful," says Kemp, who has been at Capital FM for seven years and supplements his time on the airwaves with various entertainment shows, including *Martin & Roman's Weekend Best!* alongside his father.

One of the stars of *I'm a Celebrity...Get Me Out of Here!* in 2019 – he finished third behind Andrew Whyment and Jacqueline Jossa – the talented presenter has drawn on profound personal upset in putting together a recent BBC3 documentary, *Roman Kemp: Our Silent Emergency*, which was released in March 2021, has been nominated for a National Television Award.

"I come at this from the perspective of having known someone who took his own life, and having

lived through 13 years of on-and-off depression myself where, in my darkest hours, I have considered ending it."

Kemp said that his mum, famous singer Shirlie Holliman, actually saved his life. At his darkest moment, she made sure he wasn't alone and allowed him to confide in her about his suicidal thoughts. When he called her in crisis, she stayed on the phone with him as she travelled to London to be by his side.

Kemp was devastated by the loss of his close friend and fellow Capital Breakfast colleague, Joe Lyons, in August 2020. Recognising when friends are in trouble and encouraging people to open up about their emotions is at the heart of Kemp's work across both TV and radio, championing a trend for people to be outspoken and honest about their feelings.

He said: "It shook me back then and it continues to now. I still have days where I can't believe he isn't here, and I didn't see the signs.

"I actually think we're in a much better place than we were 10 years ago when it comes to speaking out and having the confidence to say what's really on our minds, what's really troubling us.

"The problem, I feel, is that this is being counterbalanced by so many other pressures, and lots of those stem from social media. I don't think we can change how Twitter, Facebook and Instagram have altered our lives, yet we can teach people to approach and view those influences in different ways. Obviously, the strands run much deeper than just that, but it is a good place to start.

"We all need to play our part. It's an old cliché, but to save just one life makes it all worthwhile."

Photo credit: PinPep/Shutterstock





PUZZLES & TRIVIA

PUZZLES

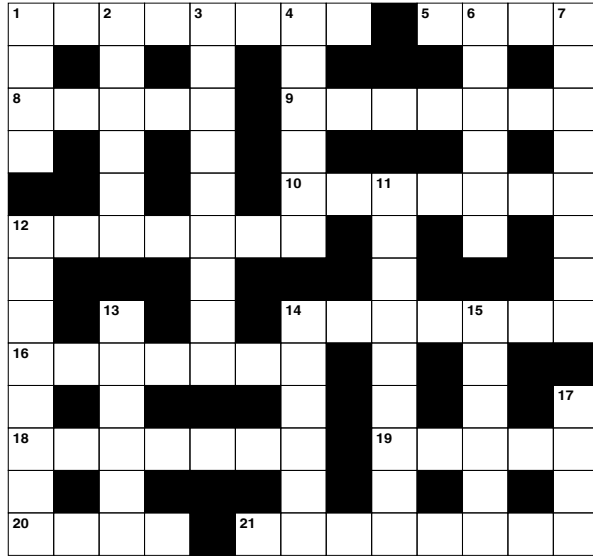
Answers: see end of The VISION Listings

ACROSS

- 1. Succession; series (8)
- 5. Run at a moderate pace (4)
- 8. Sag (5)
- 9. Sour in taste (7)
- 10. Mountain in the Himalayas (7)
- 12. Contemplations (7)
- 14. Subdivision (7)
- 16. Part of a chair (7)
- 18. Increasing rapidly (7)
- 19. Kingdom (5)
- 20. Japanese beverage (4)
- 21. Large metal pot (8)

DOWN

- 1. Soft drink (US) (4)
- 2. Cites (6)
- 3. Act of spying (9)
- 4. Stops (6)
- 6. Thief (6)
- 7. Not inclined to talk (8)
- 11. Let oracle (anag) (9)
- 12. Thick dark syrup (8)
- 13. Set out on a journey (6)
- 14. Mark of disgrace (6)



- 15. Make worse (6)
- 17. Word ending a prayer (4)

DID YOU KNOW?

- ▶ Pound cake got its name from its recipe – one pound each of butter, eggs, sugar and flour
- ▶ Most wasabi in supermarkets is made from coloured horseradish with flavourings, as real wasabi is expensive to make
- ▶ Crackers often have holes in them to prevent air bubbles from forming when cooking
- ▶ Farm-raised salmon is naturally white or grey. A pink colour is added to mimic the natural colour of a wild salmon
- ▶ Russian president Dmitry Medvedev signed a bill in 2011 officially classifying beer as alcohol. Previously, anything containing less than 10 per cent alcohol in Russia was considered foodstuff
- ▶ A typical ear of corn has an even number of rows

SUDOKU

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



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A GUIDE TO PATIO FLOORING



A well-designed patio can act as a second living room for your home, transforming your garden from basic to beautiful. However, you need to make sure you choose the right materials and style for your property if you want a showstopping end result.

PICK PATIO FLOORING TYPE

WOOD – Timeless and extremely versatile, wood can be used to create a rustic or modern-styled patio area. You can also sand down wood multiple times, making it a great long-term investment for your home. Apply a protective wood oil for enhanced longevity.

NATURAL STONE – For the epitome of luxury, natural stone is hard to beat. Popular natural stone options include slate, travertine, granite and marble. Avoid light-coloured natural stones if you have pets or young children.

CERAMIC TILE – A classic flooring material, ceramic offers a durable and cost-effective way to create a patio area in your garden. Opt for unglazed tiles to reduce the risk of slipping and consider adding a sealant to protect from wear and tear.

BRICK – Low maintenance and slip resistant, brick gives off an old-world feel that is ideal for period properties. If cost is an issue, brick pavers make a cheaper alternative.

CONCRETE – Arguably the most versatile choice, concrete can be moulded to fit any shape, and you can personalise it with colouring, stamping, brushing, painting and patterning.

CHOOSE THE RIGHT SIZE

- There are three steps involved in sizing your patio flooring:
1. Decide how big you want your patio to be
 2. Determine the size of your chosen patio material
 3. Work out how much flooring you need to cover your chosen area

PATIO STYLE IDEAS

- > Surround tiles with decorative stones for a more organic look
- > Swap grass for a paved patio and surround with raised flowerbeds
- > Select interior and exterior flooring in the same tone to create a seamless flow

Photo credit: ukts.com



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GARDENING



Garden Goldmine

OUTDOOR FEATURES THAT ADD VALUE TO YOUR PROPERTY

COVID-19 and the associated stamp duty holiday have made a lot of us think about the saleability of our homes, and perhaps even consider a move. While countless television shows point us in the right direction as far as interior décor goes, what can we do to spruce things up on the outside?

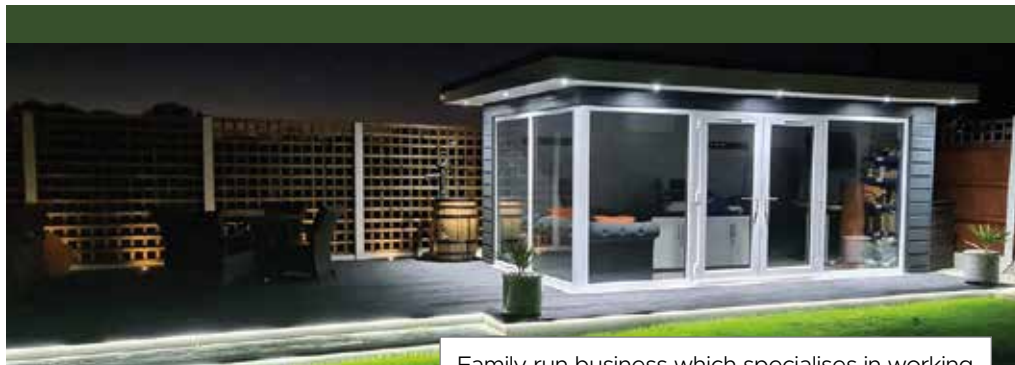
Wood you dare?: Wood effect adds a rustic, natural, earthy feel to any outside space, and the popularity of decking – and, to a lesser extent, patios – also makes a big difference when it comes to maximising property value. And the good news is that modern composites will give that ‘indoor wood’ finish and quality, even in exposed outdoor areas.

Natural landscaping: While for years we’ve obsessed over new kitchens, bathrooms, conservatories and more, it seems that landscaping garden spaces – from lawn care to water features and even planting small trees – will add more value to your property than any of the others listed, according to research undertaken last year.

The paint saint: A paint job – the entire house, the front wall or perhaps just a new garden gate – will give a real sense of style and cleanliness. Our outer walls and pathways take a real battering across the seasons, so brightening them up can make a big difference when it comes to adding value.

In reality, it makes sense. In Britain we love the idea of reclining in peaceful, tranquil, stylish surroundings with a drink, a magazine, some music and the gentle breeze of summer... even if the season comes and goes in under a fortnight.

Light show: We’re very much in the area of strings of bulbs lighting up entrance ways, trees and even whole gardens. For a relatively low cost, it’s possible to give those dusky evenings a real glow of homely warmth.



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HOW TO Water wisely

If you want your garden to be as fruitful as it can be over the summer, you need to make sure that all your plants are getting the right amount of water.

1. TEST THE SOIL

If you are not sure if a particular plant needs watering, simply test the soil using your finger. Poke down a few inches below the stem to check the root zone. If it feels dry below the surface, get out your hose. Alternatively, use a soil moisture meter.

2. WATER IN THE MORNING

The best time to water your plants is first thing in the morning, as this will allow the water to soak in before it evaporates either from heat or wind. Avoid watering in the heat of the day.

3. AIM FOR THE BASE OF THE PLANT

Always water your plants at their base and avoid getting the leaves, fruits or vegetables wet. This helps prevent diseases that thrive on moisture, such as powdery mildew.

4. PROVIDE A SLOW AND DEEP WATERING

Plants benefit more from a slow and deep watering

rather than a quick splash. When watering pots, keep going until water starts to run from the bottom. For plants that are bedded in the garden, water until the soil is wet six inches below the surface.

5. USE THE RIGHT TOOLS

For best results, water your garden using a watering wand, a long-neck watering can, a soaker hose or a drip system. Alternatively, recycled plastic bottles make a great deep watering system. Simply cut the bottom off and bury upside down next to your plants. Add water to the bottle through the top and the water will be absorbed more deeply into the soil.

QUICK TOP TIPS:

- > Brown leaf edges or yellow leaves can indicate overwatering
- > Apply 2-3 inches of organic mulch to retain more moisture
- > Fruit and vegetable plants need a consistent supply of water to produce well.

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KIDS



BAD BOUNCE

THE SAFETY MEASURES YOU NEED TO PUT IN PLACE WHEN PURCHASING A TRAMPOLINE

On the face of it, it's hard to believe that trampolining is one of the more hazardous leisure pursuits out there; yet the activity accounts for almost 100,000 injuries requiring medical attention every year. Put another way, more than half of parents with children aged 12 have said their child has come to harm at some point.

The reality is, while the spring-mounted tarpaulin offers the softest of landings, kids are making contact from considerable height, and with others close by. And with a prevalence of injuries being caused by freak, awkward landings – sprains and strains account for almost half of injuries recorded – even the most cautious of happy hoppers can come unstuck.

Of course, there are a few measures you can take in order to minimise the risk of injury:

likely knock a juvenile jumper off their feet if a friend lands a split-second earlier.

✓ PROTECTIVE WALL

Most trampolines nowadays come with 360-degree netting around the edges, eliminating the danger of kids being propelled off the apparatus and into nearby hedges. If any part of the edging is broken, however, your safety net is gone, both metaphorically and literally.

✓ SIX OF ONE

It's recommended that no children 'bounce' if under the age of six. The reason for this is younger kids lack the muscular strength to be able to trampoline safely, leaving them more likely to come to harm.

✓ SUPERVISION

Perhaps the greatest deterrent of all is adult supervision. Sure, you may not want to spend your summer afternoons watching kids bounce up and down repetitively, but it's sure as hell a better sight than the inside of the A&E department.

✓ BOUNCE ALONE

Guidelines suggest kids should trampoline by themselves rather than with buddies. Colliding with others in a confined space is common and dangerous, and the trampoline canvas will most



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Work this way



The Volunteer Vibe



Big up the Bothie



Airmiles

While the COVID-19 pandemic has robbed many of us of the money to be able to venture off on holiday, it hasn't removed that passion to explore. Yet in the 'new normal', and having rediscovered a love of simpler things through lockdown, perhaps it doesn't have to cost the Earth in order to travel it.

House Swap: More than just the premise of endless reality shows, holiday house-swapping is a real thing, and is becoming more popular every year. After all, why not profit from someone house-sitting your abode by finding a holiday location that suits your needs perfectly, but is also free of charge? The website homelink.org.uk is one of those leading the way.

Work this Way: It's the age-old explorer's way, but working your way around the world on a backpacking mission is the extreme version, with many lower commitment job-based escapes closer to home. If you're young and without kids, consider fruit picking, event marshalling or even working in a bar as a way of putting in the hours to sustain that holiday vibe in a new place.

The Volunteer Vibe: In a similar way, pitching up somewhere willing to put the hours in for free can be a great way of securing accommodation, food and enough free time to explore the vicinity.

Big up the Bothie: You know those secluded stone buildings synonymous with the Highland Clearances... you can stay in them, for free. Sure, they may not protect you from the elements as would a five-star hotel – although many have been sensitively restored – but websites such as mountainbothies.org.uk arrange short-term stays in these mystical, remote former homes.

Airmiles: Finally, a fad of the Nineties, airmiles these days are for much more than business users, and the miles can really stack up if you are a frequent flyer.

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UNUSUAL FRUIT OF THE MONTH:

Mangosteen

FOOD & DRINK

HOW TO PREPARE MANGOSTEEN

To remove the fruit, cut a circle into the thick skin around the stalk and lift it off like a lid. This will reveal the segments of mangosteen, which resemble those of an orange, but are bright white in colour. The seeds are soft and edible so do not need to be taken out.

HOW TO EAT MANGOSTEEN

- > Eat fresh either on its own or combined with other fruits in a fruit salad
- > Juice them
- > Blend and make sorbet or ice cream
- > Add to a curry

WHAT DOES MANGOSTEEN TASTE LIKE?

Described as a delicious combination of lychee, peach, strawberry and pineapple, the mangosteen boasts a slightly sweet and sour flavour which is quite unlike any fruit you have tasted before.

WHAT ARE THE HEALTH BENEFITS OF MANGOSTEEN?

Offering a rich supply of nutrients, fibre and unique antioxidants, the mangosteen is low in calories and fat, making it a great snack for those who crave a sweet fix during the day.

WHERE CAN YOU BUY MANGOSTEEN?

Although this fruit is easy to eat and prepare, it can be a little bit more difficult to find, as mangosteen is only in season for a short period of time. Your best bet is to head to your local Asian market, or you may be able to find it frozen or canned at the supermarket.

HOW TO STORE MANGOSTEEN

Ripe, whole mangosteen will last a few days at room temperature, whereas unripe mangosteen can last 1-2 weeks. Store in the fridge for 3-4 weeks. Do not freeze as this will damage the flesh.



celebrate NATIONAL BEER DAY

To celebrate National Beer Day on June 15, we have gathered the top six beer and food pairings that are guaranteed to go down a treat either at your local pub or in the comfort of your own home.

Stout & Oysters

Although you may associate oysters with champagne, they actually go amazingly well with stout. In fact, the Oyster Festival has been sponsored by Guinness for the past 60 years.

Dark Ale & Steak Pie

More suited to the winter months, but a perfect pairing nonetheless. Braise your steak in beer and then enjoy your pie with a glass of dark ale for a rich and comforting dish.

British Bitter & a Ploughman's

If you love nothing better than sitting in a pub garden with a traditional ploughman's lunch, then you will be pleased to hear that this summertime dish can be made even better with the addition of a classic British bitter.

IPA & Curry

Who doesn't love a curry on a Friday night? And, of course, you can't have a curry without a nice cold beer. Opt for a lighter style of IPA and an aromatic but not too spicy curry for mouth-watering results.

Lager & Fish and Chips

A British classic, fish and chips is one of the nation's favourite dishes. As well as enjoying a refreshing pint of lager with your fish, why not add a dash of beer to your batter mixture for an even crisper and lighter texture.

Blonde Beer & Brie

You may be surprised to learn that beer can be a match made in heaven with cheese, and this is most certainly the case with a blonde beer and young brie. The combination of this nutty cheese and lightly acidic beer is, quite frankly, unbelievable.



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A VEGGIE VISION

WHY WE NEED TO UNDERSTAND THE HUGE IMPACT OF THE MEAT INDUSTRY

Though we may still umm and ahh over the full implications of climate change, there is one fact we are no longer able to deny, and that is that eating meat is not good for the environment. In an era when our food comes perfectly packaged in innocent-looking fillet and steak packs, it is easy to detach ourselves from the reality of what we are consuming. Unfortunately, though, industrial meat farming has very real implications for our natural world.

For starters, there's the questionable treatment of animals being farmed on a large scale. Often kept in cramped and unsanitary conditions, these creatures have a poor quality of life and weak immune systems, which makes them more vulnerable to illness and the potential to spread disease.

Second, eating meat has a negative impact on climate change. Industrial meat is the biggest cause

of deforestation globally, as farmers in countries such as Brazil start forest fires to make room for cattle grazing and to grow industrial animal feed, such as soya. Removing the trees' ability to turn CO₂ into oxygen, these fires also release huge quantities of carbon dioxide into the air.

Finally, meat-eating is inefficient. It takes up to seven kilograms of grain to produce one kilogram of beef, which is incredibly wasteful in comparison to eating vegetables or grains, which we grow and then eat, cutting out the middleman (or cow).

However, dyed-in-the-wool carnivores need not fret, for no one is suggesting to remove meat entirely from your diet. Recent campaigns prefer to focus on the consideration of small changes, with quality over quantity. Eating local meat from a trusted and ethical farm is a great place to start, as is abstaining from the pleasure perhaps one day each week.



SUPPRESS the sweat



Although the arrival of warmer weather can work wonders for your mood, it can also make you feel hot, bothered and bad tempered. Fortunately, the below breathable fabrics are guaranteed to help keep you cool, calm and collected.

- Cotton:** Known for being lightweight, soft and breathable, cotton should be your go-to fabric for summer. With a natural ability to soak up sweat, allow heat to escape from the body and keep your skin cool, cotton comes in countless styles and colours, meaning you can find the perfect outfit for any occasion.
CARE TIP: Cotton can shrink in the dryer. Avoid this by hanging items in the home or garden to dry.
- Linen:** Linen is loosely woven, meaning it is also a highly breathable fabric that lends itself well to high temperatures. Although it can be stiff, linen can absorb a vast amount of moisture and it dries quickly, providing relief from sweat when you need it most.
CARE TIP: Combat creases by lightly spraying with water and smoothing with your hand.
- Rayon:** A man-made fabric, rayon is a blend of cotton, wood pulp and other natural or synthetic fibres. Created as a more cost-effective alternative to silk, rayon boasts very thin fibres that offer lightness and help prevent sticking. The perfect fabric for dresses and sportswear, rayon garments keep their shape and require little maintenance.
CARE TIP: Machine washable and dryable, rayon should not require ironing.
- Denim/Chambray:** Denim is made from tightly woven cotton so it has many of the same benefits as this natural fabric. However, it can feel heavy, which is why some people prefer to wear chambray when the temperature rises. Often referred to as imitation denim, chambray is much lighter and comes in a high thread count which guarantees enhanced breathability.
CARE TIP: Preserve your denim/chambray by spot washing with cold water and use a mild soap.





BEAUTY

NAILED IT

Do you know your nail shapes?

If not, don't worry, we've got you covered. Learn how to pick the perfect shape for your lifestyle here. Plus, the best shades for each shape.

SQUARE

A square nail is straight with sharp edges that are squared off at the tip. This nail shape suits those with a shorter nail. Although you may be told that shorter nails do not suit darker shades, this nail shape can actually accommodate all polish colours.

OVAL

An oval nail is round in shape with corners that curve inwards. Ideal if you are growing a manicure out, this nail shape suits those with medium length nails and narrow nail beds. You can rock any shade with oval nails.

COFFIN

Similar to the square shape but slightly more angular, a coffin nail has a straight-edged tip that is tapered in. To achieve this shape, a long nail is needed. Dark shades can look harsh on coffin nails, so opt for lighter colours.

ROUND

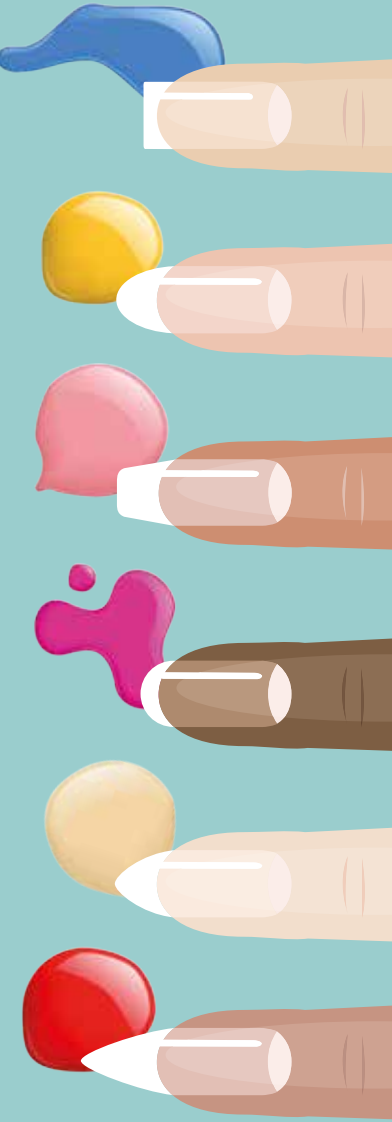
A round nail has straight sides that round up with a flat-edged tip. Best if you need short nails for work, round nails are easy to get used to and lend themselves well to bright-coloured polish and nail art.

ALMOND

An almond nail is essentially an oval shape that comes to a soft point. Suited to medium nails, this shape helps to slenderise wide fingers and to give the appearance of slimmer hands. Pair with a neutral polish.

STILETTO

Definitely one of the most eye-catching nail shapes, a stiletto nail is long and spiky, with the point curving to the base like a triangle. You must have long nails to achieve this shape. Not suited to those who type for a living or carry out manual labour, red is definitely the couleur du jour for stiletto nails.



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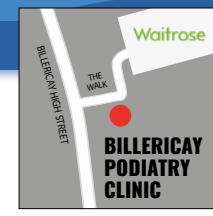
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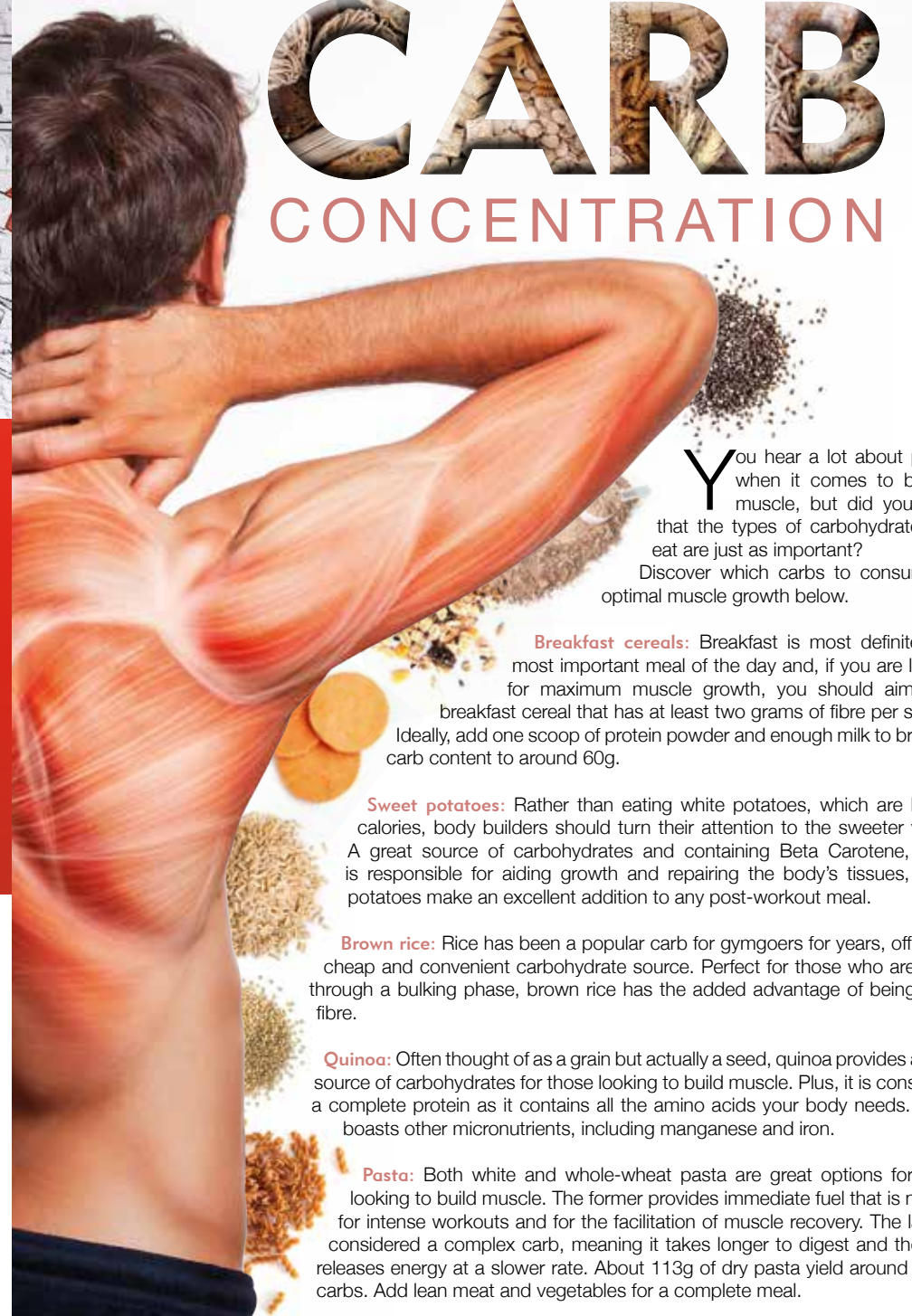
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HEALTH & FITNESS



You hear a lot about protein when it comes to building muscle, but did you know that the types of carbohydrates you eat are just as important? Discover which carbs to consume for optimal muscle growth below.

Breakfast cereals: Breakfast is most definitely the most important meal of the day and, if you are looking for maximum muscle growth, you should aim for a breakfast cereal that has at least two grams of fibre per serving. Ideally, add one scoop of protein powder and enough milk to bring the carb content to around 60g.

Sweet potatoes: Rather than eating white potatoes, which are high in calories, body builders should turn their attention to the sweeter variety. A great source of carbohydrates and containing Beta Carotene, which is responsible for aiding growth and repairing the body's tissues, sweet potatoes make an excellent addition to any post-workout meal.

Brown rice: Rice has been a popular carb for gymgoers for years, offering a cheap and convenient carbohydrate source. Perfect for those who are going through a bulking phase, brown rice has the added advantage of being full of fibre.

Quinoa: Often thought of as a grain but actually a seed, quinoa provides a clean source of carbohydrates for those looking to build muscle. Plus, it is considered a complete protein as it contains all the amino acids your body needs. It also boasts other micronutrients, including manganese and iron.

Pasta: Both white and whole-wheat pasta are great options for those looking to build muscle. The former provides immediate fuel that is needed for intense workouts and for the facilitation of muscle recovery. The latter is considered a complex carb, meaning it takes longer to digest and therefore releases energy at a slower rate. About 113g of dry pasta yield around 90g of carbs. Add lean meat and vegetables for a complete meal.



Springfield Hospital

Consultant Breast Surgeons



Mr Simon Smith BSc MS FRCS FRCS (Gen Surg)

Mr Simon Smith is a Consultant General Surgeon who specialises in breast and endocrine surgery. He is an 'Oncoplastic' Breast Surgeon performing not only resectional breast surgery for breast cancer but also many reconstructive and cosmetic breast procedures.



Mr Harun Thomas FRCS MS (Oncoplastic Breast Surgery) MS & MBBS (General Surgery)

One of the first surgeons in the United Kingdom to successfully complete both the Masters in Oncoplastic Breast Surgery (Europe's highest qualification in Oncoplastic breast surgery -www.w.uea.ac.uk) and the prestigious UK National TIG Oncoplastic fellowship. Mr Thomas specialises exclusively in the investigation and management of breast symptoms and diseases covering all aspects of breast care including breast cancer, breast lump and pain, benign breast diseases, family history of breast cancer, risk reducing mastectomy, breast reconstruction and implant based breast surgery. His special interest is therapeutic mammoplasty (use of plastic surgical techniques to provide best outcomes after breast cancer surgery) and his research interest is on intraoperative ultrasound (use of ultrasound during surgery to improve patient experience and outcomes).

The professional team includes:

- A Consultant Breast Surgeon
- Mammography Specialist Radiographer (to take mammogram pictures)
- A Consultant Breast Radiologist (to read the result of mammogram, ultrasound scans and undertake biopsies)
- Breast Care Nurse (to offer information, support and counselling)

On the Spot Tests

A Consultant Breast Surgeon will lead your care. During your visit the surgeon will examine you and where needed refer you for a Mammogram and Breast Ultrasound.

If necessary a fine needle test and/or core biopsy to be carried out, to exclude any abnormalities within a lump that has been discovered.

Please be aware of the likelihood of some waiting time during your clinic visit to allow all tests to be performed.

Rapid Results

In most cases the result will be available on the day, but occasionally further tests are needed to give a conclusive result.

Support is provided by a Breast Care Specialist Nurse who offers emotional support and guide you through the treatment options, as well as providing ongoing care for patients who may require surgery.

Breast Care Advice

Breast changes to seek advice about:

It is important that you see your GP if you notice that anything about your breasts has changed from what is normal for you, especially if it's only in one breast.

Breast changes to look out for include:

- A change in the size, shape or feel of your breast
- Dimpling, puckering or redness of the skin
- Redness, a rash or crusting on your nipple or surrounding area
- A change in your nipple, such as in its shape or if it turns inwards to your breast (becomes inverted)
- A discharge from your nipple (unless you're breast feeding)
- Bleeding from your nipple area
- Pain in part of your breast or armpit
- Swelling, thickening or a lump in your breast or arm pit

These symptoms don't necessarily mean that you have breast cancer but if you have any of them, see your GP.



We are proud to support
**Breast Cancer
Awareness Month**

Rapid Diagnosis Breast Clinic

Springfield Hospital's clinic is available to anyone with breast symptoms. If you are paying for yourself, just call the number below to make an appointment. If you are using your private medical insurance, please call your insurance company to get an authorisation number. Then call our appointments line who will make an appointment for you.

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EYE YOGA EXERCISE...

A wellness trend that you most definitely need to keep an eye on, eye yoga promises to prevent eye strain and eye fatigue and to result in brighter peepers in as little as five minutes per day. Exactly what our screen-loving nation needs.

EYE EXERCISE 1: *Palming*

- 👁️ Rub your hands together for 10 seconds to create heat and energy
- 👁️ Look straight ahead and gently place your palms over your closed eyes
- 👁️ Take a few deep breaths and allow the darkness and heat to soothe your eyes
- 👁️ Leave until the warmth fades

EYE EXERCISE 2: *Blinking*

- 👁️ Sit with your shoulders relaxed and your neck straight
- 👁️ Blink your eyes very fast for 10–15 seconds
- 👁️ Gently allow your eyes to close and settle
- 👁️ Repeat every hour if using a screen all day

EYE EXERCISE 3: *Zooming*

- 👁️ Sit in a comfortable position
- 👁️ Focus on an object in the distance for five seconds
- 👁️ Move your focus to a closer object for a further five seconds

- 👁️ Move your focus to something very close to you, such as your hand, for five seconds
- 👁️ Reverse your gaze back to the middle object and then to the one furthest away
- 👁️ Repeat for two minutes

EYE EXERCISE 4: *Rolling*

- 👁️ Sit with your shoulders relaxed and your neck straight
- 👁️ Look to the right and then slowly roll your eyes up towards the ceiling
- 👁️ Roll your eyes down to your left and then down to the floor
- 👁️ Do this in both clockwise and anticlockwise directions

EYE EXERCISE 5: *Figure of Eight*

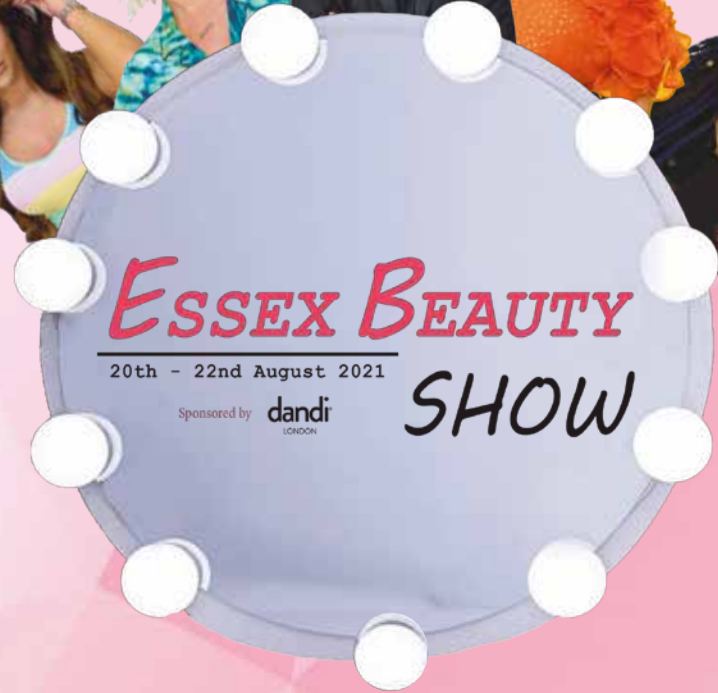
- 👁️ Sit in a comfortable position
- 👁️ Raise your hand in front of you at eye level
- 👁️ Extend your thumb and focus on it
- 👁️ Start to move your arm in a figure of eight shape
- 👁️ Keep tracing for 30 seconds and then switch directions

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Could you do with a COLD SHOWER?

From pop sensation Lady Gaga to body coach Joe Wicks to boxer Anthony Joshua, cold showers and baths are the lockdown wellness trend taking over the celebrity world.

So what has made these famous faces take the plunge?

faster to warm itself up, which in turn increases blood flow and promotes good circulation.

REDUCE STRESS LEVELS

Regularly taking cold showers imposes a small amount of stress on the body which results in a process called "hardening". This enables your nervous system to get used to moderate amounts of stress, which can help you keep a cool head.

INCREASE WILLPOWER

A case of mind over matter, forcing yourself to endure the cold for extended periods of time can help to strengthen your willpower and make you more ready to take on the challenges of daily life.

WEIGHT LOSS

Research has shown that exposure to the cold increases your metabolic rate and directly stimulates the generation of brown fat, which is a specific type of fat tissue that generates energy by burning calories.

MORE ROBUST IMMUNE RESPONSE

Scientific studies have shown that taking a cold shower can increase the amount of white blood cells in your body, which helps to protect your body against diseases.

HOW TO TAKE A COLD SHOWER

- Enjoy your usual shower
- At the end, slowly lower the temperature
- Get the temperature low enough so that you start to feel slightly uncomfortable
- Stay there for 2-3 minutes
- Lower the temperature more with each shower

BETTER CIRCULATION

By reducing your core temperature, a cold shower forces your body to work harder and

DID YOU KNOW...

...that the Guinness World Record for sitting in an ice bath is a whopping 1 hour, 52 minutes and 42 seconds? This record is held by Dutch adventurer Wim Hof, aka the "ICEMAN".

BRITAIN'S GREATEST SPORTING MOMENTS...

VIRGINIA WADE

Courting triumph, celebrating a golden day in 1977... Wade cementing her place in tennis folklore

Back in 1977, England's Virginia Wade was on the verge of completing a specular Grand Slam quadruplet. Already with US Open (1968), Australian Open (1972) and French Open (1973) titles to her name across singles and doubles, she just required victory at SW19 to complete a clean sweep of major honours.

There were times during her run to the final at Wimbledon when it seemed that elusive title would evade her, though. In the fourth round, and before the days of tie-breaks, she needed nine games to win the first set against Romanian Mariana Simionescu; while she recovered from a set down in the semi-final against Chris Evert.

The final itself, held on July 2, had an air of Britishness about it. The Queen's Silver Jubilee had taken place not five months previously, and Elizabeth II was present on Centre Court to witness, she hoped, a homegrown champion.

Yet champion status looked to be drifting

away from Wade when she lost the first set 6-4 to Betty Stöve. However, the Bournemouth-born star, who studied mathematics and physics at the University of Sussex before turning pro, came back 6-3 in the second after producing an array of dazzling winners.

In the deciding set, the electric atmosphere coupled with the pinpoint, aggressive shot-making that was such an important part of her game, saw the Brit home, as she demolished her Dutch rival 6-1 – Wade had done it.

Celebrating her 32nd birthday a week after the championships ended, she remains one of the oldest female Wimbledon champions.

Wade, who had been world number one in 1975, didn't spend a single day outside the top 10 in a 12-year period beginning in 1967, and finally retired in 1985. She moved into media work and, to this day, is one of the only female British tennis players to have won the Grand Slam.

Photo credit: Mike Hollist/ANL/Shutterstock



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CRICKETERS

Good day.

CELEBRATING 50 YEARS OF THE ONE DAY INTERNATIONAL

It shows you just how far cricket has come when you consider that when England played Australia in the first ever ODI – that is, a ‘One Day International’, comprising 40 overs per side – the concept was seen as being somewhat pointless. It was staged as a money-making exercise Down Under after the Third Ashes test of 1971 had fallen foul of the weather.

To think that a new format could come into play to disrupt the five-day sensibilities of ‘traditional cricket’, where batsmen and bowlers would toil endlessly in a match lasting almost three-quarters of a week (with a common outcome being a draw), was churlish.

Indeed, the ODI, from the outset, wasn’t hugely popular. Australia won that first landmark game, predictably, and other nations around the world were nervous to throw caution to the wind in the same way as might a limited-over batsman tasked with both accelerated run-scoring and wicket preservation.

As time went on, the ODI set-up found its popularity climb thanks to World Cup cricket, particularly during the 1980s; and, of course, as long-suffering England fans, we had to wait until 2019 when Ben Stokes, Jos Buttler and co snatched a stunning victory against New Zealand at Lord’s to finally bring the trophy back to the shores where this great game was invented.

England have remained right up there with the world’s best at the one-day format, despite minor aberrations in form of late.

Its future does appear somewhat cloudy, though, given the popularity of T20 cricket and the emergence of The Hundred – both shorter, punchier forms of the game. Though like a middle-distance runner sneering at both sprinters and marathon runners alike as

he pursues a measured, masterful, classy approach to his craft, so too does the ODI package occupy a middle ground that now feels as much a part of our cricket heritage as leather, willow, pads, stumps and endless rain delays.

Photo credit: ColourSport/Shutterstock

Because we don't know

What's

around the corner...

...it's never too early to make an LPA

Don't put it off. Often it takes a life changing event to prompt someone into action, which can sometimes be too late. Many others don't consider making an LPA at all, believing that "it won't happen to me". However, planning ahead and having LPAs prepared before they are needed can stop the evitable roadblocks faced by those dealing with your financial & business matters and health & welfare choices if the worst does happen and you are not able to make decisions yourself.

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MOTORING

WILL THE UK BE THE FIRST TO INTRODUCE 'NO HANDS' TECHNOLOGY ENABLING CARS TO BE DRIVEN BY COMPUTERS?

It was back in 2017 that former Transport Secretary Chris Grayling MP announced that self-driving cars could be present on UK roads by the year 2021, a claim reinforced by the head of the Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders as being a realistic aim.

In reality, we won't be seeing fleets of driverless cars tearing down our A roads in 2021, but we can expect the first few to pop up later in the year. Perhaps this delay is a result of lockdown, perhaps the dramatic slowing of the motor industry as a whole in light of the global pandemic.

And yet, the idea of self-driving cars still holds firm, and it may not be long until we do see high-end manufacturers fully embracing what will be the most dramatic motoring ever. The benefits include fewer incidents on the road (94 per cent of accidents are caused by human error), less congestion and improved transport connectivity, not to mention greater mobility options for elderly, disabled and

young users.

The UK wants to be regarded as a leader in this field, with the prediction being that by 2035 more than 40 per cent of new cars will have self-driving capabilities. Automated Vehicle (AV) technology could be worth more than £40billion, and will bring 40,000 jobs to the country.

More than £200million has been invested so far in start-ups looking to fuel this motoring revolution, with the advancement of Intelligent Roads helping to move ideas forward.

There is just one issue though – AVs work perfectly when surrounded by other AVs. It is only when these brilliant computers are asked to interact with human drivers that potential collisions occur. It seems the scientists will have to overcome this somewhat fundamental flaw before we can call on our trusty computerised four-wheeled motors to deposit us home safely.

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We believe that retirement is something to be looked forward to after a lifetime of hard work – so don't let it be overshadowed by financial concerns. We can help you quantify your finances and get your numbers straight, ready for an enjoyable retirement. Even if you're not planning to retire this year, it's important to engage with your finances.

Here are some pointers to get started with; we'll be on hand to help with these.

- Get a State Pension forecast – Visit www.gov.uk/check-state-pension to find out how much State Pension you'll be entitled to and when you can receive it.

- Check what's in your pension pot – Calculating the value of your pension pot(s) is essential to start planning your finances in retirement.

- This includes any 'lost' pension pots – You may have lost track of a pension over the years, perhaps as you moved between jobs and workplace pension schemes. We can help you track down lost pensions and potentially provide a welcome boost to your retirement income.

- Quantify your savings, investments and debt – Calculating the value of your savings and investments, and quantifying any outstanding debt, will help provide a holistic understanding of your overall financial circumstances.

- What will you need in retirement? – We can help you calculate your income requirement in retirement, by thinking about the lifestyle you want, your living costs and other potential expenses.

- Watch out for scams – Don't risk losing your lifetime savings to scammers. Pension fraud is on the rise – so make sure you know how to spot the signs

- Take advice – In this period of uncertainty, financial advice has never been more important. We can help you make those big retirement decisions easier by guiding you through your available options, taking into account the tax implications and giving you the confidence that you're making the right choices for your future.

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Refund rules

YOUR CONSUMER RIGHTS WHEN PURCHASES GO SOUR

We've all had purchases go bad, and when that happens the immediate fear is whether we'll get our money back.

In most instances, the answer is "yes". Certainly, if you buy anything online you are protected by the 2015 Consumer Rights Act. That means, for whatever reason – including simply changing your mind – you will be able to return your goods. You'll usually need to do this within 14 days in order to get a full refund, and obviously items must be sent back in the same condition as they were received.

When purchasing in store, things become a little different. You will struggle to get refunds for perishables unless you are returning in an almost immediate timeframe – such as buying a sandwich only to immediately discover the bread is stale.

In other situations, the product will need to be defective or not fit for purpose, at which point the retailer is allowed to attempt to repair or replace. Be warned, though, simply having changed your mind isn't a verified reason for a refund, and you may discover some pushback.

Of course, while these hard and fast rules reflect a stated code of conduct when it comes to refund rights, things can often veer either side of the line. You may sometimes encounter an overly officious staff member or customer service agent who makes life difficult; though more likely you'll find retailers going the extra yard to refund in some circumstances when they perhaps don't need to legally. Ultimately, good publicity – and bad – travels.

As with all refunds, proof of purchase is important, and building rapport with the person you are liaising with will doubtless move you closer to the result you want, no matter what the circumstances.





Speedy SALE

HOW TO SELL YOUR HOME FAST THIS SUMMER

If you are looking to sell your house this summer as quickly and lucratively as possible, then our property experts can help you. Plus, discover how to speed up the move into your new home.

SPRUCE UP YOUR GARDEN

Searches for properties with large outdoor spaces have soared during lockdown, but that doesn't mean homes with smaller gardens can't also be an attractive option for potential buyers. Make sure you mow your lawn, place the bins out of sight and, if possible, make your garden secluded with the use of fences or hedges.



FOCUS ON KERB APPEAL

You will be surprised at just how many homebuyers will dismiss a property purely on its exterior, with some not even venturing inside after a bad first impression. Prevent this from happening by keeping your windows clean, ensuring your house number is clearly visible and cutting back any overgrown trees or bushes.

STAGE YOUR HOME

Property developers know exactly how to stage a new home to sell it fast and there is no reason why you can't do this too. Ensure that your property is clean and tidy, with any clutter out of sight, lay the table for dinner, make up the beds, light some scented candles and keep the thermostat at a consistently pleasant temperature.

SEEK PROFESSIONAL ADVICE

Estate agents live and breathe property sales, so it makes sense to ask their advice on how to sell your home as quickly as possible. Be sure to seek out local insights and pre-empt the questions buyers are likely to ask.

ENJOY A FAST AND STRESS-FREE MOVE WITH THESE MUST-ASK QUESTIONS:

- > What is the position of the buyer/seller?
- > Should I use a mortgage broker?
- > Has my buyer's mortgage application been submitted?
- > When is the target exchange date?
- > What paperwork do I need to complete?



Financial advice made personal

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