

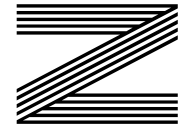
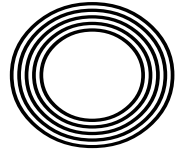
**HOW TO
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50 YEARS
of Mr Men and Little Miss

Sue Barker
Celebrating the TV presenter's career

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The billionaire completes out-of-this-world venture



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Editor's notes...

AUGUST 2021



Nik Allen, Editor

Hello and welcome to this month's edition of **VISION** BillericayShenfield. Even now things have calmed down, it still hurts to say it... Football didn't come home. The Three Lions fought, battled and impressed at almost every turn, but came up painfully short, as has been the case on so many occasions before.

Of course, as the song goes, 'We still believe', and within a day or two of that painful penalty shoot-out defeat by Italy, I couldn't help but accept some simple truths: England didn't lose a single game; we conceded just two goals in more than 11 hours of football; we played great football;

we saw the emergence of yet more brilliant youngsters; and mostly, even in defeat, even with lingering thoughts of 'what if we'd done that differently?', we will take the positives forward.

Football, and life itself, is about coming back from the challenges that confront us; it's about striving to be better than before - wiser, stronger, more equipped. That resilience is inbuilt - it's a natural human trait, and it's arguably our most inspiring. Our armoury is now hardened ahead of the not insignificant World Cup in Qatar at the end of next year.

So while we failed to make it to the ultimate destination, we are at least on the road, and the journey continues. What better inspiration than that to take into every other aspect of our lives?

Nik Allen

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

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CONTRIBUTORS | Tabatha Fabray, Geraint Roberts, Ruby Ward

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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SPORTING INJUSTICE?

SUE BARKER CBE'S DEPARTURE AS A QUESTION OF SPORT HOST INFURIATED AN ADMIRING BBC AUDIENCE, BUT THE PRESENTER'S CAREER IS ONE TO BE CELEBRATED.

The ever-evolving world of sport is perhaps only rivalled these days by the BBC's drive for diversity and representation, so the fact Sue Barker CBE has managed to keep pace over the past 24 years is nothing short of commendable.

Alas, the 65-year-old former British tennis star has fronted her final show as presenter of the iconic *A Question of Sport* (AQoS). When news of her departure first broke towards the end of last year, there were clamours of resistance and dismay from every corner – after all, not only is Barker's demographic one that arguably struggles for airtime in the BBC's revised content package, but hosts with her informed, cheeky, charming aplomb are exceptionally hard to come by.

Barker certainly won't be short of new projects – she has always combined presenting duties across AQoS, BBC Sports Personality of the Year, Wimbledon, athletics and the Olympics. While many of those other engagements will carry on, the AQoS team will need to pull out all the stops to replace not just Barker, but also team captains Matt Dawson and Phil Tufnell, with personalities able to knit together format and team mechanics with such precision. It was Barker's infectious laugh, slightly mumsy approach to the captains, and an ability to keep up with the cut and thrust of fast-paced questions that saw the show strip off its slightly stuffy demeanour of the Eighties and Nineties, when it resembled a more sporty version of *Mastermind*, and become a programme beloved by so many.

'The presenter has never been afraid to push forward ideas – it was that courage and confidence that put her in the spotlight...'

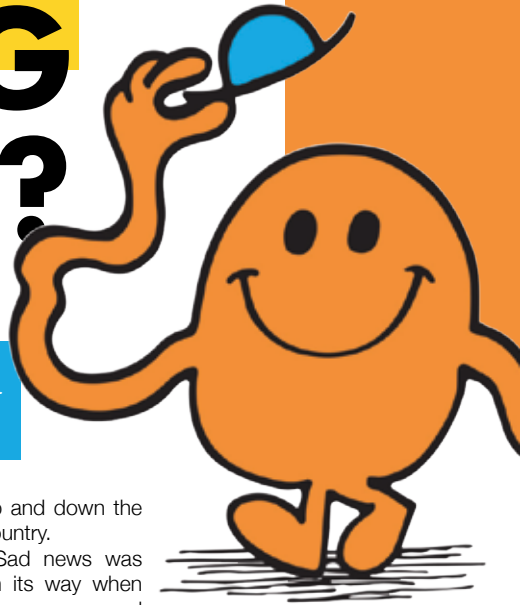
The presenter has never been afraid to push forward ideas – it was that courage and confidence that put her in the spotlight as a tennis player back in the 1970s. At the age of 17, she turned pro, and captured the hearts of the nation three years later when she won the French Open, defeating Renáta Tomanová in the final. On home soil, Barker reached the Wimbledon semi-finals in 1977, but was surprisingly beaten by Betty Stöve.

She continued to vie for titles and, at her peak, sat as the third best tennis player in the world. But injury and loss of form followed, and she retired in 1984, aged 28. Nonetheless, Barker claimed 15 singles and 12 doubles titles across her career, and her popularity was such that, on retirement, she slipped almost seamlessly into the media world, initially with Australia's Channel 7.

After three years at BSkyB, she joined the BBC in 1993, assuming the role as AQoS host four years later. While the years managing charismatic AQoS captains such as Dawson and Tufnell, plus Ally McCoist, Frankie Dettori and John Parrott, have certainly given Barker an occasionally dominant exterior on-screen, she is someone who carries herself with humility, humour and no small amount of style. Her contribution to television over the past three decades was reflected in the Queen's Birthday Honours List in June, with Barker awarded the title of CBE for services to broadcasting and charity, having previously been given an MBE in 2000 and an OBE five years ago.

The presenter, who is married to landscape gardener, Lance Tankard, and lives in the Cotswolds, presented her final show in May. The new series will be fronted by comedian Paddy McGuinness. The *Top Gear*, *Take Me Out* and *I Can See Your Voice* host said: "It's an honour and opportunity I'm certainly not taking lightly".

A LONG TICKLE?



Celebrating 50 years of the Mr Men and Little Miss characters

It all started with Mr Tickle, a seemingly innocent, curly-armed cartoon character created by Roger Hargreaves. The illustrator was, at the time, a 36-year-old Yorkshire-raised writer and designer who, having become disillusioned with working in advertising and copywriting, developed characters to entertain his children.

The *Mr Tickle* book came first and sold a million copies in its first three years on the shelves. Perhaps it was the simplicity of the stories, perhaps the wonderful illustrations, perhaps the fun and colourful tales – whatever it was, Hargreaves had landed upon a series that was about to explode when the BBC picked it up and began broadcasting the stories, narrated by *Dad's Army's* Arthur Lowe.

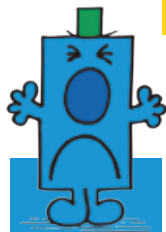
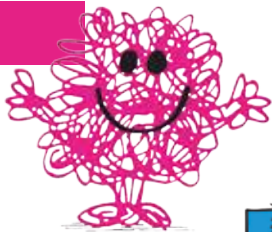
With *The Mirror* and the *Daily Mail* getting in on the act in the form of comic strips, other characters came to the fore. Now titled *Mr Men and Little Miss*, the illustrations and instantly recognisable bold capitalised font became a staple for kids

up and down the country.

Sad news was on its way when Roger passed away unexpectedly in 1988. A publishing legacy that had its roots in a father wanting to create captivating stories for his kids was suddenly under threat. It was therefore somewhat apt that his son, Adam, just 25 at the time, would take over the reins. By the turn of the century, he had developed a number of new characters for a new generation of kids whose languages, tastes, interests and fashions had moved on from those early days.

To date, the *Mr Men and Little Miss* series has developed characters based on real-life icons as diverse as the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge and the Spice Girls, as well as being featured across the London Underground and on Royal Mail stamps.

Photo credit: allaboutstamps.co.uk



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ARE HYBRID MATTRESSES WORTH THEIR HEFTY PRICE TAG OR IS IT A LOT OF HYPE?

First came spring mattresses, then foam, and then came the exalted combination of the two. Every reinvention brings new promise of “the best night’s sleep you’ll ever have” – along with an ever-expanding price point.

New kids on the bedding block, such as Simba, Eve and Emma, have all devoted themselves to giving you the most dream-inducing, pain-relieving eight hours of rest. But regardless of their lofty claims, it is still a leap into the unknown for those accustomed to traditional brands.

So what exactly is a hybrid mattress? Well, it’s a multi-faceted design combining layers of both pocket springs and breathable foam to create a mattress that offers mouldable, gravity-defying support AND resistant buoyancy. This means not only will you feel supported in all the right places, but also that the surface resists dipping and sagging over time. They also keep you cooler during the warmer months and are less reactive to movement – ideal if your partner tends to toss and turn.

Another benefit that sets these flexible beauties apart from other mattresses is that they generally come vacuum-packed in relatively small boxes. Not only does this make them ideal for top-floor flats in narrow buildings, but it is also a marvel in itself as you watch your new bedfellow expand from a tightly-packed roll into a welcoming crash pad.

Not found on the high street, these hybrid designs still remain a reasonably left-field take on the mattress concept – hence the current lack of a big name, bargain equivalent. Pioneers in the field pride themselves on the huge amount of technology and design that goes into creating each prototype, with Simba bedding even boasting ‘space-inspired’ fabric. All also offer a limited-time sleep offer in which you can change your mind – creating a second market for the refurbished rejects.

So is it worth splashing the cash? If you are perpetually unsatisfied with your sleep options, you definitely ought to give one of these a try. After all, what’s worse – counting pennies or counting sheep?

Photo credit: city.com





HOME & DIY

BANISH BATHROOM BACTERIA

Have you ever thought about how often you should clean and replace items in your bathroom? If not, the below advice from our cleaning experts may come as a shock to you.

BATHROOM TOWELS

You may be surprised to find out that bathroom towels should be washed after every three uses. Furthermore, they should be replaced entirely every one to three years.

TOP CLEANING TIP: Always hang up your towels to dry fully after each use.

BATH MATS

This essential is one of the most germ-ridden areas of your bathroom and needs to be washed every three to seven days and thrown away after two years. For mats with rubber backing, spray generously with white vinegar weekly and wash in cold water every three to four weeks.

TOP CLEANING TIP: Clean on a 40-degree wash and hang to dry.

TOILET BRUSHES

Covered in lots of harmful bacteria, your toilet brush should be cleaned weekly and replaced every six to eight months. Soak in a mixture of boiling water and bleach and allow to drip dry.

TOP CLEANING TIP: Rinse after every use for maximum longevity.

SHOWER HEADS

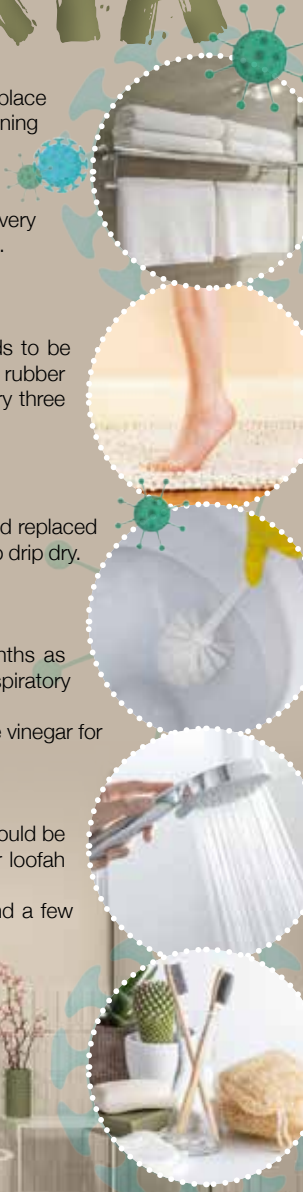
Shower heads should be cleaned monthly and replaced every six to eight months as harmful bacteria thrive in this moist environment, which can be harmful to the respiratory system, especially for at-risk patient groups.

TOP CLEANING TIP: Soak in a mixture of three cups hot water and one cup white vinegar for 30 minutes and then scrub with an old toothbrush.

LOOFAHS AND TOOTHBRUSHES

Both these items should be replaced every one to three months. Toothbrushes should be rinsed after every use and the handle should be wiped down once a week. Your loofah should be rinsed thoroughly after each use.

TOP CLEANING TIP: Soak your loofah in warm water and a few drops of essential oils weekly to deter bacterial growth



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grillo designs:

inspiration FOR EVERY HOME

Get to know Grillo Designs, a UK-based interiors blog that has all the inspiration you need to transform your home

The internet is full of incredible home inspiration, but let's face it – not all of it is achievable. Those Pinterest perfect homes are often only possible with a huge budget and a team of professionals to pull it off.

So it makes a refreshing change when someone like Medina Grillo comes along. Medina's love all of things interiors led to her starting her own Facebook page back in 2014, and she now runs an award-winning blog, Grillo Designs.

Full of inspiration showing renters that they too can do incredible things with their homes, Grillo Designs is the style guide you've been looking for to transform your space.

Medina describes herself as "an IKEA-loving-upcycling-junkie-DIY-passionate-home-décor-crazy momma and wife", who shares her cool and unique designs with the world. A healthcare worker by day, she works with her partner, Vince, to bring her design ideas to life.

Grillo Designs has more than 174,000 followers on Instagram, while the blog has won several awards.

In addition to Grillo Designs, Medina is the voice behind #HowIRent - "a celebration of all the amazing renters out there who, in spite of it all, have managed to transform their homes into abodes of personality and style".

Medina's style is contemporary, blending muted shades with pops of yellow and creating interest through textures and patterns. With Grillo Designs, you can find all kinds of inspiration to create beautiful, stylish looks for your space.

BRINGING GRILLO DESIGNS INTO YOUR HOME

Grillo Designs highlights fun, quirky DIY projects you can bring into your home, whether rented or owned. Here are some amazing ideas to help you transform your own space:

1. CREATE A DIY COFFEE CORNER IN YOUR KITCHEN

Using some shelving, hooks and maybe a few pieces of artwork, you can create a stylish space to display your favourite mugs and coffee items and celebrate your love of the bean.

2. UPDATE DATED DRESSERS TO GIVE THEM A NEW LIFE

Dresser or chest of drawers chipped, covered in scratches or just a bit dull? Give it a simple makeover. You could stain the wood, paint using multi-surface paint and add some new hardware to create a complete transformation.

3. CUSTOMISE YOUR IKEA ALEX DRAWERS

Most people have some trusty IKEA Alex drawers around – especially if you've built a home workspace for yourself during the COVID-19 pandemic. Make yours a little more unique with some stickers or contact paper to add your own quirky design.



HOME & DIY

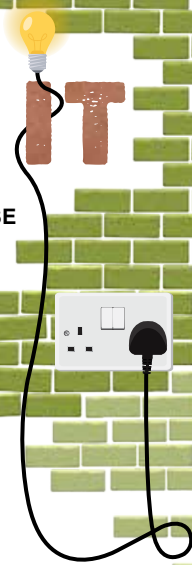
Photo credit: grillo-designs.com



HOME & DIY

BRICKING IT

THE SMART BRICKS THAT CAN REVOLUTIONISE HOW WE USE ELECTRICITY IN OUR HOMES



Most of us know that bricks are brilliant insulators against the cold. In warmer periods, their thermal mass qualities can mean heat is released very gradually over time – something that's perfect for maintaining the temperature of our homes.

However, advances in construction technology are set to take our desire for energy- and cost-efficient warmth to another level.

Scientists have developed a new type of brick that works more like a battery, thanks to fine strands of special conductive polymer fibres, called PEDOTs.

The new bricks, which appear a darkish brown colour instead of the standard red, are coated with an epoxy in order to waterproof them, and are then connected to a power source. The result is that the heat stored within a single brick can power a LED light for 10 minutes.

At present, the technology on offer won't allow the bricks to be used for construction purposes because they contain an acid component in their ingredients, but scientists are looking for alternative constituents that would mean safe and durable building blocks that can be used to power the very homes they act as a border for.

What's more, it's said each brick can be charged 10,000 times without losing any more than 10 per cent of its storage capacity, suggesting longevity when put into a physical, built-in structure.

At present, each brick would cost around £2 to make, though if the necessary adjustments could be made to ensure the product becomes construction-friendly, that cost would be brought down dramatically – as would energy bills.



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TOTES *amazing!*

Sustainable fashion is all the rage, so why not take your eco-friendly efforts one step further and create your very own handy tote bag using just an old jumper?



WHAT YOU NEED:

- An old jumper – this could be an old school jumper or a much-loved hoodie that no longer fits
- Needle and thread
- A pair of scissors
- Sewing machine (optional)

HOW TO MAKE:

- > Cut off the bottom band of the jumper
- > Cut off the hood (if applicable) and sleeves as close to the seams as possible
- > Determine the centre of the logo or image if there is one
- > Depending on the size of your jumper, work out the length and width of your tote bag – 35x40cm is a medium-sized bag
- > For the handles, cut and remove the sleeve band and cut the sleeve open along the seam
- > Cut eight strips of 2–3cm width and set aside for later
- > Using the remaining fabric, cut out the desired size of your bag, making sure to add 2–3cm extra on both the width and length
- > Pin the front and back of your jumper fabrics together and stitch using a 1/2-inch seam allowance, either by hand or using a sewing machine
- > Secure and set the seams with the fibres of the fabric using an iron. Always supervise children during this step
- > Fold in 2cm of fabric at the top of the bag and press, and then stitch the fabric near the raw edge using a zigzag or straight stitch for a seamless opening
- > Make the handles by sewing together two of the strips you cut earlier to create one long strip. Create four long strips in total, using eight strips. Overlap the ends and use a zigzag stitch to secure
- > Take two of the four strips, lay the ends on top of one another and stitch together. Repeat with the other two strips
- > Stitch the handles to the top of your tote bag
- > Voila! Your finished jumper tote bag.



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MAKE A STATEMENT

with vases

THE STATEMENT VASE TREND THAT'S TAKING OVER HOMES (AND THE INTERNET)

Vases have always been a practical necessity as something to display your flowers in. Now, it's the vases themselves that are on display.

One of the key home trends of the moment is the statement vase. With the ability to bring new life to an interior, or the perfect finishing touch to your tablescape or shelfie, having some statement vases in your home brings instant style.

From unusual textures and shapes to bold colours, this is one trend that anyone can get on board with.

Discover the statement vase trend and how to make it work in your home.

THE QUIRKY ONES: A cool and quirky vase is a great way to dress up your home. A bold shape draws the eye, making an excellent impression in any space. From your hallway display to your coffee table, a quirky vase will add some style interest to any home.

THE CLASSIC VASE: Just because something is a classic, doesn't mean it can't make a statement.

Traditional style vases, such as busts or a ceramic vase, are gracing Victorian-style homes all over Instagram and Pinterest, bringing an expensive, luxury look without the antique price tag. Choose a smaller vase for a more understated look, or go large if you want to create a bolder, more striking look.

THE BOLD VASE: If you want to liven up your neutral decor, or celebrate your love of colour, then a bold and bright vase is the way to go. There are some incredible pieces to choose from right now, blending vibrant colours with floral patterns to create a fashion-forward look. Keep the rest of your look simple to let the vase do the talking.

Whether you're looking for the perfect centrepiece or a dash of colour, or you want to dress up your space, there's a statement vase out there for you. Flowers or no flowers, your new vase will always have a place in your home.



Photo credit: hnm.com, Emily Dunstan/Heals via livingetc.com



HIVE *alive*

SMART HEATING SYSTEMS AND HOW THEY WILL STYLE OUR FUTURES

Like a scene from a science fiction novel, you can now control appliances and systems in your home using your voice, a sleek home hub, or even remotely via your smartphone. From doorbells and lighting to security cameras and motion sensors, it has never been easier to make your home work for you. We also now have smart heating systems, such as Hive or Google's Nest, that have revolutionised how we heat our homes.

As the names suggest, these systems are developed with your preferences, lifestyle and – most importantly – comfort in mind. Gone are the clunky thermostats of yore that were either painfully complex to programme, or frustratingly simple with nothing more than a temperature dial. Both Nest and Hive boast stylish thermostats with customisable options, and, even better, you can also download a corresponding app that gives you full control over both your heating and hot water even while away from home.

Better still, this level of control helps you save money in the long run. Going to be home an hour late from work? Simply delay your heating until you're on your way back. Concerned about a sudden drop in temperature while you're away for the weekend? Enable the frost setting via your app to protect your pipes. You can even create zones within your house by buying smart radiator valves, to reduce your overall energy output while you're at home.

Going forward, it seems likely that devices such as these will become as ubiquitous as the kitchen sink as we edge closer towards the reality of the hi-tech modern home.



Photo credit: currys.co.uk, grahnamcrae.co.uk, Hive YouTube

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LOCAL NEWS

from your neighbourhood



LOCAL NEWS BILLERICAY



Boxer sets his sights on the Olympics after championship success

A young boxer from Billericay has set his sights on competing in the 2024 Olympics, despite experiencing several setbacks during the COVID-19 pandemic.

George Liddard, 19, who trains at Billericay and Wickford Boxing Club (BWBC), initially gave the sport a go as he wanted to build his confidence. He has been committed to succeeding ever since.

George told **VISION** BillericayShenfield: "I was always quiet as a kid and my dad started teaching me how to box to make me more confident, and he loves the sport himself. He took me to BWBC when I was around nine-years-old and I fell in love with it.

"I'm a very competitive person, so I loved working hard to be the best that I could possibly be."

George has had many fantastic moments in his youth

boxing career, but said his proudest moment so far was winning the 2020 National Youth Championships.

He said: "I had worked so hard for it and was on a good winning streak, so I was very confident that I had what it takes to win.

"The last year has been very frustrating as I was picked to represent England in the European and World Youth Championships, but England didn't take a team in the end because of COVID-19, which really set me back and was hard to take."

Despite missing out on the opportunity to represent his country on a big stage last year, George is hoping he can join Team GB in the near future.

He added: "I would love to represent Great Britain in Paris in 2024 and would really love everyone in the area to get behind me and join me on my journey."



Two officers assaulted outside train station



Photo credit: Ruby Ward @theartoflondonn

Essex Police are appealing for witnesses after two off-duty police officers were assaulted in Billericay.

Police were called to Billericay train station on Wednesday, July 7 just after 10.50pm, and found two men injured near the taxi rank. They had been assaulted by two men who were not known to them.

One of the men suffered a minor injury. The second suffered a serious injury but is in a stable condition.

A family member confirmed that the victims were off-duty police officers employed by the Metropolitan Police. Essex Police are liaising with their counterparts at the Met to ensure the welfare of those impacted by this incident.

Officers are continuing their enquiries and anyone with information is urged to contact Basildon CID, quoting incident number 1350 of 7 July.

You can contact Essex Police at www.essex.police, uk where you can also use the live chat button to speak to an online operator between 7am and 11pm.

Alternatively, call 101. Information can also be given to independent charity Crimestoppers 100 per cent anonymously on 0800 555 111 or www.crimestoppers-uk.org

Search for gang who shouted homophobic abuse at boys

Essex Police have launched an investigation after a gang of around 20 people shouted homophobic abuse and threats at two boys last month.

At around 5pm on July 1, at Lake Meadows Park in Billericay, witnesses saw the gang aggressively threatening the boys. Police are now searching for those involved.

A spokesman for Essex Police said: "We received reports of a group of people acting aggressively

towards and threatening two boys in Lake Meadows in Billericay shortly before 5pm on Thursday, July 1.

"It was also reported the victims were subjected to homophobic abuse. The incident is being treated as a hate crime.

"If you have any information, you can submit a report online at www.essex.police.uk or use the live chat button to speak to an online operator between 7am and 11pm. Please quote incidents 858 and 968 of July 1.

"You can also call us on 101 or contact Crimestoppers anonymously on 0800 555 111."

Police have said that they do not believe any weapons were used during the incident.

Win a pair of tickets for annual wellbeing festival

An annual festival is giving residents the chance to discover the world of alternative health and beauty.

The third annual Soul Spirit & Wellbeing Festival on Sunday, September 5, is being held at the Ramsden Bellhouse Community Hall, Church Road, Billericay, from 11am to 4.30pm.

The event is a showcase of eco fashion, fitness, healthy food, and spiritual wellbeing treatments. There will be yoga and dance fitness sessions, vegan food and drink, therapies, readers, crystals and candles.

Some of the UK's best readers and holistic therapists will be present, and there will be free presentations and workshops.

Entry is £5 on the door and includes a strip of raffle tickets with the chance to win £500 worth of wellbeing goodies, with the money supporting The Essex Wildlife Trust. There will also be free gifts for the first 50 festival-goers.

VISION has 10 pairs of tickets to give away for free. To enter, send your name and contact number to billericay@visionmag.co.uk by Tuesday, August 31.

To buy tickets, visit www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/soul-spirit-wellbeing-festival-tickets-154376455133




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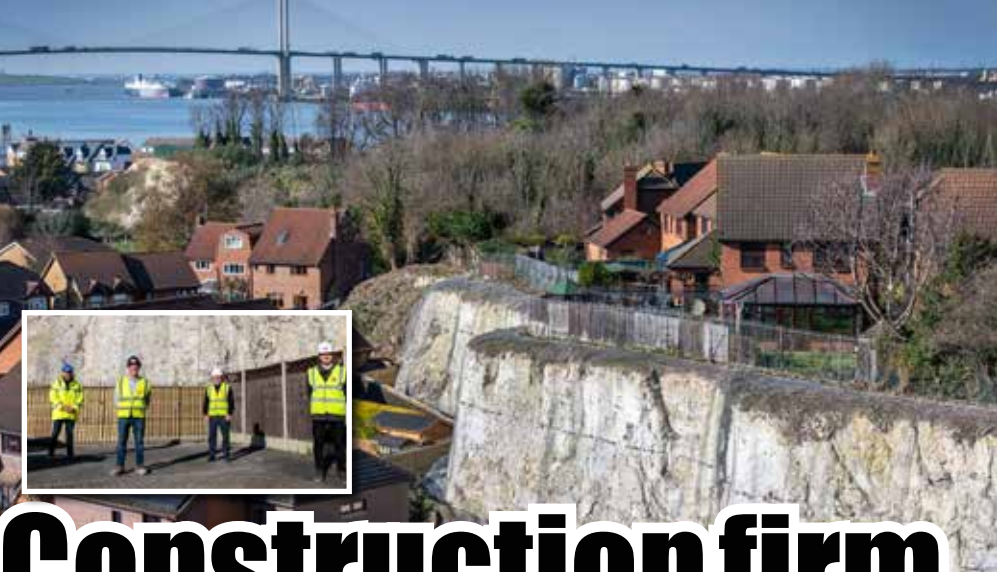
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Construction firm saves cliff on brink of collapse

A cliff at risk of collapse has been saved following a £1million rescue operation.

Dartford Borough Council appointed Ingleton Wood's Billericay office to inspect the cliff in Eagles Road, Greenhithe, which had first been identified as a safety concern in 2019. Experts discovered that an excessive amount of trees, shrubs and other foliage was adding too much weight for the cliff to support.

A year-long rescue project was launched to remove the surface coverage of foliage without damaging the cliff face or destroying animal habitats.

The team also prioritised the safety of residents around the cliff by putting in place precautionary

measures to avoid any damage occurring to their properties.

Chris Mabbutt, partner at Ingleton Wood, said: "Our structural engineering, project management and quantity surveying teams prepared a comprehensive list of works following the initial inspection, which provided enough flexibility to adapt the scheme as necessary.

"Once the project progressed, it became clear that some areas of the cliff face required more severe remedial works to secure the site.

"The team worked hard to secure the cliff face, overcoming many complications along the way."

Food banks partnership helps protect residents

Safer Basildon has provided a range of crime prevention materials to be distributed across the borough.

In a normal year, Safer Basildon would have held a programme of pop-up events in the community, and materials including personal alarms, purse bells and card defenders would be distributed to residents at these events.

As these events have been unable to go ahead due to COVID-19 restrictions, Safer Basildon has partnered with the Helping Hands Food Bank, Billericay Food Bank and Street Pastors, providing them with materials to distribute to the community.

Leader of Basildon Council, councillor Andrew Baggott, said: "This is a fantastic example of the brilliant work Safer Basildon is doing to help protect our communities."



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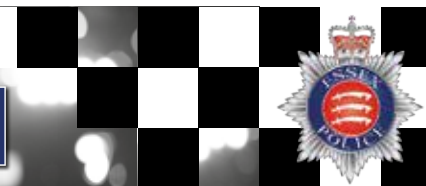


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NEWS FROM YOUR LOCAL POLICE TEAM



LOCAL NEWS BILLERICAY

Let's keep each other safe this summer. As COVID-19 restrictions are removed and the summer gets into full swing, we have had one of the busiest periods we have seen for a long while.

There has been some good weather and it appears the vast majority of people across the Basildon district have been able to enjoy themselves. Unfortunately, there is always an irresponsible minority who do not know how to behave; this is often fuelled by too much alcohol.

We have seen countless times over the years the consequences of excess alcohol causing things to get quickly out of hand, resulting in innocent people being assaulted. Aggressors then find themselves arrested and convicted of violent offences when they had only gone out with the intention of having a good time. This type of behaviour unnecessarily ruins so many people's lives.

On the other hand, we also know that every weekend, good friends do what good friends do, and

help people realise when it's time to call it a night, preventing things from escalating and keeping people safe.

Whether you are out enjoying the many great entertainment venues across the district, or having a gathering at home, please make good decisions and look after yourself and your friends and act responsibly. By doing so, our focus can remain on the other key aspects that matter to you.

Please be reassured that our teams will be there when needed. We will be out and about on patrol in known hotspots, will respond promptly when called, will make arrests, and will ensure people are brought to justice where appropriate.

We look forward to continuing to support residents and visitors in the local area to make the most of the summer, after what has been a difficult year so far.

Charity's yearly grant increased

Basildon Council has agreed a £5,000 increase to the yearly £20,000 grant to Basildon, Billericay and Wickford Council for Voluntary Service (BBWCVS) for the next three years.

BBWCVS is a registered charity founded in 1979 and aims to promote, develop and support a thriving voluntary and community sector across the borough. The charity provides a range of services to meet the needs of voluntary and community organisations.

In addition to the yearly increase, a one-off payment of £5,000 was agreed to support the charity's work over the next year. This is in recognition of its increased workload in supporting the borough's community and voluntary sector as it recovers from the pandemic.

Chairman of the Communities and Wellbeing Committee, councillor Terri Sargent, said: "The support that BBWCVS gives to community and voluntary sector groups in the borough, which support people in so many ways, cannot be underestimated – especially over the last year.

"From helping with the development of the council's community hub to support our vulnerable residents at the start of the first lockdown, to helping community



groups and organisations access vital grant funding to develop coronavirus-related support projects for residents, BBWCVS has adapted brilliantly to the increased demand for its help.

"This additional grant funding will help it not only to maintain its increased service provision, but also to develop its volunteer network, as we hope people's increased interest in volunteering will continue."



LOCAL NEWS

from your neighbourhood



Young tennis club star tops the 10-and-under leaderboard

A young tennis player from Hutton and Shenfield Tennis Club has topped the 10-and-under UK Tennis Leaderboard after an impressive performance at the Scottish Junior Open.

Brentwood School student, Brandon Pugh (pictured), played extremely well to reach the final in Glasgow last month, but narrowly missed out on the title, losing in a very close tiebreak 5-10.

Brandon, who is in Year 4, has worked extremely hard for this ranking, having achieved outstanding results this year at the Ipswich Sports Open and Bradfield National Tour.

Brandon's hard work has been recognised by the Lawn Tennis Association (LTA), which has offered him a place on an LTA training course at a development centre from September.

This will complement his existing training programme, allowing him to continue working with his coaching

team and retain a balance of hard work and fun.

Brandon continues to take each successful tournament and result in his stride and is very modest about his outstanding achievement.

Mr Simpson-Crick, PE teacher at Brentwood School, said: "Brandon can feel incredibly proud of this exceptional achievement, which is fully deserved. He has worked so hard to improve his level of play and continually practises to keep improving every time he steps on court.

"Brandon has a fantastic attitude and always competes with great desire and passion, while retaining respect for his classmates and opponents. This is another step in the right direction for Brandon, who is a fantastic talent with exciting times ahead of him in the future."

For more information on the tennis club, visit www.huttonandshenfieldtennisclub.co.uk

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Two men arrested for catalytic converter thefts



Two men have been arrested in connection with a series of catalytic converter thefts.

Residents in the Brentwood area – including Hutton, Shenfield and Pilgrims Hatch – have reported 55 thefts between January and June, which are being investigated by detectives in Brentwood.

Two men were arrested on June 25 after a car believed to have been used in the crimes was seen by Metropolitan Police officers in Upminster.

It failed to stop for police and was tracked down by officers, with assistance from a police helicopter, to Stapleford Abbots. The two men inside the car fled but were detained.

Cutting equipment was found inside the Ford Focus, which had been reported stolen from Grays last year.

The men, aged 20 and 22 and both from Romford, were arrested on suspicion of theft from a motor vehicle in relation to the Shenfield offences.

Detective Sergeant Tristan Carter said: “Criminals steal catalytic converters because precious metals have risen in value. They have no consideration for the costly impact on car owners.

“Our countywide rural engagement team and local community policing teams regularly work with local authorities, the Environment Agency and businesses such as scrap metal dealers to ensure thieves don’t have anywhere to sell stolen metals.”

the Safari Trail, which has seen 12 safari animals appear around the area, residents can scan a special QR code at each of the giant animal figures to allow them to collect local reward points. These points can then be used to claim special offers, giveaways, discounts and free gifts in participating shops.

Brentwood Borough Council leader, councillor Chris Hossack, said: “One of our key priorities is supporting our local economy, and the local rewards scheme will add another string to the bow for businesses to develop and grow their customer base.”

For more information about listing a business on the guide, email business@brentwood.gov.uk

Popular art trail brings communities together

Eye-catching displays and unusual exhibits attracted the attention of residents and visitors during the Brentwood Art Trail.

With more exhibits than ever before, art from 64 local artists was displayed in windows across 35 venues in Brentwood, Ingatestone and Shenfield, with the event sponsored by the Brentwood Business Partnership.

Venues acting as pop-up galleries reported a positive response to the displays, including Liquorice in Shenfield, where work from Alison Cook and Neil Milton was on show.

Owner Jo Eastwood said: “I’m delighted to have been selected again as a venue for the Brentwood Art Trail and to be involved in such a brilliant local initiative.”

The day before the trail commenced, local artist Sue Mills was commissioned by the Brentwood Art Trail to deliver a live Zoom workshop to local primary schools.

More than 600 children took part in the free session, creating their own abstract portrait under Sue’s expert tuition.

Launch of new digital rewards scheme for shoppers

A virtual rewards scheme was launched in Shenfield in July, giving shoppers special offers from local businesses and the chance to earn loyalty points.

Brentwood Borough Council is the first borough in the county to run the virtual Local Rewards High Street Guide, which started on Saturday, July 17, in conjunction with the Safari Trail.

To mark the start of the scheme and the launch of



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HISTORY



WHEN THE MONA LISA *went missing*

DETAILING THE 110TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE THEFT OF THE ICONIC PORTRAIT

Stealing the world's most famous pieces of art is usually about status, spite or financial gain, yet for Vincenzo Peruggia, the architect of the theft of the Mona Lisa on August 21, 1911, it was none of these things... or so he said.

Painted in 1503, the painting ended up in France following Napoleon Bonaparte's widespread plundering of art during the Napoleonic Wars. Many of its various mysteries – the creeping smile, the haunting face, even the lack of eyebrows – can only be answered by its long-dead creator, Leonardo da Vinci.

The masterpiece had hung in the Louvre for more than a century before Peruggia, an employee at the museum on the banks of the Seine, snuck it out under his smock after having hidden in the building overnight. The gendarmerie were at a complete loss as to who stole the artwork and the theft created a media sensation, with the mystery featuring on the front pages of newspapers worldwide.

Peruggia kept the painting in his apartment in Paris for two years, then took it back to Italy. Herein lies his claim that it was removed expressly with the intention of returning it to its homeland. The thief's explanation was undermined by the fact that when contacting Florence art dealer Mario Fratelli, he placed a 500,000 lire price tag on the piece.

No sooner was the deal discussed than the prospective buyer contacted the police and Peruggia was arrested.

For his crime, the Italian received only a short prison sentence – he served seven months and was hailed a patriot upon his release. Alas, his attempts were in vain, as the Mona Lisa was returned to the Louvre, where it has been on display ever since, its notoriety merely enhanced by the theft.

Peruggia died in 1925 on his 44th birthday, leaving behind a wife and daughter.



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CAR TRAVEL *etiquette*



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THE FEET TREAT

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PET MYTHS

BUSTED



MYTH: Two male guinea pigs can't live together.

TRUTH: As long as your cage is big enough, there is little chance their occasional spats will lead to any real life-threatening behaviour, but in any case it is wise to neuter them both to prevent the need for dominance.



MYTH: A big garden means you don't need to walk your dog.

TRUTH: Just because you have access to an outdoor space that is large enough for your pooch to run around in, it can't replace a walk, as canines crave new scents and exploration. Experiencing much of the world via their olfactory sensors, those constant stops to sniff are vital to your dog's wellbeing.



MYTH: There is no need to use flea and tick treatment during the winter.

TRUTH: Though we refer to 'flea season' during the summer months, these critters don't just die off in winter, particularly as we generally keep our pets inside our warm homes. So keep your furry friends topped up whatever the weather, because prevention is definitely better than cure.

MYTH: Cats always land on their feet.

TRUTH: While they do possess an 'air-righting reflex' – meaning they can adapt their bodies quickly in order to land safely – this isn't an exact science. Too short a fall and they often land on their side, while too large may cause damage to their ligaments and bones.



MYTH: Wheels are an integral part of your hamster's happy home.

TRUTH: The sight of a hamster spinning on its wheel is a familiar one as it powers relentlessly through its daily exercise. While this is an excellent way for them to burn off all those honey treats, the classic hamster wheel is actually now thought to be detrimental to spinal health, unlike its 'flying saucer'-shaped counterparts.

SPACE IS THE PLACE



Photo credit: Virgin Galactic/ZUMA Press Wire Services/Shutterstock

HOW SIR RICHARD BRANSON MADE THE ULTIMATE JOURNEY AND FIRED VIRGIN GALACTIC INTO THE ANNALS OF HISTORY

Sir Richard Branson has been the voice of countless business tomes and multiple entrepreneur tutorials, all advising success-hungry go-getters how they can flourish in the relentless world of enterprise.

And that's great, until you consider how many times he himself has come close to what we might deem ultimate bankruptcy – death.

In his second autobiography, *Finding My Virginity*, the 71-year-old self-starter lists 75 occasions when the end might have been nigh – from swimming to shore from a sinking fishing boat on honeymoon (he and first wife, Kristen, were the only survivors), to falling down a gaping gorge on Necker Island, to so many serious airborne emergencies you'd be surprised if he ever wanted to leave terra firma again... except, this is Richard Branson.

A man who has never admitted defeat, the Virgin founder has now ascended to a level of human achievement that sets him apart from anything he has achieved in an office or on a shop floor. That's because on Sunday, July 11, the daredevil journeyed 53 miles to the edge of space on his craft, Unity, ably supported by two pilots and three employees. He departed from the Spaceport America facility in New Mexico, with the intergalactic trip and re-entry completed in around an hour.

Branson said: "I have dreamt of this moment since I was a kid, but honestly nothing can prepare you for the view of Earth from space.

"The whole thing was just magical."

Branson's competitive streak is the thing that has kept him going for more than half a century in business, and the fact that he is the first to

successfully complete a space tourism venture ahead of Amazon's Jeff Bezos and SpaceX's Elon Musk didn't stop his rivals from congratulating him afterwards.

Ever the type of person to prepare a platform for future exploration, he admitted afterwards: "I've had my notebook with me and I've written down 30 or 40 little things that will make the experience for the next person who goes to space with us that much better."

While Branson's innovative endeavours in space tourism are clearly a unique first for 'everyday' humans, we are a long way from the days of the Space Race and an era where countries were driven to send rockets into space with competitive regularity. In a sense, that makes his daredevil ways even more applaudable, although it was

always destined that he would be the first. From hot air balloon near-disasters over the Atlantic in the 1980s to bungee jumping off Victoria Falls in Zambia, Branson has always put himself forward as the exemplar not just of his Virgin brand, but also of a mindset that insists everything is achievable if you have the courage and conviction.

Perhaps such a desire to explore comes from when, as a four-year-old, his parents used to drop him off on one side of Blackheath and tell him to find his way home. Perhaps his brand of risk dates back to the early days of Virgin Records when he narrowly avoided a prison sentence after illegally importing records; or perhaps this addiction to adventure is the very thing that fuels Sir Richard Branson on to future innovation and further greatness. Whatever it is, he is a unique inspiration and someone we rightly revere.



PUZZLES & TRIVIA

PUZZLES

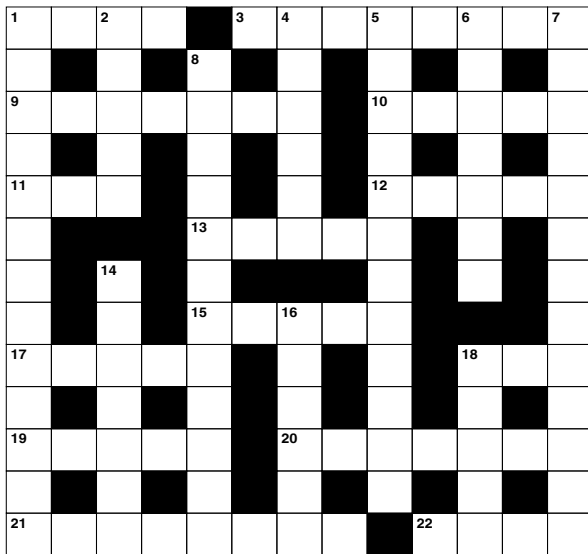
Answers: see end of The VISION Listings

ACROSS

- 1. Bog (4)
- 3. Difficulties (8)
- 9. Settled oneself comfortably (7)
- 10. Flower part (5)
- 11. Cook in hot oil (3)
- 12. Mother-of-pearl (5)
- 13. Name of a book (5)
- 15. Drives out from a place (5)
- 17. Up to the time when (5)
- 18. Cereal plant (3)
- 19. Mental impressions (5)
- 20. Not tidy (7)
- 21. Mobster (8)
- 22. Young kangaroo (4)

DOWN

- 1. Making (13)
- 2. Tarnished (of a metal object) (5)
- 4. Least polite (6)
- 5. Efficient (12)
- 6. Anticipates (7)
- 7. Obviously (4-9)
- 8. Decomposition by a current (12)
- 14. Among (7)



- 16. Safe (6)
- 18. Lover of Juliet (5)

DID YOU KNOW?

▶ As early as 250 AD, cocoa beans were once used as barter currency in exchange for food and clothes

▶ In 1961, Hamburger University was opened in the basement of a McDonald's restaurant in Elk Grove Village, Illinois. Graduates received a Bachelor of Hamburgerology degree

▶ When you eat a chilli, the burning sensation is caused by a chemical compound called capsaicin

▶ Cucumbers are made up of around 96 per cent water, making them the food with the highest water content

▶ A bunch of bananas can also be referred to as a 'hand' and a singular banana a 'finger'

▶ Almonds are actually seeds, although many people classify them as nuts

SUDOKU

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

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I PREDICT A RIOT

FROM BUILD-A-BEAR TO THE NUTELLA PANIC, THESE ARE THE MOST EPIC CONSUMER RAMPAGES EVER

When consumers get a taste for a retail trend, there's every chance that seemingly sane people will transform into bloodthirsty consumers. While it happens every year with Black Friday and January sales, here are four other occasions when people have stopped at nothing to get their hands on a cherished prize.

THE FRENCH NUTELLA PANIC

It was a seemingly average 2018 before French supermarket Intermarché decided to slap a 70 per cent discount on Nutella. Cue a stampede for the spread, reminiscent of a situation four years previously where a hike in the price of hazelnuts caused similar stampedes across the UK. Nutty!

THE BUILD-A-BEAR BOOM

Thursday, July 12, 2018, will forever be known as the Build-A-Bear day of mayhem. An initiative that invited customers to "pay their age" meant a top-of-

the-range bear could be purchased for well below the usual price point of around £50.

Yet they reckoned without the devotion of a younger audience, leading to stores being overrun, queues of up to four hours and police being called. What's more, the exercise turned out to be wholly unprofitable for the chain.

TESCO'S BEER BONANZA

A computer error back in 2012 meant that instead of discounting two cases of beer by £4 at the checkout, the booze was costing £4 in total. It took the retailer hours to fix the error as shoppers across the country performed relays in emptying the shelves.

AND WHO CAN FORGET THE 2020 TOILET ROLL HUNT?

As COVID-19 gripped the world in the spring of 2020, so too did a strange perception that this global pandemic would see us imprisoned in our bathrooms. As early toilet roll fanatics bought up large stocks of paper, so too did others in fear of supplies being exhausted. Thankfully, normality was resumed within a few weeks.



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REASONS TO BE CHEERFUL

As the country emerges from lockdown, an increasing sense of optimism has filled the air as normality returns this summer.

FASTER RECOVERY PREDICTED

There also appears to be a similar air of optimism in relation to economic matters, with data across the first half of this year proving to be stronger than analysts had expected. As a result, there now seems to be a good chance that major economies on both sides of the Atlantic will have recovered the lost ground caused by the COVID-19 pandemic before the end of 2021.

GLOBAL GROWTH FORECASTS UPGRADED

This has led to a string of renowned international forecasting agencies upgrading their global growth projections during the past few months. The UN's mid-2021 World Economic Situation and Prospects Report, for instance, revealed an annual growth forecast of 5.4 per cent for this year, up significantly from January's 4.7 per cent estimate. This brighter outlook largely reflects the rapid vaccine rollout in a few large economies, principally the US and China, as well as an increase in global trade.

DIVERGING FORTUNES

UN economists, however, did warn that inadequate availability of vaccines in many countries was threatening a more broad-based global recovery. The report did strike a note of caution, suggesting that: "The economic outlook for the countries in South Asia, sub-Saharan Africa and Latin America and the Caribbean remains fragile and uncertain."

ADVICE REMAINS PARAMOUNT

While the outlook has certainly improved significantly across the first half of this year, the UN forecast reinforces how the pandemic continues to create a relatively uncertain economic backdrop. This inevitably means the provision of expert advice is a vital component of investor success. We can help you make the most of any investment opportunities that do arise.

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Lie of THE LAND

If you are a first-time land buyer, the process of picking the right plot can be more than a little daunting. In fact, it can be completely terrifying.

Fortunately, our land-buying guide will help you every step of the way.

📍 DETERMINE YOUR MOTIVE

Think about why you want to buy land. Do you see it as a better investment than stocks and shares? Are you looking to build your forever home? Or perhaps you're seeking a smallholding (a piece of land of less than 50 acres) so that you can become more self-sufficient?

📍 SEARCH DIFFERENT TYPES OF LAND

Development land can be either a greenfield or a brownfield site, with the former never having been built on before and the latter having either been built on or having buildings on it. Each is subject to different planning requirements.

📍 RESEARCH THE MARKET

In the same way that you would check out the

local property market if you were buying a house, you need to research the land-buying market in your preferred areas. Land values can range from £5,000 to £15,000 per acre, so you need to find out what is a reasonable price to pay for a piece of land before committing.

📍 SEARCH FOR THE BEST DEALS

The land market is plentiful, so you will have lots of choice when it comes to finding the perfect plot. Plotfinder.com is the UK's leading land-finding service, but you can also try land auctions if you are prepared to move quickly.

📍 HIRE A CHARTERED SURVEYOR

You should always hire a chartered surveyor to inspect a plot of land before you make a purchase. They will be able to establish which category the ground is and whether it is fit to build on. They will also check for risk of flooding, pollution and subsidence.





ONE MAN WENT TO MOW

We cherish our gardens for the freshness, variety and life they bring to our homes, but a bit of cultivated creativity can add a whole new level of interest to your luscious lawn.

PERFECT PATTERNS

You can achieve the most wonderful lawn patterns simply by adding a striping kit to your lawnmower. This bends the blades of grass, meaning that stripes can be achieved by leaning the grass towards or away from the eye.

THREE OR MORE STEPS TO HEAVEN

From stepping stones to a mosaic path, breaking up your lawn with a decorative stone or wooden walkway will give it personality and depth, as well as preventing the gradual wearing away of grass marking out the path to the shed.

SIMPLY SOLAR

Give your lawn light and radiance, even when the nights begin to draw in, with a selection of solar lights which can be inserted into the beds around the perimeter.

WILDLIFE

Section off a quiet part of your lawn in order to create your own mini wildflower meadow. Plants and grasses such as cowslip, red clover, hoary plantain and birds-foot trefoil can be bought from garden centres and will add a rustic feel to your garden, where plants and insects can thrive.

MAIN FEATURE

A water feature will bring extra life to a lawn, as well as providing an audible, gentle backdrop to days spent in the garden. The hard work is in the installation, but with a variety of traditional and contemporary features, coming in all shapes and sizes, you can quickly bring extra interest to your lawn space.

STONE THE GROWS

Finally, how about making a focal point out of large rocks, an old tree trunk or some scattered driftwood as an artistic feature on your lawn? Not only will your garden space have abounding personality, but you'll also be encouraging natural life into the various nooks and crannies.



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So, if you've been thinking about enjoying a great lawn this year – green, lush and weed-free, why not contact us today and let us bring your lawn to life.

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Scrap that!



If you are looking for ways to reduce waste and save money on fresh produce, then growing scraps – also known as garbage gardening – is the way to go.

Bulb vegetables

Vegetables such as spring onions, leeks and fennel can be grown in a similar way to leafy greens. Cut off the end with the tiny roots so that you have a scrap about one-inch tall. Place root down in half-an-inch of water in a saucer and keep fresh. A supply of shoots will soon appear, which can be immediately harvested. Alternatively, transplant into soil to enjoy these veg indefinitely.

Leafy vegetables

Leafy vegetables that grow in heads, such as celery, romaine and bok choy, are some of the easiest scraps to grow. Cut off the plant's base (around an inch tall), place it cut side up in a saucer and add half-an-inch of water. Water regularly and place in a sunny spot indoors. Leafy scraps will grow on a sunny indoor windowsill all year round or can be transplanted into soil when they show roots.

Root vegetables

When it comes to root vegetables such as beetroots and turnips, you can grow tasty leaves that are ideal for salads and sautés. Just cut off the top, leaving half-an-inch of the vegetable attached, and place cut side down in water in a shallow container so that only the root is covered. Fresh greens will soon appear.

Avocados

This fruit regrows easily in water. Just clean the pit, stick in three or four toothpicks around one-third of the way down from the pointy end and sit the pit on a glass so that the toothpicks support it on the rim. Add enough water to cover the pit's bottom half and refresh regularly. Once the pit has roots and a sprout, move to a container with soil, keeping the top half of the pit above the soil line.



GARDENING

PREP YOUR GARDEN FOR

AUTUMN

Whether you love to garden or not, there are several jobs that need to be taken care of during the last few weeks of summer if you want your garden to remain intact over winter and thrive come spring.

DIG UP ANNUAL FLOWERS

Although annuals are great for a single season, providing vibrant colours and stunning scents, they do need to be dug up and added to your compost heap before winter.

ADD FERTILISER TO YOUR LAWN

You may not usually fertilise your lawn, but your grass needs this in order to maintain healthy growth. Typically, plants absorb nutrients through their roots, but you can give your lawn an extra boost with a good quality lawn fertiliser such as Growmore Garden Fertiliser.

CLEAN AND COVER YOUR POND

If you are lucky enough to have a garden pond, you should remove any leaves and other gunk before the weather turns cold. You should also cover it with a net to protect against falling leaves and other debris.

CUT YOUR PERENNIALS

Perennials will survive all year round, but they can also dominate your garden over winter if you let them. Avoid this by cutting them back to soil level and disposing of the cuttings to prevent further growth.

DE-WEED YOUR GARDEN

One of the least appealing garden tasks, but if you don't get your weeds under control before winter, you face a mammoth job come spring. Always remove weeds by the root and refrain from using weedkiller near other plants.

PROTECT YOUNG TREES

Young trees need protection during the winter months as they are more susceptible to damage from frost, ice and wind. Tree-guarding wraps are ideal for protecting their trunks.

Photo credit: normanbride.co.uk

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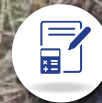
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UNUSUAL FRUIT OF THE MONTH: Kiwano

V
FOOD & DRINK

The kiwano – also known as the horned melon owing to its spiky exterior – is an exotic fruit that is native to Southern Africa. Boasting an incredibly versatile flavour, kiwano can be enjoyed in many different ways.

at room temperature. An unripe kiwano can last for around 20 days at room temperature, whereas a ripe one will stay fresh for up to 10 days. Once cut, it needs to be used by the next day.

WHAT DOES KIWANO TASTE LIKE?

The flavour of kiwano has been unusually likened to that of a cucumber, a banana and a lemon/lime. Its texture is similar to a passion fruit or pomegranate, with ripe kiwano showcasing orange skin and lime-green, jelly-like flesh. The skin, flesh and seeds are all edible, although be careful when eating the horns.

WHAT ARE THE HEALTH BENEFITS OF KIWANO?

Kiwano is a low-calorie fruit that is high in vitamin A, beta carotene and magnesium. The seeds contain antioxidants, which can help to boost your immune system.

HOW TO PREPARE KIWANO

- Take a knife and slice in half – either through the middle or lengthways
- Gently loosen the pulp away from the skin using a knife
- Scoop out the pulp with a spoon or by squeezing it with both hands over a bowl
- Alternatively, slice into wedges and eat in the same way as you would an orange

WAYS TO EAT KIWANO

- As a simple snack
- In a juice or smoothie
- In a cocktail such as a kiwano margarita or kiwano daiquiri
- Added to a tomato salsa
- Frozen into an ice lolly
- Blended into ice cream

HOW TO STORE KIWANO

The kiwano fruit does not like the cold, so it is best kept out of the fridge and instead stored



THE ULTIMATE VEGGIE BBQ

For too long, vegetables have been sidelined at BBQs in favour of carnivore classics such as pork sausages and steak burgers. No more. Vegetarian or not, these top meat-free alternatives are guaranteed to tantalise your tastebuds and impress your guests.

CHARGRILLED VEGGIE KEBABS

Simple yet stunning, vegetable kebabs can be just as exciting as their meaty counterparts. Just chop up your favourite veggies such as peppers, red onion and tomatoes, as well as some big chunks of salty halloumi, place on a skewer and drizzle with oil.

VEGGIE BURGERS

Whether you favour falafel, love the tang of beautiful beetroot, or want the meaty texture that only the humble mushroom can deliver, there are so many veggies you can use to make great burgers. Simply combine your chosen cooked veg or preferred canned pulse or bean in a food processor with some herbs and spices, a binding agent such as eggs, oats or breadcrumbs, and then form into thick patties.

SUPER SALADS

Every BBQ needs a salad or two and there is no reason why you can't create one using a few chargrilled veggies. How about a traditional Italian Caprese salad with grilled peppers? Or chargrilled aubergines topped with salsa verde and some creamy white beans?

FRESH 'N' FRUITY DESSERTS

Forget boring, shop-bought puddings and use your grill to transform seasonal fruits into something spectacular. From warm grilled peaches to juicy slices of charred pineapple, enjoy both served with crème fraîche and plenty of zingy fresh mint.

VEGETARIAN/VEGAN WINES

Although wine is made from grapes, the fining agents used may not be. Fortunately, all the major supermarkets now offer vegetarian and vegan wines. Below is our selection of the best for your BBQ:

- Aldi Toro Loco Reserva 2015
- M&S Tapa Roja Old Vines Monastrell 2019
- Co-op Irresistible Gavi Broglia 2017
- Sainsbury's Taste the Difference Alvarinho 2017
- Lidl Comte de Senneval Brut Champagne



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Super SIMPLE SCONES

To celebrate Afternoon Tea Week, we are treating you to a delicious and simple scone recipe that anyone can master. Plus, discover the proper way to enjoy a quintessentially British afternoon tea.

YOU WILL NEED (makes 8 scones):
350g self-raising flour | 1 tsp baking powder | 3 tbs caster sugar | 85g butter, cut into cubes | 175ml milk | 1 tsp vanilla extract | ¼ tsp salt | Squeeze of lemon juice | Beaten egg for glazing | 30g sultanas if desired | Jam and clotted cream to serve

HOW TO MAKE:
STEP 1: Heat the oven to 220°C/200°C fan/gas mark 7.
STEP 2: Pour the flour into a large bowl and add salt and baking powder. Mix well.
STEP 3: Add the butter and rub with fingers until you have a crumb consistency. Stir in the sugar and sultanas if desired.
STEP 4: Heat the milk in the microwave for 30 seconds until warm and then add vanilla extract and lemon juice.
STEP 5: Place a baking tray in the oven.
STEP 6: Make a well in the dry mix and add the liquid. Combine quickly.
STEP 7: Scatter flour on a clean surface and tip out the dough. Dredge the dough with more flour and fold over until smooth.
STEP 8: Pat into a round shape, around 4cm deep, and then take a 5cm-diameter cutter and dip it in flour. Plunge into the dough and repeat until you have all your scones.
STEP 9: Brush the scones with beaten egg and arrange on the hot tray.

STEP 10: Bake for 10 minutes until risen and golden on top. Enjoy with jam and clotted cream.

- AFTERNOON TEA ETIQUETTE TIPS:**
- Sandwiches must be eaten first – with fingers, not cutlery
 - Scones should be second and eaten warm
 - Scones should be broken in half by hand and each half eaten separately
 - One person, 'mother', is elected to pour the tea. Guests can then add milk and sugar if desired
 - Tea should be stirred back and forth, never in a circle
 - A touch of fizz is allowed.



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DIY COLOURED CHALK



A low-cost summer activity that kids of all ages love, why not save yourself the trouble of hitting the shops and make your own super-sized coloured chalk that is perfect for using on the pavement, exterior walls and anywhere else your kids fancy getting crafty? Don't worry, it will all wash off in the rain.

YOU WILL NEED

- > 1 cup of water
- > 2 cups of plaster of Paris
- > 3 tbs of food colouring or poster paint
- > An old tin or plastic cup
- > Cardboard toilet roll tubes (one for each colour of chalk)
- > Baking paper
- > Masking tape

HOW TO MAKE

- > Seal one end of each of your toilet roll tubes with masking tape. Ensure neat seals to avoid leakage
- > Line your toilet roll tubes with baking paper
- > Pour the water into a tin or large plastic cup,

then add the plaster of Paris and the paint or food colouring

- > Carefully pour the mixture into the toilet roll tubes
- > The plaster of Paris should begin to set after around 15 minutes. You can tell when it is about to harden as it will warm up
- > Leave for a couple of hours or ideally overnight
- > Peel off the toilet roll cardboard, and voila!

OTHER CHALK CREATIONS TO MAKE AT HOME

- > **Chalk rocks.** Use balloons to mould your chalk recipe into the shape of rocks
- > **Chalk pops.** Insert wooden craft sticks and use a silicone pop mould or ice cube tray to create a lollipop shape. But remember these are not for eating. They are for drawing purposes only
- > **Glitter chalk.** Add glitter to the mixture for some added sparkle
- > **Squirt chalk.** Fill a squirt bottle two-thirds full with a mixture of corn starch and baking soda, add your preferred food colouring and fill to the top with water. Fill another bottle with vinegar and squirt on chalk patterns for a fizzy surprise.



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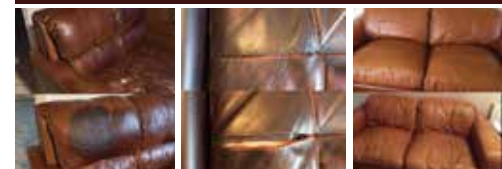
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MAKEOVER

your man

Unlike women, most men seem to have an “if it ain’t broke, don’t fix it” approach to getting a new hairstyle. But does your current cut really complement your face? Discover the latest hairstyle trends for men based on each face shape below.

THE TEXTURED CROP

Best for triangle-shaped faces

If you’ve got a commanding jawline that outmeasures your cheekbones, then you have the perfect face shape to rock the textured crop. Seen on the likes of Chris Hemsworth and Jake Gyllenhaal, ask your barber for some extra weight on the sides and length and texture on the top.

THE LONG & LAYERED

Best for oval-shaped faces

For those with an oval face, you are in the lucky position to be able to carry off long hair à la Jason Momoa. For optimum results, go for regular trims so that your hair remains in good condition. Avoid if you have very fine hair.

THE CHERUBIM

Best for heart-shaped faces

Heart-shaped faces perfectly suit a cherubim cut, which both Justin Bieber and Harry Styles have previously showcased. Best described as a grown-out bowl cut, this hairstyle is popular with men who want the versatility of length for styling and don’t mind a slightly feminine look.

THE MESSY BED QUIFF

Best for diamond-shaped faces

Great for showcasing length on the top and natural texture, this is an easy style that requires little maintenance. Make sure to ask for plenty of length in the fringe, getting shorter towards the back.

THE SWEEP BACK

Best for square-shaped faces

If you are growing out your hair and you have a square-shaped face, you are the ideal candidate for a swept back look. Enjoying renewed interest since the series *Poldark* hit our screens, ask your barber to balance your hair for this longer style.



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WEDGES

Whether you're lacking in the height department or simply love the look

of elevated footwear, the right shoe can transform your style and your self-esteem.

However, do you opt for a more comfortable wedge or a sky-high stiletto?

What is the difference between wedges and heels?

Technically, wedges fall into the high-heeled shoe category as they do have a raised heel. That being said, with a wedge heel, you get a solid, wedge-shaped outsole that is elevated at the heel and tapers down to a flattish toe. With a high heel, the heel portion is separate from the sole underneath the toe.

Why choose wedges?

Wedges are a great option for women who struggle to walk on traditional heels, as they offer support and height by evenly distributing your weight throughout the sole.

Wedges come in a variety of different materials including cork, leather, rubber and jute and can be closed or open-toed. You can even get wedge boots that make a comfier alternative to regular heeled boots.

Wear to the beach, a casual occasion or lunch with the girls.

Why choose heels?

There are several types of heels, including stilettos, kitten heels, block heels, mules and heeled boots, with each one providing a slightly different look and feel. If you are a pro at walking in high heels and want a showstopping look, then stilettos are the shoe for you. However, if you struggle with too much height, opt for a more modest kitten heel.

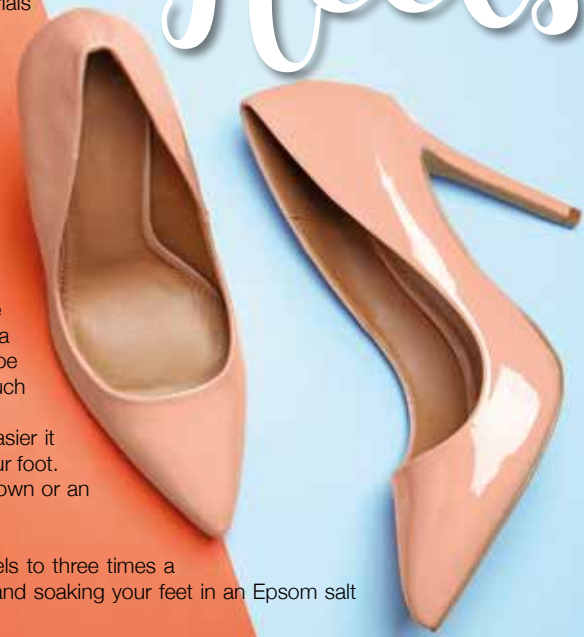
As a general rule, the wider the heel, the easier it is to walk in and the more support it offers your foot.

Wear to a formal occasion, a night on the town or an important meeting.

Protect your feet by limiting wearing high heels to three times a week, regularly stretching your calf muscles and soaking your feet in an Epsom salt bath for 10-15 minutes after wearing.



vs
Heels



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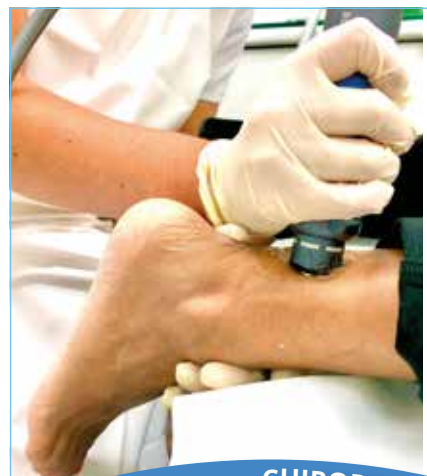
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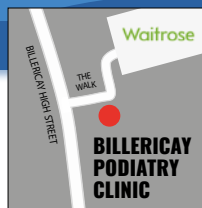
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VANQUISH THAT

VERRUCA

Most people will get a verruca at some point in their lives, with this unsightly virus being most common in children and young adults. Although you can buy verruca treatments, these can damage the surrounding skin, making it more vulnerable to reinfection. So why not try the following natural remedies instead?

APPLE CIDER VINEGAR

Wash your foot and soak in water for 20 minutes | Use a pumice stone to gently remove any dead skin | Apply a thin layer of Vaseline around the verruca | Fix an apple cider-soaked cotton ball over the affected area | Check and replace until the verruca has gone.



ONION

Place several 1/2-inch slices of onion in a bowl, sprinkle with salt, cover and let it sit for one hour | Wash your foot and soak in soapy water for 20 minutes | Rinse and pat dry | Break an onion slice and rub over your verruca | Take another slice, place it on the verruca and cover with an adhesive bandage | Leave for three days and then check to see if the verruca has shrunk | Replace until the verruca has gone.



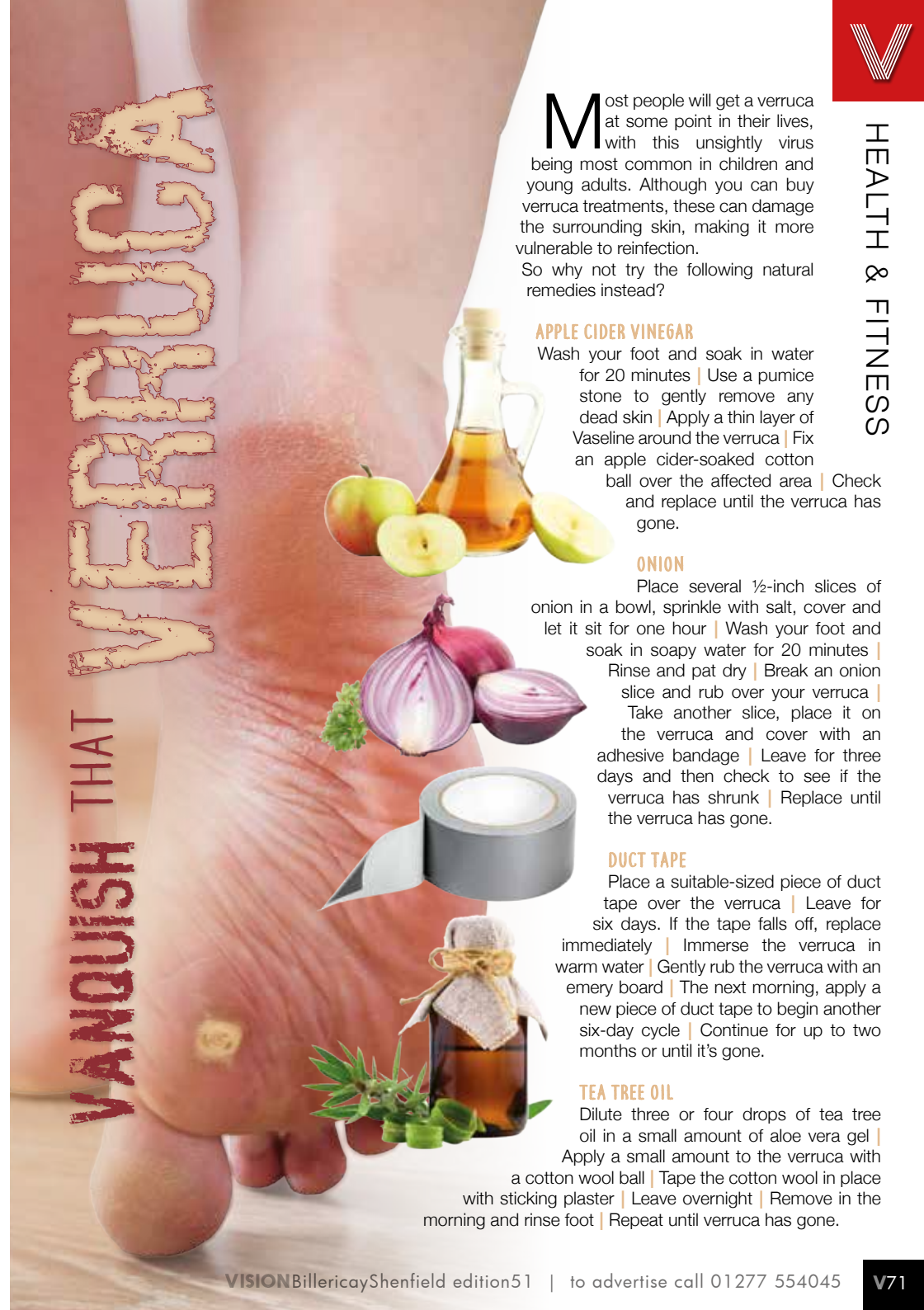
DUCT TAPE

Place a suitable-sized piece of duct tape over the verruca | Leave for six days. If the tape falls off, replace immediately | Immerse the verruca in warm water | Gently rub the verruca with an emery board | The next morning, apply a new piece of duct tape to begin another six-day cycle | Continue for up to two months or until it's gone.



TEA TREE OIL

Dilute three or four drops of tea tree oil in a small amount of aloe vera gel | Apply a small amount to the verruca with a cotton wool ball | Tape the cotton wool in place with sticking plaster | Leave overnight | Remove in the morning and rinse foot | Repeat until verruca has gone.





HOW TO PERFORM CPR ON AN ADULT

Cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) could save your life, the life of a loved one or the life of a stranger. Find out how to perform CPR on an adult below.

HOW TO DO CPR ON AN ADULT:

- > If you find someone collapsed, do not place your face close to theirs. Instead, check to see if they are responsive by asking them questions. If they do not respond in any way, they are unresponsive and should be treated as soon as possible.
- > Next, check that their airway is open and clear by placing one hand on their forehead to tilt their head back and using two fingers from your other hand to lift their chin.
- > To check if they are breathing, do not place your face close to theirs. Instead, watch to see if their chest moves.
- > If an adult is unresponsive and not breathing, ask someone to call 999 or 112 for emergency help and to find a defibrillator while you commence CPR as detailed below.
- > Place a towel or piece of clothing over the mouth and nose of the casualty to protect yourself from the risk of infection.
- > Kneel next to the person and put the heel of your hand on the middle of their chest.
- > Put your other hand on top of the first and interlock your fingers, making sure that they do not touch the ribs.
- > Keep your arms straight, lean over the person and press down hard to the depth of 5–6cm before releasing pressure.

TOP TIP: Use the beat of the song *Staying Alive* to keep the right speed when performing chest compressions

IN NEXT MONTH'S EDITION, LEARN HOW TO PERFORM CPR ON CHILDREN AND BABIES.



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ON YOUR BIKE

Learning to ride a bike is a rite of passage for most children, yet only three per cent of adult Brits cycle daily. It has the ability to transform your health and reduce the cost of your commute, so let's take a closer look at the benefits of biking. Plus, our tips to help you get started.

WHAT ARE THE HEALTH BENEFITS OF REGULAR BIKE RIDING?

Riding a bicycle regularly provides one of the best ways to reduce your risk of health problems associated with a sedentary lifestyle. A low-impact activity that can be enjoyed by people of all ages, consistent cycling can:

- o Increase cardiovascular fitness
- o Improve muscle strength and flexibility
- o Enhance joint mobility
- o Decrease stress levels
- o Improve posture and coordination
- o Strengthen bones
- o Lower body fat levels
- o Reduce anxiety and depression

VISIT YOUR LOCAL BIKE SHOP

Rather than shopping online, it can be a much better idea to visit your local bike shop as they will be able to offer advice on choosing the right bike for your needs.

INVEST IN THE RIGHT KIT

Although you don't need to spend a fortune, you should invest in:

- o A helmet
- o A bike lock
- o Bike lights
- o Padded cycling shorts

ADJUST YOUR BIKE ACCORDINGLY

For maximum comfort and to avoid injury, you need to find your optimal saddle height. This can be carried out by placing your heel on the pedal at its furthest away point. Your leg should be straight so that when you clip in, there is a slight bend.

BEST BEGINNER-FRIENDLY BIKES

- o Apollo Slant Men's Mountain Bike
- o Cross Daisy Classic 26 Inch Wheel Size Heritage Women's Bike
- o Pinnacle Lithium Two

NOT READY TO GET ON THE ROAD?

If you invest in an exercise bike instead, you can enjoy all the benefits of cycling without having to step foot outside your front door.

BEST INDOOR SMART BIKES

- o Peloton Indoor Training Bike
- o Echelon Smart Connect EX3
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HEALTH & FITNESS



MOTORING



The optimum fuel level in your tank for price and performance

Filling up is the easiest way to spend money – simply holding down a lever and watching the money tick by. But could we be costing ourselves even more by having too much or too little petrol or diesel in our tank?

The quick answer is yes.

Scientists have found that driving around with low levels of fuel can be bad for the preservation of performance. At these levels, the debris and accumulated gunk in the tank has more chance of being ingested into the filter when it drops below the pump intake level.

Conflictingly, while having a full tank may give you a feeling of power and motoring potential, the weight of the fuel can end up costing you more, since that same additional weight requires more power to lug it around.

The general recommendation is to try to keep your tank above a quarter full at all times, and not beyond three-quarters. Within this range you're

protecting the cleanliness of the tank while not overloading it with excessive weight.

Of course, if you have genuine focus on optimising fuel cost and efficiency, you're probably already looking at the dawning of the greener fuels era, which could be heading to our fuel station forecourts as early as next year.

Transport Secretary Grant Shapps recently unveiled plans to introduce E10 as the standard grade at pumps in the UK. The current E5 petrol contains five per cent bioethanol; by embracing a minimum 10 per cent renewable energy ratio within the fuel, it is expected we will reduce CO₂ emissions by 750,000 tonnes per year – that's the equivalent of taking 350,000 cars off the road. And while an estimated 600,000 vehicles won't be compatible with the fuel, these concerted efforts to continue to reduce the nation's carbon emissions have been welcomed by environmental campaigners.

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SPORT

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BRITAIN'S GREATEST SPORTING MOMENTS...

Super Saturday: LONDON 2012 OLYMPICS

Each month, we look at some of the most significant events in British sporting history. Proving that good things really do come in threes, we recall Super Saturday at the London 2012 Olympics.

August 4 always had the potential to be one of the defining days of the London 2012 Olympics.

Of course, Team GB had a memorable campaign anyway, accumulating a total of 65 medals, 29 of them gold. But sometimes events come together to produce a compilation of such exhilarating determination, skill and sporting endeavour, that a nation feels truly united.

And so it was at the Olympic Stadium on the first weekend of August when, within a 45-minute period, three British athletes wrote themselves into sporting folklore.

First up was Greg Rutherford in the long jump. The toiling set of leaps eventually ended with him setting a benchmark of 8.31m – one that nearest rival, Mitchell Watt of Australia, couldn't better.

Jessica Ennis-Hill then stepped up in the 800m. The Brit needed victory in the event to take heptathlon gold and led from the start. Having dropped to third by the time the final straight

emerged, she powered home to the roar of a deafening crowd, and gold was secured at 9.02pm.

Confirmation of Rutherford's gold came at 9.24pm, and with the Brit still soaking up the applause from his winning jump, Mo Farah tore past the bell on the final lap of his 10,000m run. Leading into the bend, he powered away from the pack to land the ultimate middle-distance prize – Olympic gold.

Farah's achievement came at 9.42pm. It was an evening – 42 minutes, in fact – of athletics that will never be forgotten and, perhaps, never bettered.



Looking back on when we first met...



SPORT



HOW GARETH SOUTHGATE'S ENGLAND HEROES CAME SO CLOSE TO ENDING 55 YEARS OF HURT

Putting to one side the sour way it ended, the UK's Euro 2020 experience was undoubtedly the tonic the whole nation needed.

While, as a country, we are certainly not alone in the mental and physical setbacks encountered over the past 18 months, the spectre of COVID-19 loomed particularly large over these shores. Even as the showpiece final played itself out at Wembley on July 11, the banks of empty seats showed that the pandemic is not over yet.

Add in economic and societal tensions, and a successful England team was the boost everyone was hoping for. And for a few weeks, we were uplifted, inspired and full of admiration for our heroes.

In Gareth Southgate, England had a manager of wisdom, yet weighed down somewhat by the

expectation of what this team should do. Making it to the World Cup semi-final three years ago became a standard to replicate, at the very least, and with home advantage for all but one game in the tournament, there was always the justified belief we should go far.

Many label the former defender a 'yes man', but his team selections clearly showed a resilient, stubborn side to his character. Blessed with an unprecedented array of attacking flair, Southgate opted for a 'safety first' strategy, nullifying the opposition's forward threat in three group games – two of which saw 1–0 wins (versus Croatia and Czech Republic), with the other an admittedly dour goalless draw against Scotland.

In the first knockout game, a 2–0 win against old rivals Germany; in the quarter-final, a totally

dominant showing as Ukraine were hit for four; in the semi-final, the courage and fortitude to come from behind (and the shock of actually seeing someone put the ball in our net) as we defeated Denmark 2–1.

Southgate's confidence in his stubborn 5–3–2 formation was upheld in every game. When he switched to a 4–3–3, we marvelled at the sudden versatility of the squad. It's this very thing that will give us the confidence to succeed at the World Cup in Qatar next year, when expectation levels will once again be incredibly high.

Regrets? Well, the horror of the penalty shoot-out came back to bite us. But apart from that, some will feel we should have been more positive going forward. In Raheem Sterling and Harry Kane, we always had matchwinners. Even with five at the

back, the wing-back play of Kyle Walker and Kieran Trippier offered attacking intent. But many will point to the lack of real opportunities for Jack Grealish, Jadon Sancho, Jude Bellingham, Marcus Rashford, Phil Foden and others, and wonder what those talented lads might have achieved with longer on the pitch.

The good news is that 'youth' is almost a byword for England now. We had the second-youngest squad in the whole tournament and, arguably, on paper, the most talented. It's been some time since we've been able to lavish such high praise on our Three Lions, even if we still find ourselves ticking the box titled 'unfulfilled potential'.

In Gareth we trust, and he will know better than anyone else how we can take that one last step forward into football folklore.

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