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# Editor's notes...

NOVEMBER 2022



Nik Allen, Editor

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

The text message, the DM, the 140-character tweet, the trend to abbreviate phrases into acronyms (LOL!), the 15-second TikTok videos, the Snapchat content that deletes itself after 24 hours.

Why are we in such a rush? Why is the obsession in this era for punchy, fast, to-the-point content, where it feels like every digital interaction must be conducted at triple speed?

We don't act like this in person - we don't greet people by shaking hands like a piston engine; we don't go to the pub only to neck a pint and leave; we don't break speed limits just to get to the supermarket for the weekly shop.

My point is, are we losing the ability to give that most precious commodity, time, to the people and things we love? Are we being conditioned to reinvent everything at high speed?

This week, why not make an effort to give extra time to the people around you? Why not give yourself time too - just lay in bed pondering your thoughts, or go the long way home from work for a change?

Our lives don't have to be conducted as a blur. Let's slow down and savour the wonderful things we have.

*Nik Allen*

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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 All pages are recyclable

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# is the NARRATIVE

## CELEBRATING 40 YEARS OF COUNTDOWN AND CHANNEL 4, AND LOOKING AHEAD TO A NEW ERA

Is there a single adult in the UK unaware of the TV quiz show *Countdown*? The vowels, the consonants, the numbers game, Dictionary Corner, the 30-second clock that never ticks past halfway, the Countdown Conundrum and, of course, that iconic music playing in the background while contestants hurriedly attempt to make words or solve a number puzzle.

*Countdown* is a national institution, and its popularity is such that it celebrates its 40th birthday this month. Where *Countdown*'s birthday is concerned, so too does Channel 4 itself revel in the celebrations, given that the show was on the original schedule that launched way back on November 2, 1982.

*Countdown* was in many ways one of the showpiece pieces of programming – a quiz that featured the effortlessly amiable Richard Whiteley OBE DL, and doyenne of the digits Carol Vorderman MBE.

Since then, Rachel Riley has succeeded Vorderman, and after Whiteley's death in 2005, permanent hosts have included Des Lynam OBE, Jeff Stelling, Des O'Connor CBE, Nick Hewer and Anne Robinson, in the accumulation of more than 7,000 shows.

One of Channel 4's true success stories, and certainly its longest lasting, *Countdown* has enchanted its weekday audience for four decades, even extending into spin-off fodder with *8 out of 10 Cats Does Countdown*, which is hosted by Jimmy Carr and has run since 2012.

Naturally, Channel 4 has extended its reach much further in the four decades since its launch. While the very nature of *Countdown* means it's not evolved too far from a weekday web of wordplay, the schedule elsewhere has incorporated many other successes, from its edgy *Channel 4 News* to innovative programming across breakfast TV (*The Big Breakfast*), soaps (*Hollyoaks*, *Brookside*), comedy (*Peep Show*, *The Inbetweeners*, *Brass Eye*, *Smack the Pony*, *Desmond's*), drama (*Skins*, *Queer as Folk*, *It's a Sin*, *Black Mirror*, *Top Boy*, *This is England*), and of course reality TV monsters such as *Gogglebox*, *First Dates*, *Made in Chelsea*, *Come Dine with Me*, *24 Hours in A&E*, *Married at First Sight*, *The Great British Bake Off*, *Grand Designs* and *Big Brother*.

And of course, while *Countdown* may lay claim to being the longest-running quiz show on Channel 4, can it top the cultural or iconic impact of *The Crystal Maze* and *Taskmaster*?

Sport has also been prevalent on Channel 4's menu – from the early days leading the surge in the popularity of cycling with Tour de France coverage, to NFL Sunday nights and, more recently, F1 coverage.

Channel 4 has always prided itself on innovation in its programming and its delivery – a fact no better exemplified than in the Film4 and All 4 spin-offs. And for the 40th birthday celebrations, a raft of specials has been planned, many of which rebel against the wealth of ultra-safe programming that other broadcasters have bowed to.

In an era where people want to be as challenged through terrestrial TV as they are online, Channel 4 continues to lead the way. Racing headfirst towards its half-century, the directive from above is to keep forcing the narrative.

THE WONDERFUL WORLD OF

# Jellyfish

You're never too humble to have your own international day of celebration – and November 3 is World Jellyfish Day. While these creatures have no brain, heart, bones or eyes, they're still fascinating. They have been around for more than 600 million years and existed before dinosaurs, trees and fungi. And they live in all of the Earth's five oceans.

Jellyfish have an umbrella-shaped body with trailing tentacles, which are armed with stinging cells used to stun their prey before gulping them down. They're helpful for self-defence, too.

Jellyfish mostly eat shrimps, crabs and small sea plants. And in their turn, they're an essential source of food for other ocean creatures like sea turtles, tuna and sharks. In some cultures, jellyfish are also a food source for humans, particularly in South East Asia. Only the main body is eaten, which is said to have a delicate, slightly salty taste. Sometimes they're thinly sliced and eaten raw, or dipped in batter and fried.

As well as using their mouth to eat and get rid of waste products, jellyfish also use their mouths to squirt out a jet of water to move themselves forwards.

There are thought to be 300,000 different types of jellyfish. Some are as small as 5mm in diameter, and some are as big as 2m. They come in an impressive array of colours – some are clear, but some are pink, yellow, blue or purple. Some are even bioluminescent, which means they produce their own light.

Most jellyfish stings aren't serious. But stings from some species – most of them living around Australia, the Philippines, the Indian Ocean and the central Pacific – can be severe or even deadly. Incidentally, the Portuguese man-of-war, a creature often mistaken for a jellyfish, is actually a colony of polyps. However, watch out for them – their stings can be excruciating.



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# Dangerously GOOD DESIGN



HOME & DIY

## EXPLORING THE TALENTS OF THE STUDIO ASHBY COLLECTIVE

While interior design is very much a personal thing, the collective that is Studio Ashby likes to approach the sumptuous styling of homes in a way that draws in expertise and influence from across the team.

Studio Ashby is the brainchild of creative director Sophie Ashby. A designer of real talent, her formative years were spent studying in both the UK and the US, resulting in a coming together of classical ideas that permeates through a look unswayed by passing dictates of fashion. Instead, the outcome is about contemporary world art, ageless yet modernist furniture, natural and clear palettes and a variety of materials and textures.

While colour tones are uncomplicated, the overall look is one of richness and intense detail, looking at cohesive space and the fingerprint of collaboration and integrity.

"There is no set look that we always replicate,"

says Sophie, "though many of us will view whites and greys as a classic start point, whereby delightful detail can be added."

Sophie talks not just about shade, but shape too, with smooth curves of furniture interrupting sharp lines. In addition, velvet on wood, ruffled cushions on carved chairs, and fluffy rugs on a chic wooden floor belie the idea that textures need to nestle into each other in order to work.

The studio also has an extensive shop, selling objects that perfectly match an eye for unique elements that really make a room.

A number of high-profile clients have trusted in Studio Ashby's design eye, leading Sophie to conclude: "I believe there is a poetry in the tension of combining art, antiques, craft, colour, pattern and texture; the careful layering brings character and feeling to a home."

To find out more, visit [studioashby.com](http://studioashby.com)

Photo credit: studioashby.com





# HOW TO DRAUGHT PROOF YOUR PROPERTY

**D**id you know that by simply draught proofing your windows you can save around £45 a year? And a further £65 a year if you draught proof an unused chimney.

Draught-free homes are comfortable at lower temperatures, so you can turn down your thermostat and slash the cost of your energy bills.

### HOW TO DRAUGHT PROOF WINDOWS:

For windows that open, draught-proofing strips can be placed around the window frame to fill the gap between the window and the frame. Self-adhesive foam strips are the cheapest option but will not last as long as metal or plastic ones.

### HOW TO DRAUGHT PROOF EXTERNAL DOORS:

Purchase a purpose-made cover that drops a metal disk over the keyhole, use a letterbox flap or brush, place a hinged flap draught excluder at the bottom of the door, and fit foam, brush or wiper strips on gaps around the edges of the doors.

### HOW TO DRAUGHT PROOF A CHIMNEY:

If you have an unused fireplace, then you are likely to be losing a lot of heat through your chimney. You can draught proof a chimney by either fitting a cap over the chimney pot or by buying a chimney draught excluder.

### HOW TO DRAUGHT PROOF FLOORING:

Block any cracks in your flooring by squirting filler directly into them. Use either flexible fillers or decorator's caulk for best results. These can be used to fill gaps in floorboards and skirting boards.

### HOW TO DRAUGHT PROOF A LOFT:

Hot air rises and can get lost in your loft or attic, so you need to make sure you block off any draughts around the hatch. You can use the same strip insulation as you would on a door to prevent draughts.



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## BEGINNER'S GUIDE TO bonsai trees

**G**rowing and caring for a bonsai tree is an amazing stress reliever and a fun pastime, but you need to know what you are doing if you want your little tree to flourish.

### WHAT IS A BONSAI TREE?

For the uninitiated, a bonsai tree is a miniature tree that is planted within a pot. In fact, the term bonsai literally means 'planted in container' in Japanese. An integral part of this East Asian country's culture, bonsai is now an art form that is enjoyed worldwide.

### HOW TO CARE FOR A BONSAI TREE

**Placement:** Keep your bonsai away from direct heat and drafts. They favour areas with plenty of sunlight and need humidity in order to keep their soil moist.

**Watering:** One of the most contentious issues when it comes to bonsai ownership, overwatering can cause root rot, while underwatering can lead to all the leaves dropping off in as little as half a day. As a general rule, water every two to three days in the morning, ensuring the soil is always damp to touch but not wet.

**Fertilising:** Bonsai trees need nitrogen, phosphorous and potassium in order to survive and grow. As the seasons change, your tree will have different fertilising needs. In spring, more nitrogen is needed to boost growth. In summer, equal volumes of each is best and in autumn/winter, a fertiliser with a higher phosphorus content will prepare it for the colder months.

**Pruning:** Pruning is essential in keeping your bonsai healthy. You need to make sure that you pay attention to all elements of the tree, including the shoots, leaves, buds and twigs.

**Repotting:** When you need to repot your bonsai tree will be dependent on the species you picked. However, typically, bonsais need to be repotted every two to three years to prevent the roots from becoming pot-bound.



HOME & DIY





HOME & DIY

# light up MY LIFE



There's hardly a home in the country that doesn't have a set of fairy lights – or several. And these days, they're not just for decorating Christmas trees. We love using them all year round to add a warm glow to our rooms and gardens. And there's always a pretty new shape to tempt us – flowers, hearts, stars, and even multicoloured skulls, should the fancy take you. But where did it all begin?

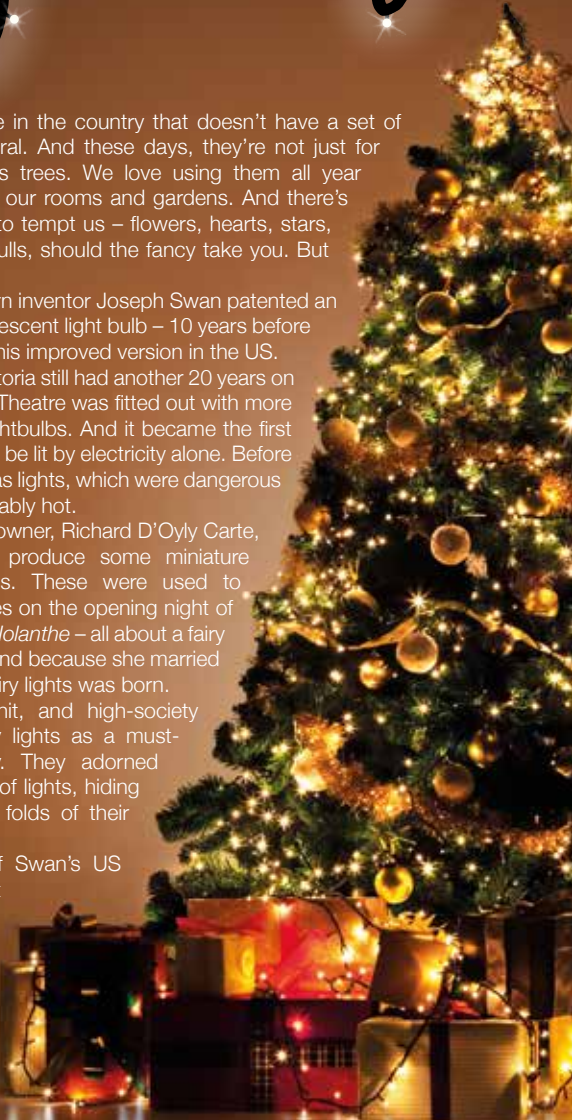
In 1869, Sunderland-born inventor Joseph Swan patented an early version of the incandescent light bulb – 10 years before Thomas Edison patented his improved version in the US.

In 1881, when Queen Victoria still had another 20 years on the throne, London's Savoy Theatre was fitted out with more than a thousand of Swan's lightbulbs. And it became the first public building in the world to be lit by electricity alone. Before this, theatres were lit with gas lights, which were dangerous and made theatres unbearably hot.

In 1882, Savoy Theatre owner, Richard D'Oyly Carte, commissioned Swan to produce some miniature versions of his lightbulbs. These were used to decorate the fairies' dresses on the opening night of Gilbert and Sullivan's opera, *Iolanthe* – all about a fairy who was banished from fairyland because she married a mortal. And so the name fairy lights was born.

The opera was a big hit, and high-society ladies soon adopted fairy lights as a must-have clothing accessory. They adorned their dresses with strings of lights, hiding the battery packs in the folds of their voluminous skirts.

By 1883, a colleague of Swan's US rival, Thomas Edison, put a set of fairy lights on a Christmas tree. It was a publicity stunt. But there started a global Christmas tradition that became so popular that we now use fairy lights almost everywhere.



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HOME & DIY

# POPPIN' Paprika

## 2023'S HOTTEST COLOUR TREND FOR YOUR HOME

There may be a couple of months left in 2022, but that doesn't mean we can't look ahead to next year's interior trends. One of the hottest trends already making waves is paprika, the spicy colour that's about to give your décor a cheeky kick.

### WHAT IS PAPIRIKA?

Paprika is a shade in the burnt orange family. Think terracotta with a hint of pink. It lets you experience the warmth of reds and oranges, without going overboard with a bold and bright colour.

### THE ULTIMATE MOOD-BOOSTER

Paprika is the perfect shade to add a touch of warmth to your home. Used as the main colour, it adds interest to the plainest of rooms, while as an accent colour, it goes perfectly with shades of navy, grey, yellow and others. It also looks great as a contrasting shade to a monochrome space.

### USING PAPIRIKA IN YOUR HOME

Some of our top tips for using paprika in your home include:

- > Go for a paprika colour pop on a wall, either as a block colour or by adding it as a shape or pattern to a neutral wall.
- > Use paprika-hued accessories to brighten up your space. Curtains and cushions in this delightful shade will help you embrace the trend easily and affordably.
- > Refresh some of your older furniture by coating them in paprika – an easy way to give your pieces a new lease of life and make a cool contrast against the rest of your décor.

As the colour to look out for in 2023, you can get ahead of the trend by embracing paprika in your home now.



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## The Building Company with a Difference

Although WeBuild Essex is only just over two years old, Andy Rogers, the founder and director, has been in construction since the early 1990s.

Completing a self build in just over a year for his own family in 2016 gave Andy the inspiration for a new and truly different building company. One that works with the client and not just for them.

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# LOCAL NEWS

*from your neighbourhood*



Photo credit: Stephen Salmon

## Ex-soldier smashes record in charity marathon

A former soldier from Billericay has smashed his own record time for a marathon, completing the 26.2-mile race in less than three hours.

Stephen Salmon, 38 (pictured left and right with his daughter, Isabella), completed the London Marathon in a non-racing wheelchair in two hours, 56 minutes and seven seconds, shaving off 20 minutes from his Guinness World Record time despite falling once after hitting a crack in the road at full speed.

Stephen has been using a wheelchair since 2008 after a neurological infection left him unable to walk and forced him to leave his career in the Royal Engineers.

He raised more than £2,500 for Whizz-Kidz, the UK's leading charity for young wheelchair users.

Stephen said: "Having the right equipment gives everybody the opportunity to thrive, not just to survive.

I call my wheelchair 'the equaliser'. It makes me feel like me."

Stephen also supports the Armed Forces charity Help for Heroes, which provides help for service personnel and military veterans and their families. More than 2,300 people have undertaken the charity's suicide awareness training programme, to learn how to spot the signs that someone may be struggling.

This follows a YouGov survey which revealed that one in three military veterans have felt suicidal in their lifetime, while more than half of adult Britons said they would not know how to help someone struggling with suicidal thoughts.

Stephen added: "Thank goodness I'm still here and I'm so grateful to everyone at Help for Heroes. The charity has helped me get where I am today and, for that reason, I'll always be passionate about it."



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Photo credit: Paul Ratford

## Charlie takes the karting world by storm

A talented teenager from Billericay tasted success at the karting championship World Finals last month. Charlie Ratford (pictured above) took part in the finals at Franciacorta in Italy on the weekend of October 15 and 16.

The current two-time British Indoor Junior Champion achieved his goal of a top 10 finish at his first-ever World Finals event, finishing in seventh place.

His achievement is made even more remarkable as he competes on a budget, which is a real disadvantage in a sport dominated by finance.

He was able to compete in Italy thanks to the support of the community, who helped raised £940 to get him on the start line.

Charlie is quickly making a name for himself in the sport and has broken three track records for fastest

lap around the country. He also teaches at Brentwood Karting to help younger drivers.

Charlie said: "It was an amazing experience and I have made some amazing memories I will never forget. I'm happy to be able to compete at such a level at an amazing track."

Paul, Charlie's father, told **VISION** Billericay Shenfield: "He was the top British driver, which was an amazing achievement for a first attempt in the World Finals.

"Unfortunately, with motorsport, money talks, and on our budget, it made it impossible to win.

"Where he goes from here, we are still unsure, but we are hopefully going to do some scholarships to race cars next year as that's what he really wants to do."

To keep up to date with Charlie's progress, follow @c.a.r.racing on Instagram.

## Golf course's holiday homes plans rejected

A proposal submitted by a Billericay golf course for seven holiday lodges and new spa facilities has been rejected by Basildon Borough Council.

Noak Hill Golf Course put forward the proposals for the lodges, which would have allowed accommodation for up to 11 months a year, in May. However, the council rejected the application last month.

In the decision report, Basildon Borough Council's head of planning, Christine Lyons, wrote: "The proposed holiday lodges constitute inappropriate development in the green belt, which, by definition, is harmful to the green belt.

"Further, the development causes a significant loss of openness of the green belt. No very special circumstances have been evidenced sufficient to outweigh the harm identified.

"The proposal is also not supported by a drainage strategy; as such the increased risk of flooding of the proposed development cannot be fully assessed."

The vote to reject the application was a unanimous one. A similar scheme submitted by Noak Hill Golf Course was rejected in February.

The owners of Noak Hill Golf Course have been contacted for comment.



LOCAL NEWS BILLERICAY



Photo credit: ShellRowe/TikTok

# Cancer survivor goes viral for her positivity

A stage 4 cancer patient from Billericay has gained nearly 700,000 followers on TikTok by posting videos of her bizarre hairstyles created using unusual items.

Shell Rowe, 23 (pictured), was diagnosed with non-Hodgkin lymphoma, a type of cancer that develops in the lymphatic system, in August 2019 after she discovered a tennis ball-sized lump in her neck.

To create a positive dialogue around hair loss, Shell

began posting humorous videos on social media about her cancer battle, showing her sticking items like flowers, feathers and spaghetti to her head.

Shell also posts videos about her hospital stays and skits to her 673,500 followers, as well as helping to raise money for Teenage Cancer Trust, a charity providing care and support for young people facing cancer.

She has now been in remission since February 2022.

## Mixed results for both of the Blues teams

Billericay Town FC saw their FA Cup campaign come to an end following a 3-0 defeat.

After a 3-3 home draw against Biggleswade forced a replay on Tuesday, October 4, the match marked the first time the Blues were beaten by a lower-league club in an FA Cup or Trophy game since 2005.

However, Billericay did earn themselves a place in the FA Trophy first round with a 2-0 victory over Margate in the third qualifying round on Saturday, October 8.

The Blues also claimed all three points in a hotly contested match against Bognor Regis FC, which finished 3-2 and was played the following week.

Billericay Town FC sit in 11th place in the Isthmian League, with two games in hand over several teams above them. They have also only lost once since their defeat to Brightlingsea Regent on August 29.

Billericay Town Ladies recovered from back-to-back away defeats to Bridgwater United and Portsmouth with victories over Crawley Wasps on October 9 and Gillingham on October 12.

Holly Turner scored her first career hat-trick, while Sophie McLean scored her first goal for the club.

After the Gillingham game, manager Karen Stephanou said: "I think the girls worked superbly today. As you can see, we are growing as a team."

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Home Office/Studies



Photo credit: Star Pubs & Bars



# Grade II listed pub to undergo £450,000 refurb

Ye Olde Green Dragon in Shenfield is undergoing a £450,000 refurbishment following an investment from Heineken-owned Star Pubs & Bars.

Licensee Karen Harris (pictured top left), who also runs The Robin at Brentwood, took over Ye Olde Green Dragon in 2019 and will be undertaking the refurbishment alongside the landowners. The pub, which will be renamed The Green Dragon to mark its restoration, is scheduled to reopen in mid-November.

The exterior of the building will be restored and repainted, with upgrades to the interior and outdoor seating areas and maintenance of the building's heritage features.

A traditional bar with a games area and a lounge with soft seating and booths will be installed, while the

toilets and kitchen will also be refitted.

Karen said: "I can't thank residents enough for their backing. They've got behind everything we've done and are really supportive of the plans.

"The Green Dragon is a gorgeous old building and a landmark of Shenfield, but it's tired and dated. The investment will turn it into a premium pub that the whole community can enjoy, whether they're after a morning coffee, a family lunch, or a great night out."

Steve Charlton, Star Pubs & Bars area manager, said: "Karen is well known in Shenfield and Brentwood and understands just what people want.

"She has done a tremendous job and given The Green Dragon a new lease of life despite all the challenges of the pandemic."



Photo credit: Tom Hodgkinson

# Tremendous Tom impresses at town recital

One of Essex's best young musicians gave a special recital at Shenfield Library last month.

Tom Hodgkinson (pictured), who won this year's Essex Young Musician of the Year, performed at Shenfield's temporary library on October 1, where he played a selection of classical guitar music by Bach, Ravel, Debussy, Poulenc and others.

The recital was organised by the Friends of Shenfield Library (FSL) in partnership with Essex Library Service and Shenfield Library.

Those attending were invited to make a voluntary donation, with all money raised going towards promoting Shenfield Library's valuable services.

Sue Matthews, chair of FSL, said: "The library was packed with enthusiastic music lovers.

"Each of the pieces Tom played was followed by loud applause, and the beaming smiles on the faces of the audience as they left spoke realms about how much everyone had enjoyed the evening.

"This was the first of an exciting programme of events we plan to put on, with proceeds from ticket sales being used to fund free events, and to benefit library users in other ways."

The temporary library is in place while redevelopment works are undertaken, which will see a new library built on the existing site.

## Councillor leads praise for fundraising teams

Hutton East councillor is among those to have praised workers at Brentwood Borough Council (BBC) who raised thousands of pounds for charity.

A group from BBC took on the Yorkshire Three Peaks Challenge with staff from Rochford District Council (RDC) last month to raise more than £11,000.

The money will be split between the charities supported by the mayors of both councils: Cardiomyopathy UK, Parkinson's UK, Hopefield Animal Sanctuary, Saint Francis Hospice, Trust Links and Achievement Through Football.

Hutton East councillor and Mayor of Brentwood Olivia Francois said those who took part "did literally

rise to the challenge".

Her comments come after the group completed the 24-mile course, which includes 1,585m of ascent, in less than 12 hours.

Mayor Francois said: "Everyone had different levels of fitness, but everyone did literally rise to the challenge, and I am delighted that my chosen charities, Parkinson's UK, Saint Francis Hospice and Hopefield Animal Sanctuary, will benefit from the dedication and hard work.

"I believe there are plans for another challenge in 2023, by which time I hope people's blisters and aching muscles will have healed."



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**BURGHART for BRENTWOOD**



Alex Burghart MP for Brentwood and Ongar

The last month has been busy as schools and Parliament returned for a new term. I was very pleased to be invited to the opening of the new extension at Mountnessing Primary School, which is doubling in size as it reaches its 150th anniversary of educating the children of the village and beyond. I was also able to join the 10-year anniversary celebrations at Becket Keys School, which has grown and thrived in the decade since it was set up on the site of the former Sawyers Hall College/Hedley Walter High School. The Brentwood Centre played host to the Limbless Association, a charity based in Billericay, for a morning of wheelchair rugby and cricket. The charity provides one-to-one peer support for amputees before, during and after their limb loss, and it was great to meet its CEO, Deborah Bent, and so many people linked to the charity. The Brentwood Centre was also the venue for the Brentwood Business Awards, albeit with a great deal of set dressing which made the sports hall look very glamorous. My congratulations to all those who won, including SNAP for Best Local Charity, Hallmark Care Homes for Best Community Engagement, and Kaye Thurgood of Sincerely Yours in Shenfield for Best Business Person of the Year. The Brentwood Business Awards reflect the strength of local entrepreneurialism and business acumen in the borough, and I have no doubt they will continue to thrive in the coming years.

LOCAL NEWS SHENFIELD



**Plans to improve town centre**

Brentwood Borough Council (BBC) is investigating the possibility of developing a Business Improvement District (BID) to drive town centre regeneration. The proposed BID would focus on three key destinations in the borough: Shenfield, Brentwood and Ingatstone. A BID is a defined area where business rate payers agree to pay a levy into a fund for a fixed five-year period. This enables businesses to join together to fund projects that address specific common problems. Using regional comparisons, any headline levy rate is likely to range between 1.5 per cent and two per cent of rateable value. The levy income would see between £400,000 and £600,000 a year raised for high street improvements in the Brentwood, Shenfield and Ingatstone areas. BBC worked with the company Locus to examine the feasibility of developing a BID. Locus' research revealed a high level of engagement among businesses and a willingness to participate in discussions around further improvements. The report read: "From the evidence obtained to date, it is likely that any BID proposal could be taken to ballot in the summer of 2023, with a start date for delivery no later than October 1, 2023."



KIDS

# Deliciously Ginger

**G**ingerbread Day takes place on November 21, and what better way to celebrate than making some cute and tasty gingerbread folk? This recipe is simple enough for even young children to help with. They're bound to love decorating their own creations – not to mention eating them!

### INGREDIENTS:

- > 350g plain flour (and a bit more)
- > 1 tsp baking soda
- > 1-2 tsp ground ginger
- > 100g butter (chopped into small pieces)
- > 175g light muscovado sugar
- > 80g golden syrup
- > 1 large egg (beaten)
- > For decoration: icing pens or homemade icing

made from icing sugar, water and optional food colouring | Small sweets like Smarties or Jelly Tots | Dried fruit | Chocolate chips or polka dots | Sprinkles

### HOW TO MAKE:

- > Heat the oven to 190°C/170°C fan/gas mark 5.
- > Put the flour, baking soda and ginger in a large bowl and combine thoroughly. Add the butter, and rub it in till the mixture resembles fine breadcrumbs.
- > Add the sugar, golden syrup and egg, and mix into a smooth dough.
- > Roll the dough out using a floured rolling pin on a floured surface until it's about 5mm thick.
- > Cut out your gingerbread folk using special cutters (or make other shapes if you prefer).
- > Place your shapes onto a lined baking tray.
- > Bake for 10 minutes, then cool on a wire rack
- > Decorate your gingerbread folk however you like, using icing to secure any loose decorations.



### Did you know?

- > An early form of gingerbread was enjoyed by the Ancient Greeks and Egyptians.
- > Gingerbread, as we know it today, was created in England in the 1700s.
- > Queen Elizabeth I apparently invented gingerbread people by asking her staff to bake special biscuits in the shape of visiting dignitaries.
- > Gingerbread houses originated in Germany in the 1800s and were probably inspired by the tale of *Hansel and Gretel*.

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Niamh already has extensive experience running her own Premium Domestic Cleaning service – Bright & Beautiful Grays, which has been operating for eight years. Neil has worked for Thurrock Council and has always aspired towards owning his own company. When he discovered Enviro Clean, it became the obvious choice.

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HISTORY

# Cooper's case

EXAMINING THE NEW NETFLIX DRAMA AND AVIATION'S GREAT UNSOLVED MYSTERY



While in 2022 we bemoan the lengths we need to go to when navigating a path through airport security, what is certain is that we have never been safer while airborne.

Certainly, the audacity of hijackers, hostage takers and those demanding cash ransoms seems of a past era. The vast majority were unsuccessful, of course, though whether the infamous DB Cooper case of 1971 can be classed in the same terms remains up for debate.

That's because the hijacking of a flight from Portland to Seattle and on to Reno, Nevada, remains the only unsolved case of air piracy in commercial aviation history.

The passenger, who purchased a ticket using cash under the name of Dan Cooper, announced to cabin crew that he had a bomb shortly after the Boeing 727 flight took off from Portland International Airport at 2.50pm.

His demands were simple – he wanted around \$1.3million in cash, required four parachutes, and requested a second flight to take off once passengers had alighted at Seattle. His threat to blow up the plane appeared real – he showed the bomb to flight crew attendant Florence Schaffner.

Fearing the worst, the authorities acquiesced to Cooper's demands, with most passengers unaware of the severity of the situation until they had landed.

On the second flight, which departed Seattle at 7.40pm with the plane refuelled, remaining crew were told to head to the cockpit. When they landed, having experienced a notable change of air pressure in the cabin (caused by the opening of a door), Cooper – and the ransom money – was gone.

What makes this story so enchanting is that the hijacker was never found. Many suggest he perished en route to the ground, given inhospitable terrain and cold conditions. Small amounts of money were found, and none of the marked notes were ever spent.

The FBI kept the case open until 2006, when lack of resources led to the investigation being closed.



Photo credit: biography.com

# Pugh

## AGAINST THE MACHINE

### HOW FLORENCE PUGH HAS INVENTED HERSELF AS AN ALTERNATIVE HERO FOR THE HOLLYWOOD MACHINE

Florence Pugh may have hit the big time, but she is in no mind to play along with any of the niceties that may be expected from a Hollywood sweetheart. Take, for example, her audible frustrations at the furore surrounding her recent big project, *Don't Worry Darling*, which saw the leading lady in some parts referred to, in a rather derogatory way, as Harry Styles' "onscreen lover".

Or what about the fuss made during her recent fashion foray at the Valentino couture show in Rome, to which she wore a stunning pink gown through which her nipples could be visibly seen.

After receiving negative feedback online for both, the beauty boldly challenged the critics on Instagram, booming: "Why are you so scared of breasts?"

The response was perfect, proving beyond doubt that Pugh is as ferocious and bold as the strident characters she has become known for playing. From the plotting and seductive Lady Macbeth in the eponymous indie masterpiece, to the assertive female wrestler Saraya Knight in *Fighting with My Family* and, most recently, super assassin Yelena Belova in Marvel's *Black Widow*.

And for the ballsy 26-year-old, the battle rages on...

"I have always tried to force myself to pursue not just new avenues, but uncomfortable ones," she says. "Fear plays a big part of that, of course, and fear for an actor is something that can really ground a career.

"I have always had the view that to really succeed you need to push yourself further and harder than the last time, and that's the way I go about what I do, to the extent that the more I fear something the more I have to do it. That's just who I am."

---

‘ I love the diversity that film and TV brings and owe it to myself to really work out who I am and what I am capable of ’

---

In terms of pushing herself, 2022 has proved more forward-thinking than any year previously. The aforementioned *Don't Worry Darling*, a dystopian look at social values, personality and community, and our ability to accept and challenge the norm, has been well received. Yet almost to prove she is an actress unafraid to mix it up, she has since been announced as reprising Yelena in 2024 Marvel release *Thunderbolts*, and before that is contracted to appear in *Dune: Part Two* next year, alongside Timothée Chalamet, Stellan Skarsgård and Zendaya.

There's also Netflix movie *The Wonder*, which airs in November. The drama/mystery, set in Midlands Britain in 1862, tells the story of a girl who stops eating but miraculously remains alive and well. An all-British cast, the production aims to look behind the mask, and is based on the 'fasting girls' phenomenon from the Victorian era, as documented by author Emma Donoghue.

"I love the diversity that film and TV brings and owe it to myself to really work out who I am and what I am capable of. The truth is I don't want to be defined by anyone other than myself." That logic is certainly reflected in the actress's burgeoning Instagram presence, with a large following brought about in no small part by a number of endearing cookery videos filmed during lockdown.

"To have that connection was so valuable," she says. "It's such a relief we are through those days, though I learned so much about myself and community through food; it's a passion that has stuck with me."

Between her creative cookery videos and her accolades on screen, the young actor is definitely cooking up a storm across the globe.

## YOUR FINANCIAL WELLBEING HUB

The past couple of years have undoubtedly been a challenge for us all but, by pulling together, we have managed to get through an extraordinarily difficult period. Now, as we emerge into the post-COVID economy, we face a different set of challenges which, in their own way, appear no less daunting. One thing, though, does stay the same – we're still here, by your side, and determined to continue steering you safely through any financially choppy waters that lie ahead.

### ECONOMIC UNCERTAINTIES

Although the economy did stage a tentative recovery last year and in the early part of 2022, it's fair to say the outlook has become increasingly challenging in recent months. Surging inflation has curtailed our spending power and, with energy bills set to rise further over the autumn and winter months, the cost-of-living squeeze looks set to continue for now. Higher than expected inflation has also triggered a rise in interest rates, while fallout from the war in Ukraine adds to a cocktail of economic uncertainties.

### PLANNING IS PARAMOUNT

No one is immune from these difficulties; while some will struggle more than others, we will all be impacted to some degree. In many ways, though, times like these

serve to emphasise why people seek professional financial advice in the first place. Economic downturns are normal but having a sound, structured plan helps to ensure our financial goals and aspirations are not derailed when one does occur.

### FINANCIAL WELLBEING

Arguably, protecting your financial wellbeing has never been so important and the best way to do so is by sticking to your financial plan. It's therefore essential to try to maintain any ongoing commitments such as pension contributions, protection premiums and regular savings policies if you possibly can.

### WE'RE HERE TO HELP

It's also vitally important to keep talking, so do get in touch if you need our help. We're here for both you and your family; ensuring your financial wellbeing is, and always will be, our primary area of concern.

**At HCR, we take the time to understand our clients' unique planning needs and circumstances, so that we can provide you with the most suitable solutions in the most cost-effective way. For a free review of your current financial situation, please contact Karyn Vogel on 01277 654153.**



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- Divorce
- Family Mediation
- Prenuptial Agreements

**If your case is suitable we can offer a 40-minute free consultation with one of the team.**



**Sally Ward**  
Head of Family Team  
[sallyward@mplaw.co.uk](mailto:sallyward@mplaw.co.uk)



**Roisin McCorry**  
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[roisinmccorry@mplaw.co.uk](mailto:roisinmccorry@mplaw.co.uk)



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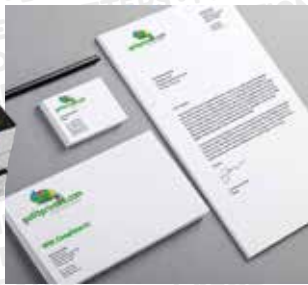
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## THINKING OF buying a property...



## abroad?



BUSINESS & PROPERTY



Thinking about buying a property abroad but unsure of where to begin?

To invest in property overseas, you need to be clued up on how the buying process differs from the UK – from mortgages and estate agents to stamp duty and bank fees.

### How to find the perfect property abroad

There are several places you can look when it comes to house-hunting abroad:

- ▶ Online property portals such as Rightmove and Zoopla
- ▶ Local estate agents in the region where you want to buy
- ▶ Exhibitions such as A Place in the Sun Live
- ▶ Developers

### How to get a mortgage for a property abroad

It is very difficult to get a mortgage with a UK company, for a property overseas, so you will most likely have to approach an overseas lender. Ideally, you should use a specialist broker as they will be able to give you tailored information, including a list of estate agents and lawyers to use in your chosen country.

It is worth noting that foreign banks and brokers are not covered by the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) or the Financial Ombudsman.

### Costs associated with buying abroad

- ▶ Mortgage fees such as a mortgage broker fee, arrangement fee and administrative fees
- ▶ Chartered surveyor fees
- ▶ International bank transfer fees
- ▶ Furniture, shipping and insurance costs
- ▶ Legal fees to make a will, which may be obligatory in some countries
- ▶ Translation fees
- ▶ Connection fees for water, electricity, etc
- ▶ Stamp duty or annual property tax
- ▶ Income tax or income tax for non-residents

### Getting independent advice

As mentioned above, buying an overseas property is not regulated by the FCA, so it is vital that you seek independent advice from a lawyer who is not connected to anyone else involved in the buying process such as the seller, estate agent or developer. Look for an English-speaking lawyer who is fluent in the local language.

# A WILL WRITER'S WORDS OF WISDOM

## WORRYING PROBLEMS

Unless it has a Contemplation of Marriage clause, marriage or re-marriage invalidates a Will, requiring a new arrangement

Without a Will, spouses and civil partners are NOT automatically entitled to all of the estate assets on death, and the Government could inherit your estate if you die with no surviving traceable relatives.

Without a Will, even grandparents have NO automatic Legal Guardianship of their orphaned grandchildren

Without a Will, the Rules of Intestacy, ie 'The Government

Will', could land the children with an IHT liability

A beneficiary or their spouse should not be a witness to a Will, or they will disinherit themselves

Although divorce does not invalidate a Will, marriage will indeed invalidate a Will, unless a marriage clause has been embedded

If you have no surviving parents, siblings, grandparents, uncles or aunts, then under the Intestacy Rules, the whole estate goes to the Crown or the Duchy of Lancaster or the Duke of Cornwall

## PEACE OF MIND SOLUTIONS

Always appoint charities as your final beneficiaries, to avoid your estate being claimed by the Government

By the use of a Property Protection Trust, you can ensure that if you pre-decease and your spouse re-marries and has more children, your own children benefit from your share of your home, and not the new spouse. BUT if Probate is not completed, the Trust Deed will not be set up and notified at the Land Registry

If children have special care needs, an appropriate Discretionary Trust could avoid loss of State benefits on them inheriting your estate

A Grant of Probate confirms to Executors that they have the authority to act and carry out the wishes of the deceased

Provide in your Will for continuity of your business on your death

If you own property abroad, you should arrange a Will for your assets in that country, to avoid costly fees and much Probate delay

If a Named Beneficiary, Executor, Trustee or Legal Guardian changes their name, e.g., on marriage or by Deed Poll, it is not necessary to amend the Will: documentary evidence, eg Decree Absolute, is sufficient

A properly worded Will could ensure that half the value of your home is potentially protected against Local Authority care home fees

There is no Inheritance Tax liability if the deceased spouse has left their entire estate to their surviving spouse or civil marriage partner

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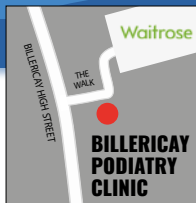
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**TRAVEL**

# BRING ME Sunshine

**W**here's the best place to head if you want a last-minute getaway to escape the winter chills – and soak up some vitamin D? Here's our round-up of beautiful beach destinations, and there are some great deals if you hunt around.

**CANARY ISLANDS:** Flight time: 4½ hours from London | Average daily maximum temperature (Nov-Jan): 22°C

As well as the well-known spots like Gran Canaria, Tenerife, Fuerteventura and Lanzarote, check out the less-visited smaller islands – La Palma, El Hierro, and La Gomera, which are great if you love hiking and walking.

**CYPRUS:** Flight time: 5 hours from London | Average daily maximum temperature (Nov-Jan): 20°C

It might be too chilly to swim in the Med – but there should still be plenty of sunshine. And it's an excellent

location for anyone keen on wine and ancient history.

**MOROCCO:** Flight time: 4 hours from London, depending on the exact destination | Average daily maximum temperature (Nov-Jan): 21°C Agadir on the South Atlantic coast is perfect for beach lovers, and many hotels offer 'affordable luxury'. And the colourful markets (souks) are great for bargain hunters.

**EGYPT:** Flight time: 5½ hours from London, depending on the exact destination | Average daily maximum temperature (Nov-Jan): 25°C Egypt in November is a bit cooler and less crowded. Sharm-el-Sheikh is excellent for snorkelling, and desert trips and camel rides are available nearby.

**DUBAI:** Flight time: 7 hours from London | Average daily maximum temperature (Nov-Jan): 27°C Dubai's luxury resorts could be just the thing if you're after impeccable service, lots of activities and the chance of some retail therapy. And in winter, it's not too humid.

**CAPE VERDE:** Flight time: 6 hours from London | Average daily maximum temperature (Nov-Jan): 25°C

Consisting of 10 islands off the coast of West Africa, the best ones for beaches are Sal and Boa Vista. Cape Verde is more affordable than Dubai and great if you want something truly different.

*Bon voyage!*



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## Disney Cruise Line

Set sail for a dream Disney holiday at sea with Disney Cruise Line. Get onboard and enjoy a magical sailing with spectacular entertainment, imaginative dining with magically themed restaurants and character experiences with Mickey & Friends.

Whether you're looking to book that ultimate family getaway, a romantic break or last-minute weekend away, we have got it all, with some brilliant options just for you.

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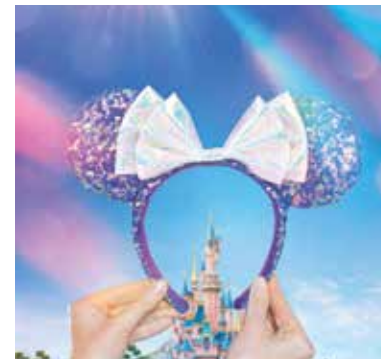


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## FOOD & DRINK

# GUIDE to GAME



Have you always wondered about game but been too timid to try? If yes, then the below guide is just what you need. Popular at Christmas, discover all the best game meats for the festive season and their perfect pairings below.

### WHAT ARE THE DIFFERENT TYPES OF GAME MEATS?

- 1. WINGED GAME:** This includes quail, duck and pheasant.
- 2. GROUND GAME:** This includes hare and rabbit.
- 3. BIG GAME:** This includes bison, venison, elk and wild boar.

### WHY EAT GAME MEATS?

Game meats are primarily raised on pasture, which means that they are better for the planet as they require fewer natural resources to raise. They also provide lean, high-quality, nutrient-rich protein that adds some much-needed diversity into our diets.

### WHERE TO BUY GAME MEATS

You can buy game at your local butchers, online or in most major supermarkets, including Asda, Tesco and Waitrose.

### GAME MEATS TO TRY THIS CHRISTMAS

**PHEASANT:** Pheasant is a great alternative to chicken and turkey, providing lots of flavour and a lean source of protein. It is also great for making stuffing if you fancy a change from sausage meat.

**FLAVOUR PAIRINGS:** Fruits such as apples, oranges and prunes, as well as aromatics like sage and thyme.

**QUAIL:** One of the smallest game birds; quail meat looks very similar to chicken but boasts a much more intense flavour. Typically, one whole quail is the perfect size for a starter or appetizer.

**FLAVOUR PAIRINGS:** Winter citrus fruits, grapes, cranberries and pomegranates, as well as spices such as cumin and coriander, and honey.

**VENISON:** If you want a change from beef, then venison is a great choice. Venison, which refers to meat from a deer, has a very strong gamey flavour and is extremely versatile. It is also very lean and rich in iron.

**FLAVOUR PAIRINGS:** Blueberries, cherries, cranberries and dates, as well as sage, juniper berries and black pepper.



# High-Flying Family Fun!



The Towngate Theatre is back this festive season with their high-flying panto for 2022-23, **The Panto Adventures of Peter Pan**.

This swashbuckling spectacular promises to be even more breath-taking and magical than ever before – a Pan-tastic Adventure for all the family to enjoy!

Basildon favourite, Simon Fielding, returns this year as their Co-Producer and Director, and the baddie everyone loves-to-hate – Sophie Ladds – will be back on stage, playing the legendary role of the dastardly Captain Hook. Essex-based Sophie is a much-loved performer in the Towngate's pantomimes, winning rave reviews from both audiences and critics alike, and earning two Best Villain nominations at the Great British Pantomime Awards for her multi-talented performances.



After winning the hearts of the audiences as Dame Dolly Dumpling in *Beauty and the Beast*, Ian Hallard will be popping on his fabulous frocks once again to play the role of Mrs Smee this year. Joining Sophie and Ian will be Harvey Zaffino

as cheeky Peter Pan, Hannah Taylor as lovable Wendy, Antonia Luisa-Clarke as mischievous Tinkerbell and Michael Loftus as silly Wiggles.

The Towngate's award-winning, critically-acclaimed pantomimes are the jewel in the crown of Essex – they're renowned for their stunning scenery, colourful costumes, dazzling dancers and a fantastic live band at every performance. Each show is a non-stop, musical extravaganza that is not to be missed!

Once again, the Towngate's Box Office records have been broken with *The Panto Adventures of Peter Pan* currently outselling all previous pantomimes at this time in their respective years. It is strongly

recommended that audiences book without delay, as this is on-track to be their biggest selling panto yet.



The Panto Adventures of Peter Pan runs from Wednesday 23 November 2022 – Monday 2 January 2023 with Family Packages and Group Rates of 10+ available.

Book tickets online at [www.towngatetheatre.co.uk](http://www.towngatetheatre.co.uk) or call the Box Office on 01268 205 300.

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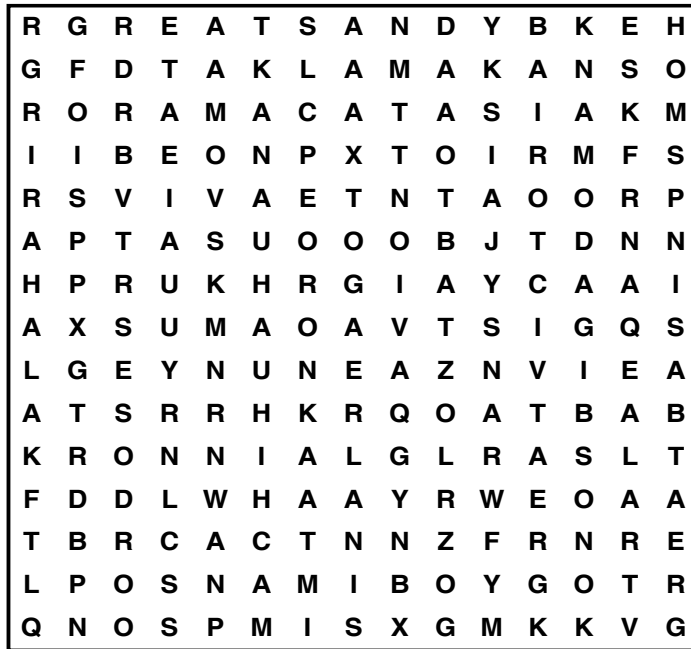


# PUZZLES & TRIVIA

PUZZLES

Answers: see end of The VISION Listings

- ▶ AGATE
- ▶ AMETHYST
- ▶ AQUAMARINE
- ▶ DIAMOND
- ▶ FELDSPAR
- ▶ JADE
- ▶ JASPER
- ▶ LAPIS LAZULI
- ▶ MALACHITE
- ▶ MOONSTONE
- ▶ OBSIDIAN
- ▶ OLIVINE
- ▶ OPAL
- ▶ QUARTZ
- ▶ RUBY
- ▶ SAPPHIRE
- ▶ TANZANITE
- ▶ TOPAZ
- ▶ TOURMALINE
- ▶ TURQUOISE

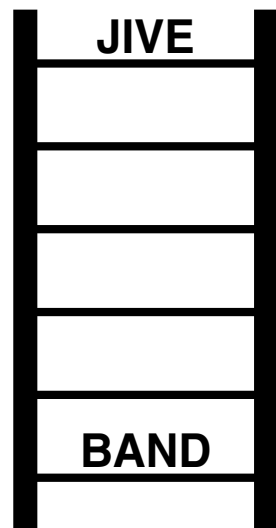


## DID YOU KNOW?

- ▶ Queen Victoria was the first sovereign to live in Buckingham Palace.
- ▶ The garden at Buckingham Palace is the largest private garden in London.
- ▶ William the Conqueror chose the site where Windsor Castle was built.
- ▶ In 1992, a fire destroyed many rooms at Windsor Castle. The restoration took five years to complete.
- ▶ Frogmore House became a royal residence in 1792 when it was bought by Queen Charlotte, George III's wife.
- ▶ The Queen's Gallery at the Palace of Holyroodhouse was opened by Queen Elizabeth II in 2002 as part of her Golden Jubilee celebrations.

Facts courtesy of Royal Collection Trust

## WORD LADDER



THE AIM: Change the word at the top of the ladder one letter at a time to make the word at the bottom.

HOW TO: Change one letter on each step to make a new word. By the time you reach the end, you should have created the new word.

DO NOT rearrange the order of the letters.

TIP: There is usually more than one way to solve this puzzle.

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BEAUTY

# HAIRSTYLES FOR MEN

WITH

## Thin hair

Is your hair looking a little thin? If yes, you are far from alone. By the age of 35, approximately 66 per cent of men will have experienced some degree of hair loss.

It's happened to the likes of Channing Tatum, Ashton Kutcher, Ben Affleck and even David Beckham. Fortunately, you can fight back.

### MESSY TEXTURED CUT

If your thin hair is also prone to frizz, then this is the perfect hairstyle for you. Ask your barber to add texture to your hair with a messy and irregular cut that features subtle spikes. This is also a great haircut for men who want a low-maintenance style that only takes minutes to master.

### MEDIUM SCISSOR CROP

For those who feel self-conscious of their receding hairline, this is a great choice. Make sure that your barber leaves enough hair on the top and the sides to create the illusion of volume and get practising how to style this youthful and trendy cut.

### HIPSTER HAIR

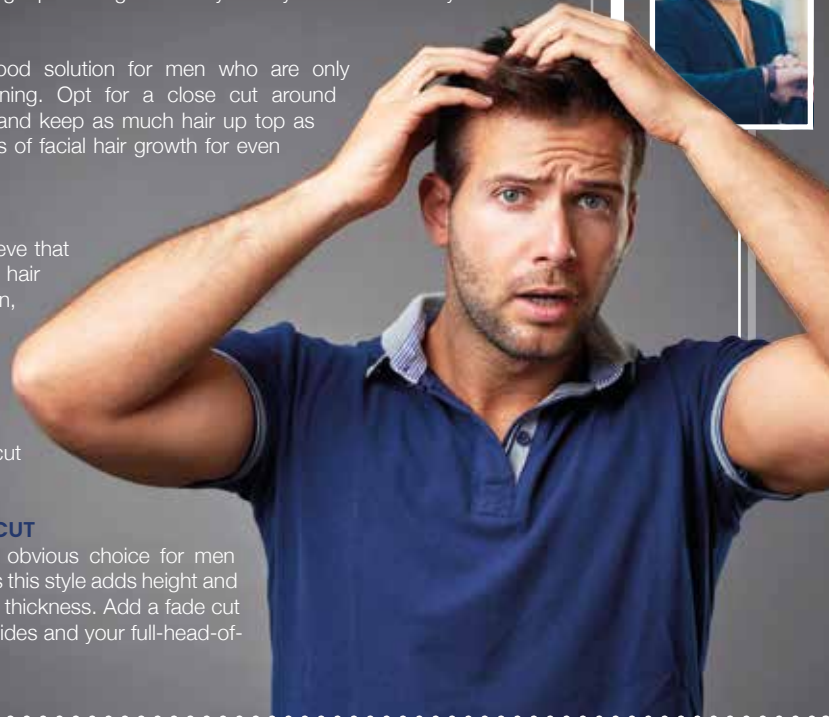
Hipster hair offers a good solution for men who are only experiencing minor thinning. Opt for a close cut around the sides and the back and keep as much hair up top as possible. Add a few days of facial hair growth for even more fullness.

### ADD LENGTH

Although many men believe that you should keep your hair short if it starts to thin, longer styles can in fact make your locks appear thicker and fuller. Grow out your hair as much as you can and then add in a square bottom cut midway down the neck.

### SLICKED-BACK FADE CUT

Slicked-back hair is the obvious choice for men with a receding hairline as this style adds height and distracts from the lack of thickness. Add a fade cut along the back and the sides and your full-head-of-hair look is complete.



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HEALTH & FITNESS



## Are you getting ENOUGH IRON?

Iron deficiency affects a whopping two billion people worldwide and is the cause of more than 57,000 hospital admissions each year. Responsible for many important processes in the body, let's take a closer look at iron and how you can ensure you are getting enough of it.

### WHY IS IRON IMPORTANT?

Iron plays a crucial role in making red blood cells, which carry oxygen around the body. A lack of iron can lead to iron deficiency, known as anaemia, which can cause fatigue, heart palpitations, pale skin and breathlessness. Iron also helps to promote a healthy pregnancy, to increase energy levels and to enhance athletic performance.

### HOW MUCH IRON DO YOU NEED?

According to the NHS, the amount of iron you need per day is as follows:

- > For men over 18, 8.7mg
- > For women aged 19 to 50, 14.8mg
- > For women over 50, 8.7mg

Women who experience heavy periods are at a higher risk of anaemia and may be required to take iron supplements.

### WHAT FOODS ARE HIGH IN IRON?

There are two types of iron: heme and non-heme. The former is found in animal foods that contain haemoglobin and the latter primarily comes from plant sources and fortified foods.

These include: Organ meats such as liver and kidneys | Soybeans | Clams and mussels | Spinach | Fortified cereals | Dried fruits like raisins and apricots | Legumes such as beans, lentils and chickpeas | Pumpkin seeds | Turkey | Tofu

### WHAT FOODS CAN HELP YOU TO ABSORB MORE IRON?

Iron has a low bioavailability, which means that the small intestine does not readily absorb large amounts of it. This increases the risk of deficiency.

Fortunately, there are some foods that enhance your body's ability to absorb this key mineral. These include foods rich in vitamin C such as citrus fruits and bell peppers, foods with vitamin A and beta-carotene like carrots and sweet potatoes, and meat, fish and poultry.





# SHADES

TO HELP YOU *sleep*

We are a nation of insomniacs, with 67 per cent of adults suffering with disrupted sleep and 23 per cent getting no more than five hours per night.

While this could be a result of stress, poor lifestyle choices or a mental health condition, it may actually be the colour of your bed linen that is stopping you from drifting off.

### HOW DOES COLOUR AFFECT SLEEP?

Colours have the ability to influence our mood, emotions and behaviours, with different shades evoking certain feelings such as anger, happiness and calmness, all of which can affect how you sleep.

### WHAT ARE THE BEST COLOURS OF BED LINEN FOR PROMOTING GOOD SLEEP?

**Blue**  
Blue is known for promoting feelings of peacefulness and serenity and, when used in the bedroom, can help you feel safe and relaxed. As a result, it is one of the best colours for aiding good sleep. Avoid bright blue and opt for paler shades.

**Green**  
The colour green is synonymous with nature, which means it has an instant calming effect. Opt for

sage green rather than bright green as this shade is softer and more peaceful.

### Light pink

While this may not be your first choice for your bedroom linen, if you lead a hectic and stressful life, then light pink linen can help to soothe your mind and body.

### WHAT COLOURS SHOULD YOU AVOID?

#### Red

Red is an energetic and intense colour that can provoke aggression and anger. Therefore, it is one of the worst shades to use on your bed linen.

#### Dark purple

Purple is known for stimulating creativity and, when used on bed linen, it could promote vivid dreams or nightmares which can disrupt your sleep.

#### White

Although you may think that white would be a good colour for aiding sleep, it could in fact be keeping you awake. This is because bright white can affect your melatonin levels and disrupt your sleep patterns.



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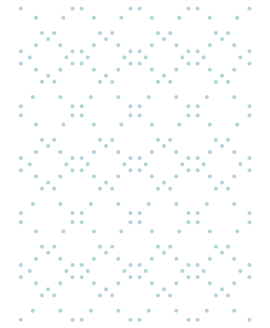
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# Sculpt YOUR CORE

## WITH STANDING AB EXERCISES

Are you sick to death of doing sit-ups and abdominal crunches, but dream of having a perfectly toned tummy? If yes, then you need to try these four killer core exercises that you can do standing up.

### STANDING MARCH TWIST

- > Stand with your feet hip-width apart, your arms above your head and your abs engaged.
- > Bring your right elbow to your left knee and twist through your waist as you do this.
- > Return to the starting position and repeat on the other side.
- > Make sure to focus on using your core, not your quads, when you lift your knee.
- > Continue to alternate each side for two minutes.

### WIDE SECOND SIDE CRUNCH

- > Stand with your feet apart (wider than hip-width), holding a dumbbell in each hand.
- > Turn your toes outward and lower yourself into a wide squat.
- > Raise your arms so that your elbows are bent to 90 degrees, engage your core and bend to the right so that your elbow taps your thigh.
- > Do 10 reps on each side and then repeat.

### STANDING CROSSOVER TOE TOUCH

- > Stand with your feet apart (wider than hip-width) and extend your arms into a T shape.
- > Engage your core and then rotate your torso to your left.
- > Tap your right hand to the outside of your left foot.
- > Do this on your left side for one minute and then repeat on your right side.

### STANDING STABILISATION

- > Stand with your feet hip-width apart, holding a medicine ball or dumbbells in both hands.
- > Extend your arms in front of your chest.
- > Keeping your arms straight and your shoulders pressed down, slowly rotate your upper body to the right.
- > Return to the centre.
- > Try not to let your shoulders climb up to your ears as this means your upper body is starting to take over.
- > Do 10 reps on each side and then repeat.



# WORD *play*

EVERYDAY WORDS THAT CAME FROM OVERSEAS

The English language – and indeed, the British race – is a smorgasbord of different nationalities, empires and revolutions. We are an island nation, and all the better for influences that stretch across the planet. This is no better highlighted than in the words we use.

While we have obviously adapted a direct word for many things we know and love – a croissant for breakfast, a favourite item of lingerie or pair of pyjamas, a rendezvous with friends – there is a whole raft of other words that, while British sounding, have origins that are anything but.

Here are eight words you may not know have been stolen and adapted into our wonderful language.

### **Fest** – German

A word taken to mean a celebratory excess, this comes from German and means a party, celebration or, of course, festival.

### **PATIO** – Spanish

In Spain, a patio is a courtyard or playground.

### **GLITCH** – Yiddish

A Jewish word that means ‘from a slippery place’, and from ‘glitsch’, which is to slide or glide.

### **Entrepreneur** – French

One of those where, upon saying it, you will probably utter, “Of course it’s French”, but with the popularity of business in modern culture, we have adopted it as our own.

### **Macho** – Spanish

Derived from the word for mule. Interestingly, macho in Spanish can be a virile, strong man... or an idiot, so be careful.

### **Schmooze** – Yiddish

Originally from the Hebrew, ‘shmue’, which means ‘rumour’, it has been built into a word for networking and currying favour for gain, usually financial.

### **RUCKSACK** – German

‘Rucken’ in German means ‘back’, so a sack for the back, literally.

### **MOPED** – Swedish

Motor and pedaller combine for ‘moped’, but it’s the Swedes who can take the credit for this one.



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# Electric EXCESS

## DOES A LACK OF CHARGING POINTS MEAN WE'RE NOT ACTUALLY EQUIPPED TO SWITCH TO ELECTRIC?

We are living in an electric wonderland where the government, environmentalists and Elon Musk himself are all striving to point out that electric vehicles (EV) are the future.

The 1.1 million electric and hybrid cars already on Britain's roads suggest that we are listening, and if you ever needed any further reminding that battery-powered motoring is the way forward, a simple glance at petrol and diesel prices will fuel your perspective.

When at home, we have mostly solved the problem of charging our cars. The government has passed legislation stating that new work or residential construction projects must have built-in charging points; that said, charging point access in existing high-rise developments remains an issue.

Yet it is a sheer paucity of accessible points when out and about that's beginning to set off sparks amidst the EV revolution.

And as if the current struggles weren't bad enough, the year 2030 presents additional worries, with the proposed banning of diesel engine motors. This will lead to an estimated 18 million electric and hybrid vehicles on the road by that date, further intensifying the race to charge.

At the current growth rate, only 25 per cent of the required public charging stations will be in place.

The sluggish creation of charging points isn't all the fault of government representatives promising big. In part, it's owing to a global shortage of essential EV charger components, as well as precious metals, such as lithium.

The UK and Germany are current leaders in looking to set up a worldwide-recognised EV charging infrastructure, but the clock is ticking, and putting the brake pedal on the EV revolution would be detrimental not only to the effort put in so far, but to the environment too.





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# TULIP FEVER

If you plant tulip bulbs this month, you can be sure of a bumper display of dazzling flowers come springtime.

There are two main types of tulips:

**BORDER TULIPS** are usually grown as annuals, so they're dug up and thrown away after flowering. They're readily available at garden retail outlets. Despite their name, you can grow them in containers as well as borders.

**SPECIALIST TULIPS** are usually smaller. They'll often naturalise in your garden and flower year after year. Sometimes you can find them at garden retail outlets, but you might need to buy them by mail order or online.

Specialist tulips usually have specific needs, so check you can meet these before you buy, and follow these tips for the best results.

**HEALTHY BULBS:** Select bulbs that are firm and watch out for mould. Don't worry about any flaky skin – this won't affect flowering.

**THE RIGHT NUMBER:** For a border, you'll need 25-50 bulbs for every square metre you want to cover. Use 12-20 bulbs for a 45cm diameter pot.

**CHECK YOUR SOIL:** Border tulips like well-drained soil in a sunny spot. If you're planting in a container, make compost by mixing three parts of multipurpose compost with one part of grit.

**HOW DEEP?** If you're planting border tulips in a flowerbed, as annuals, plant your bulbs 10cm deep with the pointed end up. If you're putting them in pots, plant them 15cm deep.

**FEEDING:** Use a potassium-rich liquid fertiliser such as Tomorite on your border tulips in containers in spring. You don't need to feed the ones in borders.

### DID YOU KNOW?

- > Tulips were first discovered in Kazakhstan.
- > The word 'tulip' comes from the Persian word 'tulipan', meaning 'turban'.
- > During the tulip craze in 17th-century Europe, a single bulb once cost the same as a house in Amsterdam.

# WAVE goodbye TO WEEDS

**D**o the weeds in your garden just keep coming back no matter what you do? If the answer is yes, then maybe it's time to try a different approach.

Natural weed killers are not only better for the environment, but they can also be more effective at banishing weeds in the long term, and they are cheaper too.

### A SALTY SOLUTION

Salt has been used as both a herbicide and a pesticide for centuries and can be highly effective at killing off stubborn garden weeds. Simply dilute three parts water to one part salt, mix and leave to dissolve for 10 minutes. Spray liberally over the weeds and wait for them to die off.

### A JUG OF BOILING WATER

As simple as it sounds, all you need to do is pour boiling water directly over growing weeds to stop them dead in their tracks. Be careful not to splash on any nearby plants or flowers as this could kill them also.

### A SPRINKLE OF BAKING SODA

If you are struggling with weeds growing through the cracks in your patio or pavement, then a liberal sprinkling of baking soda is the perfect solution. Again, be careful not to spill on any healthy vegetation growing nearby.

### A LAYER OF MULCH

Chemical-free and available in abundance, mulch is most effective at killing pesky weeds when layered with newspaper or old cardboard. Plus, this will help to prevent new weeds from growing through.

### A TIPPLE OF VODKA

For weeds that live in the sun, mix 30ml of vodka with two cups of water and a couple of drops of washing-up liquid. Pour onto the weeds and they will quickly dry out and die. This is not as effective on shade-loving weeds.

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England's 1966

**WORLD CUP WIN**

## AHEAD OF THIS YEAR'S WORLD CUP, WHICH STARTS THIS MONTH, WE REMEMBER ENGLAND'S FINEST FOOTBALLING MOMENT

The events of July 30, 1966, have been replayed so many times that, while most of us weren't at Wembley to see Sir Geoff Hurst MBE's hat-trick win England the Jules Rimet Trophy, we might as well have been.

This summer marked the 55th anniversary of that great day, but it was tempered somewhat by the growing list of Three Lions heroes now not with us – in the last few years alone, we have lost Gordon Banks OBE, Ray Wilson MBE, Martin Peters MBE, Nobby Stiles MBE and Jack Charlton OBE DL.

The 1966 competition was the first World Cup to take place in the English-speaking world, and if ever the onus was on the hosts to perform in a tournament that featured just 16 teams, then it was felt in the opening game against Uruguay, when our troops laboured to a goalless draw.

By the second game, though, confidence was

flowing, and the 2-0 score that saw Mexico despatched was repeated in the final group match against France.

In the quarter-final, England again came up against resilient South Americans, as a late Geoff Hurst goal saw off dogged Argentina; and Sir Bobby Charlton OBE's brace in the semi-final was enough to defeat Portugal and their Golden Boot free-scoring attacking legend Eusébio. Four days later, England would be football world champions.

As we head into this year's showpiece, it's clear we now live in a world where the dividing line between success and failure is painfully thin. So with VAR and social media ready to hold Gareth Southgate OBE's men to scrutiny, it's perhaps worth taking a moment to reflect on those heroes of 1966, and in particular, the close calls they endured en route to the ultimate prize.

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