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# Editor's notes...

SEPTEMBER 2023



Nik Allen, Editor

Hello and welcome to this month's edition of **VISION** BillericayShenfield. As we turn the page to a new month, I find myself looking at my own life as chapters in a book. Just as characters in a book evolve through the challenges they face, so too are we continually changing in response to everything happening around us.

Currently, my wife is embarking on a new chapter as she returns to the workforce full-time. This shift brings its own set of challenges, as the balance between work and family takes on new dimensions.

Our little ones are stepping into their own new chapters as they begin school. I look forward to seeing them mature and grow as they make new friends, encounter challenges and learn invaluable life lessons.

Let us remember that the narrative of our lives is never stagnant. Each chapter brings with it an opportunity to learn, to grow and to deepen our understanding of ourselves and those around us.

Just like the most engrossing novels, our lives are full of anticipation for what lies ahead, reminding us that while change can be scary, it's often one of the most exciting parts of life.

I look forward to these next few months as we head into autumn, and hope you enjoy this September edition.

*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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# THE WORLD AT THEIR FEET



Football may not be coming home after England's women lost to Spain in an eventful World Cup Final, but the fact that they made it to the final stage of the tournament signifies another huge advancement for Sarina Wiegman CBE's team, and the sport as a whole in this country.

As the final whistle sounded in Sydney on Sunday, August 20, and the Lionesses collapsed to the floor, many in tears, their big chance to clinch the Women's World Cup had slipped away... for now, at least.

Before the match, England had

been riding a wave of hope. Euro champs from 2021, and under the guidance of Dutch coach Wiegman – recognised as the world's leading female football coach – they had suffered just one defeat in 38 games, a friendly reverse to one of the co-hosts of this tournament, Australia.

Their journey to the final saw them navigate a mass of injuries, temporary loss of form, a penalty shoot-out, and a two-game ban for Lauren James, who was sent off in the quarter-final. Yet even when not playing at their best, they found ways to win – ultimately the sign of a team who have the strength and resilience to overcome challenges.

However, on this occasion, the project fell one result short. Wiegman's expertise was pushed to its maximum. After the game, the players were quick to admit the better side won on the day, as Spain's Olga Carmona fired in the winning goal in the 29th minute.

With their line-up comprising seven members of Barcelona's Champions League-winning side, the Spaniards' skills were evident from the get-go. Indeed, despite

having Ballon d'Or winner Alexia Putellas on the bench owing to ailing fitness, and a wider rift existing within the Spanish squad pre-tournament, Jorge Vilda's side proved to be a formidable opponent.

Perhaps it was England's victory against them in the quarter-finals during Euro 2021 that gave the Spaniards extra impetus, but they were stronger and more clinical when it mattered.

England, who had won their group phase with victories over Haiti, Denmark and China, had then beaten Colombia and Australia en route to the World Cup. They will likely see the defeat as a missed opportunity, particularly with defending champions USA and European powerhouses Germany both eliminated early.

Wiegman, ever the strategist, made changes at the break and shifted formations, yet while England's play improved, ultimately it was Spain who should have extended the lead after Jennifer Hermoso's penalty was brilliantly saved by Mary Earps.

Even 13 minutes of injury time couldn't save the Lionesses, yet there are positives to take.

First, Mary Earps was named FIFA Best Goalkeeper for the tournament – otherwise known as the Golden Glove Award winner. She conceded just three goals in six matches, keeping three clean sheets. The honour was a tremendous comeback for the 30 year old, who has had to battle for her spot as England number one.

Next, we have a nation that continues to embrace the onward trajectory of women's football in England.

The Lionesses remain a team who have rewritten the script, broken records, confronted societal norms, and continue to advocate for more investment and exposure in women's football.

Consider those elements, and the stylish way in which the team continue to galvanise a nation of girls growing up in the game, and in many ways they are true champions.

## FIFA WOMEN'S WORLD CUP 2023™



Photo credit: James Gourley/Shutterstock, Morgan Hancock/Shutterstock

## FIFA WOMEN'S WORLD CUP 2023™ THE FINAL



# QuIRKY STUDIES

Are you looking to pursue further education but don't want to choose the same course as everyone else? In that case, these quirky university programmes may grab your attention.

## VITICULTURE AND OENOLOGY

Do you love a tippie or two, or want to know more about the science of winemaking? Discover the wonderful world of viticulture and oenology. These courses provide all the skills and knowledge needed to become a vineyard manager, winemaker or winetaster.

## HOROLOGY

If you are fascinated by time, then horology could be the course for you. Focusing on the art and science of time management, this is the perfect course for budding entrepreneurs who understand that time is money!

## ETHICAL HACKING

Offering a surprisingly high graduate employment rate, ethical hacking focuses on the study of cybersecurity in order to protect businesses from computer hacking. Ideal for computer whizzes.

## ETHNOBOTANY

If you have embraced the recent trend for greenery in your home, then you may be interested in a course that looks at how humans respond to and benefit from plants. A great choice for those who want to pursue a career in the field of botany.

## CIRCUS PERFORMANCE

Yes, you read that correctly, you can pursue a university degree in circus performance. One of the most exciting courses we found, you can learn a whole host of skills and receive top physical training. Because who didn't dream of running away to join the circus at some point?

## SURF SCIENCE

Another degree course that sounds like great fun, surf science, as you may have already guessed, involves the study of surfing. Whether you want to set up your own business or work for one of the big names in surfing, this is one degree course that promises not to be boring!



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# track lighting

Track lighting is one of the most versatile lighting solutions and is currently experiencing a surge in popularity.

It is energy efficient | It is cost-effective | It is simple to reconfigure

Here's our advice on how to use it in your home for maximum impact.

### What is track lighting?

When you think about track lighting, you are likely to imagine a series of individual lamps, known as heads, that slide along a metal track. While this is the case for some track lighting systems, there are now many other styles to choose from. Typically, track lighting is hardwired and connected to a wall switch. The heads can be focused spotlights, radiant spotlights or pendants.

### What are the benefits of track lighting?

There are many benefits to track lighting, including: It is easy to install | It is customisable and can be

### How to use track lighting in your home:

As track lighting is so customisable, it can be used in nearly every area of your home, but it is particularly useful in the kitchen, hallway, living room and in a home office.

Some of our top ideas for where to place track lighting in your home are:

1. Run a track along your hallway ceiling and aim fixtures at any artwork or directly at the wall.
2. Customise a track to fit your kitchen space such as over an island or onto the countertops.
3. Install a track system in a dark wardrobe and position several heads where you need light.
4. Use in rooms with high ceilings and opt for white fixture heads which will blend in more effectively.



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INTERIOR DESIGN PROFILE

ELICYON



HOME & DIY

Elicyon was founded by designer Charu Gandhi, whose love of crafting has served as the inspiration for many of her designs.

The studio was founded in 2014 and has gone on to transform interiors all over the world. Gandhi claims her main influences come from "art deco, mid-century and Biedermeier", although other global influences serve as inspiration from time to time.

ABOUT ELICYON

Elicyon's style is distinctive, pairing neutral shades with darker brown accents to create a rich contrast that adds an elegant touch to the space. Designs are kept simple, working with the space to make the most of different features, while adding detail through furnishings, artwork and accessories.

Each project is carefully considered, creating a space that is practical and well orientated, while still providing a beautiful and pleasing aesthetic.

TOP TIPS FOR EMULATING THE ELICYON STYLE

With some simple touches, you too can emulate the Elicyon style, creating a look that works across different home types. Some top tips include:

- Keep spaces light and airy by using shades of white and light brown in your home. This can make spaces feel larger, while also helping to keep them serene.
- Elicyon uses darker accents across furniture, shelving and accessories to add some contrast. Think rich browns such as walnut to create a luxury space.
- Add shelving with carefully selected and placed accessories to add detail and bring personality into the room.
- A subtle pop of colour through greenery or a colourful vase can add interest and help break up some of the neutral colours.

Elicyon's style is subtle but warm, and can help transform a neutral space in your home to add depth and personality.

Photo credit: Elicyon.com





# Winter HEALTH CHECK

## THE FIVE THINGS YOU NEED TO DO NOW TO ENSURE YOUR HOME DOESN'T LET YOU DOWN THIS WINTER

**W**inter is nearly upon us, and it's the time of year when the prospect of something going awry in our homes can spell disaster. It might be more than just the cold shower resulting from a broken boiler that leaves you shuddering – wait until you see the call-out fee to get it fixed!

That's why giving some essential parts of your home a health check now may save you from some wintry wails of terror.

### BRILLIANT BOILER

Ensuring that your boiler is serviced by a registered gas engineer should be a must ahead of the cold season. The good news is a full service is usually affordable and can cost as little as £60, and it's something you should be performing annually.

### REMARKABLE RADIATORS

Bleeding radiators is essential to efficient central heating. Not only will it save you money, but it'll help to keep your house warmer too.

The process of bleeding is simple and doesn't require specialist help. By easing out air trapped in the system, you'll return your radiators to their natural efficiency.

### PERFECT PIPES

It can also be a good idea to insulate exposed pipes before the winter months. This will reduce heating loss and also help prevent them from freezing and bursting during cold spells.

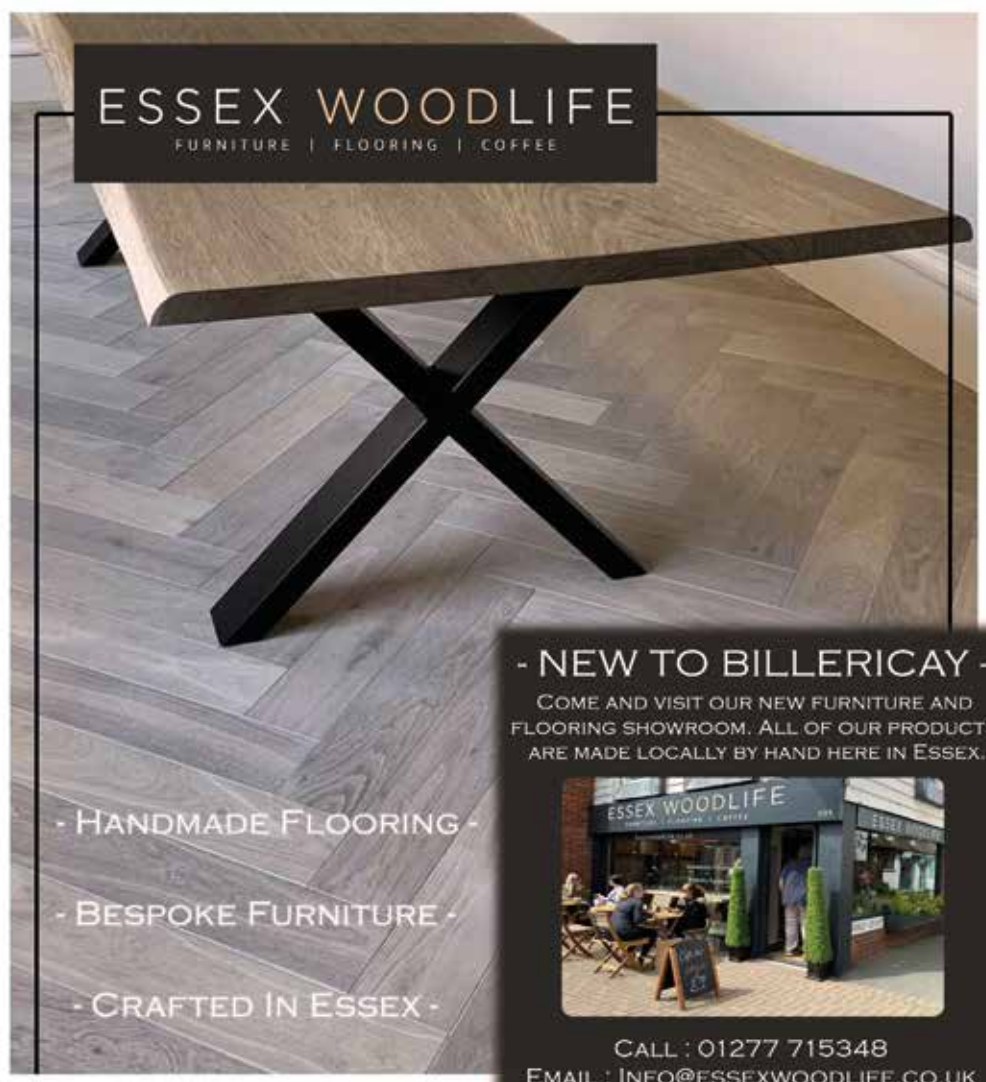
### EXTERIOR EXCELLENCE

Debris such as leaves and twigs can accumulate in gutters, pipes and drains throughout the autumn. It pays to check and clear out these areas if necessary to ensure you don't have any lingering blockages that are going to

cause problems when the rainy season really hits.

### WICKED WINDOWS AND DOORS

Be sure to go round the house, checking all windows and doors close properly. Now is the time to make small repairs to gaps and draughty grooves where cold air will whistle through.



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# Peaceful plants

**D**id you know that at least one-third of the adult population suffers from some form of insomnia? Furthermore, an estimated 20 per cent of teenagers get less than five hours of sleep a night. Not getting enough sleep can cause a whole host of physical and mental health problems, but there are ways to help you drift off naturally.

**How can plants help you to sleep?**  
If you suffer from insomnia but you don't want to start taking prescribed medications, then indoor plants offer a more natural way to aid sleep. Fragrant plants have been shown to calm nerves and reduce anxiety, whereas other types of plants act as air purifiers and absorb toxins.

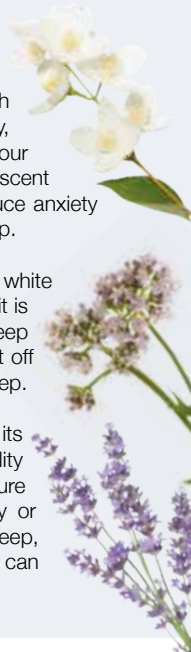
**The best indoor plants for insomnia**  
**GOLDEN POTHOS:** Golden pothos, also known as devil's ivy, is great for purifying the air, which can help to aid sleep. This plant looks best when placed in a hanging basket, making it a good choice for

homes with children or pets.

**JASMINE:** If you struggle to switch off and relax at the end of the day, then jasmine is the perfect plant for your bedroom. Studies show that the sweet scent produced by jasmine can help to reduce anxiety and improve your overall quality of sleep.

**VALERIAN:** Boasting small pink and white flowers, a valerian plant is as pretty as it is practical. Used for centuries to cure sleep problems, valerian can help you to drift off more easily and enjoy better-quality sleep.

**LAVENDER:** Lavender is known for its sleep-inducing qualities, with the ability to lower your heart rate, blood pressure and stress levels. If you have a baby or young child who struggles to get to sleep, the scent of lavender in their bedroom can make all the difference.



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Dudbrook Hall has been building a new care home within the rear of the existing Dudbrook Hall. This will feature:

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St Michaels Homes are looking forward to when we can move across from our existing care home, Dudbrook Hall, into our new state-of-the-art care home Dudbrook House. Currently, we are planning to move into our new home by early September 2023. We are looking forward to welcoming newcomers to our new home, and all current residents at Dudbrook Hall will also be moving across to our new care home facility. At St Michaels Homes, we can offer support with our day placement service, short stay (i.e. for a weekend or week) or respite care. This gives a carer the peace of mind that their loved one is safe and sound, and within a friendly/social environment where they can enjoy all the same advantages as our residents. This also give you, the main carer, time to relax and enjoy

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With its slow pace of country living and manor house look, you would nearly imagine you have stepped back in time. However, the home is

*All residents within our current care home Dudbrook Hall will be transferred over to the new state of the art care home at its current lower rate. This offer will only last until end of July 2023 all new placements with us will be at our new rates from 1st August 2023. Dudbrook Hall currently has availability for respite stay and short term placements.*

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# FROM YOUR AREA



LOCAL NEWS

## LEGO sessions at library to teach children vital skills



Photo credit: Essex County Council

LEGO sessions are launching at Shenfield Library to encourage children to develop a variety of skills.

Essex County Council's (ECC) project was launched earlier this year, offering children the chance to develop their problem-solving, literacy and coding skills.

Now, the project is expanding to Shenfield after councillor Louise McKinlay, Deputy Leader of ECC (pictured above), received a positive response to enquiring about possible interest in the sessions.

Cllr McKinlay has now secured funding for the equipment and training for the sessions, which will support children in learning about science, technology, engineering and mathematics.

Cllr McKinlay said: "The project was jointly funded by two of the council's programmes, Digital Essex and Multiply in Essex. Since launching in May, sessions have been taking place in libraries across our six Levelling Up priority areas and I am delighted that we are able to build on that success and fund the expansion of the programme across Essex."

To check availability, visit [library-events.essex.gov.uk](http://library-events.essex.gov.uk)

## Man charged with four counts of burglary

A man has been charged with a series of burglaries, including at three homes in Billericay and a home in Basildon.

Detectives with Basildon CID have been investigating incidents where car keys were stolen from homes and vehicles taken from driveways.

On Sunday, January 8, car keys were stolen from a home in the Basildon area, before a BMW was

taken from outside the property. The stolen vehicle was recovered the following day after it failed to stop for officers.

Three properties in Billericay, all within walking distance of each other, were targeted in the early hours of Wednesday, February 15, with vehicles taken from outside two of the properties. All vehicles taken were later recovered.

Officers arrested Callum O'Brien, 29, of Swanstead, Basildon, on Sunday, July 30. He was later charged with four counts of burglary and appeared at Southend Magistrates' Court on Monday, July 31.

He was remanded in custody until a further hearing at Basildon Crown Court on Tuesday, August 29, as **VISION** BillericayShenfield went to print.

## Work to begin on 76-bed care home development

Work on a new care home in Billericay is set to begin this year.

Permission was granted last November for a 76-bed care home specialising in dementia care and a 24-hour service for elderly people on green belt land at Coxes Farm Road in Billericay.

It has now been confirmed that the site has been sold to Barchester Healthcare, with work set to begin soon and a completion date of July to September 2025. The development has been designed by Edmund Williams Architects.

The care home will include en-suite wet rooms, lounge and dining spaces, cinema, hair salon, activity spaces, roof terrace and landscaped gardens, and will also provide more than 60 new jobs.

Barchester Healthcare has been contacted for comment.



Photo credit: Edmund Williams Architects





LOCAL NEWS

# BURGHART for BRENTWOOD

Alex Burghart MP for Brentwood and Ongar



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The summer of 2023 has been a mixed bag – with some of the hottest weather on record during July, followed by some of the wettest weather we have experienced all year during August.

It's been a tough time for vegetable growers – be they farmers, allotmenters or back garden veg plotters – because whatever the plants needed from the weather at each stage of growing, the exact opposite has been happening. However, from what I can see from pleased Facebook posts, and looking over the fences of our local allotments, it just about worked out alright and crops have been harvested.

Earlier in the summer, I was very pleased to be able to visit the Friday coffee morning in Doddinghurst, which is a cheery group of men and women who meet

for coffee, cake and a chat each Friday. They had a whole schedule of summer activities planned, so I hope the weather did not get in the way.

I was very pleased to catch up with Eileen and Irene (pictured), who I first met at the coffee morning four years ago and had a lovely picture taken with them, which I was able to recreate!

By the time this edition of VISION Billericay Shenfield is distributed, the children will be back at school, and the public exam results will be in and digested to allow older teenagers to move on to Sixth Form, college, apprenticeships or higher education. As always, I wish them well in all they do at this transitional stage in their lives, and hope they make the most of their youthful enthusiasm and the opportunities available to them.

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# Iconic annual carnival brings community together

The Burnham-on-Crouch Carnival is many things to many different people. Undoubtedly perfectly picturesque, and most certainly brimming with Britishness, it welcomes in thousands of tourists to this attractive part of Essex.

The carnival, which takes place on the last weekend in September, is the culmination of a number of events that decorate the rich community vibe of this special town.

In the preceding month, Quay Day on the bank holiday Monday in August sees the waterfront feature an eclectic mix of music, art, demonstrations and water-based activities, with the successful food and drink festival having appeared earlier in the year.

As for the carnival itself, it is a festival of community life whose origins go back to the early 20th century. Founded as a modest gathering of local musicians and artists, it aimed to showcase the unique blend of talent that flourished in this part of the UK.

The first editions saw poets reciting against

the backdrop of the estuary's waters, with streets lined with performers who drew inspiration from Burnham's idyllic ambience.

These days, the carnival is the centrepiece of a four-day explosion of energy, with the town's age-old High Street transformed into a magical place of discovery, with stalls, rides, music, history and art.

What makes this such an ideal location is its placement – far enough away from the nearest major conurbation (Chelmsford) to have its own personality and style, it's inland from the bluster of the Essex coast, yet served by the River Crouch. The town itself dates back more than 1,000 years and is mentioned in the Domesday Book.

And when darkness descends, the charm of Burnham-on-Crouch only increases, as one of the largest night-time processions in the land is lit up in all its glory.

Photo credit: Daniel Reed Photography



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**COMEDY NIGHT AT THE CRICKET CLUB**  
Billericay Cricket Club, 2 Blunts Wall Road, Billericay, CM12 9SA  
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**THURROCK RAMBLERS: SHENFIELD TO BRENTWOOD VIA HERONGATE**  
Meet at Brentwood Station, Warley, Brentwood, CM14 5EZ  
Sunday, September 24, 9.50am

Join the Thurrock Ramblers on a walk through Hutton Mount and Highfield Wood on to Herongate for a lunch stop at The Green Man, then through Thorndon

Park and Hart's Wood back to Brentwood Station. Meet new people, get some exercise and enjoy the outdoors.

Find out more at [www.facebook.com/events/665229515079886](http://www.facebook.com/events/665229515079886)

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HISTORY

# Get over TO DOVER



For centuries, Dover has been a strategic stronghold guarding the English coast. But beneath the town's castle, perched on the iconic White Cliffs, lies a hidden network of secret wartime tunnels and chambers that stretches back centuries. And the great news is that you can visit these tunnels and discover their mysteries for yourself.

## WAY BACK WHEN

The origins of these tunnels date back to the medieval era. They were first constructed after the 1216/17 civil war to connect various parts of the castle, making it difficult for attackers to reach the main gate.

Fast forward to the early 19th century, when the threat of Napoleon invading had everyone on edge. The castle's engineer-in-chief, the brilliant William Twiss, stepped in and turned the existing tunnels into an impressive stronghold that even Napoleon would think twice about attempting to break into.

## WAR STORIES

During the Second World War, Dover's tunnels housed a military command centre, where strategists and commanders made crucial decisions for defending the nation.

The tunnels also doubled as an air raid shelter, providing refuge for thousands of locals seeking safety from the relentless bombings. As the air raid sirens wailed, families huddled together, filled with a mix of fear, resilience and hope for a brighter tomorrow.

In addition, a new tunnel complex was built to provide a hospital safe from air attacks and shelling, where the Royal Army Medical Corps, including surgeons, nurses, orderlies and cooks, cared for those injured in the conflict.

## SEE IT FOR YOURSELF

If you visit the castle today, you can walk through the secret wartime tunnels and parts of the medieval and Georgian sections. You can also visit the wartime hospital.

Tunnel visits are limited, and access is not suitable for everyone. Please get in touch with Dover Castle before making your visit or go to [www.english-heritage.org.uk/visit/places/dover-castle](http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/visit/places/dover-castle) to find out more.



Photo credit: english-heritage.org.uk



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## 2. Cost-effective

Hyperlocal advertising can be cost-effective because it is focused on a specific local area, meaning that businesses can reach their target audience without wasting money on broader marketing campaigns that may not be as effective.

## 3. Increased engagement

Hyperlocal advertising can lead to increased engagement with customers because it is focused on the local community and the interests of the people living in that area. By targeting customers with ads that are relevant to their interests and needs, companies can build a stronger relationship and increase their chances of repeat business.



## 4. Improved search engine optimization

Hyperlocal advertising can improve a business' search engine optimization because it targets customers who are likely to be searching for businesses and services in their local area. By optimizing their website and other online presence for local search terms, businesses can improve their visibility and attract more customers.

## 5. Better return on investment (ROI)

Hyperlocal advertising can lead to a better ROI because it is focused on a specific area and customer base. Targeting customers who are likely to be interested in their products or services, can increase conversion rates and revenue.



IS YOUR BUSINESS READY TO BENEFIT FROM HYPERLOCAL ADVERTISING? CONTACT VISION TO FIND OUT MORE





# Surprising foods THAT CAN BE COOKED IN A PIZZA OVEN

**P**izza ovens are all the rage, with more and more people embracing this simple and versatile method of outdoor cooking. However, you can cook much more than just pizza in one of these bad boys!

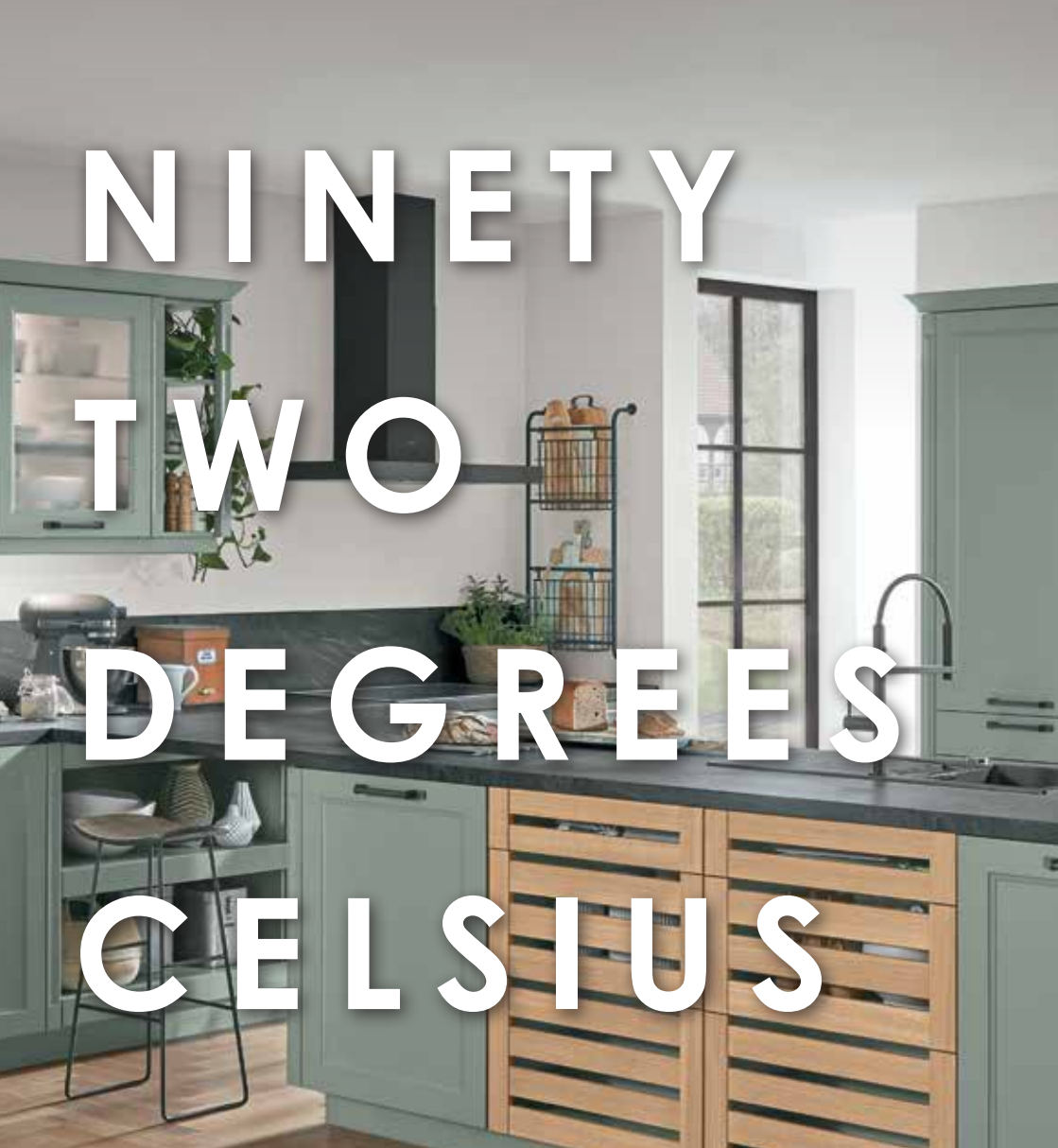
**FRESHLY BAKED BREAD:** If you love everything about delicious dough, then you will be pleased to hear that you can bake bread in wood-fired pizza ovens. To create the perfect loaf, make sure you regularly turn the bread to ensure even baking. Don't forget that you still need to leave your dough to rise before cooking.

**SLOW-COOKED MEATS:** For meat lovers, a large pizza oven that features a door will allow you to slow cook meat to perfection. Place your chosen cut in a casserole dish and cover tightly with foil. Then cook for around four hours until the meat is tender and juicy.

**FISH DISHES:** Whether you love a fish stew or you prefer a piece of lightly grilled fish, a pizza oven is a great alternative to a traditional oven. Simply pop your chosen fish in a roasting tray with herbs and spices or place on a skillet or cast-iron pan to grill.

**VEGAN CURRIES:** If you have a vegetarian or vegan in the family, then a pizza oven can be used to create a whole host of vegan-friendly dishes such as curries, chilli and stews. Be sure to gently fry your chosen spices first to release their flavour, add your selected liquid and veggies, and then cook in the pizza oven until soft.

**DECADENT DESSERTS:** Think that a pizza oven is only suitable for preparing savoury dishes? Think again. You can also bake desserts such as pies and pastries in this outdoor cooking device.



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# NUTS FOR FREE

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When the warmth of summer begins to fade, September provides a delightful free gift in the form of tasty nuts. Here are some you're sure to find in the countryside near you.

**NUTS, WHOLE HAZELNUTS** – Shake the branch of a hazel tree whose leaves are turning yellow, and the nuts should fall to the ground. Eat them raw and enjoy their slightly buttery flavour or use them to make your favourite chocolate spread.

**CHESTNUTS ROASTING ON AN OPEN FIRE** – Our next nutty star is the sweet chestnut – not to be confused with conkers, their inedible cousins. Conkers are round and shiny and come in husks sparsely covered with thorn-like spines. Sweet chestnuts are pointed at one end and flat on one side, with husks densely covered with needle-like spines. Chestnuts are ripe when they fall to the ground. Pierce the skins first before roasting for 15-20 minutes at 200°C/Fan 180°C/Gas 6. Eat them as they are, or use them in sweet or savoury recipes.

**FROM MIGHTY OAKS** – Yes, you really can eat acorns. They're ripe when you can pick them easily. First, crack them open with a nutcracker. Then soak them in warm water for a day or two, changing the water frequently, to get rid of the bitter-tasting tannins. Once dry, roast them for 15-20 minutes at 180°C/Fan 160°C/Gas 4 – and enjoy.

**BEECH BABY** – Beech nuts are ready when they fall to the ground. It's best to roast them before eating because they contain saponin, which can be poisonous if consumed in large amounts. Cook for about 20 minutes at 180°C/Fan 160°C/Gas 4. And to be safe, don't eat more than a handful at once – and don't give them to children or pets.

Nut foraging can be rewarding but remember to respect the environment. Only take what you need, and leave plenty for local wildlife.

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# WILLKOMMEN KANE



**W**hat will England captain Harry Kane MBE's departure for Germany mean for Spurs, for England, and for the man himself?

It was the most drawn-out transfer saga of the summer, with neutral football fans across the country breathing a collective sigh of relief when Spurs and England forward Harry Kane finally pulled the plug on his Premier League time – for now – by signing for German giants Bayern Munich at the start of August.

While the banal 'will he/won't he' rhetoric from our sports broadcasters is at an end, attention now switches to whether the brilliant frontman can make a success of his time in the Bundesliga.

On the face of it, he should. The German league has the same physical, tactical and technical prowess of the Premier League.

And despite Bayern dominating domestic affairs, it's fiercely competitive, which the 30-year-old will thrive on. Even outside those elements, Kane's ability to affect play from everywhere around the attacking third will surely mean he will shine.

What's more, his exposure to new players, new challenges and new ideas may enhance his already stellar contributions to the England national team.

Currently just 47 goals shy of Alan Shearer OBE's record, Kane, as the second-highest all-time goalscorer in the Premier League, will likely want to return to home shores if he hopes to take the top spot.

Kane made his Bayern debut in a 3-0 defeat to RB Leipzig in the German Super Cup, though things will surely improve.

As for Spurs, chairman Daniel Levy is noted as a shrewd and tough negotiator, yet he was ultimately backed into a corner by the fact Kane only had a year left on his contract at Tottenham. To cash in now, at £86million, is common-sense bean-counting, rather than enduring the financial and emotional pain of losing that same player for nothing in 10 months' time.

Meanwhile, in Richarlison, Kulusevski and Son the Lilywhites have enough firepower to compensate for their talisman's loss.



SPORT

Photo credit: Xinhua/Shutterstock



# Barbie

## AMBITION



### WHY MARGOT ROBBIE HAS THE FORMULA RIGHT

Margot Robbie's elevation to Hollywood heavyweight is one of Tinseltown's true success stories.

The skill of the Aussie, who once lived in Clapham and recently revealed she still has her old Oyster card, is in her groundedness. Sure, she is a stunning multimillionaire, a pioneer for women in film and even a successful businesswoman, as the co-founder of LuckyChap Entertainment with British husband Tom Ackerley. Yet a decade in the spotlight has taught her an important lesson.

"I think humility is so important in this industry," she begins. "It's been a big part of who I am since I was a child, so I have grown up with respect for others as well as the need to present myself in the right way.

"I know very well how stardom can change you, and if you lose sight of that sense of humility, you will be exposed for it because as much as this industry is rewarding, the media spotlight can be extremely unforgiving too."

A case in point is Robbie's courageousness to back away from the powerful, punchy, script-perfect roles that have characterised so much of her success. Few actresses would have the bravery to strip their creativity back to a long blonde wig, a wardrobe of pink and white outfits, and the kooky babe appeal that comes with portraying Barbie, a character that has been entwined in the childhoods of girls for decades.

More than that, though, as executive producer, her commitment to the LuckyChap project – large parts of which were filmed at Warner Bros. Studios Leavesden – has meant she has stayed true to a story that has

inspired so many. Perhaps if Disney had approached its reworking of *Snow White* with quite the same level of respect, it wouldn't be looking at another catastrophic woke failure.

Instead, aided by the brilliant Greta Gerwig, Robbie stuck to a storyline true to Barbie, and had no intention of betraying that narrative. "Greta and I knew just how vital it was that we got this just right," she says. "We're thrilled with the outcome and hope that the audiences are too.

"I think it's every girl's dream to be Barbie, and every adult's dream to make a girl's dream come true, so this always did feel like a very special project."

It is. The movie took more than \$1 billion at the box office in its opening fortnight – an almost unprecedented footfall endorsement that clearly paves the way for the *Bombshell*, *Babylon*, *Suicide Squad*, *The Wolf of Wall Street* and *I, Tonya*, star to reach further into the creative locker for her next storyline.

*Queen of the Air* is up next – a period drama based on a true story that takes place on the dizzy heights of the trapeze, utilising the script from the 2013 book by Dean Jensen.

Before that, Robbie can delight in her current project setting off a Barbie-core fashion trend that is adding bright colour, innocence and no small amount of fun to the high street, at a time when we need it most.

She adds: "It's a delight when things work out. There's pressure to do everything justice, all the while conquering the self-doubt inside. It's always a battle, but fear has played a big part in where I've got to today, and hopefully I'll always thrive off it."



# LAWN AERATION

*Why, when and how to do it*

Keeping your lawn looking luscious is no easy feat, and you need to make sure you employ essential lawn care practices if you want your grass to glisten in the sun. Find out everything there is to know about lawn aeration and why it's important below.

## WHAT IS LAWN AERATION?

The word 'aeration' means to allow air to act on something. In the case of gardening, it is the process of poking small, long holes in the ground in order to provide the soil with good air circulation. Lawn aeration can also help to break through piled-up thatch (a layer of dead and living grass roots) in high-maintenance lawns and to reduce lawn compaction, which is when the soil becomes compressed.

## WHY DO YOU NEED TO AERATE YOUR LAWN?

The soil in your garden needs both air and water to ensure its ecosystem remains in optimal condition. Therefore, good drainage conditions and adequate top soil intake are vital. By aerating your lawn, you allow air to enter into the soil. This leads to a gaseous exchange in which the grass roots suck oxygen in and expel carbon dioxide. It also allows water to enter more easily, which is essential during the hotter months of the year.

## WHEN IS THE BEST TIME TO AERATE YOUR LAWN?

There are two perfect times to aerate your lawn: spring and autumn. This is because, during these months of the year, your soil is typically moist and suitable for holes to be poked in easily.

## HOW TO AERATE YOUR LAWN USING A GARDEN FORK:

If you have a small- to medium-sized garden, you can aerate your lawn using a garden fork.

- > Water your lawn the day before you plan to aerate it.
- > Firmly spike the surface down to at least 3cm. Repeat this technique every 10cm.
- > Move the fork back and forth a little and then pull out.

If you have a large garden, you may want to invest in a lawn aerator to save you time and energy.

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THE POISON GARDEN

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Home to more than 100 toxic, intoxicating and narcotic plants, the Poison Garden at The Alnwick Garden in Northumberland is not for the faint-hearted. With a sign on the black iron gate emblazoned with the message, 'These plants can kill', do you dare to enter?

See some of the deadliest plants in the garden...

### THE GYMPIE-GYMPIE

A fairly new addition to the Poison Garden, gympie-gympie is known as the world's most venomous plant and is said to deliver a sting similar to being burnt with hot acid and electrocuted simultaneously.

### LABURNUM TREE

The second most poisonous tree in the UK, the laburnum tree contains a poison called cytisine. In fact, this tree is so poisonous that if one of its branches fell to the floor, lay for several months and then was picked up by your dog, it is unlikely your dog would survive the hour.

### HELLEBORES

The root of this deadly plant contains a cardiotoxin that will stop your heart in an instant. Its sap can also irritate the skin, so this plant should only be handled when wearing gloves.

### CHERRY LAUREL

Cherry laurel, also known as English laurel, can kill you even if all you're doing is trimming its leaves. This plant contains cyanogenic glycosides and cyanide ions; when these two components are combined, they create cyanide gas which can be deadly in a confined space.

### DEADLY NIGHTSHADE

As the name suggests, deadly nightshade is a poisonous plant that can cause a whole host of nasty symptoms including blurred vision, a skin rash, headaches, slurred speech, hallucinations and eventually death. In fact, eating just two to four berries can kill a child.

Other deadly plants on show include:

- ☠️ **THE KHAT PLANT** – contains a carcinogen that causes mouth cancer.
- ☠️ **YEW TREE** – eating a small number of its leaves can be fatal for livestock and humans.
- ☠️ **HOGWEED** – contains toxins that are activated by light, causing pain and skin lesions.

If you dare to enter...

The Poison Garden is open to the general public and entrance is included with a day ticket to The Alnwick Garden. Remember to follow all the guidelines to stay safe.



GARDENING







PETS



# HOW TO STORE PET FOOD

Did you know that the way you store your pet food can make a big difference in both its quality and its freshness? Discover the best practices for pet food storage below and keep your pet happy and healthy.

**HOW TO STORE UNOPENED PET FOOD**  
If you buy your pet food in bulk, then you need to make sure you store any food you are not using in the right way. As a general rule, both unopened dry and wet pet food should be kept in a dark and moisture-free place such as a kitchen cupboard or pantry. It is not a good idea to store pet food in your garage as humidity and temperatures can fluctuate.

**HOW TO STORE OPENED DRY PET FOOD**  
Once opened, dry pet food should be kept in its original packaging where possible, as these are typically designed to keep the contents fresher for longer. If you do not have its original packaging,

store it in an airtight container to avoid contamination. All opened dry pet food should be kept in a dark and cool place.

**HOW TO STORE OPENED WET PET FOOD**  
Once opened, wet pet food should be consumed right away or any leftovers kept in the fridge, where they will stay fresh for two to three days. Always make sure you cover any unconsumed wet pet food so that it does not dry out. Allow any refrigerated wet pet food to return to room temperature before giving it to your pet, especially for cats who prefer their food slightly warmer.

**HOW TO STORE RAW PET FOOD**  
Store-bought raw pet food usually comes frozen so you will naturally choose to store these in your freezer until you are ready to thaw for eating. If not frozen, raw pet food can be stored in the fridge for up to four days. Ideally, raw pet food should be consumed in a single sitting.



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# PUZZLES & TRIVIA

PUZZLES

Answers: see end of The VISION Listings

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- ▶ BORAGE
- ▶ CARAWAY
- ▶ CATNIP
- ▶ CHERVIL
- ▶ CINNAMON
- ▶ DILL
- ▶ FENNEL
- ▶ FENUGREEK
- ▶ GINGER
- ▶ MACE
- ▶ MARJORAM
- ▶ MINT
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- ▶ SAFFRON
- ▶ TARRAGON
- ▶ THYME

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Y	Y	P	H	A	E	F	N	L	L	D	O	C	Q	Q
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T	S	A	F	F	R	O	N	E	G	I	N	G	E	R
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## DID YOU KNOW?

- ▶ In 1921, women were banned by the FA from playing in Football League grounds. The ban would not be lifted for 50 years.
- ▶ The first women's FA Cup final took place in 1971 and saw Southampton win 4-1 to Stewarton Thistle (now Kilmarnock FC).
- ▶ The England women's team is fourth in the FIFA world rankings. Sweden is in third place, Germany in second place and the USA in first place.
- ▶ Jamaica's women's team was able to compete in the 2019 Women's World Cup thanks to a fundraising initiative spearheaded by Cedella Marley, daughter of Bob Marley.
- ▶ Chelsea FC player Sam Kerr is reportedly the highest-paid women's football player, earning just under £400,000 a year.

## WORD LADDER

RAIN
DROP

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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# 7

## MOST COMMONLY ASKED gynaecological QUESTIONS

When it comes to your vagina, it is normal to have a lot of questions, but you may feel embarrassed about asking your GP about your sexual health. Find out the answers to the most commonly asked gynaecological questions below.

### 1. Will the contraceptive pill make me gain weight?

There are multiple studies that show that the contraceptive pill does not cause weight gain. However, there are some that may increase your appetite.

### 2. Can I catch an STD from a toilet seat?

While a toilet seat carries a lot of bacteria which can be passed on, you cannot catch a sexually transmitted disease from sitting on one.

### 3. Is douching the best way to clean my vagina?

No! Douching is not recommended as a way to clean the vagina as it can disrupt its delicate balance of good and bad bacteria and lead to infections such as thrush. The vagina is self-cleaning, which means that internal cleaning is not necessary. Instead, wash externally with warm water or a specially formulated intimate wash.

### 4. What is the best way to treat period cramps?

Over-the-counter pain relief such as ibuprofen offers one of the most effective ways to treat period cramps. A warm bath and a hot water bottle can also work wonders.

### 5. Can I get pregnant on my period?

Although unlikely, it is possible to get pregnant on your period. If you have a short interval between each period, meaning you ovulate early in your cycle, you can fall pregnant.

### 6. Can I have sex on my period?

Yes, you can. Although some couples prefer not to have sex at this time, it is perfectly safe to have sex when you are on your period.

### 7. Why does my vagina smell?

Everyone's vagina has its own unique scent, and it is important to know your own so that you can easily notice any changes. A healthy vagina should have a mild, musky scent that is not unpleasant. If you notice an unpleasant odour, this may be a sign of an infection, and you should see your GP or visit your local sexual health clinic.



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# BACK PAIN *be gone!*

Banish back pain for good with these three yoga poses that promise to align your body, reduce stress and eliminate any discomfort you are experiencing.

### THE CAT-COW

A great yoga pose for beginners, the cat-cow stretches and mobilises your spine whilst also stretching the torso, shoulders and neck.

- > On all fours, place your wrists underneath your shoulders and your knees underneath your hips.
- > Balance your weight evenly between all four points.
- > Inhale as you look up and allow your stomach to drop down towards the mat.
- > Exhale as you tuck your chin into your chest and arch your spine towards the ceiling.
- > Repeat for one minute.

### THE DOWNWARD-FACING DOG

This pose helps to relieve back pain and sciatica and also works out any imbalances in the body.

- > Get on all fours and place your hands in alignment with your shoulders and your knees under your hips.
- > Press into your hands, tuck your toes under and lift your knees up.
- > Bring your sitting bones up toward the ceiling.
- > Press firmly into your hands and the soles of your feet.
- > Keep your head in line with your upper arms.
- > Hold this pose for one minute.

### THE EXTENDED TRIANGLE

This classic pose is great for alleviating back pain, neck pain and sciatica. It works by stretching the spine, hips and groin, and strengthening the shoulders, chest and legs.

- > Step your feet three to four feet apart.
- > Turn your left toes to face forward and your right toes out at an angle.
- > Lift your arms up to the sides, parallel to the floor and with your palms facing down.
- > Hinge at your right hip to tilt to the side with your arm and torso, keeping your arms straight.
- > Bring your right hand down to your leg or onto the floor
- > Extend your left arm up and turn your head to look at the ceiling.
- > Hold this pose for one minute and repeat on the other side.



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It is sensible to be screened regularly as spotting any changes in cells early on can often prevent cervical cancer. A cervical screening test (or smear test) looks at the health of your cervix and for any abnormal cells. Early detection and treatment of any abnormal cells can prevent cervical cancer developing. You can ask us any questions you like during screening. Our experienced staff are always on hand to comfort and reassure you.

### WHO SHOULD HAVE A CERVICAL SMEAR?

Women aged between 25 and 50 should be screened every three years. If you are a woman aged between 50 and 65, it's best to be screened every five years.

### WHAT HAPPENS IN A CERVICAL SMEAR?

A speculum is inserted into the vagina, which can be uncomfortable, but shouldn't be painful. A small brush is used to take a sample of cells from the lining of the cervix and deposited either on a slide (sometimes called a 'smear' test), or in a preserving fluid. It is then sent to the laboratory to be examined. Any early changes in the cells of the cervix can be seen.

### HOW WE CAN HELP IF WE FIND ABNORMAL CELLS

Treatment for abnormal cells can vary. It's likely you'll go and see a gynaecologist for treatment, which may include:

**Colposcopy** - a microscope is used to examine the cells on the cervix in more detail, and further treatments can be performed to remove or destroy the abnormal cells. You generally don't stay overnight for this procedure but are seen as an outpatient (day case).

**LLETZ (large loop excision of the transformation zone), sometimes called LEEP (loop electrosurgical excision procedure)** - this procedure removed the abnormal cells with a thin wire loop. This is usually done under a local anaesthetic. The removed tissue may then be sent to the laboratory for examination.

**Laser therapy (or laser ablation)** - this treatment destroys abnormal cells by vaporising them with a hot beam of light.

**Cryotherapy** - a cold probe is used to freeze away the abnormal cells

**Cone biopsy** - a minor operation to remove a cone of tissue from your cervix where the abnormal cells are located. This biopsy is usually done under general anaesthetic as a day case or overnight stay. The tissue is then sent to the laboratory for examination.



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BEAUTY



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*What is marula oil?*

Marula oil is derived from two sources of the African marula tree, either extracted from the marula nut or the soft kernel seeds of the marula fruit. Marula oil has multiple uses, functioning as a cooking oil, massage oil and a beauty ingredient.

*What does marula oil contain?*

- Marula oil contains a range of beneficial components, including:
  - Amino acids, such as L-arginine and glutamic acid, which have hydrating and anti-ageing properties
  - Fatty acids, including stearic, oleic and palmitic acids, which have emollient and moisturising benefits
  - Antioxidants, such as phenolic compounds and vitamins E and C, which can help prevent sun damage

*How to use marula oil*

**FOR YOUR SKIN:** Marula oil is lightweight and is absorbed easily, making it ideal for use on the skin. Perfect for dry and/or ageing skin, as well as for stretch mark prevention, apply three or four drops of marula oil to your facial cleanser for enhanced moisturisation or directly to your body. This multitasking ingredient also has antimicrobial properties, making it a good option for treating acne.

**FOR YOUR HAIR:** Marula oil has hydrating, moisturising and occlusive (preventing water loss) properties, making it ideal for dry, frizzy or brittle hair. Apply to the ends of dry hair or as a scalp treatment before shampooing and conditioning.

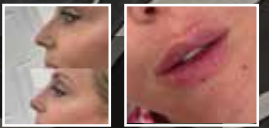
**FOR YOUR NAILS:** Keep your nail beds and cuticles soft and supple by applying marula oil daily or after removing polish, which can be particularly drying for your nails and surrounding skin. It can also be effective at reducing hangnails and cracked skin around the nail bed.



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# They're no Plain Jane

THE HISTORY OF MARY JANE SHOES

As shoe design goes, the Mary Jane has been through more revisions and incarnations than most. In 2023, we know it as a style that's bold, impactful, fashionable and durable – characterised by either a flat sole or block heel, a leather top, a rounded toe and a buckle across the top of the foot. Often coloured black, this is a design that has been enabling women and girls to walk the walk for years, whether off for a night out, to work or even to school.

Its evolution as a footwear style couldn't be further removed from the high street, however. One of the first to rock the Mary Jane look was in fact King Henry VIII – indeed, the shoe was worn mostly by men in the Renaissance era when it first came into fashion.

The buckle strap wasn't added until the early 19th century but now makes it iconic. Women truly embraced the shoe's simple, flat, round-toed relevance and sophistication in the aftermath of the First World War, and the style continued to decorate pavements into the 1950s.

Even through the Swinging Sixties, where heels and excess dominated the fashion world, the Mary Jane held on, though its most recent surge came in the late 90s when thick soles, chunky heels and edgier straps came to the fore. Dr Martens, in particular, embraced the simplicity of the Mary Jane to give it a look that has survived to the present day, with undertones of punk and goth taking the look to a whole new level.

From Dame Mary Quant DBE to Dame Lesley Lawson DBE, most commonly known as 'Twiggy', embraced by Courrèges and Yves Saint Laurent, Dior and Jimmy Choo, the shoe has crossed continents and fashion boundaries with every passing decade.

These days, it's a flat shoe favourite that both embraces sustainability and veganism, yet its familiar, easily recognisable shape will always link this design classic back to its Renaissance beginnings.







TRAVEL



# THE Famous...



Chateau Marmont



The Plaza



Belmond Copacabana Palace



Raffles

**A LOOK AT THE PRESTIGE AND THE HISTORY OF FIVE OF THE WORLD'S MOST ICONIC HOTELS**

**The Savoy, London:** Located in the Strand and opened in 1889, The Savoy was the UK's first luxury hotel, and it has lost none of its charm or opulence in attracting the world's richest and most powerful guests.

Hollywood power couple Sir Laurence Olivier and Vivien Leigh met there, while guests have included The Beatles, John Wayne and Marilyn Monroe.

**Chateau Marmont, Los Angeles:** Los Angeles began to acquire its celebrity popularity in the 60s when the *LA Times* felt obliged to tell its readers that the Chateau Marmont was for those in show business. Its appeal was its combination of 63 rooms, suites, cottages and bungalows, not to mention the fact that it overlooks Sunset Boulevard.

When John Belushi died at the hotel of a drug overdose in 1982, its fame only escalated. Beyoncé, Jay-Z, Britney Spears, Lindsey Lohan are all regular guests.

**The Plaza, New York:** If you've seen *Home Alone 2* or *The Great Gatsby* (the author of which, F. Scott Fitzgerald, lived at this famous hotel), you've seen The Plaza. Overlooking the vast greenery of Central Park and located on the corner of Fifth Avenue, this hotel is iconic and instantly recognisable.

Royalty and state leaders have all stayed at the legendary Manhattan hotel.

**Belmond Copacabana Palace, Rio de Janeiro:** Located as the crown jewel of the most famous beach in the world, the Belmond is a masterpiece of art deco architecture and has welcomed everyone from Walt Disney to Princess Diana.

Built over a period of four years at the turn of the 1920s and designed by French architect Joseph Gire, it remains a staple place to visit for the affluent.

**Raffles, Singapore:** This Singapore hotel has been around since 1887, when it was established by a pair of Armenian brothers, the Sarkies. Its colonial style of architecture has led it to become a national monument for the country, as well as being the birthplace of the Singapore sling cocktail!

# 5

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## A Brand New Smile in One Day?

From the outside, Brentwood High Street's SmileHQ looks more like a boutique hotel than a dental practice.

Inside, owner Dr Vishal Patel and a highly skilled team of dental surgeons provide a treatment that transforms much more than just smiles.

The clinic is earning rave reviews for its Same-Day Teeth treatment—a life-changing procedure that gives patients a brand-new replacement smile in just one day.

**Dr Vishal and the SmileHQ team are now offering an exclusive 10% discount on the procedure, which could save VISION Magazine readers up to £2,060.**



## Life Without Smiles

Life without a complete set of teeth isn't just an oral health challenge, says Dr Vishal. "While it sounds trivial, the problem of loose or missing teeth and poorly fitting dentures can be a real blight on lives.

"These conditions prevent patients from

eating their favourite foods and getting the balanced diet they need. It can also be a constant drain on confidence that leaves people feeling afraid to smile."

## The Same-Day Solution

In the past, the only option for patients with missing teeth was removable dentures or implanted teeth.

However, dentures often leave wearers facing problems with eating and speaking clearly, while implant surgery is a lengthy process leaving patients without functional teeth during recovery.

SmileHQ's Same-Day Teeth changes this – reversing even the most extreme effects of failing oral health and tooth loss in a single day.

The procedure uses state-of-the-art dental implants to replace loose or missing teeth, so it's also perfect for those who live with the daily inconvenience of dentures.

Results are such a dramatic improvement that Same Day Teeth are often life-changing for SmileHQ patients, says Vishal: "The changes we see in patients after receiving their brand new smiles aren't just cosmetic. For many, it represents

a new lease of life, with improved confidence, a more youthful look and radically improved dental function."

## The Science of Same-Day Smiles

Same Day Teeth technology uses a series of strong titanium implants as a substitute root for the replacement teeth. Where traditional



methods require 6-10 implants per jaw and a lengthy recovery time, Same Day Teeth uses just four for a completely new arch of teeth.

Crucially, this means patients can walk into the practice with no teeth and leave the same day with a brand-new smile.

## Trust SmileHQ's Same-Day Experts

Dr Vishal and the SmileHQ team have successfully placed thousands of same-day implants and also have extensive experience

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in advanced implant techniques, including bone grafting and sinus lifts.

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## Claim Your Exclusive Offer

"We believe everyone should be able to enjoy the benefits of a healthy, functional smile without the wait," says Dr Vishal.

His team is offering an exclusive 10% off the treatment for Vision Magazine readers throughout July, August and September.

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\*Terms and Conditions apply. Full-price treatment costs £17,000 per jaw. Saving is £1,700 per jaw. Free initial Consultation & Assessment (usually £195) and free CBCT scan (usually £165) only applies if you decide to proceed with treatment. Offers end 28th August 2023.

\*\*A £30 refundable deposit is required when booking a consultation.





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# Back to school SHOWDOWN

Is getting your child to go to school a constant battle? While a little reluctance to return to school after the summer holidays is to be expected, if your child is becoming severely distressed at the prospect of going to school, then you need to take action.

**TALK TO YOUR CHILD**  
There are many reasons why your child may be refusing to go to school, such as bullying, anxiety, learning differences or emotional issues, so it is important that you try to get to the root of the problem. Sit down with your child and try to find out what it is that is making them not want to go to school and then take appropriate action.

**HAVE A GOOD MORNING ROUTINE**  
If you do not have a calm and consistent morning routine, then this can make the process of getting ready for school a lot more stressful for you and your child. Make sure they get up at the same time

every day and that they know what they need to do and by what times, i.e. get dressed, brush their teeth, etc. Remember to provide plenty of praise.

**INVOLVE THE SCHOOL**  
If your child is flat-out refusing to go to school, then the sooner you talk to the school about this problem, the better. Arrange a meeting to talk to their teacher or headteacher and see what advice they have. For example, they may suggest a buddy system or bringing in your child slightly earlier to avoid the crowds in the playground.

**STAY CALM BUT BE FIRM**  
Although this can be hard, try to stay as calm as possible when trying to get your child to go to school, as getting angry or upset will only make the situation worse. That being said, you do need to be firm and don't give them the chance to say no. For example, say "Put on your uniform" rather than "Are you going to put on your uniform?"





# CHEAPEST CITIES

Are you looking to get on the property ladder but are struggling to find anything within your budget? Discover the top five most affordable cities for first-time buyers in the UK – as well as the most expensive cities! The average monthly mortgage payments listed below are based on a 10 per cent deposit.

**1 BRADFORD:** Bradford in West Yorkshire is officially the cheapest city for first-time buyers to purchase a home. Named as the upcoming City of Culture in 2025, the current average asking price for a two-bedroom property in Bradford is £104,643.

**Average monthly mortgage payment: £521**

**2 CARLISLE:** If you don't mind moving a bit further north, then the city of Carlisle is the second cheapest city for first-time buyers. With an average asking price of £104,784 for a two-bedroom house, there are some beautiful semi-detached properties on offer in this part of the UK.

**Average monthly mortgage payment: £522**

**3 ABERDEEN:** The third most populated city in Scotland, Aberdeen is known for its stunning architecture and closeness to Cairngorms National Park. The average asking price for a two-bed property currently sits at £106,088.

**Average monthly mortgage payment: £528**

**4 HULL:** Although this city does not have the best reputation, you can get a lot more for your money if you relocate to Hull. The average asking price for a two-bedroom property currently stands at £106,939.

**Average monthly mortgage payment: £532**

**5 DUNDEE:** A vibrant, modern and affordable city, the average asking price for a property with two bedrooms or fewer in Dundee is £111,415.

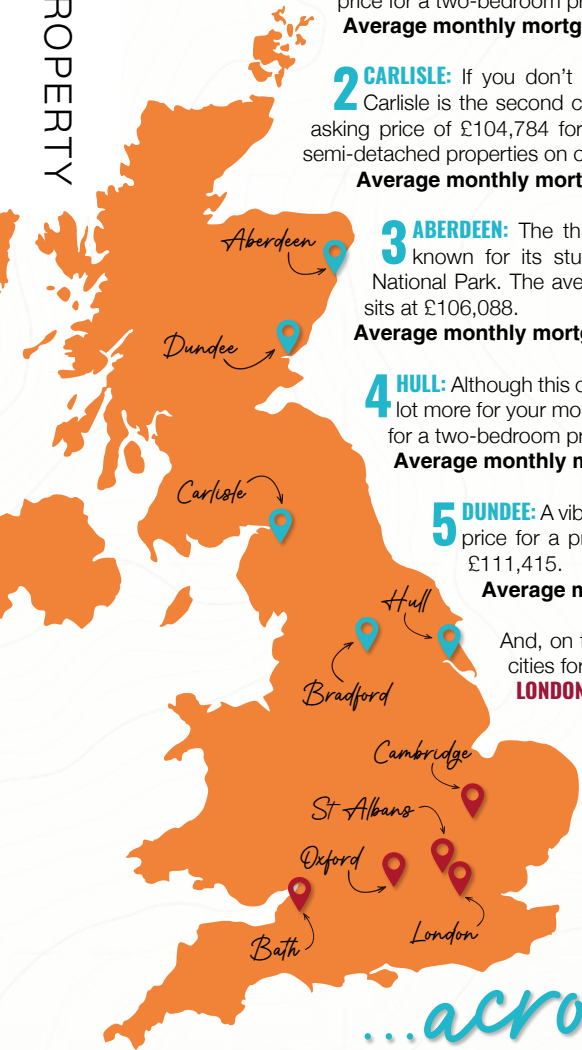
**Average monthly mortgage payment: £532**

And, on the other end of the scale, the five most expensive cities for first-time buyers in the UK are:

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To put this all into perspective, the average house price for a first-time buyer in the UK is £245,958. This is £55,500 higher than five years ago. According to the Financial Conduct Authority, two-thirds of first-time buyer mortgages have terms that go beyond 25 years.

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**It's time to make an LPA.** There is a common misconception that Lasting Powers of Attorney only need to be put in place when an individual gets older. In fact, it is always wise to put LPAs in place earlier in life. By doing so, you will gain peace of mind that your affairs – both financial and health – can be looked after if you are ever unable to do so. You will also be ensuring that your loved ones are not left in an impossible position, unable to deal with your affairs, if the worst should happen.

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## A WILL WRITER'S WORDS OF WISDOM

### WORRYING PROBLEMS

If a married couple dies together, and where there is no Will, the eldest is deemed to have died first, so only the family members of the surviving spouse will inherit

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

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

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 remarries 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

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

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

The estates of current or retired members of the Armed Forces, fire police and ambulance services, and most rescue organisations are entitled to exemption from Inheritance Tax if they die on active service, or if their later death was caused by an injury or disease that was received or aggravated while they were on active service

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 registered civil partner

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MOTORING



# Famous MOVIE cars

They say the car is the star, and with these cherished vehicles from the big screen, that's certainly the case.

**ASTON MARTIN DB5:** Four units of the DB5 were used for the 1964 James Bond classic *Goldfinger* – two during filming and a further two promotional vehicles. The now iconic car was modified by special effects expert John Stears to include a number of spy-worthy gadgets. Although stolen in 1997 from Boca Raton Airport in Florida, the car has since been spotted in a 'private setting' in the Middle East.

**DELOREAN DMC-12:** The DeLorean is one of the most recognisable cars in the world owing to Steven Spielberg's *Back to the Future* trilogy, yet what should have been a marketer's dream turned out to be anything but. Despite futuristic 'gull wing' doors and stainless steel body panels, the DMC-12 didn't sell well owing to its impracticability and lack of balance, being a rear-engine car.

**BATMOBILE:** Batman/Bruce Wayne was known to high-powdered supercars since he first appeared in comics in 1939, but it wasn't until 1941 that the title 'Batmobile' was first used. The first on-screen Batmobile appeared in the 1943 serial *Batman* movies and was a 1939 Cadillac Series 75. Since then, the Batmobile has gone through several iterations – from the first completely black version in the 1989 Tim Burton film, to the Christopher Nolan version which was described as a cross between a Lamborghini and a tank.

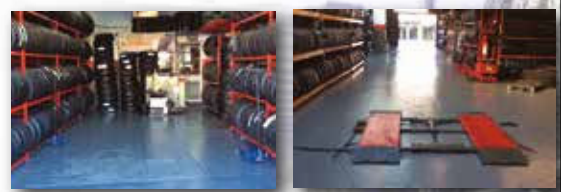
**ECTOMOBILE:** Ecto-1 from the *Ghostbusters* movies was an original 1959 Cadillac Miller Meteor, and the two models converted for screen use are still owned by Sony Pictures. The film provoked a number of copycat models, one of which sold in 2021 for more than £200,000.

**FERRARI MODENA GT:** While three Modena GTs were used in the iconic 1980s film *Ferris Bueller's Day Off* starring Matthew Broderick, all were replicas. The one that flies out the window in the movie didn't even run properly – it was a fibreglass shell version built specially for that scene. Though one of the replicas was seriously damaged in the jump scene, it was successfully repaired and sold for £122,000 at auction.

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# The Reading Rooms

## The Billericay home of the Open Bible Learning Group




Each Sunday afternoon, The Open Bible Learning Group open the doors to anyone with an enquiring mind and interest in reading their Bible and more effectively.

The group meet at **2:30 each Sundays** in the Reading Rooms, 73 Billericay High Street to explore the exciting and powerful message God has revealed in his word, the Bible, by means of talks, discussions and presentations.

The **Open Bible Learning Group (OBLG)**, are just ordinary men and women who first met here in the **Reading Rooms** in 1957 as a place worship and to study. This month's **OBLG varied Sunday** programme at **2:30 pm** include:

- Sept 3<sup>rd</sup> **OBLG Exhibition Stand at the East Gate Shopping Centre, Basildon**
- Sept 10<sup>th</sup> **Resurrection – the Facts and the Hope**
- Sept 17<sup>th</sup> **Can Science and The Bible Co-exist?**
- Sept 24<sup>th</sup> **Open House for your Bible questions in the Reading Room**
- Oct 1<sup>st</sup> **Who wrote the Bible and is it important today?**

Visit our website for a full list of events. Plus free Home-Study Packs, Audio Recordings to stream or download. Watch past special events online or search  for **@openbiblelearninggroup** and our 5 minute **"Bible Shorts"**. Then spend a little longer to join a Sunday afternoon Zoom session 'Live' from the Reading Rooms, Billericay – email us at **oblg@mail.com** for you Zoom invitation link.

[OpenBibleLearningGroup.com/Events](https://OpenBibleLearningGroup.com/Events)

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## The Open Bible Learning Group – Why listen to them?

So many different voices seem to compete for our attention these days, both online and offline. Take, for example, the appeals that are made by so-called Christian churches... not only are there very many of them (hundreds of groups exist in Essex alone)... but at times they can each seem to have their own 'unique' teaching. How can this be right, given there is just one Bible?

Recently, I caught up with, a member of the Billericay Open Bible Learning Group (OBLG), and asked Simon, how OBLG have come to a clear and simple position on these things? "If something can be demonstrated from the one Bible – and shown to be consistently taught – then there really is no debate. The truth can only be found in God's Word, so that's where the investigation must both start and finish. Misunderstandings," he told me, "generally only begin when the Bible is set aside."

Of course, most paper Bibles are at least 1,000 pages long, so people can understandably feel a bit overwhelmed when they first approach the book. So I asked Simon, how can somebody who is not so familiar with the Bible build up at least a basic starting knowledge? Where should they start? What are the key themes or topics? And, how can someone get a bit of supportive guidance if needed?

"They're good questions, which is why, to help with all of this, the Billericay OBLG have created a series of so-called 'Bible Shorts' for YouTube on key topics (e.g. God; the Gospel; the Christian hope), each lasting



no more than five minutes. These shorts are intended to be just an introduction, but importantly they apply the same approach that any study should, with the Bible as the touchstone and it is constantly referred to."

Alongside these 'Bible Shorts', OBLG also available have various full length recordings of their recent talks and special presentations, which can be viewed or just listened to free of any obligation. So, if you can't make it along in-person or just want to start your Bible journey in your own time, why not check out their website [openbiblelearninggroup.com](https://openbiblelearninggroup.com) or their YouTube channel [@openbiblelearninggroup](https://@openbiblelearninggroup). It only needs to start with five minutes of your time... with "Bible Shorts – An introduction to the Bible"



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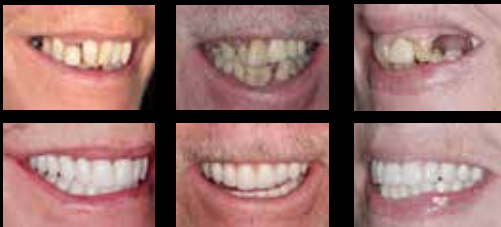
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