

*Daisy*

Birth flower  
of the month

**UNUSUAL  
FRUIT OF  
THE MONTH  
RAMBUTAN**

**NIGEL OWENS**

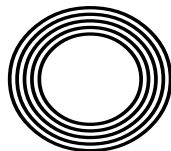
Highlighting LGBTQ+ in sport

*Stacey Saloman*

From TV personality to organising queen

*Dame*  
**JUDI DENCH**

The actress showing no signs of slowing down



**FREE**

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# Editor's notes...

APRIL 2021



Brett Shohet, Editor

Hello and welcome to this month's edition of **VISION** Bishop's Stortford. Last month I said that it really felt like we were coming out the other side of the pandemic now, and I'm pleased to see that pattern continuing as we approach the summer. I think it's only a matter of time before the nation feels a lot healthier, both economically and physically.

Personally, I'm always looking forward. I'd be lying if I said COVID-19 hasn't taken its toll on me and **VISION** at points, but I've continued investing time and money into the business and now we're in a better position. So much so that we're looking at expanding into new areas this year, offering more titles and more fantastic content and advertising opportunities.

Of course, we wouldn't be in the position we're in without our ever-supportive readers and clients. We've been having more interactions than ever before and I'm sure that will continue long into the future.

Something I've been thinking about plenty recently is stimulating myself business-wise and trying to create other incomes. Because I don't work a typical 9-5 job at the moment, I'm using my time to self-develop as a businessperson, and hearing feedback from people is a big help. So feel free to contact me: I'm always open to having a chat.

*Brett Shohet*

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CONTRIBUTORS | Tabatha Fabray, Tim Green

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

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# Stacey Solomon SPOTLESS IN THE SPOTLIGHT

**FOUR BOYS... AND POTENTIALLY MORE ON THE WAY – HOW THE STACEY SOLOMON/JOE SWASH LOVE STORY IS A REALITY TV STORY WE ALL LOVE**

Stacey Solomon isn't too worried about the airs and graces of celebrity life. Sure, she has grown up in the lens since being catapulted into the scene in 2010 with a stellar display on *The X Factor*. While she ended up falling short – coming third, behind Joe McElderry and Olly Murs – the dye was cast as far as a career on screen was concerned. It was her casual, considered, girl-about-town image that viewers admired; the fact she was never afraid to speak up, to share her emotions and to bridge the gap between viewer and star.

“Throughout my TV career I've always just tried to be myself,” she says. “It's strange when you receive criticism for that – perhaps I don't round my consonants as well as I should, perhaps I act a bit loud at times, but that's just me. I think the era of the manufactured presenter is over and we're all allowed to be a bit more ourselves, and that's something I love.”

.....  
‘I think the era of the manufactured presenter is over and we're all allowed to be a bit more ourselves, and that's something I love’  
.....

The 31-year-old Dagenham-born star's TV career has ultimately been the 'x factor' that has led her to love, having fallen for the charms of chipper, funny man Joe Swash, also a near-veteran of the reality TV industry. The pair got together five years ago, drawn together by a shared passion for... well, everything.

“We connect on such a perfect level,” says Stacey, “and we're always making each other laugh.”

The pair, who got engaged just before Christmas, now also have a little reality star of their own to share – baby Rex, who arrived in 2019.

“I have two sons from a previous relationship and Joe has one, so bringing everyone together in our home has been perfect.”

The Essex-based couple have recently moved into their new home - aptly named Pickle Cottage. Stacey admitted it would need some work, but what's certain is that she will get it looking spick and span – after all, Stacey has just released her latest book, entitled *Tap to Tidy*. It's a smorgasbord of houseproud hints that also details crafting and design, as well as cleaning and keeping shipshape.

Stacey, who has appeared on and won *I'm a Celebrity...Get Me Out of Here*, and has presented shows such as *The Love Machine*, *The Jump* and *Loose Women*, also has a new BBC series, *Sort Your Life Out*, arriving later in the year; while Joe's work ranges from *EastEnders* to *Dancing on Ice* – he is also a previous winner in ‘the jungle’, which is where the likeable pair first met.

“TV was always an industry I admired, and although it has been a strange year, I think so many people have been able to keep their spirits up by escaping for a few hours in the evening to watch something,” Stacey says.

“The pandemic has really brought us back to the basics, where spending time around our family now feels like the most important thing in the world, whereas before we were perhaps more side-tracked by work and careers and more selfish things in our lives.

“That said, I want to get back to normality – it's what we all need, and I've got a wedding to plan, after all!”

# Jasmine Harrison WATER BABE

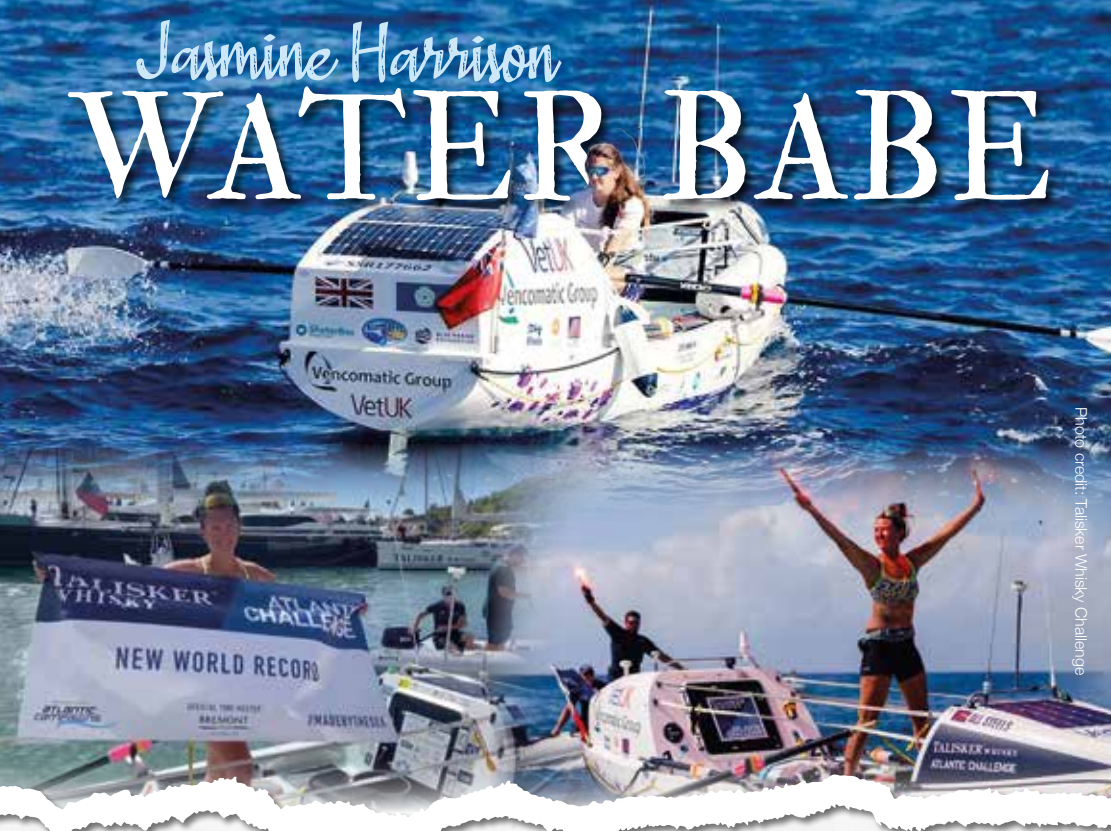


Photo credit: Talisker Whisky Challenge

## HOW JASMINE HARRISON BRAVED ISOLATION AND SLEEP DEPRIVATION TO BECOME A WORLD RECORD HOLDER

From rowing across the Atlantic Ocean with only the sound of waves crashing against the sides of a flimsy 21ft boat, to answering a Zoom call from the Duchess of Cambridge, Kate Middleton, on International Women's Day, Jasmine Harrison's journey from desperate isolation to taking centre stage as an example of true human endeavour and resilience has been magnificent.

The 21-year-old world record breaker was inspired to start rowing when she saw the event two years ago while teaching in the Caribbean. Yet despite having not set foot inside a boat until 12 months ago, she powered her way into the record books in February by becoming the youngest woman to row solo across the Atlantic Ocean as part of the Talisker Whisky Challenge.

Going up against a field of experienced entrants, the Yorkshire-based sailor drew on every last sinew of courage and conviction, to the delight of her friends, family and support crew who tracked

her every move across 3,000 miles of water.

The journey, from La Gomera in the Canary Islands to Antigua, took Jasmine 70 days. Despite extreme exhaustion – the longest duration of uninterrupted sleep she could have was two hours – searing heat, dehydration and no small quantity of challenges along the way – including capsizing her vessel just two days before finally making it to the finish line – the intrepid sailor says the experience was the most profound of her life.

"I will take away from this experience so many memories – some bad, but most of them good."

Asked what she was looking forward to most when back on dry land, she laughed: "That's easy – food... lots of food."

As for what comes next, the part-time bartender is almost certainly going to find herself in demand where other marine challenges are concerned.

"I'm going to take some time off then look around and decide what comes next. This isn't a one-off for me and I want to achieve more."



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# ALL CHANGE: HEDI SLIMANE



**We look at the creative directors who have transformed some of the world's most famous fashion houses. In this issue, it's Hedi Slimane.**

Looking at Hedi Slimane, we see someone who appears to represent the very essence of French style. A creative director of exemplary reputation and influence, he has revived the fortunes of ailing fashion houses at problematic times in their history, allowing them to emerge on the other side with a renewed take on flair, panache and relevance.

And yet the 52-year-old has genetics that originate some distance from his native Paris. Born to a Tunisian father and an Italian mother, Slimane's cultural influences are well mixed. Sure enough, he discovered photography at the age of 11, and by the age of 16 was designing and making clothes.

Perhaps it is the exuberance of Italy and fabric-adorning reputation of north Africa that combined in inspiring Slimane to creative brilliance. If it was, then Yves Saint Laurent was the grateful beneficiary. After serving his apprenticeship at Louis Vuitton, Slimane moved to YSL in 1996, and by the year 2000 was on the move again, installed as creative director at Dior Homme (the menswear line of Christian Dior).

He switched back to YSL for two years from 2016, and is now creative, artistic and image director at Celine, a move that coincided with him topping *Vanity Fair's* list of the 50 most influential French people in the world.

Slimane's edge has always been in combining art, photography, fashion and music. For someone who has operated at the very top table of some of the world's leading fashion houses, he still manages to work in influences of punk, pop, tabloid chat and broadsheet formality.

His collections are never afraid to move brands forward into brave new quarters, and that has only ever reinforced his reputation as a game changer in the fast world of fashion.

Photo credit: Michel Elie/AP/Shutterstock



**Do you choose a conditioner based on your individual hair type?** If not, you could be doing your hair more harm than good. Discover the right conditioner to transform your locks from limp to luscious.

### Oily hair

If your hair is naturally oily, you may find that conditioners make your mane look and feel even worse. That being said, rather than skip conditioner altogether, look for a treatment that actively helps to reduce oil.

**Choose conditioners that are:**

- Light • Volumising • Balancing

**Avoid products that claim to be:**

- Hydrating • Smoothing • Moisturising

### Dry or damaged hair

When hair is dry, damaged or brittle, you need a conditioner that will help prevent future breakages and protect against heat damage.

**Choose conditioners that:**

- Moisturise • Hydrate • Offer frizz control • Promote repair

**Avoid products that claim to be:**

- Fortifying • Volumising • Strengthening

If your hair is severely damaged, you may also want to use a coconut oil treatment or deep-conditioning cream once a week for intense damage repair.

### Fine or flat hair

Straight hair that does not suffer with frizz, but can appear flat, suits conditioners that add some much-needed texture.

**Choose conditioners that are:**

- Volumising • Lightweight

**Avoid products that claim to be:**

- Heavy • Moisturising • Smoothing

### Coloured hair

Coloured hair has very specific needs, especially if you want to retain your colour for as long as possible. In terms of a conditioner, you need one that will seal hair cuticles.

**Choose conditioners that are:**

- Colour-safe • Colour-depositing • Hydrating

**Avoid:**

Any conditioner that is not for coloured hair

### Afro hair

Afro hair tends to be described as kinky owing to the intensity of its curl. However, with the right conditioner, it can look both healthy and shiny.

**Choose conditioners that are:**

- Deeply hydrating • Oil-based • Protein-based

**Avoid products that claim to be:**

- Volumising • Lightweight



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HEALTH & FITNESS



# Beat the BURNDOUT

Do you have chronic fatigue?

The mechanics that make all of us individuals mean no two people will endure the same medical condition in the same manner, but where chronic fatigue syndrome (also known as CFS or ME) is concerned, the overriding sense of physical and emotional emptiness is one that hits all sufferers.

The health condition, which shouldn't be confused with sleepiness and general lethargy resulting from working too hard or resting for too short a period of time, can be caused by a number of factors – from stress and anxiety to depression, eating disorders and the gradual debilitating impact of life events on the mind.

There can also be medical problems at play, such as thyroid problems, diabetes, vitamin deficiencies, irritable bowel syndrome, high blood pressure and even kidney disease.

A proper diagnosis is essential and should be sought as soon as you feel you are slipping into a

phase where you simply don't have the ability to perform very basic daily functions, such as rising out of bed, conversing with people or leaving the house.

A doctor will use various tests and techniques in attempting to reach a diagnosis; only when this is done will a medical professional set you on a path of therapy to get you back on track.

While medication is a recognised route to this, it could be that making positive changes to diet, routine and physical health will make a profound difference. There might also be moves to improve surroundings, practise mindfulness and build mental positivity in putting you on the road to feeling revived and restored.

Mental health services are of prime focus to the NHS in light of the COVID-19 pandemic, so don't delay in contacting your doctor if you need help – there will be brighter days ahead.



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# HONE & TONE

*cleaning your home*



**B**ecome a lean, mean cleaning machine with the below common household tasks that are guaranteed to help you burn calories and shift those unwanted pounds.

**GENERAL CLEANING:** Picking clothes off the floor, wiping surfaces and dusting can all help you to work different muscle groups, making general cleaning one of the most effective household chores for burning calories.

**Total calories burnt = 3,976** (based on 280 minutes per week)



**VACUUMING:** This daily chore that is hated by many has the ability to provide a full body workout. Forcing you to use your entire core muscle groups, the simple act of pushing your Hoover back and forth will target your abs and put both your back and legs to work.

**Total calories burnt = 1,248** (based on 132 minutes per week)



**IRONING:** Another household task that few relish, but you may be surprised to learn that ironing burns a lot of calories. Not only does this task require you to stand up for long periods of time, but it also works your core as you move the appliance about.

**Total calories burnt = 1,360** (based on 144 minutes per week)



**DOING LAUNDRY:** If you have a big family, you may find yourself doing laundry multiple times a day. Although not the most engaging task, you will be pleased to hear it can help you lose weight. The act of washing, folding and lifting all helps to contribute to a full cardio workout.

**Total calories burnt = 1,588** (based on 168 minutes per week)

**OTHER CALORIE-BURNING CHORES:** Cooking = **2,856** (based on 301.7 minutes per week)

| Mopping = **2,724** (based on 138 minutes per week) | Making beds = **1,316** (based on 144.2 minutes per week) | Sweeping floors = **1,304** (based on 138 minutes per week)

**NB:** Calories burnt is based on one month's worth of each activity and is based on the average weight of a person being 156 pounds.





# Rambutan

The rambutan is a tropical fruit that closely resembles a lychee. Grown in countries such as Thailand, Malaysia and Indonesia, the name rambutan means hairy, which refers to the fleshy spikes on the skin of the fruit.

### WHAT DOES RAMBUTAN TASTE LIKE?

The flavour of rambutan is similar to a grape but with a bit of a strawberry quality. Slightly acidic and sweet in equal measures, this fruit has a pleasant fragrance that makes it ideal for using in cooked dishes.

### WHAT ARE THE HEALTH BENEFITS OF RAMBUTAN?

Rambutans are high in vitamin C as well as containing lots of fibre that is good for your digestive health. They also contain vitamin E, which is known for helping to prevent both acne and premature ageing.

### WHERE CAN I BUY RAMBUTAN?

You can find rambutans in most Asian markets and food shops. Look for bright red skin that indicates the rambutan is at its freshest. Green rambutans are not ready to be eaten, whereas black ones are over-ripe.

### HOW TO PREPARE RAMBUTAN

You should not peel a rambutan until you are ready to eat or cook with it. To open, carefully cut the skin with a sharp knife or simply twist open with your hands if the fruit is ripe enough to do so. Then peel away the skin to reveal the egg-shaped fruit. Don't forget to cut open the fruit to remove the nut-like seed in the centre.

### HOW TO STORE RAMBUTAN

Wrap them whole in a paper towel and put them in a perforated plastic bag before placing in the fridge. Your rambutans should last for up to two weeks.

### HOW TO EAT RAMBUTAN

Enjoy rambutans as a healthy snack or as part of a tropical fresh fruit dessert bowl. Alternatively, add to cooked dishes such as curries and soups.




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## BREAKING NEWS:

# PEAS OUT!



FOOD & DRINK

According to Harvard University scientists, peas are not as healthy as we have been led to believe and may not even count towards one of your five a day.

Find out more about this shocking revelation below. Plus, great alternatives to peas that pack a punch when it comes to improving your health.

### WHAT DOES THE SCIENCE SAY?

Harvard University believes that it has found the key to leading a longer life, and it lies with consuming the right combination of fruit and vegetables. Its research shows that by eating two portions of fruit a day and three servings of vegetables, you are much less likely to die from conditions such as heart disease, cancer and/or respiratory diseases. However, not all vegetables offer the same longevity-boosting properties, with a higher intake of peas having no link to lower mortality rates.

### WHY YOU SHOULDN'T CONSIDER PEAS AS ONE OF YOUR FIVE A DAY

Strictly speaking, green peas are not vegetables, as they are part of the legume family which consists of plants that produce pods with seeds inside.

Furthermore, peas have a high glycaemic index which can cause a spike in your blood sugar levels, and they contain phytates that prevent key nutrients from being absorbed by the body.

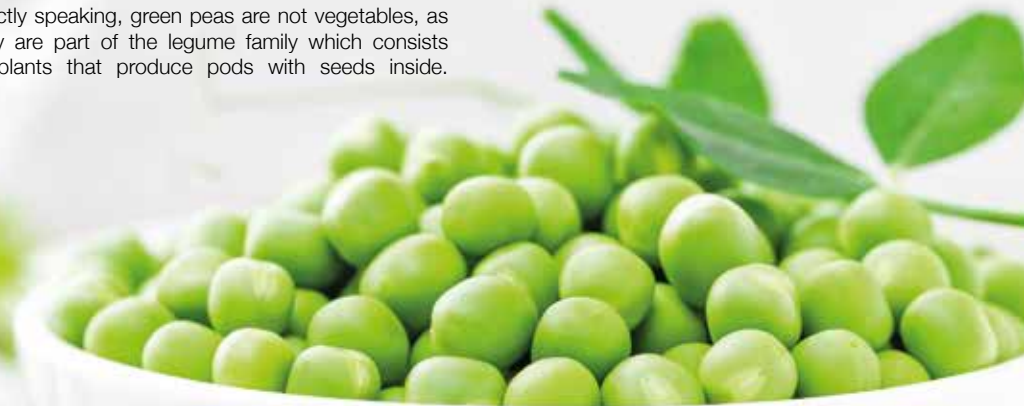
### WHAT OTHER FRUIT AND VEGETABLES DO NOT AID LONGEVITY?

During the extensive study, the scientists at Harvard also found no link between a higher intake of starchy vegetables, such as corn and potatoes, and enhanced longevity, as well as drinking fruit or vegetable juices.

### WHAT CAN YOU EAT INSTEAD OF PEAS?

If you like to add a bit of greenery to your own and your family's meals, there are still lots of alternatives to peas that most definitely do count towards your five a day:

- Broccoli
- Asparagus
- Spinach
- Kale
- Courgette
- Cooked greens
- Lettuce





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# Lusting for LUSTRE



HOME & DIY



**M**odern glass showers and marble counters may look great, but they need care to maintain their lustre – bring forward the Great British Baking Soda solution.

You may not think glass shower doors and cubicles have much to do with those huge slabs of marble that comprise the worksurfaces in your kitchen, but think again. Both undergo daily use, both are largely mistreated – consider limescale and heat in the bathroom and all manner of spillages in the kitchen – and yet both can be kept in A1 shape with the required care and attention... and a bit of baking soda.

### GLASS SHOWERS

Tending to a bit of cleaning is the last thing on our minds when we wander out of the shower in the morning, still half-asleep from the night before. Yet daily spraying – with a limescale-fighting premix – and wiping can preserve the lifetime of glass so it stays shiny for longer.

However, if you're the type who would rather do a one-off clean every couple of weeks, use washing-up liquid on a course brush and scrub the areas that contain the tell-tale white, bumpy marks.

Rinse with cool water, then use baking soda to break down some more of the mass, spraying vinegar over the top before rinsing away with warm water.

### MARBLE COUNTERS

Baking soda is again your best friend when it comes to returning marble counters to the way they were before soups, sauces, pasta and pancetta took a rather appealing shine away.

Simply mix three tablespoons of baking soda into a litre of water. Apply the mixture to your worktops and leave in place for several hours.

When you return, wash the pasted solution off with warm water, then apply a shop-bought marble sealer.

As ever, regular cleaning, and ensuring you don't leave spillages to set, is the best way to keep your marble at a constantly high level.



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# FAWNING OVER flora

The floral effect, and how to achieve it

Although floral interiors are nothing new, they've certainly become on trend over the last few years. Flowery bedspreads, botanical cushions, jungle-print curtains and all manner of foliage frolics have been brought into the home, with our front rooms, kitchens, bedrooms and even bathrooms better places for it.

Vivacious ideas and vivid colours have become the order of the day, with ambitious, elegant results, all crafted in the knowledge that floral interiors never go out of fashion.

If you've kept your walls clear and fresh, it means that you can just add in colour with floral-print additions to your furniture, with vibrant cushions, rugs and throws in your living room. For perhaps the smallest of makeovers, your inside space can represent all the bounty of an outside garden.

If, however, your current styles mean a drastic design change, a mural or flowered wallpaper may be more in demand. If this is your route, supplement a complicated background with plain cushions and simple, flat, easy-to-digest whites and greys.

In addition, adding real or fake flowers will bring walls into the 3D realm, enhancing your look and creating energy, interest and talking points.

As for the palette you have at your disposal, floral colours offer all manner of outdoor shades, as we know. From pinks to purples, yellows, whites and reds, there are few colours out of bounds.

And once you've remastered a room with a full-on floral theme, you can progress the idea by making small, subtle changes that complement the look, such as adding small garden-themed pictures, or perhaps even candles with floral scents.

Very soon, you can find yourself bringing the outside inside, where opening a window and allowing a breeze to blow through the space completes what is an invigorating and inspirational design effect.



Photo credit: [pin.young.via.idealhome.co.uk](http://pin.young.via.idealhome.co.uk), [greenandnatural.com](http://greenandnatural.com), [marrs.scot](http://marrs.scot) and [courtesy.via.goodhousekeeping.com](http://courtesy.via.goodhousekeeping.com), [fransisco.lapresse.delaillat.com](http://fransisco.lapresse.delaillat.com)

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# JET PROPELLED

## SEVEN HANDY HINTS FOR MAKING THE MOST OF YOUR JET WASH HIRE



**Y**ou're about to embark on a bit of high-pressure jet washing – perhaps you're getting that grubbiness off the walls, maybe your patio needs bringing back to its original sheen, or it could be your windows that want rid of all that winter grime.

Whatever the case, here are some tips that mean when hiring a pressure washer you'll clean up... literally and financially.

### ONE: The price is right

It sounds obvious, but it pays to shop around. Kärcher leads the market with consumer pressure washers, but they all work in the same way, so don't necessarily be swayed by a big name or a fancy trim.

### TWO: Time is of the essence

Be realistic over how long you want to hire a pressure washer for. Most hire companies will let you extend, but it's cheaper and easier to plan out your workload first; and of course, don't ever waste money by hiring one that you're not going to use straight away.

### THREE: Failing to prepare...

With the last point in mind, prepare the areas you're going to use the jet wash for before picking it up. Not only will it help with space and efficiency, but your hire time won't be wasted moving items around so you can get started.

### FOUR: Safety first

While great fun, pressure washers pack a huge amount of power, and even a lower-grade machine has enough punch to break through human skin.

### FIVE: Pre-wash

Pre-washing any area makes jet spraying so much easier when you come back to it a few minutes later.

### SIX: Nozzle knowledge

The pressure washer comes with a variety of nozzles, so ensure you select the right one for the job.

### SEVEN: "I need proof (waterproofs)"

Spray will quickly consume you and people in neighbouring counties, so ensure you have waterproof gear, and prepare for a huge amount of dirt while you're at it.

You can use a jet wash for cleaning windows, patios, driveways and even your car.



# STYLISH SPIKES

**A**cactus can make a great addition to any home thanks to its striking shape and often unusual flowers on some varieties. However, this spikey houseplant offers many other benefits.

### CACTI ARE SELF-SUSTAINING PLANTS

If you want to inject some greenery into your home but you simply don't have the time to care for plants, then a cactus is the plant for you as it requires little to no maintenance. Native to the desert, cacti store moisture in their roots, leaves and stems and regulate their own food intake so you barely need to water them at all.

### CACTI IMPROVE THE AIR QUALITY IN YOUR HOME

Green plants such as cacti actively absorb carbon dioxide from the air and release oxygen, which helps to improve the air quality in your home. Other health benefits of cacti include an ability to reduce stress levels, provide companionship and even enhance your memory.

### CACTI CAN MAKE YOU MORE PRODUCTIVE

If you are currently working from home but are being driven to distraction by family life, a well-placed cactus plant can boost your productivity levels. In fact, controlled tests have shown that having a cactus in your office can improve your performance by more than 12 per cent.

### CACTI OFFER SUBTLE BEAUTY

For those who follow feng shui in their home, a cactus is the perfect plant for adding an elegant visual experience while at the same time banishing any negative energy. Cacti love the sun, so choose to add one to your windowsill or near the entrance to your home. Avoid placing in the living room or your kitchen, unless you want to be on the receiving end of an unexpected spike.

### BEST CACTUS VARIETIES TO GROW INDOORS:

- Angel wings cactus
- Rat tail cactus
- Old lady cactus
- Christmas cactus



# JUDI DENCH

## THE LIFE OF THE BUSY DAME

### Why Dame Judi Dench is perhaps the most unique acting talent of them all

---

In a professional career on stage and in front of the camera, it's notable that Dame Judi Dench has, more often than not, played characters who are assertive, strong and definite. From Q in the James Bond films to Ophelia, Juliet or Lady Macbeth on stage; from Evelyn in the *Marigold Hotel* movies, right through to 13 years playing Jean, the comedic mainstay of classic BBC comedy *As Time Goes By*, there has always been a strength present.

And so it follows, then, that the 86-year-old embodies very much those same qualities in real life. How else do you explain the fact that, despite lockdown, the York-born doyenne remains ensconced in one of the busiest periods of her acting career?

"I think the intention was that when I stepped away from Bond I'd be calming things down a bit," she begins. "What actually ended up happening was I found more roles coming my way, as would, I guess, any actor breaking free of a big character."

And therein lies the problem. The determined and decorated cornerstone of British drama simply can't say no. During 2020, while the world's acting fraternity were sitting back doing very little as the entire industry fell into a state of dormancy, Dench was still busy promoting four projects – films *Artemis Fowl*, *Blithe Spirit* and *Six Minutes to Midnight*, as well as an appearance on *Staged*, the widely acclaimed lockdown-themed TV series starring David Tennant and Michael Sheen.

She was also filming parts of what 2021 presents as two major feature films. First up is *Off the Rails*, a drama about a group of friends recreating an interrail journey across Europe, in which she appears alongside Kelly Preston, Ben Miller and Sally Phillips. Then, in *Belfast*, Jamie Dornan co-stars in a drama about a working-class family in Northern Ireland in the late 1960s.

Indeed, since bidding goodbye to 007 in that dramatic, windswept Highlands setting in *Skyfall* in 2012, Dench has appeared in 24 big- and small-screen projects.

"I think, for me, it's about picking and choosing things that make me content and happy," she says. "If I'm being asked to fly halfway around the world for a few minutes on camera, or the brief means being away from home for weeks on end in some inhospitable backwater, I'll say no. The truth, though, is I'm as enchanted as much by acting now as I was when I first performed *Hamlet*, or first stepped in front of a television camera at the end of the 1950s.

"I won't deny the slower parts of lockdown were frustrating, but if you want to keep busy and you want to find yourself things to do, then those things are out there, no matter where you are in the world or in your life," says Dench, who has now been two decades without husband Michael Williams, who died of lung cancer aged 65.

"I know Michael will be looking down, proud of the fact I'm still a workaholic," she smiles. "The truth is it's the only way I know to live."



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# LOCAL NEWS

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Photo credit: Clyheart

## Council presses ahead with cinema plans amid concerns

Plans for Old River Lane in Bishop's Stortford moved forward last month when members of East Herts District Council gave the go-ahead to a revised version of the scheme.

When the redevelopment was first put forward, at its heart was a new £30million arts centre with a 500-seat auditorium. But after COVID-19 hit and government lending rules were changed for councils, the auditorium, a planned backstage theatre and associated backstage space were scrapped.

The new scheme, which will now cost £15.5million, will instead feature five cinema screens, although there is the potential to accommodate live performances in

some of the auditoria.

The move has been strongly criticised by opposition parties who set up the Old River Lane Working Group and local arts groups.

The day after the decision was made, a Facebook post from the Hertford and Stortford Constituency Labour Party summed up the feeling of opposition.

It read: "Hertford and Stortford Labour are disappointed but not surprised by the decision at the extraordinary council meeting to steamroller through the unpopular, poorly thought through and unconvincing plans to build a five-screen cinema at the heart of the Old River Lane development."

## COVID-19 cancels carnival for second time

One of Bishop's Stortford's most popular annual events has been cancelled for a second time owing to the pandemic.

A spokesman for Bishop's Stortford Town Council said members, the chief executive officer and events team do not consider it wise to organise a carnival in 2021 owing to COVID-19, but said it is hoped a series of smaller events can be delivered in the spring and

summer on Sworders Field and in the town centre.

She added: "These events may include a series of fun music and theatre workshops, open-air cinema, travelling markets, River Stort celebration and more. We are also working alongside and supporting other event organisers to increase the event offering within the town."

For more details, go to [bishopsstortfordtc.gov.uk](http://bishopsstortfordtc.gov.uk)



# 40 Days of Disney raises money for musicians

A former Bishop's Stortford College student and his partner have raised more than £2,500 to support musicians during the pandemic.

The project, 40 Days of Disney, is the brainchild of Tess Pearson, who sang with the Bishop's Stortford Choral Society, and former Bishop's Stortford College student James Priest.

More than 30 musicians took part in the project, which saw daily video performances of some of Disney's most famous songs to raise funds for Help Musicians UK.

Tess explained: "The 40 days of Lent in the Christian calendar are a time when, as a classical singer, I could expect a lot of performance opportunities. Disney films are something I come to when I seek nostalgia and comfort, and I know that many of us are in need of those things right now."

James said the project went very well. He added: "We're surprised at the donations and pleased at the results of the videos."

You can watch the videos by visiting [www.youtube.com/user/TessLa89/videos](http://www.youtube.com/user/TessLa89/videos)

# Climate group hopes orchard takes root

Plans for a community orchard in Bishop's Stortford are being considered by the town council.

The idea is from the Bishop's Stortford Climate Group which wants to establish the orchard on town council land off Jenkins Lane and says it will engage with the community from the outside. It estimates 60 volunteer days will be needed to plant the trees and says it will also hold monthly maintenance working parties.

The land has been earmarked by the town council as an extension to the town cemetery if needed.

The plans were discussed at a recent meeting of the town council's environment and public amenities committee.

The minutes showed that several members expressed support for the plan but concern was also raised about the viability of the site for future burials if the scheme were to go ahead.

The plan has been referred to the finance and policy committee.



# Dynamic duo walk marathon for Motor Neurone Disease



Two students at Bishop's Stortford College raised more than £20,000 for the Motor Neurone Disease Association when they walked a marathon last month.

Ellie Lewis and her friend, Emelia Mitchell, trekked from Ugley Green to Cambridge on March 20. Ellie's mum, Gilly, who was diagnosed with Motor Neurone Disease (MND) in 2019, was waiting for them at the finish line.

Ellie said: "We wanted to show my mum love and support by completing this walk and showing her that there is always hope. Every penny we raise will make a difference to people with MND and their families. We could help scientists find a cure and help support people living with MND now."

You can donate by going to [gofundme.com/f/emelia-and-ellies-marathon-for-mnd](http://gofundme.com/f/emelia-and-ellies-marathon-for-mnd)

# New school set to include specialist autism support

Plans to introduce support for autistic children at a new secondary school in Bishop's Stortford have been welcomed by parents, carers, governors, staff and residents.

A consultation by the Avanti Schools Trust, which will run the new school, showed overwhelming support for the scheme, which should come into operation in September 2023.

The feedback was considered by Herts County Council's children, young people and families cabinet panel last month.

The new facility at the school, which is still to be built, will cater for up to 20 students with autism.

A report set out why the new support was being offered, stressing that there are an increasing number of pupils with speech, language and communication needs – including autism and social communication difficulties – that cannot be met with existing provision.

The report reads: "These pupils need access to a mainstream curriculum and academic challenge,

balanced with a safe space to be in, where work can be done to support self-regulation, build resilience and protect emotional wellbeing."

Mike Ion is education director of the Avanti Schools Trust and stressed the board's full commitment to the proposal.

Planning permission for the new school was granted in late 2020 and it is hoped the school will welcome its first students from September next year.

# School gym becomes COVID-19 testing centre

Support staff, governors and parent volunteers joined forces last month to test all 1,100 pupils at The Bishop's Stortford High School before they returned to the classroom.

Every week since January, the school has been testing all staff and the children of key workers who have been in school, but last month saw mass testing begin for the first time.

All the personnel staffing the centre had been trained in NHS procedures and how to carry out the testing. The centre was managed and run by senior science technician, Lisa McMahan, and head groundsman, Paul Trigg.

Pupils were given time slots to come into school and the majority of tests were completed within five to ten minutes, with results emailed out to pupils and parents within two hours.

Each pupil will be tested three times, in accordance with government directions, and will then go on to test twice weekly at home for the remainder of the term.

Headteacher Dale Reeve said: "The first wave of mass COVID-19 testing has gone extremely well in school. Lots of colleagues have been incredibly willing and helpful and it is very much appreciated. We had a massive uptake and I am pleased to say we did not have a single positive test."





## Appeal after alleged knife attack

LOCAL NEWS



Photo credit: Google Maps

Police are appealing for witnesses after a man was pulled into a car and attacked with a knife in a Bishop's Stortford car park last month.

The 20-year-old was walking through Link Road car park near Sworder's Field at around 9.40pm on Sunday, March 7, when two males pulled him into a silver/grey five-door hatchback, which was damaged on the nearside.

A fight ensued inside the vehicle, during which the victim sustained cuts, allegedly caused by a knife.

The victim's money, iPhone and Nike trainers were stolen from him, before he managed to escape the vehicle and return home.

Detective constable Ben Farmer, from the East Herts Local Crime Unit, said: "I appreciate an incident of this nature will cause concern among the community. I would like to try to reassure people that we are doing everything we can to establish the circumstances and motive around what happened."

Anyone with information is asked to please contact DC Farmer at ben.farmer@herts.pnn.police.uk

You can also report information online, speak to an operator in the Force Communications Room via the online web chat or call the non-emergency number 101, quoting crime reference 41/16660/21.

Alternatively, you can contact Crimestoppers anonymously on 0800 555 111 or via its website, crimestoppers-uk.org

## Funds to help dream community projects

Community projects that benefit health, arts and cultural activities, and projects that promote accessible community buildings and green spaces can apply for financial help.

East Herts District Council's (EHDC) first round of funding for large grants opened last month. The maximum grant to deliver a project is £3,000, and the maximum grant for work on a community building or

outdoor space is £8,000.

Councillor Suzanne Rutland-Barsby, executive member for communities, said: "We're looking forward to seeing some imaginative projects that will directly benefit East Herts residents."

Before applying, applicants should email the council's grants officer, Claire Pullen, at claire.pullen@eastherts.gov.uk. The deadline for larger grants is Monday, May 3.

To find out more about the grants, requirements and how to apply, go to [www.eastherts.gov.uk/community-wellbeing/funding-community-organisations-and-individuals](http://www.eastherts.gov.uk/community-wellbeing/funding-community-organisations-and-individuals)

## New policing priorities set for town

Drug use, antisocial driving and the illegal use of e-scooters are some of the issues police in Bishop's Stortford will be focusing on over the next few months.

Police officers, council representatives and members of the education and business communities hold meetings to decide where police efforts should be focused. The issues raised during these meetings determine local officers' priorities.

Residents will notice an increased police presence and targeted enforcement to help tackle these issues.

Officers will aim to reduce drug dealing, drinking and antisocial behaviour across Bishop's Stortford.

Neighbourhood sergeant Theresa Funes-Walker said: "Feedback from members of the public is vital to ensure that local policing resources are focusing on the issues that matter most to them. I want to thank everyone who has contacted us with their views."

"Both forces are also continuing to liaise with respective highways colleagues to ensure the carriageway is cleared of debris more regularly."

Inspector Hunt added: "Sadly, we are aware of posts on social media suggesting that people take matters into their own hands. While I can fully appreciate people's frustrations, we would strongly advise against this, as you could end up putting yourself in danger."



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On inspection we found the retaining walls were failing and the land mass starting to move which was of concern as the property is on a steep hill.

Our design involved rebuilding all the retaining walls and raising them up to include a decorative black railing with electric sliding gate. These were complimented with a stepped flower bed and sandstone staircase with matching handrail. To finish the design, we proposed a porous resin bound surface in Champagne pink.

The project began in earnest in the spring and was completed within 12 weeks. During that time we had weekly meetings to review progress and ensure we were creating the clients vision.

The customer is very happy with the result, they now have a beautiful front garden and drive that is secure and easy to maintain.

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# THE BIRDS *and the bees*



# Daisy



If you were born this month, your flower is the delightful daisy, a bloom that often doesn't get the appreciation it deserves. Incredibly versatile and easy to grow, daisies can make a cheerful addition to any garden, however big or small.

### What does the daisy represent?

A quintessential symbol of both purity and chastity, the daisy can also be used to convey secrecy. In fact, daisies were once called "day's eyes", as they close their petals at night and only reveal their bright yellow centre in the day. This flower can also be used to symbolise true love.

### What does this birth flower say about your personality?

If your birth flower is the daisy, you are said to be a happy-go-lucky kind of person who tends to brighten up everyone's day just by being you. You are also adventurous, cheerful and optimistic, all of which means you are often the person whom others choose to confide in.

### Why grow daisies in your garden?

Sadly, in the UK, we have lost nearly all of our traditional meadow land, meaning that meadow wildlife is under strain. By planting natural and local meadow plants such as daisies in your garden, you will be giving a much-needed helping hand to meadow insects and other wildlife.

### How can I ensure my daisies thrive?

Daisies are the perfect choice for those who are looking for garden plants that do not require much care and attention. English daisies thrive in well-drained and evenly moist soil so be sure to water them during droughts. For the best display of daisies, plant them in full sun.

### Best types of daisies for a vibrant show:

English daisy | African daisy | Gloriosa daisy | Blue Marguerite daisy | Shasta daisy | Cape daisy



In the third of a four-part series that shows how even the most urban garden can be a haven for the wonders of wildlife and the nurturing of nature, we consider how birds and bees are so pivotal to everything outside our windows.

While they appear to be fluttering and buzzing about our gardens in blissful relaxation, the roles of our birds and bees is actually a vital one.

Let's take the humble bee, for instance. Forget a spoonful of tasty honey, the value of these buzzing beauties goes much deeper, with pollination the name of the game. In the first instance, bees as pollinators are responsible for more than one-third of the world's food. Add in the fact that more than 90 per cent of plants rely on bees' cross-pollination skills, and you can see why the move to halt the recent decline in global numbers has been taken so seriously.

Bees also

provide habitats for a huge quantity of insects and animals. Their complex, interconnected ecosystems allow a vast number of diverse species to co-exist. Put another way, a garden without bees would be bare, as would your plate.

A smaller role for bees is as a food source for birds, but go easy on our feathered airborne acrobats – while they have their own pollination qualities and act as pest controllers, they themselves, most crucially, act as a source of food for animals.

There's also something truly cerebral about birds, who predate our own time on the planet by some 150 million years. Sure, they're not cuddly or kinaesthetic, but through birdsong, breathless beauty, their solid commitment to building homes and raising families, and with a level of ingenuity and intelligence that many mammals can't even get close to, birds are a truly cerebral addition to nature's nest.



TRAVEL

# NATIONAL PARKS

fortnight: April 4 – April 18



New Forest National Park



South Downs National Park



Yorkshire Dales National Park



Northumberland National Park

Treasure trails and historic hill forts, secret coves and stunning lochs: all these and more are waiting to be discovered in the UK's 15 National Parks. Let's take a closer look at some of what England has to offer.

### DARTMOOR NATIONAL PARK

Located in the south of Devon, Dartmoor National Park is known for its wild open moorlands and rich local history. For hikers, check out the Meldon Reservoir and then treat yourself to afternoon tea in Ashburton.

### NEW FOREST NATIONAL PARK

Made a National Park in 2005, New Forest National Park offers a huge diversity of rare plants and animals. Marvel at the grazing ponies, cattle and pigs that roam freely around the park and enjoy a real sense of freedom whether you choose to explore on foot, on horseback or by bike.

### SOUTH DOWNS NATIONAL PARK

Less than two hours from London, South Downs National Park is a destination rich in culture and countryside, as well as some gorgeous country pubs. Don't miss the chance to dine at The Earl of March, owned by Giles Thompson, former executive chef at The Ritz London.

### YORKSHIRE DALES NATIONAL PARK

Perfect for those looking for natural beauty at its finest, the Yorkshire Dales National Park has much to offer, including Aysgarth Falls, the Yorkshire Three Peaks Challenge and the Force Gill Aqueduct.

### NORTHUMBERLAND NATIONAL PARK

The most northern National Park in England, it is also the least populated and least visited. However, don't let this put you off as this park boasts Hadrian's Wall, Kielder Water and Forest Park and the Sycamore Gap Tree.

### NATIONAL PARKS IN OTHER AREAS OF THE UK

There are two National Parks in Scotland: Cairngorms and Loch Lomond & The Trossachs. In Wales, there are three: the Brecon Beacons, Pembrokeshire Coast and Snowdonia.

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# Coming up ROSIE

How Rosie Huntington-Whiteley went from supermodel to businesswoman

For years, Rosie Huntington-Whiteley has been perfecting the art of spreading her talents across a wide spectrum.

This is the supermodel who leapt into our consciousness at the age of 16 when she appeared in *Teen Vogue*, then quickly ascended to adult fashion with projects for Victoria's Secret, Burberry, Pirelli and others.

Embracing motherhood – she has a three-year-old son, Jack, with actor Jason Statham – as well as embarking on film projects (*Transformers: Dark of the Moon* and *Mad Max: Fury Road*), you would imagine the now 33-year-old has enough on her plate. Yet burgeoning business ideas have created another angle with which the Plymouth-born model can utilise, maximise and monetise a polished brand.

Sure enough, in November, she announced the launch of her Clean Beauty Collaborative brand. Working with cosmetics firm Amyris, Rosie is building a digital platform for all things beauty, undertaken with an eye on great-performing products that are manufactured sustainably without harm to the planet.

The project follows on from her Rose Inc launch in 2018, which focuses on carbon-neutral eco-friendly initiatives.

She said: "I am passionate about responsible beauty products that are healthy for people and the planet."

Rosie has in the past admitted the maze of looks, styles and messages emanating from social media can be particularly off-putting.

"I want us to get back to the basic thrill of uniting people with access and knowledge and secrets of the industry," she says. "If we can all look as good as we can, while uniting to make the places where we live more sustainable, surely that's a route towards a happier future, because even I find myself getting negatively affected when I'm scrolling through feed after feed. I think we need to celebrate diversity and different kinds of beauty."

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# VITAMINS

## FOR CHILDREN EXPLAINED

**D**o you currently give your children daily vitamins but are not sure if they are worth the expense? Or are you thinking about buying vitamins for your kids but don't know which ones they need?

may be tempted to take more than they need, which could be harmful to their health.

### WHAT VITAMINS DO CHILDREN NEED?

The Department of Health recommends that all children aged six months to five years are given daily vitamin supplements that contain vitamins A, C and D. They also advise breastfed babies to be given a daily vitamin D supplement from birth. Some experts recommend that the following groups of children should take a daily multivitamin:

- > Those who do not have access to regular, nutritionally balanced meals
- > Picky eaters who are not getting sufficient vitamins and minerals
- > Children who eat a lot of processed or fast food
- > Vegetarians or vegans, who may need an iron and/or calcium supplement

### WHAT DOES A HEALTHY DIET INCLUDE?

If you are not sure whether your child is already getting all the vitamins and minerals they need from their diet, this guide should help you. A well-balanced diet should include:

- > Milk and dairy products or vegan alternatives
- > Plenty of fruit and vegetables
- > Protein
- > Whole grains

### ARE GUMMY VITAMINS A GOOD CHOICE?

Becoming increasingly popular in recent years, gummy vitamins seem to be the perfect solution for kids who lack certain nutrients. However, these are usually higher in sugar than other vitamins, plus they look and taste like sweets, meaning your child

### ADVICE FOR GIVING YOUR CHILD VITAMINS:

- > Keep them out of reach so that children do not have more than one a day
- > Do not treat them like sweets
- > Try a chewable vitamin if your child won't take a pill or liquid supplement
- > Consult your doctor first if your child is taking any other medication





SPORT

# Making plans for NIGEL

How Welsh referee Nigel Owens MBE is the latest to bring LGBT issues to the front line of sport

**O**n the face of it, it's perhaps the manliest sport of them all – where the fire and ferocity of competition demands brutish, testosterone-driven combat.

Like it or not, the past hasn't always been kind in associating homosexuality with those characteristics. And yet it's a credit to our progressiveness as a society that those attitudes are changing; and across Gareth Thomas, other male stars, both retired and still playing, plus a whole host of women who have proudly declared their sexuality, rugby is the sport that seems to be pioneering inclusion and diversity above any other.

The rise to prominence of Nigel Owens MBE as an ambassador for such inclusion is, alongside Thomas, perhaps the best example of someone emerging from the shadows. Having previously battled bulimia and suicidal thoughts as side effects to the hiding of his sexuality, the experienced referee came out in 2007.

"It's such a big taboo to be gay in my line of work," he says. "I had to think very hard about it because I didn't want to jeopardise my career. Coming out was very difficult and I tried to live with who I really was for years. I knew I was 'different' from my late teens, but I was just living a lie."

In reality, coming out only enhanced Owens' reputation in the game. He went on to claim the record for most test matches refereed, and in the Queen's 2016 Birthday Honours was awarded an MBE for services to sport. He retired in December 2000 after 17 years at the top.

And yet his work doesn't stop – in a long-term relationship with a teacher, Barrie Jones-Davies, Owens is a pioneer for LGBT issues in both sport and wider society. He works with charitable organisations in raising awareness and acceptance of gay people, using his story as a bridge to greater understanding of the issues involved.



Photo credit: Chris Fairweather/Huw Evans/Shutterstock

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A huge number of people drive on our roads unaware that their MOT has expired; and yet with the DVLA's reminder system, setting up a simple text message alert would prevent this happening.

The only time you're allowed to travel on the road with an expired MOT certificate is if you're en route to the test centre to get the service done, otherwise you could be looking at a fine of £1,000.

In 2020, during the COVID-19 outbreak and

subsequent lockdown, MOT dates were extended, though this is not the case in 2021.

### **TAX**

Road tax is a necessity for any car, and you can expect a hefty fine in the post (of up to £1,000), if you're driving around in an untaxed vehicle. That may be a better scenario for some than the alternative – your car is clamped, and if the fine isn't paid quickly it is impounded, incurring a daily fee of £21.

### **INSURANCE**

The big one – driving without insurance is the biggest threat to yourself, your passengers and other road users. It is looked upon dimly, and if you are stopped by the police, your keys will be confiscated immediately. A £300 fine and six points on your licence is the minimum, but greater penalties, including disqualification, are possible.

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# PUZZLES & TRIVIA

PUZZLES

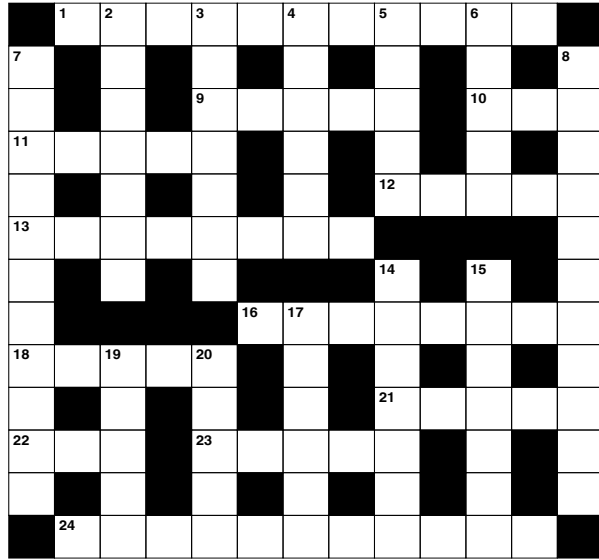
Answers: see end of The VISION Listings

## ACROSS

- 1. Dishonestly (11)
- 9. Ape (abbrev.) (5)
- 10. Fish eggs (3)
- 11. Hackneyed (5)
- 12. Giraffes have long ones (5)
- 13. Mad rush (8)
- 16. Eye condition (8)
- 18. Spring flower (5)
- 21. Boredom (5)
- 22. Female chicken (3)
- 23. Island in the Mediterranean Sea (5)
- 24. Study of lawbreaking (11)

## DOWN

- 2. Morally right (7)
- 3. Extract (7)
- 4. Wound together (6)
- 5. Unfasten a garment (5)
- 6. Expressing emotions (of poetry) (5)
- 7. Calamity or great loss (11)
- 8. Celebrity (11)
- 14. Panacea (4-3)



- 15. Linking (7)
- 17. Cosmetic cream (6)
- 19. Of the moon (5)
- 20. Device that splits light (5)

## DID YOU KNOW?

- ▶ Saudi Arabia is one of the only countries in the world that doesn't have any permanent rivers
- ▶ In the Falkland Islands, sheep outnumber people
- ▶ Napoleon ordered the construction of the Arc de Triomphe in Paris
- ▶ It's thought that in the future, the Maldives may become completely covered by water
- ▶ In Norway, around 98 per cent of the electricity production comes from renewable energy sources
- ▶ The Great Wall of China is 21,196km long
- ▶ Reykjavik is the most northern capital city
- ▶ Indonesia is the world's largest island nation, but no one knows exactly how many islands it contains

## SUDOKU

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



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