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THE WORLD OF SEX & POWER

15

MEGHAN MARKLE making her mark

SAY WHAT?

The best conversations to have with smartphone Siri

OLLY MURS The popstar's unexpected rise to fame

VISION Brentwood | Edition 21



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- MEGHAN MARKI E
- 8 SIRI...SAY WHAT?
- 11 HOME & DIY
- 19 LOCAL NEWS
- **39** GARDENING

40 OLLY MURS

- 43 HEALTH & FITNESS
- 47 BEAUTY
- 53 FASHION
- 54 SEX AND POWER
- 56 FOOD & DRINK
- 60 KIDS
- TRAVE 61
- 62 TECHNOLOGY
- 64 BUSINESS & FINANCE
- WHAT'S ON
- MOTORING
- 73 PU77LES
- 74 SPORT
- LOCAL TRADES & SERVICES 76
- 78 THE VISION LISTINGS

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Editor's notes...



this month's edition of VISIONBrentwood I'm writing this the day after the President of

the European Commission Jean-Claude Juncker. and many others, spoke in support of the UK

holding a second Brexit referendum. I voted to leave the EU and I think it will eventually be great for this country.

That's my view and I'm entitled to it - just like the 48 per cent of people who voted to remain. If the Leave camp had lost I would have accepted it. Calls for a second referendum are nonsense in my opinion. It's like asking to keep playing a game of football until your side eventually wins.

I realise that's a simplified view but let's say a second referendum delivers a remain vote, does that mean people who voted Leave should start asking for yet another referendum? Madness. The public exercised their democratic vote and the majority wanted to leave the EU. I believe that should be respected, just as much as I respect the views of those who want to remain. We voted to leave so let's get on with it. In this month's edition in local news, Brentwood mayor, councillor Will Russell, is set to take on the Brentwood Half Marathon, an Inbetweeners star is spotted directing a music video and the second phase of a council housing project is completed. I hope you enjoy this month's magazine.

15. INFERNO, 17. CITRIC, 19. LIBEL, 20. SINCE

22. ORB, 23. NORSE, 24. ALTERCATION

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ACROSS

2. REGRESS, 3. THROUGH, 4. NATIVE, 5. INDIA, 6. UNTIL, 7. VALEDICTION, 8. UNOBSERVANT, 14. PORTENT,

1. PRETENTIOUS, 9. RATED, 10. TEN, 11. LARGO, 12. ADLIB, 13. DESIGNED, 16. SCHOONER, 18. TALKS, 21. THETA,





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LEARNING to be Royal

eautiful American actress Meghan Markle, who is marrying into one of the most famous families in the world, is now the only pupil at a unique school – learning how to be royal – before she walks down the aisle with Prince Harry in May 2018.

And the curriculum, coupled with her studies on that score, includes swotting up on information, which will get her through the UK citizenship test to make her a British subject, which takes three years. But Meghan, 36, will also retain her US citizenship.

These are "exams" that Meghan just cannot fail and given her track record she looks certain to gain an honours degree in QAC – Queen and Country.

Meghan has already been learning a lot about the Royal Family from her fiancé Prince Harry, 33, and one lesson she will need to make sure she does not screw up is whom should she dip and bob to in the social minefield of curtseying.

Meghan will be expected to become swiftly au fait with who's above, and who's beneath, her and Harry. For his part, as guide and mentor, Harry will need to take her painstakingly through the protocol.

The Queen is a definite as is her sister-in-law The Duchess of Cambridge. But it is a no to Sophie, Countess of Wessex, as she too is a commoner. However the answer changes to yes if she is with her husband Prince Edward.

Princess Anne also gets a curtsey from Meghan, as she is the daughter of a sovereign, but not Zara Tindall, Anne's daughter, or Peter Phillips.

Eugenie and Beatrice are a yes, unless Meghan walks into the room with Harry, then no because he is a higher rank.

Any royal prince also merits a curtsey.

The current rules on who curtseys to who come from a document drawn up by the Queen's private secretary in 2005 and circulated among the family and courtiers only. Entitled 'Precedence Of The Royal Family To Be Observed At Court', its purpose was to clarify Camilla's place in the firm following her marriage to Charles.

Applicants on the citizenship test must prove they have a good knowledge of English and life in the UK, with most required to sit a test costing £50, which covers British values, traditions, history and everyday life.

She has been warmly welcomed into the Royal Family and her first royal duty with Prince Harry in Nottingham shortly after the couple's engagement was announced shows that Britain is already in the grips of Meghan mania.

Meghan has already announced she is giving up the vast amount of charity of work she has undertaken. But instead she will join William, Kate and Harry in the Heads Together mental health charity. She will also increase her charity work here in the UK and is expected to become patron of a number of organisations. TULIA TULIA UALO UTALIPATA



merican actress Meghan Markle already has a strong connection with Britain's Royal Family – even before she walks down the aisle with Prince Harry.

One of her ancestors Lord Hussey, 1st Baron Hussey of Sleaford, was executed by Henry VIII – Harry's 14th greatgranduncle.

He was beheaded on the orders of Henry after falling out of favour with the king.

Meghan is Sleaford's relative 10 generations down the line.

And on her wedding day, Meghan and Harry are expected to be given a royal title as a wedding present from the Queen.

They are expected to be named as the Duke and Duchess of Sussex, which will give Meghan an HRH status.

It is one of the few remaining dukedoms that is available.

Meghan, 36, will not formally be known as Princess Meghan because she is not of royal birth. However, she will become Her Royal Highness Princess Henry of Wales when she marries Harry, whose proper first name is Henry.

Like Prince William's wife Kate, Meghan will be known as a duchess and not a princess – unless a future decision is taken to upgrade their titles to that of princess.

Harry's mother, Diana, was widely known as Princess Diana, but that was never her formal title. She was the Princess of Wales by virtue of her

eventual unsuccessful marriage to Charles, the Prince of Wales.

But it was largely the media who constantly referred to her as Princess Diana and by which she was known around the world.

If Harry and Meghan have children they will have the titles of prince or princess, just like William and Kate's two children Prince George and Princess Charlotte.



Banish loveliness with these hilarious – and sometimes insightful – questions and conversations you can have with your loyal virtual assistant Siri.

GAGS AND RIDDLES

- > Tell me a joke (keep asking for several different responses)
- > How much wood can a woodchuck chuck?
- > Why did the chicken cross the road?
- > Will pigs fly?'
- > What does the fox say?



FILM AND TELEVISION

- > Are you her? (referring to Joaquin Phoenix's OS 'girlfriend' in the film *Her*)
- > Is Jon Snow dead? (Game of Thrones)
- > Have you seen The Matrix?
- > Hey Computer? (The LEGO Batman Movie)
- > What is *Inception* about?
- > Do you like Blade Runner?'

TECHNOLOGY

- > Windows or Mac?
- > Do you follow the three laws of robotics?
- > Which is the best phone?

- > Do you like Pokémon Go?
- > Hey, Alexa

EXISTENTIAL MUSINGS

- > What is the meaning of life?
- > What does Siri mean?
- > How old are you?
- > When is the world going to end?
- > What is 0 divided by 0?

PURE ENTERTAINMENT

- > Can you sing? (ask repeatedly)
- > Can you beatbox?
- > Will you go on a date with me?
- > Do you have a girlfriend?
- > What do you want for Christmas?
- > What costume should I wear for Halloween?
- > Why do you vibrate?

> I'm drunk

- > What are you doing later?
- (Game of Thrones)
 - > I'm naked



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FUTURE DESIGNS

HOME & DIY

Writer, broadcaster, curator and the undisputed king of European design – just who is Deyan Sudjic?

arly last year, London's Design Museum moved from its old home in the historic riverside location of Shad Thames to a new, glossily minimalist four-storey building in Kensington. Within a few weeks of opening, the museum had attracted more than a quarter of a million visitors – more or less the same number the old building managed to pull in over the course of a year.

But the newfound success of the Design Museum isn't just down to this shiny modernisation. Standing at the helm of the organisation for over a decade now has been writer and broadcaster Deyan Sudjic. And in that time, as well as releasing a hatful of academic books showcasing the length and breadth of the knowledge that has made him such a force in the world of design and architecture, Sudjic has taken the

museum to new heights.

The son of Yugoslavian communists has managed to more than keep pace with the capital's fashionable design elite, all the while eschewing unnecessary pretentiousness. Having found his feet among the occasionally mismatched landmarks of London, Sudjic is determined to keep leading the way for British architecture and revolutionary design. Meanwhile, he has plenty to say about the way things are going.

"London is the nearest thing in Europe to Shanghai, the way the skyline has been utterly transformed, in a very heedless, mindless way," he told The Guardian last year. "It seems very curious that all the things that we took for granted as a terrible idea 25 years ago – like building skyscrapers in the middle of London – are suddenly seen as entirely normal. I think there are some buildings that do a lot of damage. No one, even its architect, seems to like the walkie-talkie. There are areas around Battersea Power Station that, when they're completed, the reaction's going to be shock."

Photo Credits: Ron Ellis/Shutterstock.com



anging wallpaper may seem simple, but with these tips and tricks you can fully ensure that every time you try, the end result is papered-over perfection.

Wallpaper is the easiest way to transform a room from bland to bold - but if you make mistakes, the end results can cause peeling or mismatching and will drive you up the wall.

Corners

Learning how to wallpaper corners is one of the trickiest parts of the process. The most important thing to avoid is making the mistake of trying to paper a corner with a single sheet. This will cause wrinkles and creases to develop quickly.

When you measure the wall, add an extra half-inch before you cut it and this excess paper will cover the corner. Then take a second sheet and paste it to the second wall, right inside the corner without overlapping. You'll need to make a cut at the right angle between the ceiling and wall - make sure the paper is as smooth as possible and the cut is as close to the corner as you can make it.

Sockets and Fittings

It's surprisingly easy to deal with electrical fittings and plug sockets when you're wallpapering. Firstly, make sure the power is switched off in the room, then paper over the fitting using your main sheet of wallpaper. Next, take a dry brush and lightly brush over the fitting.



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AND SHAKERS

HOME

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Innovative, minimalist and timeless, it's easy to see why Shaker design is still popular

Vou make have noticed the recent revival of sparse and functional furniture that has become what Lawrence Llewelyn Bowen might describe as "du jour". And perhaps you've given no second thought to its origins – err, the olden days? But those ubiquitous wood-panelled kitchen cabinets with round knobs, those ladder-back chairs, and even those wicker baskets you've been using for storage, all derived from a rather surprising place.

Founded in England in the 18th century, the Shakers were a break-off group from the Quakers (They were initially known as Shaking Quakers because of their ecstatic behaviour during worship services). At their peak in pre-Civil War America, there were around 6,000 believers, but despite

these still relative conservative numbers, the Shakers have always been a source of fascination thanks to their lifelong vows of celibacy, female religious leadership, simple lifestyles, and furniture design.

Admirably unadorned, the Shakers preferred function over form, giving their designs a timeless and universal impression. This makes it easy to understand why the style has become so prevalent once again, for in a world where most things are popular for five minutes, Shaker design is essentially trend-proof. Also, as we live in smaller and smaller spaces, their innovations – such as hanging chairs on walls while they're not being used and custombuilt storage – are now regarded as ingenious modern-day interior solutions.

So if you fancy shaking it up, invest in a sturdy ladder-back chair, or wooden rocker, utilise your entry hallway with a storage bench and stylish peg rail, paint your old cabinets in a neutral grey or white palette, and get your hands on some proper handmade wicker baskets. In no time at all, you'll be revelling in the simplicity and sense of practical peace you've created in your home (vow of celibacy not required).



The real truth about where the worst bacteria lingers in your home - hint: it's not your toilet.

KITCHEN SPONGE

Think your kitchen is clean? Think again. A recent study found that many kitchen sponges had more bacteria than the average toilet. This means that when you wipe all your kitchen counters with your trusty sponge, you're essentially swearing a neat layer of bacteria all over the kitchen. The solution? Either boil your sponges, or replace them regularly.

TOOTHBRUSH HOLDER

Ever thought about how your toothbrush holder is right by your toilet? Now factor in that every time you flush the toilet it sprays an aerosol of faecal bacterial up to an impressive six feet. Now wash your holder weekly with soap and hot water.

PET BOWL

Poor poochie may have been drinking out of a veritable germ pond if his bowl has not been cleaned for a while. Studies have found bowls containing mould, yeast and coliform bacteria, so significantly improve your mutt's dining habits, and possibly the taste of his water, by banging the bowl in the dishwasher once a week.

PHONES AND TABLETS

They may be a brilliant innovation, but the constant tap tapping of sticky fingers on tablets and smartphones can foster a lively playground of pathogens. In fact, so insidious are these bacteria, that studies have shown devices harbouring everything from E. coli to salmonella, and some even had more bacteria than an average toilet seat; so wash your hands and wipe down your devices.

COFFEE MAKERS

The dark and damp water chambers of your coffee machine make a lovely home for microorganisms, which is why it's worth



filling the reservoir with vinegar, which you can leave for around 30 minutes before running through.
Be sure to brew a couple of lots of water before drinking though, as vinegar-flavoured coffee is almost as nauseating as the bugs that were there in the first place.







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LOCAL

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Former patient fundraises for haematology day unit

∧ former patient at Basildon University Hospital Ahad an emotional reunion with the staff who cared for her on the haematology day unit as she handed over a cheque for nearly £8,000.

Sarah Day, from Brentwood, finished treatment for non-Hodgkin's lymphoma in January 2017 but knew she wanted to do something to say thank you to the staff who had cared for her during treatment.

She raised £7,987 by holding a series of fundraising events including a coffee morning, a guiz night and a charity ball. Two of Sarah's friends also ran the Brentwood Half Marathon to help raise funds for the unit.

Sarah said: "I had amazing care while I was here

and walking back onto the unit today and seeing the faces of the staff who cared for me has been really emotional.

"I don't mind what the money gets spent on as the staff know best, but I hope it helps them and helps the other patients who are treated on the unit.

"I would just like to say a huge thank you to every single person who has supported me, donated money, auction prizes and their time. People have been so generous and I couldn't have done it without them."

As well as coming in to hand over the cheque and say thank you, Sarah was also able to ring the end of treatment bell.

Mayor to take on Half Marathon



Brentwood Mayor, councillor Will Russell, will be taking on the Brentwood Half Marathon this year.

The half marathon, organised by Brentwood a Becket Rotary Club, received an incredible response from individuals wanting to take part. The 13-mile event takes place on March 18 and starts and concludes at Sawyers Hall Lane. Big crowds are expected to support those taking part, helping to raise money for charity.

Usually the mayor would be at the start line to set people off, but this year cllr Russell will be taking part.

He will be raising money for his chosen charity The Mayor's Community Trust Fund, which gives grants to small local charities and funds individual cases of needs.

He will also be raising awareness for Atrial Fibrillation (AF) – a heart condition that he lives with himself.

Cllr Russell said: "AF is quite a common condition although less common in someone of my age.

"It is a little worrying knowing that long distance running is not recommended if you have this condition. However, there are risks associated with skydiving and that didn't stop our past mayor Ann Coe in her efforts to raise money for her chosen charities.

"I would much rather keep my feet on the ground. Of course, I am hoping to raise as much funds for my charity in the process."

There are still places available to enter the event. Those wishing to take part can enter via the Brentwood a Becket Half Marathon website www.brentwoodhalf.org

Officers reunite lost dog with owners



Two police officers from the Brentwood and Epping Forest Community Policing Team reunited a lost dog with his grateful owners recently.

PC Karen West and SC Lee Whitman were patrolling Epping Forest on January 13 when they spotted a dog running around.

With no owner in sight, the pair approached the dog cautiously but he ran off. The officers gave chase but they couldn't catch up with the dog.

Karen checked the website www.doglost.co.uk to see if anyone had posted about the dog.

She found a dog that matched the description, a three-year-old Bedlington terrier whippet cross called Bertie, and the pair called the owners to state that they'd spotted him.

His owners, Alan and Iwona were overjoyed to receive the call. Bertie had been chasing squirrels during a walk earlier that day and after hours spent searching for him, they'd almost given up hope.

Alan met the officers at the park where he had been spotted and called out for Bertie. Moments later, he appeared and rushed towards his dad who greeted him with open arms.

After giving Bertie a fuss, Alan thanked Karen and Lee for taking the time to contact him and for remaining in the area to better the chances of reuniting the dog. Iwona has since got in touch with Essex Police to thank Karen and Lee. She said: "We are extremely grateful and will never forget the day we got Bertie back, he's the baby of the family."



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Street Pastors in Billericay and Brentwood are continuing to serve their communities by being on the streets on their towns on Friday and Saturday nights just looking out for anyone who is or maybe becomes vulnerable. This can happen in a variety of ways and although sometimes it's down to life choices it isn't always. We spend a lot of time listening to people who are going through bad situations involving family life, work, finance and health. Although we don't take on our own clients, as we are not counsellors, we do signpost anyone who wants to receive further help on to specialist groups who are also ready to help.

During 2018 we will be launching new initiatives in other towns that don't have Street Pastors and we are also launching new projects of School, Rail and Response Pastors. Through these additional projects we seek to help out on the railways, schools and also in communities where an incident has occurred that causes unrest or an unhappy emotion in that area. We will seek to deploy in our recognisable uniforms, in groups of three, to offer a listening ear, care and help to people that may be going through emotional stress due to death or injury or for some other form of trauma impacting them and their neighbours.

THE PASTORS

We are currently very busy organising our next training schedule for those new recruits to the various teams. We train in roles and responsibilities of a Street Pastor under the Charity Ascension Trust. We also train in first aid, safeguarding children, youth, education, good news, mental health, police, alcohol and drugs. This is to equip our volunteers to stay in touch with modern day culture. All Street Pastors are over 18, in attendance of their local Christian church for at least one year, DBS checked and willing to train and volunteer to go out late at night until 3am.

We are on social media on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram or have various web pages if anyone wants to find out more about us or wants to volunteer. Why not follow us or email Billericay@Streetpastors.org.uk to organise a shadow patrol with one of our teams to find out for yourself what we do and why.

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The Inbetweeners star spotted directing music video

The Inbetweeners star James Buckley was spotted filming a music video in Brentwood recently.

He was directing the latest music video for Death of Guitar Pop and was seen outside the JobCentre and Eagle and Child pub.

Buckley tweeted his fans telling them of his whereabouts and encouraging them to go to the JobCentre for a chance to appear in the music video.

He wrote: "Not exactly sure when, but I'll be in Brentwood today near the station and I'm making a music video for @dogpska if you want to be in it, that would be really helpful. If you're in the Brentwood area? Just need you to stand outside the job centre ... not really selling this." After a day of filming, Death of Guitar Pop posted on Facebook saying: "Great day shooting with our old pal, the bafta award-winning, original bus w***** himself James Buckley for our next video "Welcome Back" ! Watch this space for release."

Buckley rose to fame after starring in *The Inbetweeners* which first came to our TV screens in 2008.

Photo credit: Ricci Fothergill

V25

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This magazine is packed with advertisements for goods and services provided by small businesses, many of whom are based in the Brentwood and Ongar area, or who are hoping to attract the attention of those of us living here.

Small businesses are usually working to tight margins, and a late or non-payment can have a huge effect on staffing and on the business's ability to keep going. It's a scandalous state of affairs when small businesses struggle to stay in business because of late payment and this is an issue which is of great concern to the government.

Changes have been made so that the Prompt Payment Code now promotes 30-day terms as standard with a 60-day maximum limit and unless signatories can prove exceptional circumstances for longer terms they will be removed from the Code.

I'm pleased the likes of Brentwood Borough Council has ensured its standard payment terms are 30 days from receipt of invoice, while invoices from suppliers within the borough are paid within 20 days. New rules have also been introduced to force the UK's largest companies to publish their payment terms giving businesses league tables of late payment performance to identify companies with the best record. This will put pressure on large companies to improve payment practices and deal with payments more efficiently while giving suppliers the information they need to negotiate fair contract terms. The introduction of Small Business Commissioners will also help handle disputes with larger businesses over issues like late payment.

With the recent news that Carillion, which holds contracts for 450 projects nationwide, including the building and maintenance of hospitals, prisons, defence sites and the construction of HS2, has gone into liquidation, I am all too aware that small businesses in Brentwood and Ongar may have been affected and am anxious to hear from any local companies which have been impacted. As always you can contact me at www. alexburghart.org.uk

An artist impression of the current renovation works which are being taken out on Brentwood Borough Council



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Showiumper Claudia in sizzling form Б

CAL NEWS $B_{\text{form winning the Charles Britton Equestrian}}^{\text{rentwood School's Claudia Moore was in sizzling}}$

Construction Winter JA Classic Qualifier at South View Equestrian Centre recently.

The hotly contested qualifier, held in Cheshire, was part of the 148cm Pony Premier Show. Claudia, a second year pupil, topped the leader board.

From a strong field of 29 competitors, 13-yearold Claudia took the win on board 14-year-old bay gelding and Liverpool International winner, Elando Van De Roshoeve. With just five through to the final round, Claudia tactically produced an accurate round to secure the sole treble clear of the class in 43.69 seconds.

The Championship will be held during the British Masters International Horse Show between June 29 and Julv 1.

She followed up this success with wins on two other ponies, Deflip and Shamrock Du Gite, in the Winter JC qualifier for the Royal International Horse Show, Hickstead. She then went on to gain qualification for the Charles Britton Winter Final at the Charles Stanley International in July this year with a very creditable second place with Shamrock.

Claudia has now gualified with both Elando and Shamrock for the Charles Stanley International which is a trial event for selection for this year's Pony European Championship Team.

Her super run of form means Claudia now has four ponies qualified for various finals, with only one pony 'Bugsy' left to gualify.

Man dies in hospital following collision

V28

∧ man who was injured following a collision in AHutton, Brentwood has died in hospital.

The crash happened in Rayleigh Road near to the junction of Claughton Way at around 7.10pm on Thursday, January 4 and involved a Peugeot 2008

and a pedestrian.

The pedestrian, a 34-year-old man, suffered serious head injuries and was taken to hospital for treatment but sadly died.

A 34-year-old man from Hutton was arrested in connection with the collision and has since been released under investigation.

Essex Police are appealing for anyone who witnessed the collision or who has dash cam footage at around the time of the incident to come forward.

If you have any information, please call PC Natacha Brown at the Serious Collision Investigation Unit on 101 quoting incident 949 of 04/01 or email collision. appeal@essex.pnn.police.uk

Alternatively you can contact Crimestoppers anonymously on 0800 555 111.

Officers raise awareness for domestic abuse charity

C tudent officers will be shining boots for 18 weeks Oto raise awareness for a domestic abuse charity. Intake C1 is looking to raise £1,000 for Changing Pathways, a charity providing support to victims in Basildon, Brentwood, Castle Point, Rochford and Thurrock.

The shoe shining challenge forms part of the dayto-day duties of a police officer.

Chief Superintendent Sean O'Callaghan, head of learning and development, said: "While many aspects of policing are changing, some of the old traditions still remain in place and are at the very heart of our police force.

"The recruits we train through our college have been model candidates, adopting our policies and showing great professionalism and heroism on our streets.

"I wish our new recruits every success during their fundraising appeal and I'm sure there will be plenty of officers queueing outside their door to have their boots shined."

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Town put on the map as Elizabeth Line is added

Brentwood has been put on the map after the Elizabeth Line was added to the Tube map recently.

The line has been given a distinct purple to stand out from other lines.

The start of the Elizabeth Line services will begin to operate in December 2018 including Paddington to Abbey Wood, Paddington to Heathrow (Terminals 2, 3 and 4) and Liverpool Street to Shenfield.

Fifteen trains per hour will run through the new tunnels, increasing to 24 trains per hour through the central section by May 2019.

The new stations and travel links are expected to boost the economy by £42billion overall and support

thousands of new jobs and homes in London and the South East.

The Mayor of London, Sadiq Khan, said: "The new map being unveiled shows how the first phase of the Elizabeth Line will connect to key parts of the transport network in the heart of central London, substantially reducing congestion on other key Tube lines as London's population grows.

"The huge progress made on the Elizabeth Line so far is testament to the hard work and expertise of the thousands of men and women who have worked on the project so far. When it opens next year, the line will improve the quality of life for millions of people for decades to come."

Elderly women targeted by fake fraud detectives

Police are urging people in Brentwood to be vigilant following four incidents in south Essex where suspects posing as fraud detectives have attempted to con vulnerable people.

Three reports were made on January 9 with elderly women in Leigh, Westcliff and Southend being contacted.

A final report was made on January 12 from an elderly woman in Benfleet.

Investigating officer DS Rachel Jeffery said: "The suspects are preying on their elderly victims' trust

V30

and respect for police officers in an attempt to con them out of hundreds, and in some cases thousands of pounds.

"Fortunately, in each case reported to us the victims were rightly suspicious and either told a relative, police or their banks.

"Remember we will never ask you for personal bank details on the phone or ask you to withdraw any sums of cash.

"We would talk to you in person if we were concerned about anything suspicious."

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Around 70% of homes in the UK incorporate a mineral felt flat roof.

Mineral felt generally has a slow breakdown often allowing water ingress to cause unnecessary damage before anything can be visibly detected within the home.

A failing roof & the warning signs – look for signs of cracking around the roof edge, pipes, upstands and roof lights etc. Beware of blisters on the roof surface, during colder months they can become brittle and crack. Felt will attract moss and algae further degrading the roof surface.

IMPORTANT – ALL PROPERTY OWNERS PLEASE BE AWARE

When a flat roof is replaced there are Part L Building Regulations that the homeowner and the contractor must comply with. **Please call for free information regarding the Part L Law**. The homeowner should also be made aware that insurance companies will no longer accept any liability for any external or internal damage caused by a leaking flat roof which is over 10 years old.

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INVEST Essex offers boost to SMEs

NVEST Essex has shown its intent to strengthen the efficiency of small to medium sized enterprises (SMEs) in the county by further bolstering its team of experts.

Graham Johnson has joined as a second 'Essex SME business manager', alongside Dave Watson, to offer free impartial consultancy from experienced finance professionals.

INVEST Essex locations services director David Rooke believes the duo will be able to provide great value to the local business community.

Rooke explains: "We are offering a new business support service, targeted at SMEs and start-ups, providing bespoke funding and finance advice from seasoned business banking professionals using their knowledge and insight of a combined 50 years of working in the industry to access funds and finance."

Johnson, who was previously employed by Coutts and Baker Tilly in working with businesses to maximise their value, joined INVEST Essex in January and is anticipating a productive 2018.

He says: "My role at INVEST Essex is to help SMEs raise money, identify premises and to grow as businesses - to hopefully increase employment in Essex as a result.

"There is a 12-hour commitment of 'free' advice (covered by the European Regional Development

Fund) in the form of dedicated face time but that can be increased if there is value. I have already been surprised by the volume of enquiries and look forward to a busy year ahead."

Meanwhile, Watson, who has more than 25 years of corporate banking experience across start-up, growth and turnaround businesses alongside client strategy consultancy for NatWest Commercial across East Anglia, has already been putting his wealth of expertise and contacts within the Essex SME market to good use since joining in September 2017.

Watson adds: "Access to finance and funding remains difficult, which restricts SME growth, Every SME is unique, and we work hard to understand that business - developing bespoke finance solutions to make things happen. We have an extensive network of contacts and it's been fantastic working with owners across Essex to grow their businesses."

INVEST Essex is an investment promotion agency (IPA) and business support provider, now part of the 'Let's Do Business Group' delivering services for Essex County Council across the Greater Essex area.

You can find out more about the work done by INVEST Essex at: www.investessex.co.uk, email: contact@investessex.co.uk or follow them on Twitter (@investessex).

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Barn completely destroyed in fire

Firefighters were called to an alight barn recently. Several crews were called to the fire in Hall Lane, Shenfield, in the early hours of January 7.

Crews immediately requested further support to contain the fire, to prevent it spreading.

V34

The fire was extinguished by 3.07am. Firefighters continue to extinguish hotspots until 5.42am.

One of the crews revisited at 8am the following morning, where they reported a number of small hotspots still remained.

Second phase of council housing project complete

Brentwood Borough Council has completed the second phase of new council housing to be built in the borough for 25 years.

NIGHTS SQUARE

Knights Square has been transformed from a garage site attracting anti-social behaviour to newly developed housing for the residents of Brentwood.

The site has four single-storey properties for older residents. It was named Knights Square in memory of Malcolm Knights, former head of housing at the council who sadly passed away in June 2015.

Jessica Knights, Malcolm's daughter, cut the ribbon to officially open the new homes.

She said: "I'm really proud and surprised that this has been named after my dad. It means there is a long-lasting legacy for everyone to see."

A plaque was unveiled at the site by Malcolm's brother Duncan.

He said: "Malcolm started his career in local government in the early 1980s when the sell-off of existing council housing was in full swing, but he maintained a position throughout that such developments still had a place in the borough's portfolio, and was passionate in his defence of this. He would be very proud to be remembered by such a development."

The housing is part of a project to repurpose disused sites to create housing to meet needs locally.

Brentwood Borough Council's chairman of the community, health and housing management committee, councillor Chris Hossack, said: "Malcolm Knights' hard work and dedication started the journey towards building new homes for the people of Brentwood, so it's appropriate that we have named this development after him.

"This phase has sheltered homes for older residents who may want to downsize from the home they currently have and no longer need, which in turn allows bigger properties to be available for others in the borough. The garage sites were ideal to use as they were semi-derelict or unused and provide much-needed homes."

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Spring clean YOUR GARDEN

ow is the time of year when things really start to get busy in the garden. The worst of the weather is (usually) behind us and the days are getting longer. Frosts and strong winds can still be a hazard, but it is time to put in lots of preparation for the months ahead.

Spring clean

Get rid of any weeds which have cropped up in recent months to ensure they don't get out of hand and dig over your beds. Also cut back overgrown and non-flowering shrubs. Deadhead daffodils and hydrangeas as the flowers finish and let the foliage die back naturally. If you have a lawn it's also time to mow it to ensure a greener, denser patch in the summer. It is an ideal time for roses to be pruned, removing any damaged, dead or diseased stems.

Prepare and plant

Once you have dug over your flower beds, add a layer of compost or well-rotted manure. Then it is time to think about planting - if you plan it well enough you can have a continuous crop of flowers in the summer months.

Hardy annuals and perennials such as delphiniums can be sown to provide a burst of colour. It is also time to plant summer-flowering bulbs such as gladiolus, lilies and ranunculus.

Sweet peas, broad beans and first salads can be planted, but will need to be protected from mice and bad weather with cloches.

Plant out onions and shallot sets and cover with netting to prevent birds pulling them free. Plant the first potatoes.

In the greenhouse

If you have a greenhouse why not sow cucumbers, tomatoes, aubergines, celery and peppers, and plant strawberry runners in hanging baskets.



Finding his

dored by the nation, particularly the ladies, popstar Olly Murs made his debut on ITV's *The Voice* recently.

When Olly finished second to Joe McElderry on season six of *The X Factor*, it was assumed that the show's winner would be the one to go on to have the triumphant career. And yet, eight years later it is Murs who is still wowing us, not just in the charts, but on television too where he has carved out quite the niche for himself as a chatty and charismatic cheeky chappy.

It's not hard to spot what the Essex lad's appeal is. Not only is the 33-yearold effortlessly charming, talented and extremely handsome, he also has a certain down-to-earth appeal – an ability to make everyone feel they'd quite like to be best mates with the *Heart Skips a Beat* crooner.

Certainly for his latest role as a coach on ITV's *The Voice*, his likeability and warmth will be vital as he nurtures and guides his musical protegees to success. Filling the spot of Gavin Rossdale (who left after just one season) Murs will take his spinning chair next to fellow coaches Sir Tom Jones, will.i.am and Jennifer Hudson.

Prior to making his *Voice* debut, Murs admitted to feeling the pressure, but said the team had been extremely welcoming. "When I first started I was really nervous to be the new member - it is like being in a new class at a new school with all new kids. I have got all these new people to meet and they all know each other, and they have got to get to know me. Will they like me or not? I don't know, but I have settled in brilliantly."

Having worked as a presenter both on the *Xtra Factor* and the *X Factor*, it's certainly familiar territory for Murs, though let's hope he doesn't make any howling reality 'big reveal' errors - cue like Prue Leith who last year accidently tweeted *The Great British Bake Off* winner before the final was aired.

Thankfully, Murs is likely to exercise caution on social media following his overreaction at the Oxford Circus tube incident last November where a scuffle on a platform led to mass stampedes and panic.

"F***, everyone get out of Selfridges now gun shots!! I'm inside," posted

Murs to his seven million Twitter followers, before

adding, "Evacuating store now! F*** heart is pounding." As there turned out to be no gunshots, or any specific reason for the panic, Murs was mercilessly mocked for his overreaction, and even scolded by Piers Morgan for fuelling the hysteria.

Still, such a nervous disposition doesn't seem to have affected his appeal with the ladies, and in the last few months alone Murs has been romantically linked to Melanie Sykes, Love Island's Amber Davies and Capital Xtra DJ Emma Conybeare. Rumour has it the Dear Darlin' singer hasn't found his true love yet, so let's hope the coming months bring huge success both on and off screen for everyone's favourite runner-up.



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BODY WEIGHT TRAINING

This trend is all about getting back to basics as you use your own body weight to build strength. Part of the reason for its burgeoning popularity is that it requires no equipment and can be performed anywhere, meaning you can finally be that weirdo in the office.

NOVELTY YOGA

It may be one of the most ancient forms of exercise, but there are too many modern incarnations to

count. There's 'couples' yoga', said to strengthen your bond with each other; 'beer yoga' (performed down the boozer with a beer in hand, and founded in Germany); 'laughter yoga' and even 'goat yoga', which is where you practise outside with... goats. Just keep an eye on your yoga mat.

ROPES

It may sound a bit kinky to the exercise lingo layman, but working out with weighted ropes is going to become even more popular in 2018, and it's not hard to see why when you consider the health benefits. Ropes not only work every muscle in your body, they also give you a cardiovascular workout and improve co-ordination. You'll knot find a more thorough workout.

NAPPING

Napercise is already a 'class' you can take at David Lloyd Gyms, whereby you lie on a single bed in a comfortably-heated room with soothing sounds piped out. It is said to burn calories while you sleep and is, therefore, the perfect workout. Yawn...



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NO SWEAT?

Uncovering the myths behind how it aids toxin release and weight loss. Sweating is having its moment. From Bikram yoga classes to infra-red saunas and even cardio classes in heated studios, it has never been cooler to sweat. But while devotees of these practices extol the many virtues of getting hot and steamy – which

include accelerated weight loss, improved flexibility and serious detoxification – few of these claims appear to be rooted in science.

"Sweating out the toxins" is one phrase often bandied about by perspiring yogis, but while it's nice to imagine your pores opening up and all matter of filth and unwanted fat pouring forth, the truth is that this really isn't the purpose of sweat at all. The function of sweat is to cool your body down when it is overheated. The cause of sweat does not alter its content, so whether you're slogging out on a 5k run or panicking prior to a big presentation, it will always predominantly consist of

nderstanding why we sweat and water with traces of minerals.

Another belief is that sweating in excess will miraculously aid weight loss. It won't. Weigh yourself before and after a class or sauna and you may very well have lost weight, but most of this will again just be water.

But this isn't to say there aren't benefits from sweating. It is still an effective way to purify pores, so providing you cleanse and moisturise properly afterwards, you will get glowing skin. Sweating also encourages you to drink lots of water, which will rehydrate your body and push blood through your organs (like your liver and kidneys, which take care of all your detoxification) – helping you to think and function better.

Finally, a heated environment does help improve flexibility and promote relaxation, meaning you are more likely to enjoy a workout class and want to return. This means that over time you will build muscle and lose weight, leading to a happier, healthier you.



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> s the world's most influential make-up artist, Pat McGrath is devoted to bringing seriously fabulous and effective cosmetics to the masses. Unless you work in the fashion industry, or are a cosmetics geek, it is unlikely that the name Pat McGrath will be instantly familiar – but you will almost certainly have seen her work. From creating fashion campaign looks for brands like Louis Vuitton, Prada and Balenciaga to bringing us some of the most iconic images in fashion editorial – not to mention the wealth of celeb red carpet looks she has contributed to over the years – Pat McGrath is essentially the queen of make-up.

Raised in Northampton by her Jamaican mother Jean during the 1970s, McGrath developed an early fascination with cosmetics, fuelled in part by the fact there were so few products on the market that were effective for black skin. Despite having no formal training, McGrath began garnering attention for her bold and innovative make-up style; her career breakthrough came in the early Nineties when she began collaborating with Edward Enninful (then fashion editor of *i-D* magazine).

Hugely celebrated within her industry, the 47-year-old has managed to remain somewhat behind the scenes, but with Enninful's recent appointment as editor-in-chief of British *Vogue*, McGrath has been thrust into the spotlight, becoming the fashion bible's beauty editor-at-large.

She is also making waves with her Pat McGrath Labs make-up range, which has been selling out in the States since 2015 and came to the UK in the summer. The sumptuous palates and sets may be pricev (the Lust 004 Lip Kit is £135 at Net-A-Porter), but they are in a league of their own in terms of quality and colour as McGrath strives to make products with enough pigment to show up on every skin tone - they also come packaged in clear bags stuffed with sequins. All proof that while glitter may not always be gold, it will make you look a million bucks on Saturday night.

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V48



BEAUT

magine a world without glitter - no shimmery eye makeup on your nights out, no dazzling confetti on Lyour daughter's fifth birthday, no glitz, no glamour, no shine. This dull dystopia may have you shaking your head in horror, but in reality, the impact glitter is having on our environment is far more terrifying.

Most glitter is made from plastic, and the tiny size of its particles makes it a potential ecological hazard, particularly in the oceans. Anyone who has ever had a brief fling with the sparkly stuff is aware of its insidious nature, as it lingers under your nails, on your skin and abour your home for weeks. And once out into water, it behaves no differently. In fact, it the number of microplastic fragments in the world's ocean has been estimated at up to 51 trillion.

Most of these microplastics (defined as fragments of plastic less than 5mm in length) have been broken down from larger debris, but some glitter - along with microbeads which are set to be banned

THE LAST

in the UK this year - is manufactured specifically to be small enough to be included in cosmetics, craft glues and beauty products.

Not only have marine animals - from plankton to whales - been documented eating plastic, with devastating results, they can also end up inside us when we consume seafood. So do you think the idea of eating a shimmering scallop is cute? Well consider the fact that most glitter is made of aluminium and a plastic called PET which can break down to release chemicals that disrupt hormones, and have been linked to the onset of certain cancers and neurological diseases and you may change your mind.

Thankfully, this may not be the end of glitter, for while some scientists are calling for it to be banned, others are creating biodegradable options. So next time you're seeking out a sparkle, do your bit for those hungry whales and splash out on the good stuff.

SHAVING GOESCHIC

WHY MEN SHOULD DITCH THE BIC AND GET ON BOARD WITH LUXURY SHAVING PRODUCTS.

hile women have long had an abundance of hair removal products to choose from – oil-enriched shaving balms, epilators and razors in every shape, size and colour – men have made do with comparatively fewer options. But in the last few years, beard shaving and facial care has become a lucrative industry.

Unlike many other grooming trends that look to the future by capitalising on advancing technology, the shaving trend draws from the past and the notion that the maintenance of a man's facial furniture ought to be a luxurious and indulgent experience. This ritual began in Roman times, when Alexander the Great ordered his soldiers to remove all hair so in battle the enemy would have nothing to grab hold of. Society followed suit and soon men all over Rome were frequenting barbershops to catch up on local gossip while they were shaved with straight blades and thon meananged

and then massaged with soothing oils. You may have noticed these traditional establishments popping up in your local high street; but while the format has not changed, the products have. Bluebeard's Revenge is a brand, for instance, whose exfoliators, creams and treatments promise "shaving for real men" and boast hard-working ingredients to minimise shaving discomfort. Taylors of Old Bond Street, meanwhile, sells the kind of products one might expect to find in James Bond's bathroom cabinet – like a Luxury Sandalwood Shaving Stick.

But whether you see yourself as a dapper Dan or a nefarious pirate, there are several reasons why you may want to consider upgrading your shaving regime. Firstly, disposable razors are becoming ever more expensive, and while a straight-edge razor will set you back around $\pounds 40$, the blades you put in it are remarkably cheap. Secondly, those who suffer from skin rash and ingrowing hairs may find that a single, extremely sharp blade lessens discomfort. And finally, the small point that shaving creams and balms make you feel and smell divine.



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Everything you need to know about Edward Enninful, *Vogue's* new head honcho

hen editor-in-chief Alexandra Shulman announced her departure from Vogue just over a year ago after a quarter of a century in the role, tongues were instantly wagging over who would land what is arguably the most coveted post in British fashion. Some saw it as a chance to shake up the old guard; an opportunity to move the magazine into more diverse, bold and modern territory. And when it was revealed that avantgarde visionary Edward Enninful would be filling Shulman's stylish shoes, it was clear the masses had a real personality on their hands.

The first black male editor at the magazine, charismatic Enninful was making waves before he'd even stepped into *Vogue*'s offices, but one look at his impressive CV proves his appointment was nothing to do with controversy, and all to do with merit.

Having been appointed fashion director of cuttingedge culture tome *i-D* in 1991 (at the age of just 18), Enninful worked extensively with both American and Italian *Vogues* throughout the noughties, and his most recent role as creative and fashion director at America's *W* Magazine saw his stock continue to rise.

Born in Ghana, Enninful emigrated to London's Ladbroke Grove with his parents and five siblings when he was young. A working-class background combined with the veritable melting pot that was West London in the early Seventies, were reflected in his debut edition of *Vogue* which was released last November. Starring mixed-race British model and feminist activist Adwoa Aboah on its cover, the 'Diverse' issue paid tribute to Britain's great and eclectic heritage, and featured a broad array of talent, along with high-end couture alongside urban streetstyle.

In short, if Enninful keeps things original and innovative, we can expect *Vogue* to become an entirely different animal – cooler, all-encompassing and more thought-provoking – by the decade's close.

WHEN THE HOUSE OF CARDS **CAME CRASHING DOWN**

s Harvey Weinstein takes his ungracious exit voung, vulnerable men. Some are asking why from the inner sanctum of the movie world's elite. he seems to be taking many others with him - even on this side of the Atlantic - but where will this modern-day sex scandal end?

On Thursday, October 5, The New York Times published a story detailing decades of allegations of sexual harassment against Hollywood producer Harvey Weinstein.

In an official apology, the 65-year-old admitted that he had "caused a lot of pain", but vehemently denies having non-consensual sex with any of those named. Stars of the magnitude including Angelina Jolie and Gwyneth Paltrow came forward to speak out against Weinstein and other men in power, unleashing a flood of accusations.

Those who know the film industry are not surprised, for the Hollywood casting couch is legendary. But these powerful sexual predators do not prey solely on the beautiful and famous; nor do they target just females, as actor Anthony Rapp proved when he accused Kevin Spacey, one of Hollywood's most decorated actors, of sexually assaulting him when he was just 14 years old.

The claim prompted Spacey to come out publicly as gay for the first time, sparking criticism for the inappropriate timing of his announcement as a further wave of accusations came forward from

victims didn't speak out sooner, vet quickly we must remind ourselves of the shame and fear that still surrounds sexual abuse.

Mostly though, this is a story about power. Weinstein's wealth and status allowed him to hush those he hurt for fear he would do irreparable damage to their careers, and those who dared speak out were kept at bay by lawyers, often by offering thousands in compensation. Actress Rose McGowan claims she turned down a \$1million (£760,000) offer from Weinstein in return for her silence.

The red carpet at the Golden Globes was dominated by one colour - black. This was to show support of Time Up's movement, standing in solidarity with victims of sexual assault and harassment. Actresses Nicole Kidman, Angelia Jolie and Emma Stone were among those to walk the red carpet in the colour.

It's not just Hollywood actors who have been subject to allegations. Several MPs, including a minister, have also been accused of inappropriate behaviour towards young women. In January 2018, it was revealed under a Freedom of Information request by the Press Association that there have been more than 24,000 attempts to access pornographic websites in Parliament since the

election. However, parliamentary authorities say the majority of the attempts were not deliberate.

Some of the publicised revelations involve International Trade Minister Mark Garnier (who asked his secretary to buy him sex toys as well as calling her an inappropriate name), former Work and Pensions Secretary Stephen Crabb (who sent explicit text messages to a job applicant) and Sir Michael Fallon (multiple offences). Defence Secretary Fallon fell on his sword, Commons veteran Kelvin Hopkins was suspended by Labour for "inappropriate touching", and Tory MP Charlie Elphicke had his whip suspended as multiple other allegations against leading political figures surfaced.

One of the latest people to be accused of sexual harassment is Marvel creator Stan Lee. According to the Daily Mail, who exclusively revealed the news, a nursing company employed to care for him stopped working for him after several complaints. These included demanding oral sex, groping and walking around naked. Lee's lawyers have accused the company of defaming Lee.

It seems the first allegations have caused a snowball effect, giving those affected the confidence to step forward and share their stories. Many believe this is just the beginning and, as recent months show, it seems that is true.

One-Pan Wonder Chorizo & Butter Bean Stew

ne-pan wonders. We all love these types of recipes, where you can create a filling sumptuous meal using only one pan. There's something incredibly satisfying about putting all the ingredients into

one pan and leaving them to fuse together into a something that's bursting with flavour. This recipe is no exception a hearty and delicious onepan wonder.

Serves 4 | 40 minutes | Easy

INGREDIENTS:

- ▶ 150g chorizo, chopped into slices
- 1 onion, peeled and chopped
- 1 garlic clove, peeled and crushed
- 2tsp rosemary
- 2tsp sweet or hot smoked paprika
- 1x400g tin of chopped tomatoes

- 2 x400g tins of butter beans, drained
- > 230g roasted red peppers, sliced
- Crusty bread to serve

METHOD:

Using a deep-based frying pan or a large casserole dish, fry the chorizo over a medium heat for a couple of minutes. Be careful not to overcook them. Remove from the pan using a slotted spoon, and put them to one side on a plate. Add the onion to the pan and fry until they are soft and golden.

Add the garlic, rosemary and paprika. Fry for another minute and then add the peppers, chopped tomatoes and beans. Take the tomato tin, half fill with water and add to the pan. Simmer this for 15-20 minutes until the stew thickens. Then, return the chorizo to the pan and warm through for a few more minutes while you toast the bread. Spoon the stew over the bread and dig in.

Experience a real Mediterranean welcome

Just off from the main buzz of Billericay High Street sits this welcome new restaurant serving traditional Turkish cuisine. What sets Mirabel apart from the other Turkish restaurants popping up across Essex is it's laid back and family friendly



atmosphere. There is no stuffiness and you immediately feel welcome. The setting is perfect for large groups as well as being intimate enough to enjoy great food and company for couples, as well as families.

Serving up large portions of all the favourite Turkish dishes including Chicken Shish, Moussaka

and Iskender, there is sure to be something for everyone.

There is an extensive drinks and cocktail menu, and the restaurant welcomes diners to enjoy the bar after their meal – where of a weekend there is a DJ and belly dancers for a real Mediterranean feel!

Mirabel would be the perfect place to treat someone special for Valentine's day, or to dine out with the family for Mother's day.





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THE SCIENCE OF...

hey say it can lift spirits, cure colds and is even good for the soul, but what are the facts behind this 'souper' food?

Grandmas have been extolling its virtues for years – and it turns out that a steaming bowl of chicken soup really can cure what ails you. Far from being hokum, there appears to be some sound, science-based logic behind this old wives' tale, suggesting that a compound contained in the brilliant broth – called carnosine – can help your

immune system fight the early symptoms of flu.

A study published in 2000 by Dr Stephen Rennard of the University of Nebraska Medical Centre, Omaha, discovered that the soup inhibited the movement of the most common type of white blood cell – neutrophils – which defend against infection. This, he believed, stopped the bacteria from spreading and consequently eased symptoms.

Yet despite numerous studies and the potential carnosine connection, scientists have struggled to pin down the exact ingredient which makes chicken soup so effective. It is possible that the nutrients found in its delicious ingredients – chicken, onions, carrots, celery, parsley, salt and pepper – work in synergy to create this beneficial effect. In other words, chicken soup is the Avengers of the food world.

While shop-bought soup appears to be as healing as homemade, there is nothing quite like the added power punch you get from boiling a chicken carcass yourself, releasing a whole other host of trace minerals, vitamins and rich gelatine – thought to support skin and digestive health. But with no conclusive evidence, there are those who maintain its miraculous properties are merely a placebo effect.

But who can blame the believers? When your nose is running like Niagara Falls and your entire body aches, a mug of steaming, soothing soup as comforting as a hug from your best friend might be all the healing you need.

chicken en

V58

BEAT the Bugs

How to stop those nasty viruses that kids pick up at school from thriving.

t may be near impossible to stop your little one from accumulating all manner of gruesome gremlins and vile viruses while at school – unless vou consider the Jake Gyllenhaal film Bubble Bov as a serious parenting option - but you can teach them how to prevent the spreading of germs once they've brought them home.

When it comes to kids, remember that seeing is believing. Getting a five-year-old to understand that when he or she sneezes a spray of up to 100,000 bacteria rises in the air at 100mph, is not going to be an easy task, so it's worth trying to find a fun way to help them understand the basics.

> A good way to do this is to prepare some

hand sanitising gel with edible glitter or lustre dust in, then play a game telling them you've given them the dreaded lurgy (the edible glitter or lustre dust). This visual cue will help them appreciate how widespread bacteria are, and also means that when they wash their hands they must clean them really well to be rid of all the edible glitter or lustre dust.

It's also good to educate your child using books and song. A Germ's Journey by Dr Katie Laird and What Are Germs? by Katie Daynes make for clever and entertaining reads, while Carex have a great selection of hand washing songs you can download from their website for free.

Consider too really simple persuasive techniques, such as buying a hand soap which smells or looks great.

Finally, gentle reminders can never hurt when trying to get your little one into a good

HOW TO CONQUER THE CAPITAL FOR JUST £20 A HEAD Plan ahead: Average train fares have risen by 25 per cent since 2011, meaning the most expensive part of your trip to London could be just getting there.

Fortunately, there are plenty of ways to save. By booking in advance (even just the day before) you can get money off your train tickets, and if coming from further afield you may want to look into splitticketing, where you buy two or more tickets for different segments of your journey. You may also want to invest in a railcard (60 per cent off for children on the Family & Friends Railcard) and book train tickets with Travelcards included.

Free attractions:

Possibly one of the best things about our capital is that there are loads of fantastic free attractions. The Science Museum, the British Museum and the Tate Modern are just three fun and fascinating places where general entry costs nothing - and there are loads more. There is also an abundance of free

markets like Camden and Borough, not to mention London's many glorious parks.

TRAVEL

Hunt out offers

LONDON

on a budde-

For deals on attractions that aren't free, it's worth scouring the internet for offers. Days Out Guide is a handy website that offers two-for-one deals on attractions like the London Eye and Madam Tussauds. Many places also offer discounts for booking ahead and large groups.

Cheap eats:

The cheapest way to feed your family is to take your own lunch, but where's the fun in that? For a big treat, restaurant chains like Pizza Express or Bella Italia often have voucher codes on their websites. Or for something more authentic, why not head to Brick Lane where there is an abundance of fantastic street food, world-class bagels and, of course, some of the finest Indian cuisine?

habit. Teaching them to blow their own nose properly, wash hands frequently and cover their mouth when they sneeze will not only save the rest of your family from the neverending onslaught of illness, it will also serve them well in the future.



ROBOTS

ames Cameron's *Terminator* films envisaged them in a bleak faroff future, but the notion of killer robots is becoming a key topic of conversation among some of the world's biggest tech brains... The 'Campaign to Stop Killer Robots' may well sound like a bit of a joke, but take into account the fact that it's supported by over 100 of the world's leading robotics engineers – not to mention SpaceX and Tesla billionaire Elon Musk – and the situation looks somewhat more serious. In a letter sent to the United Nations, leaders in the artificial intelligence (Al) industry have urged the global organisation to take into account the 'Pandora's Box' that the development of 'lethal autonomous' technology could open and unleash.

While these so-called 'killer robots' - defined as fully autonomous weapons that can select and engage targets

without any human intervention – aren't yet a reality, current technological advances are making them very possible in the near future. Musk and his fellow Al innovators want to see these examples of 'morally wrong' technology banned under the UN Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons.

And while various reports on the dangers of killer Al have been supported by Stephen Hawking, Apple's Steve Wozniak, and Musk among others, some members of the Silicon Valley community appear less concerned. In July, a squabble between Musk and Facebook CEO Mark Zuckerberg hit the headlines, with Zuckerberg deeming the warnings against a potential killer robot threat "pretty irresponsible" and Musk retorting that the Facebook founder's

> knowledge on the subject was "limited". But in the same month, the Tesla tech-head told a gathering of US government figures that they would do well to heed his warnings. "I keep sounding the alarm bell," he said. "But until people see robots going down the street killing people, they don't know how to react because it seems so ethereal."

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BOXING CLEVER

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Alternatively, perhaps she's more of a G&T gal? If so, why not grab BoroughBox's Craft Gin and Tonic box which, for $\pounds 69.99$ (three months), offers a boozy gift with tasty nibbles thrown in for good measure.

And these are the tip of the iceberg. Put simply, subscription boxes are a fantastic way of giving

someone you love (or even yourself, ahem) a monthly delivery of a lovely treat. Dazzlingly diverse, you can buy everything from socks to igneous rocks, without the hassle of having to go to the shops.

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St Francis Hospice – The Big Yellow Quiz The Brentwood Centre, Doddinghurst Road, Brentwood, CM15 9NN March 23, quiz begins at 7.30pm



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We joined from the 1st edition (June 2016) and as well as us using the trades and services in there, we have already received a significant amount of work, including large commercial works. We highly recommend. Thank you Nik!

The Gleaming Glass Co

I took out a 12 month advert in VISIONBrentwood and so far in 3 months I've had a lot of work from it. I've used leaflets in the past but never got much out of it but this magazine has really worked well me raising my profile in the area.

Neil (The Gleaming Glass Co)

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NUMBER PLATES

WHY THE DVLA BANNED OVER 300 NUMBER PLATES ...

t must be tough for the folks at the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA). Not only do they shoulder the responsibility of protecting us from number plates which could be deemed offensive or salacious, they even have to employ censors who meet every six months – to coincide with the bi-annual release of new numbers – to ensure that the more creative motorist doesn't cruise around with 'PE12 VRT' emblazoned on their Maserati.

Which is why on August 25, in a bid to get ahead of the game, the Swansea-based agency released a list of 300 number plates which would be banned when the '67' vehicle registrations came into effect the following week. Among them were the more blatantly offensive configurations – like MU67 DER, BU67 GER, D067 GER, BA67 ARD, MU67 GER, and HU67 WLY – along with more cryptic ones like N067 DAD, N067 FUN, N067 MUM and N067 SON that start with the word NO and end with another complete threeletter word (where the 67 is irrelevant).

The DVLA maintains that it has a responsibility to ensure plates do not "cause upset or offence", which is why religious words like JE55US and AL14LAH are banned too – although in June the agency admitted that JH11 HAD had "slipped through the net". But deciding what can be deemed offensive is surely the hardest job of all, and in the past AD13 CTS, PR15 SON and AL60 POP have all been withheld. One thing's for sure: those poor censors will be putting in some serious overtime when the 69 registrations are released in 2020...

Understanding the lingo:

- A 6 can look like a 'G' or an 'S'
- A 7 can be read as a 'T' or an 'L'
- The number 67 can be seen by some as an 'R'

PEI2 VRT

MOTORING

MU67 DER

NO67 FUN

JE55US

JHII HAD

PRI5 SON

ΪΠ

S



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PUZZLES & TRIVIA

ACROSS

- 1. Showy (11)
- 9. Judged (5)
- 10. Net (anag) (3)
- 11. In a slow tempo (of music) (5)
- 12. Speak without preparation (2-3)13. Made with purpose; planned (8)
- 16. Sailing vessel (8)
- 18. Speaks (5)
- 21. Eighth Greek letter (5)
- 22. Sphere or globe (3)
- 23. The Norwegian language (5)
- 24. Angry dispute (11)

DOWN

- 2. Return to a former state (7)
- 3. From beginning to end (7)
- Indigenous (6)
- 5. Country in southern Asia (5)
- 6. Up to the time when (5)
- 7. Act of saying farewell (11)
- 8. Inattentive (11)
- 14. Omen (7)
- 15. Raging fire (7)
- 17. _____ acid: lemon juice constituent (6)

DID YOU KNOW

► M&M's chocolate stands for the initials of its inventors Mars and Murrie

- Iceland consumes more Coca Cola than any other country
- Nintendo first produced playing cards
- Cheerios cereal was originally called Cheerioats
- ► Hilton was the first international hotel chain
- Porsche also builds tractors
- ► The first product to have a barcode was Wrigley's gum

► There are 22 stars in the Paramount logo



19. Published false statement (5)20. From that time (5)

.....

SUDOKU



V72

e's the most decorated player in the history of the game, and now former Manchester United legend Ryan Giggs is getting a chance to make a name for himself on the game's biggest stage – international football – as the newly unveiled manager of the Wales national team.

When you consider Ryan Giggs' illustrious career on the pitch, it's almost impossible to envisage the Welsh winger in any other colour than the red of Manchester United. But until the age of 14, Giggs was signed to the youth academy of bitter cross-city rivals Manchester City – and could well have ended up as a club legend in sky blue.

But thankfully for Red Devils fans, Giggs' switch to Old Trafford proved the catalyst for a career that seemed to specialise in record-breaking achievements. After making his professional debut in 1991, Giggs became an integral part of the so-called 'Class of '92', alongside stars such as David Beckham, Gary Neville and Paul Scholes.

GIGGS

By 1999, this core of home-grown talent had proved crucial to Manchester United's most successful season to date – with Giggs, of course, scoring one of the goals of the decade with an electric, mazy run against Arsene Wenger's formerly invincible Arsenal. A goal of brilliance and perfection not matched by the goal celebration.

The treble of Premier League, FA Cup and UEFA Champions League victories won that year was a first in British footballing history, and also an indicator of the rewards Giggs' future career was to hold.

While teammates came and went, Giggs proved to be a one-club man through and through. By the time of his retirement in 2011, he was United's record appearance maker, having stepped onto the pitch a colossal 963 times for the Red Devils. Add to that becoming both the club's and the Premier League's record assist maker, with 271, his remarkable tally of 13 Premier League

titles, four FA Cup wins, three League Cup win triumphs, two UEFA Champions League winner medals, a FIFA Club World Cup gong, Intercontinental and UEFA Super Cup success, plus nine FA Community Shield victories, and Giggs is the most decorated individual ever to grace the professional pitch.

Much has been made of United's plight since the incredible reign of Sir Alex Ferguson came to an end. For his part, Giggs remained an important member of the club as assistant manager to both

David Moyes and Louis Van Gaal, who both oversaw challenging transitions at Old Trafford. There was even a brief taste of the top job too, before current incumbent Jose Mourinho came to the Theatre of Dreams with his own tried and tested backroom staff.

In the meantime, the Welshman has busied himself in the world of business – most notably alongside Gary Neville with a Manchester-based hospitality company, and as a part-owner of ambitious National League North team Salford City.

Thoughts of management were clearly never far from his mind though, and the former captain's ambitions of taking up a permanent spot in the dugout were finally realised recently when he was named as the new manager of the Welsh national team, for whom he appeared 64 times. As successor to Chris Coleman, who guided Wales to the semi-finals of Euro 2016, Giggs already

has some large boots to fill. But if successful, surely a return to the Old Trafford managerial setup won't be far from his mind.





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