

OLIVIA
COLMAN
**TAKES TO
THE THRONE**

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How Coca-Cola stole Christmas

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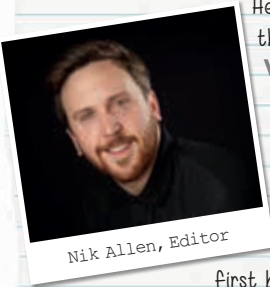
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Editor's notes...



Nik Allen, Editor

Hello and welcome to this month's edition of **VISION** BrentwoodOngar. Whoever said 'time flies when you're having fun' probably had kids in the vicinity.

Our firstborn, Max, just celebrated his first birthday, and marked the occasion by 'rearranging' various shelf items, throwing water over the floor and chewing on the remote control.

In fact, come to think of it, he's been 'celebrating' like that for the past few months.

The pleasures of parenting have certainly become a central part of the Allen household, and I'm excited to announce another little person will be arriving next year.

While growing a family offers a flurry of new milestones to celebrate, it also makes you realise how quickly life moves on.

With that in mind, festive plans are coming together quickly, and there's plenty of evidence of that in this month's bumper edition, just don't leave your **VISION** magazine on a low shelf or it may not be there when you get back.

In local news, the trial of murdered school girl Grace Millane continues, a pensioner thanks the ambulance service for saving his life and we speak to the candidates standing in the General Election.

I would like to wish all our readers and advertisers a very merry Christmas and a happy new year.

Thanks for reading,

Nik

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Suited AND BOOTED



If you thought it was just modern-day society that's taken in by the strength of marketing, think again. Here's the story of how Christmas was stolen not by the Grinch, but by the soft drinks brand.

He's arguably the most iconic and most easily recognised person on the planet, but even Santa is a Coca-Cola marketing team's plaything, and the evidence is staring us right in the face. That's right – that trademark red-and-white suit that we have come to know, love and welcome into our homes on Christmas Eve is a brand team's creation that's straight out of the marketing textbook.

Before Coca-Cola sidled up to the most travelled man on the planet, Saint Nicholas could be seen in all manner of colours, clothes and designs. Pictures exist of him dressed in a tan-coloured suit; others show him wearing shades of light and dark blue; while in some pictures he comes across as a somewhat sinister elf-like character dressed in green as he dots from house to house.

It was only natural then that, as the power of the media grew in the lead-up to World War II, so too should a universal image of the great man emerge. And siding with the world's biggest-selling soda – and its red-and-white livery – well, it was a match made in heaven... or, at least, Lapland.

And that, boys and girls, is the story of how Santa's red-and-white suit was created by the guys at Coca-Cola.

Or is it...?

While the tale of Santa taking on the colours of the world's leading drinks brand is a water-cooler classic that has done the rounds for years, it is only actually half-true.

That famous fluffy livery was actually to be found on pictures of the great man going back into the nineteenth century. It was cartoonist Thomas Nast who truly popularised the use of red and white with his hugely successful sketch series in the 1870s. And some believe Coca-Cola wasn't even the first drinks brand to popularise the figure, with carbonated water producers White Rock using him in adverts from the early 1920s.

However, where Coca-Cola can take credit is in capitalising on the big guy's popularity. Consider White Rock had 90 per cent of the fizzy water market back in 1920s America, and with imitation being the greatest form of flattery and all that, logic follows that the brand Coca-Cola adopted its own version of Santa (holding a bottle).

With the help of illustrator Haddon Sundblom, it evolved the big man into an even stronger caricature of himself. This served to vanquish the various other images of Father Christmas who back then could still be found dressed in such variant colours, all the while subconsciously linking the drink to a figure representing kindness, generosity and happiness in the minds of youngsters (and a few adults).

Put it this way: try finding a festive Coca-Cola image that doesn't feature its brand ambassador, and you'll appreciate that while the American drinks giant may not have chosen the colours for Santa, it has certainly ensured he's staying dressed in his perfect red-and-white suit, and we'll all drink to that.



Photo credit: www.solosophie.com



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THE CROWN

NEW SERIES, NEW DECADE, NEW CAST – THE RETURN OF *THE CROWN*

As a new series of prime-time drama go, *The Crown* has been a long time in coming. It's been two years since Claire Foy stepped aside as Queen Elizabeth, and in the intervening passage of time we've had a real royal wedding (Harry and Meghan), royal births, the Windsors taking a national newspaper to court and all manner of rumours regarding the seedy and nefarious actions of some in lofty positions. If all this were to be wrapped into a 10-part Netflix drama we'd probably suggest it was too far-fetched.

As it is, we're about to be treated to something rather more palatable, surely, as Olivia Colman CBE steps into the role of HRH for the first time.

The 45-year-old's long-awaited debut reflects the true evolution of an actress. Beginning at the much-renowned Footlights Dramatic Club at Cambridge University, she shared the stage with the likes of David Mitchell, Richard Ayoade and Peter Serafinowicz, before excelling in *Rev*, *Broadchurch*, *The Night Manager* and *The Favourite*.

Her landing in such a major Netflix product feels perfectly timed, having just been awarded a CBE in the Queen's Birthday Honours for her services to drama.

The new series also welcomes Helena Bonham Carter (Princess Margaret), Ben Daniels (Lord Snowdon) and an entirely new cast, with a storyline that builds from the 1970s, broaching the Queen and Prince Philip's tumultuous relationship.

As for Colman CBE, her pursuit of creative endeavour is as premium fuelled now as at any time in the past.

"Working makes me happy and I do struggle to say no," she admits. "I've an inherent fear of being pigeon-holed, and I think as a result of that I reach out in as many different ways as I can."

The good news for fans of *The Crown* is that given the series are shot back to back, season four will be along very shortly. Set in the 1980s, it will deliver Margaret Thatcher (Gillian Anderson) and Emma Corrin (Princess Diana)... and no doubt a yuppie or two.

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DAVID LINLEY AND INTERIOR DESIGN'S MISSING LINK



HOME & DIY

Talk about interior design, architecture, design and craftsmanship, and so much of what you hear revolves around the intentions, desires and whims of the designers themselves. It's almost as if they are going to be the ones living in the spaces they curate.

Clearly, in most cases they're not, and that's where the Linley stable of designers and architects takes a different approach towards creating artistic excellence.

At the heart of Linley is the intention to style a client's own vision before anything else. Sure, the Belgravia-based experts, who have been a major player in working with upmarket clients for more than 30 years, can extol the virtues of custom-made and tailored cabinets, furniture and kitchen spaces, but unless it has client direction, a project won't begin.

When bespoke designs are brought forward, Linley designs favour a few simple rules: items are sleek and sharp, utilising



whites, greys, blacks and browns, with references to art deco, 1970s elegance with polished tones. They are happy to juxtapose styles and periods to create rooms with distinction and flair, but the celebration of eras is without brazen, shouty, disturbing colours. In short, subtlety is key.

Small item collections are often in glassware or polished wood (such as boxes, desk items and picture frames), with a fascination for intensity, detail and perfect lines.

A Linley home is one to be viewed from many angles, with interiors that are to be stroked, brushed and admired; although the attention to detail demanded of everything, from intricate objects to sweeping units that glide into the distance, come with price tags to match, so beware.

Photo credit: blog.davidlinley.com

urban hype

OWN A HOOVER AND A RUBBISH BAG? You've already qualified as an urban minimalist

Talk of urban minimalist design brings about notions of wealthy Docklands apartments littered with little more than a table candle, a coffee cup and a laptop.

And yet the achieving of a clean, clear, space-driven home isn't out of reach, yuppie living or not. Ultimately, where urban minimalist design succeeds, it's in the understanding that you are defined not by your possessions, by your furniture.

Wind back a decade or so and minimalism would have sat much more on the side of brutalism, with polished concrete floors, conflicting wood and terracotta, and sleeping arrangements that appeared more akin to a night in the cells.

These days the rules are relaxed, and urban minimalism dives further into the human need for comfort, warmth, colour and texture, without the clutter, chaos and disharmony of possessions

ruining streamlined furniture, geometric design and perfectly judged angles.

In terms of colours, the warmth of wood is a key asset. Patterned against white walls, urban minimalism allows a return to the perfect white offset, while hard floors, matched rugs and boxed rooms allow styles to merge without them spilling out into corridors or hallways.

The secret to the look is to be regimented in your approach to everyday clutter. Storage space is not a secret or an embarrassment to those wanting to pull off this look, but clearly, practical solutions need to be sought in order to maintain what is a devoted approach towards cleanliness.

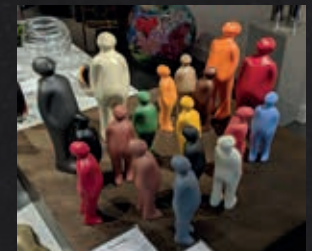
Nail the ability to hide away the knick-knacks of life, and urban minimalism enables homemakers to celebrate the ultimate pleasure derived from space and shape.



“

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Good artists steal

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Photo credit: David Giles via idealhome.co.uk

THE suite-est THING

BATHE IN THE SUCCESS OF RESTORING YOUR FAVOURITE TUB

We live in an era where throwaway culture permeates almost everything we do, and yet where bathroom suites are concerned – and baths, in particular – there is shimmering style and majestic magnificence in being tempted into a traditional tub.

That's why more and more people are now choosing to restore their tubs rather than remove and replace. Not only may this see you preserving a bathroom mainstay that is, most likely, a level up from today's cheap, lightweight fibreglass versions, but you'll save the back-breaking work of lugging the things up and down stairs too.

HERE ARE EIGHT STEPS TO GET YOUR BATH BACK ON ITS FEET:

- Sand down bumps, rust or affected areas.
- Reglaze your bath. DIY kits spell out the process, and while the fumes can be potent, you will quickly see old caulk, grime and scratches vanish.

- Give your bath a new lick of paint – for an acrylic or porcelain tub, select an EP-acrylic paint with a glossy finish; for iron bath tubs, use a latex primer then at least two coats of latex paint.
- Use a paint sprayer on the bath itself to achieve a smooth, streak-free finish inside and out.
- Apply a new coat of porcelain using a professional tradesman.
- Opt for new colours – your bath doesn't have to be white (nor that horrible lime green), so be ambitious, outlandish and brave in your new creation.
- Replace taps... a new, elegant set of taps on a bath – much like replacing kitchen unit handles – can create instant uplift.
- And finally, don't stop at the bath... because if the tiling around your tub looks like something out of a horror movie, you still won't want to take a dip. So clean, scrub, regrout and caulk your tiles to offer the cleanest finish possible.



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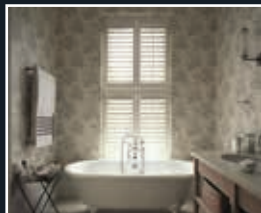
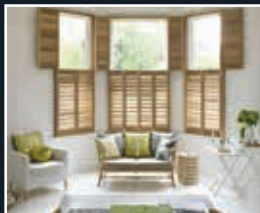


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diy Christmas Gifts

What could be better than giving someone you love a handmade gift? Not only does it show that you have put a lot of thought and effort into it, but it can also save you money – and who knows, you might even enjoy it!

Festive Bath Bombs... you will need:

300g bicarbonate of soda | 100g citric acid | Food colouring
Essential oils – orange, cinnamon and peppermint all work well
A misting bottle | Bath bomb moulds | A muffin tin for storage

how to make

- Mix the bicarbonate of soda and citric acid together.
- Add 2–3 drops of essential oil.
- Gradually add the food colouring.
- Add water, stirring as you go – be careful not to add too much.
- Your bomb is ready when the mixture holds together in your hand.
- Add the mixture to the moulds, one half at a time, then press together.
- Carefully remove your bombs and store in tin.

Merry Mugs... you will need:

Plain white mugs | Oil-based Sharpie pens in festive colours
Alphabet letter stickers

how to make

- Create a phrase using your stickers on your mug – this could be someone's name or something festive such as "Joy" or "Happy Xmas".
- Draw polka dot shapes around the stickers in your chosen colours, then leave to dry. Be sure to cover around all the edges and in between the letters.
- Remove stickers and bake the mug in an oven at 220 degrees Celsius for 30 minutes – put in a cold oven and then turn temperature up.

Alternatively you can create any design or pattern you like, even write a message on the mug. You can also decorate with acrylic paints, nail polish and glitter.

Christmas Coasters... you will need:

4 x 4.25" square ceramic tiles | 4 old Christmas cards | Minwax Polycrylic
Mod Podge | Hot glue | Felt

how to make

- Cut each card into a 4x4 square.
- Spread Mod Podge onto each tile and apply a card to each one.
- Use a credit card to smooth out the card, then leave to dry for 2–4 hours.
- Coat each coaster with Minwax Polycrylic, then leave to dry.
- Stick a 4x4 square of felt to the bottom of each tile to protect surfaces.



HOME & DIY

Photo credit: www.prima.co.uk, www.lifefamilyfun.com

Come and Visit our Showroom

We recently made a visit to the lovely village of Battlesbridge to look at what's on offer at Phoenix Fireplaces.

Parking is easy and plentiful and as well as looking at fireplaces we had time to browse the many antique outlets and have a meal in one of the excellent pubs.



The showroom at Phoenix is large and everything is laid out to make it easy to view. The staff are friendly and very helpful and we were impressed with the enthusiasm and knowledge that Triston had. His advice on how to choose the right product was of enormous benefit and

we felt confident that he was steering us in the best direction for us. They have a range of products that seems unequalled, and certainly ranges like Vision Trimline, Acquisitions, Capital, Dik Geurts, DRU and Spartherm don't seem to be available elsewhere.

The company fits their products themselves and don't sub-contract which we found particularly reassuring, they also offer a bespoke service on stone and for restoration.



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LOCAL NEWS

from your neighbourhood



Pensioner thanks heroic ambulance staff for saving his life

A man from Brentwood has met the ambulance crew who helped save his life after he survived his third cardiac arrest.

Keith Copsey, 70, began to suffer with worsening chest pains and recognised the sensation from a previous cardiac arrest in 2007.

His wife Jen immediately phoned 999 and a team of three arrived in an ambulance soon after.

By 1.30am, three hours and 20 minutes after he first arrested outside his house, Keith was in the intensive care unit having had two stents fitted.

Once Keith recovered, he and his wife met with paramedic Sandra Lodge, associate ambulance practitioner Joseph Bisquera and student paramedic Dave Smith at Basildon Ambulance Station on October 29.

Keith, who is from Pilgrims Hatch, said: "That team of three people undoubtedly saved my life.

"I cannot think of enough superlatives to describe how grateful my wife and I are for their actions on that

night. If I hadn't already been an ambulance service fan, I surely would be now.

"Our meeting was to say the least, emotional.

"How do you say thank you to somebody who has not only saved your life but has brought you back to life three times?

"They were the epitome of what the ambulance service stands for. They filled in the missing parts for me and were also genuinely pleased to see us again in happier circumstances.

"It was a meeting that I never thought was possible, but I am so grateful it took place."

Mark Whiddon, leading operations manager, said: "It was incredibly emotional for everyone seeing Keith again after all he's been through.

"The crew wanted to see how he was doing after the event; however, this is not normally possible.

"The team went above and beyond when Keith needed to be transferred out of our area and we are so delighted that he is recovering well."



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Town listed as one of the healthiest in the UK

Brentwood has been named as the healthiest town in Essex and the third best in the UK.

A study by Babylon Health, of more than 30,000 of its users, found that Brentwood made the top three.

The data was collected via their health check app and depending on the user's location, it helped gauge how healthy towns and cities across the UK are.

Scoring was based on nine indicators of a healthy lifestyle including how often people drink alcohol, smoke and exercise.

Brentwood scored 71.8 out of a maximum score of 100, placing it as the healthiest town in Essex and third in the UK.

The Forest of Dean was the UK's overall healthiest place with a score of 74.5.

The data found the amount of alcohol units consumed on average in Brentwood is 6.2.

Brentwood also has the third lowest proportion of smokers in the UK, with only 11.3 per cent of the population smoking. Those smokers also smoke on average five cigarettes a day which is below the average amount.

Another revealing statistic shows that 73.1 per cent of smokers in Brentwood want to quit and people are more likely to exercise more often.

Brentwood resident, Leanne Ward, said: "It's not surprising to hear how healthy Brentwood is compared to other places.

"There are a huge amount of options when it comes to exercise classes, sports clubs and there is definitely an active running scene in the town.

"Let's hope next year we can do even better and be the best in the UK."

Grace verdict welcomed by family

The parents of murdered Brentwood schoolgirl broke down in court after the man accused of her killing was found guilty of murder.

David Millane and his wife Gillian wept as the guilty verdict was read out.

Grace was strangled by a man she met on Tinder and her body was found buried in a suitcase in New Zealand. Before her death, she spent several hours drinking with him in Auckland on December 1 last year and then went back to his flat. She was killed either that night or early the next morning – the date of her 22nd birthday.

Outside the court, Mr Millane said the verdict will be welcomed by every member of the Millane family and friends of Grace.

He commented: "It will not reduce the pain and suffering we have had to endure over the past year. Grace was taken in the most brutal fashion a year ago and our lives have been ripped apart. Grace was our sunshine and she will be missed forever. She did not deserve to be murdered in such a barbaric way during her gap year."



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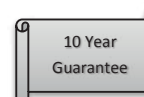
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School hits the right notes



Brentwood School has joined an elite list of schools in the UK who have achieved musical excellence.

The school, based at Middleton Hall Lane, is now one of only 13 in the UK to be known as a Steinway School.

It joined that elite list of accredited Steinway Schools in joyous fashion as Brentwood School hosted an 11-piano ensemble.

The pianos used for the ensemble had been hand-picked by Mr Cooper and five of the youngest music scholars during a once in a lifetime trip to the Steinway Factory in Hamburg.

To celebrate the occasion, the school's youngest musicians joined Old Brentwoods, relishing the honour of being the first to play on some of the finest instruments in the world.

Director of music, Florian Cooper, himself a former pupil at the school, wrote the 11-piano arrangement of both the school song, laced with a *Les Miserables* classic, which bought the audience to its feet.

Headmaster Michael Bond said: "The school already has an excellent reputation for music and this inspiring initiative will build on that even further to the benefit of this and future generations of pupils."

Man charged following spate of burglaries

A man was charged with multiple burglaries in Brentwood more than a month after a crime spree.

Dean Nuet, 33, was charged with three business burglaries and one attempted burglary in Brentwood after being arrested on Thursday, November 7 at around 10.50pm.

It followed reports of burglaries and an attempted burglary in Ongar Road between September 18 and September 23.

Essex Police said: "A man is due in court charged

with three business burglaries and one attempted burglary in Brentwood.

"A 33-year-old from Rainham has been remanded to appear at Southend Magistrates' Court."

Schoolboy shows his football talent

A Brentwood schoolboy was back in international football action after he played for England under 16s.

Jacob Knightsbridge, who attends Brentwood School, represented England in their U16 fixture against Norway at St George's Park, the English Football Association's national centre at Burton upon Trent.

The 15-year-old goalkeeper put in a match-winning performance with England winning the encounter 2-1.

It was Jacob's first appearance for the U16 side – he was first selected to play for England back in February in an U15 fixture against Belgium.

Jacob was on the pitch for 45 minutes of the encounter but his international experience did not end there.

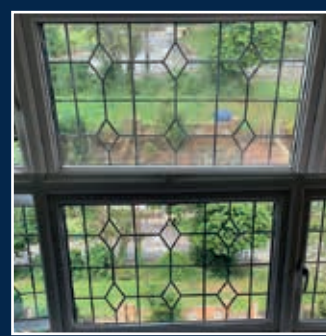
Following the full-time whistle, both teams seized the opportunity to get in some serious practice with a penalty shootout, which England also won with Jacob saving a penalty.

Jacob, who started playing competitive football when he was five years old, is also part of the West Ham Academy where he has been since the age of seven.

As well as training with the Academy, he also plays for the school U16 team.

Jacob said: "There was a penalty shootout because we need practice for penalties in future football tournaments.

"The goal I saved was a dive to my left. It is an amazing feeling putting on the England shirt."



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Liam a step closer to vital treatment



Fundraising to help a brave Brentwood man beat multiple sclerosis has been handed a boost after a successful charity race night.

Liam Egaltion, 35, is battling the disease and has been funding his own trips to Panama to receive life-saving treatment.

To help raise funds to get to Central America, he and his girlfriend, Kayleigh Biggs, have been hosting events to fundraise as much as possible.

The latest of those events took place on November 8 with a virtual race night.

Thanking people for their support, Kayleigh said: "Thank you so much to everybody who braved the cold weather and came to the virtual horse race event.

"It was such a fun evening and very touching to see so many people pull together for Liam.

"A huge thank you to Kelly, Leanne and everybody else involved and for all who came to the event, the total amount raised was £510 plus £80 in further donations from people so we are feeling a lot more positive about hitting the £8,000 target by January."

Liam told **VISION**BrentwoodOngar: "I'm lucky to have Kayleigh, she is my angel and there has been lots going on with fundraisers."

To donate to Liam, visit www.justgiving.com/crowdfunding/liam-egaltion-1

Police save the day for transplant patient

Police officers potentially saved the life of a woman who was stuck in traffic in Brentwood as they helped her get to hospital for an organ transplant.

The woman, who is in her 30s, was on her way

to a specialist hospital when she reported being stuck on the M25 close to junction 28 at around 11am on October 24.

The motorway was at a standstill following reports of debris on the road.

Officers from the nearby roads policing unit realised the urgency of her appointment and drove her to Leeds on emergency lights.

Temporary chief inspector, Sharn Taylor, head of road policing, said: "The woman started driving to hospital after getting a call to come to hospital immediately after possibly finding a suitable organ.

"Unfortunately, she was stuck in many miles of traffic on the M25 and needed help.

"We have a duty to rescue all road users in Essex and it only seemed right that we continued the long journey up north. I thank the officers for their quick-thinking and kind actions."

Bar hits back at late licence objections

A bar in Brentwood which made an application to stay open later has hit back at claims it will cause an increase in crime and disorder.

The Sugar Hut want to remain open until 7am with Brentwood Borough Council (BBC) set to make a decision. However, the plans have been met with opposition by some locals, councillors and the police who formally lodged their objection to BBC.

In a statement posted on their social media pages, Sugar Hut said: "We disagree with the objections and believe we will promote the licensing objectives of preventing crime and disorder and public nuisance.

"From experience, we believe that a 7am licence will have a number of benefits for the local area."

The Sugar Hut has invited people to send their support by emailing info@thesugarhut.co.uk



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News from Councillor Keith Parker

Mayor of Brentwood

LOCAL NEWS BRENTWOOD

The Mayor of Brentwood, councillor Keith Parker, is getting ready for Christmas with the Lighting Up Event in Brentwood on November 30 which sees around 12,000 people come to the town for the switching on of the Christmas lights and the start of the festive season with a range of entertainers, stalls and events.

This year, for the first time Crown Street will see the attendance of Muffin Pug Rescue, the charity which rescues pugs. Guest of honour is Muffin Pug and her pug friend Bear who has her own wheels and personal number plate. They will be meeting and greeting the Mayor and guests with Hug a Pug where children can play with the dogs and meet Santa Paws.

Cllr Keith Parker said: "This is a real highlight for everyone and comes of course shortly after the annual Remembrance Sunday Parade and service which saw more than 2,000 mark the passing of those who gave their lives for their country during the World Wars. We had plenty of groups marching as always and I must say it was really moving to see how many youngsters are involved."

Straight after this, the Mayor attended a further service at the Romford & District Synagogue in Romford which was followed by afternoon tea.

At the end of October, the Mayor took part in the Brentwood Business Showcase where the Essex Cricket Club trophies were on display together with local businesses networking and attending an evening



reception sponsored by Morgan Sindall Investments.

Cllr Parker added: "The role of the Mayor is a busy one as you can see, but it is important for raising awareness and charity funds for all sorts of good causes. Sometimes of course it is just about getting the community involved through volunteering. The Ping Pong Parlour at the Baytree Centre is a great example of this. It's been hugely popular and is run by volunteers, the more volunteers there are the longer it can stay open during the day."

Train services affected for Christmas upgrades

Passengers in Brentwood are being advised to check before they travel this Christmas as the railway is set to get upgraded.

The work, which includes upgrading the overhead wires between Shenfield and South Victoria, means buses will replace some services.

It follows a period of disruption already for passengers with work also taking place throughout December.

On Sunday mornings from 2.15am to 9am, some services will be affected. This will take place on December 1, 8, 15 and 22.

There are no services on Christmas Day and Boxing Day, and a rail replacement service will operate between December 27 and January 1 with work

planned to focus on the complex junction at Wickford.

In total, Network Rail is replacing 128km of overhead wires with a new auto tension system that adapts to temperature changes.

This will improve the reliability of services for years to come for passengers on the Southend Victoria line.

Mark Budden, Network Rail's route director for Anglia, said: "Most of the railway network is open over Christmas, but some routes will be closed for engineering works so we can provide a safe and reliable railway for passengers.

"For those wishing to travel over the festive period, my advice is to plan ahead and check with their train operator or National Rail Enquiries."

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News from THE ROTARY CLUB Brentwood

For all Rotary Clubs, Christmas is one of our busiest times. This year we are increasing our activities in Brentwood to include Santa's Grotto. The proceeds from our collections will go to support local charities in the brilliant work they do. We commence with:

Lighting Up Brentwood, November 30, 2019 — Santa will be in his grotto opposite WHSmith and for the grown-ups join us outside Marks and Spencer's where we have our usual mulled wine and hot drinks stall.

Billerica Christmas Market, December 1, 2019 — we will be escorting Santa and his sleigh.

Santa takes to the streets of Brentwood most evenings — from Monday, December 2 to Friday, December 13. For more details please go to www.santa-brentwood.co.uk

Santa's Grotto — book tickets via our website and ensure your place to see Santa. The Grotto can be found opposite WHSmith. Tickets are £5 per child — the grotto will be open Thursday to Saturday from December 5 to 24.

Christmas Tree Competition — Local businesses have been invited to decorate a tree in the grotto — so come along and see what they have achieved.

Collections in the High Street.

If you have missed all of the above and would like to support the Rotary Club of Brentwood in the work that they do, we will be present with our collecting boxes from Monday, December 16, 2019.

Girl praised for lifesaving actions

A brave girl who helped to save her grandfather's life in Brentwood by keeping calm and calling for help when he collapsed after suffering stroke symptoms has been praised for her courage.

Quick-thinking Grace Bruce, 12, raised the alarm and followed the call handler's instructions until crews could arrive when her grandad David became seriously unwell at his home in Brentwood.

Her actions have been praised by the East of England Ambulance Service NHS Trust (EEAST) and led to her being awarded a bravery certificate at the start of November.



After she spoke to the call handler, she then went onto clear space for ambulance crews to work before helping collect medication, as well as calling her mum to tell her what had happened.

Although David suffered a fit and went into cardiac and respiratory arrest, Grace stayed calm and collected throughout the traumatic ordeal.

David was quickly transferred to Queen's Hospital in Romford and has since made a full recovery.

Michael Whitcombe, student paramedic and EMT and Shane Farnham, EMT, were the first crew on scene.

Michael said: "David recalls his granddaughter calling for help, putting the phone on loudspeaker and following the instructions and answering the call handler's questions."

"She assisted us on scene with clearing space, getting medication and getting in touch with her mum. It is clear that had Grace not called for help, then her granddad wouldn't be here today."

Michael and his colleagues were able to thank Grace in person when she visited Basildon Ambulance Station with her mum Mandy and grandad David to collect a bravery certificate and letter of thanks from EEAST chief executive, Dorothy Hosein.

Michael said: "David recalls his granddaughter calling for help, putting the phone on loudspeaker and following the instructions and answering the call handler's questions."

"She assisted us on scene with clearing space, getting medication and getting in touch with her mum. It is clear that had Grace not called for help, then her granddad wouldn't be here today."

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Residents set to go to the polls

Residents in Brentwood and Ongar now know who could be the new MPs for their constituency as the 2019 General Election edges ever closer.

The polling stations open on Thursday, December 12 with new and familiar faces in the running to become the next Brentwood and Ongar MP.

Alex Burghart, from the Conservative Party appears to be the front runner having been the MP since 2017.

However, he faces competition from Oliver Durose (Labour), Paul Jeater (Green) and David Kendal (Liberal Democrat).

In 2017, Alex Burghart had a landslide victory having claimed 34,811 votes with 65.8 per cent of the votes going to the Conservative candidate.

Labour candidate, Gareth Barrett, came second although he got less than a third of the votes — 10,809 — that Alex did.

Conservative candidate Alex Burghart outlined his priorities for Brentwood and Ongar ahead of the 2019 General Election.

They include more money for schools, more

police officers, more money for NHS hospitals and GP services, breathing new life in the High Streets, help residents, supporting local charities and getting Brexit done.

Labour candidate Oliver Durose prioritised securing a green new deal, putting Brexit back to the people, building affordable housing, bringing key utilities under public ownership and protecting the NHS.

Paul Jeater, Green, will prioritise climate change.

He said: “The Green Party has been speaking on this for many years. It’s clear that whoever wins this election could hold power until 2025 – that’s half the time we have left to tackle the climate emergency.”

David Kendal, Liberal Democrat, is prioritising stopping Brexit.

He said: “Stopping Brexit and the Conservative government are two of the key issues at stake at this election.

“However, I am also passionate about getting better mental health services, addressing climate change and fighting for improvements to our rail and bus services.”

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LOCAL NEWS

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LOCAL NEWS ONGAR

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Calls for fire station to return full-time after house blaze

Essex's fire chief has said they are doing all they can to recruit enough on-call firefighters so Ongar has cover every day of the week.

Criticism was aimed at Essex Fire and Rescue after a fierce fire in Ongar left a family home in ruins. The blaze happened yards away from Ongar Fire station where nobody was available to respond.

That incident led to residents turning up en masse to a town council meeting to ask about what could be done to improve fire service cover in the town.

The council duly contacted the Police Fire and Crime Commissioner (PFCC), Roger Hirst, to ask about what could be done in Ongar.

In that request, the town council expressed the concerns of the residents and asked about making Ongar Fire Station a seven-day-a-week operation once again.

In response the fire service outlined what is being done to improve immediate cover at the station and what recruitment will take place.

The response from PFCC said: "Ongar Fire Station was off the run at the time of the fire due to a shortage

of an officer which meant the station was not available to respond to this incident.

"Having an appropriately trained officer in command is essential to ensure a safe working environment for the firefighters. Ongar Fire Station recently lost two officers which has adversely affected availability.

"The service has moved a dedicated officer into Ongar Fire Station on a temporary basis to increase availability until it is able to promote suitably qualified officers from within the station establishment.

"There is an ongoing service wide recruitment programme to increase on-call firefighters and Ongar Fire Station currently has a further six potential firefighters who are at various stages of their application, with two of them potentially being available for fire cover very soon.

"The recruitment target is to reach a minimum of 13 firefighters for the station which will also improve the availability and resilience of the station.

"The key to maintaining Ongar on the run is ensuring that there are enough on-call firefighters suitably trained and readily available to attend calls."

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Academy raises over £1k for Children in Need



Staff and students at The Ongar Academy held a variety of activities for the BBC's *Children in Need* appeal last month with Pudsey Bear even making an appearance.

The charity mascot taught an English lesson at the school on Fyfield Road and all students took part in a non-uniform day wearing a yellow accessory.

School governor Tracey Price appreciated the special guest.

She said: "This has brightened my morning and made me laugh. The students' smiling faces say it all."

Students also entered a cake competition with pupil Holly B being named the winner.

As the day drew to a close, the school revealed how much it had raised.

It tweeted: "We have raised over £1,000 for @BBCCIN! Well done to all our students and staff — what an amazing achievement and for such an amazing cause."

Nationally the appeal raised £47.9million. Children in Need is the BBC's official UK charity and raises money for disadvantaged young people around the country, such as those experiencing poverty, with disabilities, or victims of abuse or neglect.

Town on the lookout for citizen of the year

Nominations are being welcomed for Ongar's citizen of the year.

The competition, which was launched on November 7, is being run by Ongar Town Council who want residents to nominate anyone who they feel has benefitted the community.

Nominations can either be for a group or an

individual with the closing date in February.

The winner will be invited to the 2020 annual town meeting as a guest of honour.

The town council said: "Our community is full of people and organisations that are quietly making a difference.

"They are giving their time and skills to improve life for those who need it.

"Ongar Town Council would like to honour these people, so if you know of a group, an organisation or an individual who is doing something to benefit the community of Ongar, let us know."

For more visit www.ongartowncouncil.gov.uk

Man dies after multiple vehicle collision

A man died following a collision involving multiple vehicles in Ongar.

The collision happened at the junction of High Street and The Borough where a red Fiat 500, a blue Ford Focus Titanium, a grey Ford Focus and a white Fiat Panel Van collided on Friday, November 1 at around 11.20am.

A man believed to be in his 60s sadly died at the scene.

The road was closed and remained shut for several hours leading to police advising locals to avoid the area.

Essex Police said: "Officers from our serious collision investigation unit are working to build a picture of the events leading up to the collision and would like to speak to anyone who saw a grey Ford Focus being driven in the High Street shortly before the incident.

"We'd also like to speak to anyone with information who has not already spoken to police or has dash cam footage or CCTV footage."

Anyone with information can contact the serious collision investigation unit on 01245 240590 or email CollisionAppeal@essex.pnn.police.uk and quote incident 0462 of November 1.

Alternatively you can call Crimestoppers anonymously on 0800 555 111 or submit information via their website.



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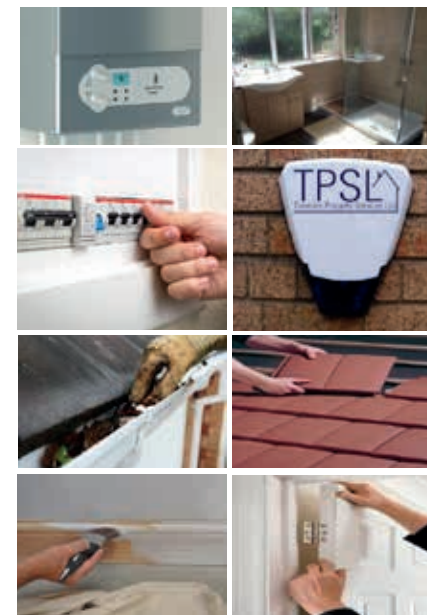
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LOCAL NEWS ONGAR



Beyond Christmas on the railway

Christmas hasn't arrived yet but the Epping and Ongar Railway are already planning well into the New Year.

Once the big day is over, the heritage railway will be operating mince pie specials on December 27, 28 and 29.

It's a chance to get away from the repeats on TV and bring family and friends to the railway for what they say will be "a great day out".

Robert Good from Epping and Ongar Railway explained what is planned in the New Year. He said: "On January 1, the railway is planning to run our New Year Steam Day.

"Our former Great Western Railway steam locomotive, Pitchford Hall, is expected to return to traffic at this event following a major overhaul — subject to final

testing at Pitchford Hall at Loughborough where she has been undergoing repairs.

"For those of you who are interested in buses, we are pleased to announce '50 Years of London Country Bus Services – Bus Running Day' on February 23.

"Further details will be announced in the next issue of **VISION** BrentwoodOngar or you can go to our website for up to date information.

"The Epping Ongar Railway is largely run by volunteers and we use the down time for much of January, February and March to carry out essential maintenance to our rolling stock and railway infrastructure."

If you would like to help the railway and the volunteer society contact the membership secretary by emailing membership@eorailway.co.uk

Car ends up in ditch after fail to stop incident

A man has been arrested and required hospital treatment following a fail to stop incident in Ongar.

At around 2.20am on Friday, November 8, a grey Fiat 500 failed to stop for officers.

Half-an-hour later it collided with a hedge after entering a ditch near Blake Hall Road.

Emergency services were called to the scene where a man was found seriously injured and was rushed to hospital.

The incident has led to an Essex Police investigation

and they are appealing for witnesses to help them.

Police have also made a mandatory referral about the collision to the Independent Office for Police Conduct.

A spokesperson for Essex Police said: "The collision followed a fail to stop incident 30 minutes before the collision where the suspect vehicle escaped. We have arrested a man on suspicion of theft of a vehicle."

If you have any information, call the Serious Collision Investigations Unit on 101 quoting incident 88 of 08/11 or Crimestoppers anonymously on 0800 555 111.



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LIFE AND TIMES OF *Mr Kipling*

"Through one of the marvels of modern science, I am enabled, this Christmas Day, to speak to all my peoples throughout the Empire.

"I take it as a good omen that wireless should have reached its present perfection at a time when the Empire has been linked in closer union. For it offers us immense possibilities to make that union closer still."

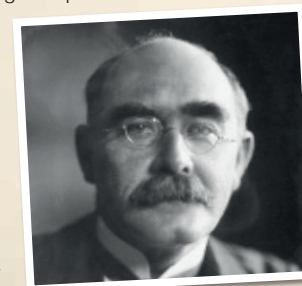
These 62 words were spoken by King George V in 1932 in the first ever Christmas broadcast to the nation on the radio.

Historians see it as one of the great speeches of the twentieth century and it is catalogued in the British Library. The majestic words, which were widely acclaimed, were written by one of the greatest British authors, Rudyard Kipling.

He was born in Bombay, India, on December 30, 1865. In 1870, Kipling was sent to England to stay with a foster family in Southsea and then went to boarding school in Devon.

In 1882, he returned to India and worked as a journalist, writing poetry and fiction in his spare time. Books such as *Plain Tales from the Hills* (1888) gained success in England, and in 1889 Kipling went to live in London.

In 1892, Kipling married Caroline Balestier, and the couple moved to Vermont, USA, where they had their two daughters. In 1894 Kipling wrote his most famous book, *The Jungle Book*. In 1896, a quarrel with his wife's family prompted Kipling to move back to England and he settled with his own family in Sussex. His son John was born in 1897.



Other books followed, including *Kim* (1901) and *Puck of Pook's Hill* (1906). *The Just So Stories* (1902) were originally written for his daughter Josephine, who died of pneumonia aged six.

In 1902, Kipling bought a seventeenth-century house called Bateman's in East Sussex where he lived for the rest of his life. He travelled a lot, including repeated trips to South Africa in winter.

In 1915, his son, John, went missing in action while serving with the Irish Guards in the Battle of Loos during First World War. Kipling had difficulty accepting his son's death – having played a major role in getting the chronically short-sighted John accepted for military service – and subsequently

wrote an account of his regiment, *The Irish Guards in the Great War*. He also joined the Imperial War Graves Commission and selected the biblical phrase inscribed on many British war memorials: *Their Name Liveth For Evermore*.

Despite his personal friendship with King George, Kipling declined most of the many honours that were offered to him, including a knighthood, the Poet Laureateship and the Order of Merit, but in 1907 he accepted the Nobel Prize for Literature.

Kipling died on 18 January 1936 and is buried at Westminster Abbey.



JOE WICKS

THE MAN FROM THE STICKS

*The man who built fitness fanaticism
from rural Surrey*

Joe Wicks is the marvellously built man-mountain whose drive towards health and well-being has inspired a nation of fitness fans, all keen to supplement their daily sweat by investing in sensible, supplementing food solutions.

In an era where we're being bombarded with influencers, energisers and "body-makers", the 34-year-old has carved for himself an attractive niche that relies on plain talking, sensible planning, ambitious targets and a small amount of humility thrown in along the way. For evidence of that, take his approach to running.

"We all know how important proper cardio is and running is arguably the best way of really getting your whole body primed to increase strength and fitness... but it doesn't mean you have to enjoy it.

"I regard myself as fit – I eat well, exercise a lot and I'm strong – but when I did the London Marathon I quickly learned the difference between power and endurance, and while I was quick enough over the first half of the course, it was a really painful and slow experience by the end... and that's okay, because we're all growing and learning together."

Wicks, whose popularity comes out of being one of the original Instagram fitness kings, has recently been throwing that (muscle-bound) frame behind breaking his own world record for the number of people he could get attending a single 30-minute High Intensity Interval Training (HIIT) class.

Having previously gathered 3,804 people in Hyde Park, Wicks ventured to Dubai to try to go one better, as well as embracing the health ambitions of the world's fastest-growing economies. During his time there, the fitness guru – who is a best-selling

author having made millions from his *Lean in 15* and *30 Minute Meals* books, among others – also conducted a workout session at a Dubai school, with 450 kids involved, and got his running shoes back on for a half-marathon challenge.

"For me it's always been about mixing up ideas and getting fitness going in different environments," he says. "When getting in shape falls into the same old routine, that's when it becomes dull, and that's what I want to steer people away from, because it's a killer for motivation."

Wicks, who recently created a series of YouTube videos offering "seven days of sweat" to encourage people to get fit and motivated before Christmas, got married over the summer to Rosie, and in the new year will welcome his second child into the world (baby Indie was born in September 2018).

And that world record attempt? Well, although huge numbers attended the Skydive Dubai field at Dubai Marina, the team fell agonisingly short of their target. Typically, Wicks sought out the positives from the experience.

"Failure is all part of building towards success in the future," he said. "I actually embrace those times when things don't go my way, because it makes me even more determined to find the right answer in future, and whether that's not managing to bench press as much as I'd like, or not hitting a treadmill PB or simply giving in to a treat occasionally, moving forward is always about failing in the past, so we get up the next day and go for it all over again."

Photo credit: Ken McKay/ITV/Shutterstock

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GARDENING

Berry nice INDEED

Warming those winter garden vistas with some bursts of festive colour

We all know the colours and the coldness of winter when it comes to gardening. Many of us regard it as a season reserved only for planning the dawning of spring, when luscious life can return to our outside spaces.

And yet, winter can be about much more than greens, browns and greys where gardens are concerned. Certainly in the use of berries, your outside space can quickly adopt all the sprigs and spray of summer. With that in mind, then, here are some plants that will help keep things colourful:

SORBUS

In white, pink, yellow, red, blue and quite the most stunning copper tones, the berries from this deciduous tree will bring breathless colour to even the darkest corner.

HOLLY

A festive favourite, holly combines a burning red berry with that intensely detailed, beautifully curated leaf, with a combination of greens that offsets its radiant bedfellow with a flourish of frosty finesse.

VIBURNUM TINUS

In its prime between the months of December and April, just when you think the golden pink buds of this characterful plant can't offer anything more, the ends burst open, offering a spray of white flowers. One of the first risers for spring's sumptuous season of colour, the Viburnum Tinus will soar in prominence just as the temperatures begin to do likewise.

CALICARPA

This shrub has purple, jewel-like berries that look as if they've come straight from a safe deposit box in Hatton Garden. An intensely rich shade, the plant goes into overdrive in autumn and winter, offering colour to even the gloomiest garden.

And if the beauty of the winter rebels isn't a pleasure enough to see, the range of birds they will attract to your garden will only serve to delight you further.



PLANT OF THE MONTH:

Sarcococca

confusa

Sarcococca confusa, also known as Christmas box, is an evergreen shrub that bears small white flowers. Somewhat surprisingly, given its heavenly honey-scented blooms, it is one of the least popular evergreens available, but don't let that stop you from choosing this obliging plant for your garden.

Where to grow Sarcococca confusa

Sarcococca confusa is a hardy plant that is very easy to grow. It prefers a relatively shady spot but can still thrive in full sun as long as the soil is kept damp.

Due to its sweet fragrance, it is advised to grow this plant close to your house where you can enjoy the full force of its aroma in flower borders, flower beds or containers.

How to plant Sarcococca confusa

You can plant this tough shrub at most times of the year, except when the ground is frozen solid, waterlogged or extremely dry, but if you want to perk up your garden this winter, then this is the plant for you.

Simply plant the shrub in moist, well-drained soil, water well and apply a granular general feed around the plant. It will also benefit from a layer of garden compost or bark chippings around the roots.

How to care for Sarcococca confusa

In early spring, lightly trim or prune back the shoots of your shrub and then apply another layer of compost around the base of the plant. In its first year, water regularly.

What other plants complement Sarcococca confusa?

As this shrub is lush and green all year round, with flowers between December and March, it is suited to plants that only peak at certain times of the year such as deciduous plants. It also complements taller shrubs such as hydrangeas.



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GARDENING

THE VEGETABLES YOU SHOULD LOOK TO GROW OVER THE WINTER SEASON

The notion of the winter vegetable is one we all stand by. Rough, rustic, wholesome and happy, they are the meal mainstays of a season in which we want to be inside, wrapped up warm, with the products of our labour in front of us.

But what about the vegetables you want to plant now for picking at the start of next year and when spring rolls around? Here is a selection that will last through those cold winter months:

plot, offering volume, flavour and spiciness right up until the soil freezes solid.

CHARD

Although some of these leaved plants can wilt in the harsh conditions, others will stand the test of winter while providing a December harvest to boot, offering your kitchen great flavour and your garden intense colour.



WINTER SALADS

Rows of lambs lettuce, land cress and mustard will need some protection from the elements, but once in the ground are resilient and happy to be picked across the colder months, where they'll regrow and keep the supply to your lunch table constant.



ONIONS

Hardy, tough and tasty, onions (and shallots) are easy to plant, brilliantly versatile and incredibly resourceful in the soil. Onions have a very long growing season and require slightly longer in the ground, so planting now will mean they won't be ready until next summer.



SPINACH

Typically planted at the start of autumn, the time is almost done for spinach going into the ground, but any late additions will see a solid reward of leaves throughout the cold months and right the way through to next summer.



CARROTS

We associate carrots with sugary, summer flavours, but planted in November and with a bit of protection, the Adelaide carrot flourishes across the colder months for an early-spring treat.



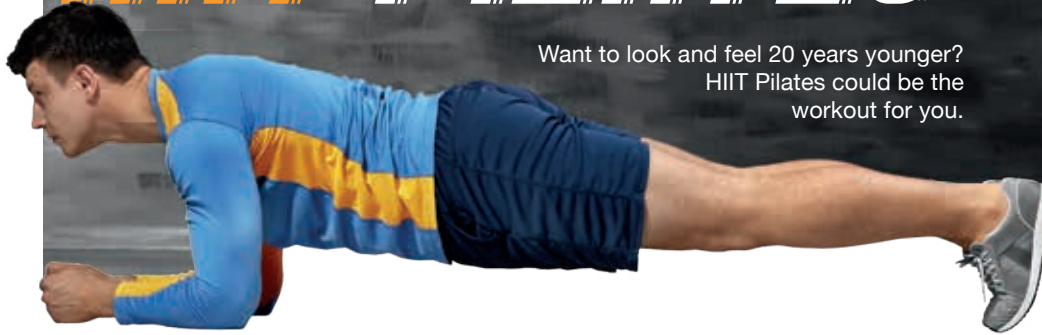
LEeks

The simple leek is a must on a winter





HIIT PILATES



Want to look and feel 20 years younger?
HIIT Pilates could be the workout for you.

WHAT IS HIIT PILATES?

HIIT stands for High Intensity Interval Training, which involves short periods of intense anaerobic exercises with very short amount of rest periods. You can expect lots of leg-dominant exercises such as jumping lunges, squat jumps and burpees. HIIT Pilates, on the other hand, focuses on core strength, which is so important in standard Pilates, as well as getting your heart rate up.

CAN ANYONE TRY IT?

Yes, unlike with standard HIIT, this combination workout puts less pressure on your joints and instead focuses on ensuring you engage all of your muscles, resulting in a more effective but less strenuous workout. That being said, it is still a full body training session that will challenge your body.

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS?

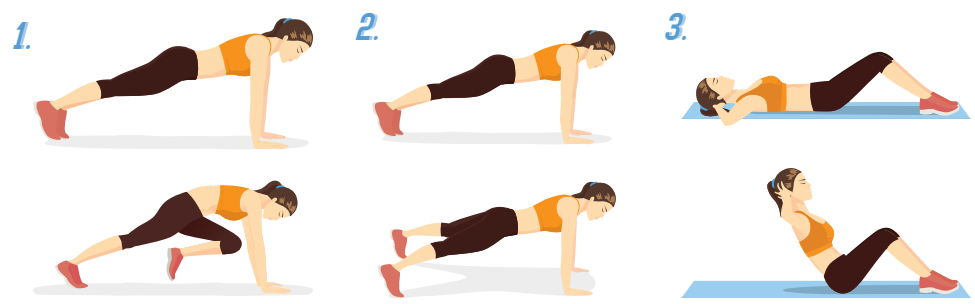
- > Burns more fat than with regular cardio
- > Faster results
- > Strengthens your core muscles

- > Keeps your heart healthy
- > You will lose weight, not muscle
- > You will feel stronger, leaner and more flexible
- > Suitable for all ages and fitness levels

WHAT TYPES OF EXERCISES CAN I DO?

- 1. Mountain Climbers:** Start in the plank position, pull one knee in towards your hands, then extend back to the plank. Repeat with the other knee.
- 2. Plank Jacks:** Start in the plank position, holding your abs tight. Jump your feet outwards into a 'V' position and immediately back to your starting position.
- 3. Triple Crunchers:** Lie down with your feet flat and your knees bent. Support your head with your hands, elbows out wide, and then lift your shoulders off the floor in three gradual movements until you are sitting upright. Keep your abs tight.

Carry out all of the above for one minute, rest for one minute and repeat twice more.



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Goodnight sweetheart

Moving away from screens earlier, therefore, seems the best way to maximise the efficiency of sleep, but remember as well the need to moderate room temperature, dim lighting and remove excess noise within or around your bedroom.

Sure enough, most of us can reel off a good number of the benefits of sleep – sharpness, mood enhancement, lowering of blood pressure, better immunity, improved memory, stress reduction and even maintaining of body weight – so it's not as if we don't know it's good for us.

Doctors recommend a trial week of "regular as clockwork" bedtimes, with long rests and the adoption of healthy habits. They then invite people to see if they feel improved in all those physical and psychological aspects. If the answer is yes, it goes to show why getting your head down may be the best thing you can do, not just for your health and well-being, but for your sanity too.

Getting adequate shut-eye is more important than any vitamin, mineral, food or workout, so why are we so blasé about sleep?

Eat sensibly, rehydrate, breathe in clean air – we take all these for granted as being good for our health. And yet the thing that, on average, will occupy one-third of our lives – sleep – is messed about with, interrupted and at times completely abandoned.

There is nothing more natural than sleep, and an interrupted pattern of rest can be linked to immune system weakness, body cell deterioration, depression and anxiety, not to mention an inability to concentrate.

Yet the answer isn't simply to go to bed earlier – you'll need to consider what's around you. Numerous studies have shown that smartphones and device usage is on the increase, and it's the "blue light" emissions from these that can delay the release of sleep-inducing melatonin, as well as resetting the body's internal clock (circadian rhythm).

we need



hours per day



hours per month



hours per year

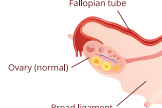


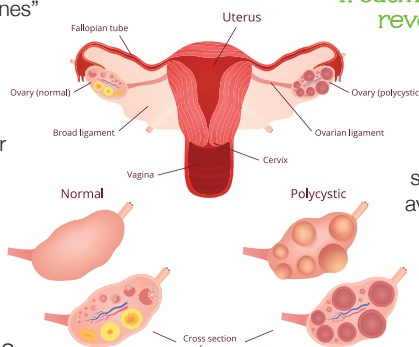


POLYCYSTIC OVARIAN SYNDROME

Polycystic ovarian syndrome (PCOS) is a common condition that affects how a woman's ovaries work.

It has three main features:

- > **irregular periods** – your ovaries fail to release eggs (ovulation)
 - > **excess testosterone** – having high levels of “male hormones” in your body, which can result in acne and excess facial or body hair
 - > **polycystic ovaries** – your ovaries become enlarged and contain fluid-filled sacs that surround the eggs
- 
- The diagram illustrates the anatomical differences between a normal ovary and a polycystic ovary. The top part shows a normal ovary, which is small and contains a few follicles. It is connected to the uterus by the fallopian tube and to the pelvic wall by the broad ligament. The vagina is also shown. The bottom part shows a polycystic ovary, which is significantly larger and filled with many small, fluid-filled sacs (follicles). The word "Normal" is written next to the smaller ovary for comparison.



If you have any two of these three features, you may be diagnosed with PCOS. It's thought to be very common, affecting about one in every five women in the UK, but not everyone gets the symptoms such as weight gain, thinning hair and oily skin.

PCOS is also associated with an increased risk of developing other health problems, such as type 2 diabetes.

What causes PCOS?

The primary cause is having persistently high levels of insulin, the hormone that controls sugar levels in the body. This raised insulin leads to the increased levels of testosterone. While PCOS is associated with being overweight, it not caused by it.

Treatment for PCOS – can it be reversed?

If you have PCOS (whether or not you're overweight), reducing your insulin levels and avoiding spikes is key. This is where the ProLongevity service can help, because by avoiding sugar spikes you'll keep your insulin low and slow. This also explains why a standard treatment for PCOS is metformin, which we usually think of as being a treatment for type 2 diabetes. Just as all roads lead to Rome,

so all aspects of metabolic syndrome lead to raised insulin.

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Tis the season of late-night shopping and dazzling festive soirees, but every night staying up late looking fabulous is followed by a gruelling early morning where you look and feel tired. Fortunately, there is plenty you can do (or NOT do) in order to appear as fresh as a winter morning.

THE DOS

✓ **DO** take your daily vitamins. Sleep is the best way to replenish body and mind, but on nights when you know you're not going to get enough shut-eye, slathering on a moisturiser rich in potent vitamin C can be the next best thing.

✓ **DO** use a shade lighter. It might seem counterintuitive to highlight your shadows, but using a concealer one tone lighter on your under-eye area is actually a great way to brighten your eyes, giving the impression of vitality.

✓ **DO** be generous with mascara. Want to look bright eyed and bushy tailed? Then open up those peepers with lashings of mascara.

THE DON'TS

✗ **DON'T** overdo it. Tempting though it might be to cover up your evening antics with make-up, you might find yourself looking even more fatigued. Youthful skin glows, so stick to products that are light and illuminating, rather than heavy, powdery ones that are prone to settling in skin creases.

✗ **DON'T** skip your cleansing routine. Washing your face may be the last thing you want to do on a dark, cold morning, but the only way to rejuvenate a dull complexion is to remove the dead cells. Use products that are gentle but powerful to effectively brighten the skin.

✗ **DON'T** load up on caffeine. Coffee might make you feel better in the short term, but too much is going to frazzle your mind and dry out your skin. Instead, drink plenty of water.



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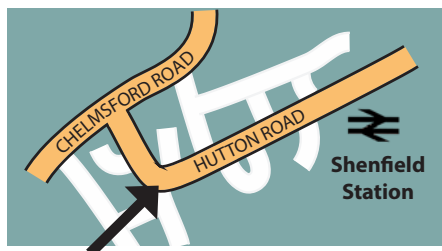


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Always dry your feet properly after bathing

How often do you jump out of the bath and fail to adequately dry your feet? Probably often, but it is extremely important that you do this otherwise you could develop a fungal infection such as athlete's foot.

TOP TIP: Always ensure you dry thoroughly between your toes.

Exfoliate and moisturise your feet daily

This may seem excessive, but it will only take a matter of minutes and can work wonders on the appearance and well-being of your feet. Make sure you apply the scrub when your feet are damp and focus on any areas of hard or cracked skin. Once exfoliation is complete, rinse and then apply a thick moisturiser.

TOP TIP: Wear socks overnight so that your moisturiser doesn't dry out.

Trim your nails regularly

Nails that grow too long are more prone to infections than ones that are well looked after. It is advised to use a nail clipper to trim your toenails and then use a nail file to remove any sharp edges.

TOP TIP: Cut your nails after a bath or shower as this is when they are at their softest.

Wear appropriate footwear

When choosing a pair of shoes, it can be tempting to let your heart rule your head, but that is not a good idea. Ill-fitting shoes can result in nasty afflictions such as ingrown toenails or bunions.

Instead, look for shoes that support your feet, feel comfortable and don't rub.

TOP TIP: If you want height, choose wedges over high heels.

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Christmas is a time to overindulge as a family, and for animal lovers, that extends to their pets.

Now you may think you are being kind in giving your pet their very own Christmas dinner, but there are certain festive foods that they should not be eating.

Snacks & Sweet Treats

✗ MINCE PIES

These pastry-encrusted traditional Christmas treats include raisins, currants and sultanas, all of which can be fatal to dogs.

✗ NUTS

Certain nuts can be toxic to animals, so it is best to avoid giving any varieties to your pets just in case they have a bad reaction.

✗ CHOCOLATE

Chocolate can be deadly to your pets so it should be kept out of reach at all times. Don't forget about tree chocolates.

The Main Event

✗ TURKEY SKIN & BONES

Although a few slices of turkey meat will not harm your pet, the skin of the bird is too

fatty for their digestive system and the bones can pose a choking hazard.

✗ PIGS IN BLANKETS

So delicious, and your dog would probably think so too, but these Christmas dinner accompaniments are simply too fatty and salty for your pet.

✗ STUFFING & GRAVY

Although not toxic to pets, both of these are high in salt and fat as well as containing several herbs and spices that may irritate your pet's stomach.

Puddings

✗ CHRISTMAS PUDDING AND CHRISTMAS CAKE

Just like mince pies, these both contain raisins, sultanas and currants that can be fatal to your pets.

✗ ICE CREAM AND CREAM

Cats and dogs both find it difficult to break down lactose which is found in both of the above tasty desserts; therefore, it is advised not to give them any. Even lactose-free ice cream can be problematic.





PUZZLES & TRIVIA

PUZZLES

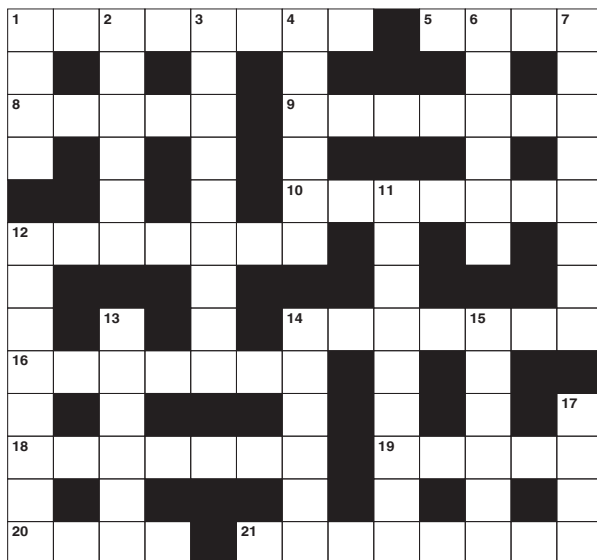
Answers can be found on the Contents Page 4

ACROSS

1. Very small African parrot (8)
5. Mire (anag) (4)
8. Criminal (5)
9. Beyonce ____: singer (7)
10. Strongly influencing later developments (7)
12. Enhance a photo (7)
14. Degree of eminence (7)
16. Boring (7)
18. Set up (7)
19. Gemstones (5)
20. Opposite of won (4)
21. Small falcons (8)

DOWN

1. Hoist (4)
2. Closely woven fabric (6)
3. Using both eyes (9)
4. Having a jaunty appearance (6)
6. Alyssa ____: US actress (6)
7. Determined (8)
11. Clumsy (9)
12. Fitting (8)
13. Love affairs (6)
14. Smear or blur (6)



15. Action of making use of something (6)
17. Poses a question (4)

DID YOU KNOW?

- Mastercard was known as Interbank from 1966 to 1969 and Master Charge from 1969 to 1979
- Porsche also makes tractors
- The first product to have a bar code included was a packet of Wrigley's gum
- Nokia was named after Nokianvirta, the Finnish river, where the business first began as a paper mill in the 1800s
- There are 22 stars in the Paramount logo, although the original has 24
- Hilton was the first international hotel chain
- The values on the Monopoly board game have been the same since 1935
- Cheerios cereal was originally called Cheerioats

SUDOKU

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



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CLEMENTINE CHRISTMAS GIN

You will need:
One bottle of London Dry Gin • 4-5 clementines • 200g caster sugar • 1 piece of fresh ginger • 2 star anise

How to make:
Slice the fruit into segments (skins attached) • Add to a sterilised jar with the other ingredients • Seal and shake • Leave in a cool spot for two weeks • Shake occasionally to infuse the flavours further • After two weeks, strain your liqueur • Pour into an attractive bottle and finish with a ribbon



CRANBERRY & CHILLI JAM

You will need:
2 red onions • 4 cloves of garlic • 3-4 fresh red chillies • 500g cranberries • 150g sugar • 40ml red wine vinegar

How to make:
Peel and finely chop the onions and garlic • Deseed and slice the chillies • Sweat the above in a large pan for 10 minutes • Add cranberries, vinegar, sugar and 50ml water • Simmer for 20 minutes • Mash the mixture slightly and cook for a further 15 minutes • Season to taste • Add to sterilised jars



CHRISTMAS BOOZY TRUFFLES

You will need:
300g quality dark chocolate pieces • 300ml double cream • 50g unsalted butter • Your preferred liqueur – Grand Marnier, coconut rum, whiskey • Your chosen coating

How to make:
Gently heat cream and butter in a saucepan • Remove from heat and add chocolate • Stir until you have a smooth mixture • Add your chosen liqueur • Chill for a minimum of four hours • Shape your truffles using a melon baller and place on greaseproof paper • Immediately coat your truffles • Store in the fridge in an airtight container



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THE Perfect Turkey

The turkey is the centrepiece of most traditional family Christmas dinners. Ensuring that it is cooked to perfection is one of the most important, not to mention stressful, tasks that you can undertake this holiday season.

Should you soak it overnight? Should you baste it? To wrap or not to wrap? These truly are the questions.

Soaking your turkey overnight

There is no set-in-stone way to prepare your turkey, but some swear by brining your bird overnight. This involves soaking your turkey in a salt-and-water solution to keep it moist. You can also add herbs and spices such as peppercorns, juniper berries and bay leaves.

Get your timings right

You need to weigh your bird so that you can ensure that you roast it for the correct length of time. Once you know how much your turkey weighs, follow these below cooking times to ensure cooked yet moist meat.

Heat your oven to 180 degrees Celsius or 350 degrees Fahrenheit.

- > 4-5kg – cook for 2 ½ hours
- > 5-6kg – cook for 2 ½ to 3 hours
- > 6-7kg – cook for 3 to 3 ½ hours

Then add half an hour for each additional kg.

Rest your turkey

You should rest your turkey for between 1 ½ and 2 hours. It is also advisable to take your turkey out of the fridge before roasting for a minimum of half an hour to prevent shrinkage.

Basting and covering

If you place your turkey on a bed of vegetables, then there is no need to baste it; plus, you will have the added benefit of a delicious gravy. To ensure a crisp skin but to not dry out the meat, it is advised to cover your turkey loosely with foil for the first hour.



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should you buy a SLOW COOKER?



TECHNOLOGY

Owning a slow cooker is now nearly as common as owning a toaster or a kettle, with many praising the virtues of this time-saving kitchen appliance.

And what better time to invest in a slow cooker than in winter when the nights are cold and your belly screams for foods that are warm and comforting, but is this cooking device right for you?

How does a slow cooker work?

A slow cooker works by cooking food for long periods of time at a low temperature. Heat is created in the base of the appliance and is then transferred up the sides of the cooker to slowly heat your food. Most slow cookers have the option of cooking at either a low or a high temperature, depending on how long you have to create your meal.

What are the benefits of a slow cooker?

- ✓ You are highly unlikely to burn your food.
- ✓ You can use cheaper cuts of meat.
- ✓ It frees up your oven or hob for other cooking.

- ✓ Minimal washing-up.
- ✓ It uses less energy than a standard oven.
- ✓ It is portable, convenient and saves time.

What are the downsides to using a slow cooker?

- ✗ Diluted flavours owing to condensation can lead to bland food.
- ✗ Not all recipes are suitable for slow cooking – such as meat that needs browning.
- ✗ Fresh spices and herbs can be overpowering in the slow cooker, so always use less than the recommended amount.
- ✗ It can be inflexible.
- ✗ No quick-fix meals.
- ✗ Tinned and even frozen veg does not work as well in a slow cooker – fresh produce is best.

Slow cookers are good for curries, soups, stews, casseroles, sauces and even mulled wine.

Best slow cooker brands: Crock-Pot Slow Cooker, Sage by Heston Blumenthal Fast Slow Pro Pressure/Slow Cooker, Russell Hobbs Chalkboard Slow Cooker 3.5L.





TUMBLE DRYER

DON'TS

How did we ever exist without the humble tumble dryer? It's quick, efficient and, most importantly, not dependent on the unpredictable British weather. But it can cause chaos to your clothes if not used correctly.

1. Bras

The main job of a bra is to provide support, but by tumble drying this item you risk the elastic becoming stretched and out of shape.

2. Leather items

Leather, suede and faux leather should always be air-dried as heat can cause these materials to crack or become distorted.

3. Delicate fabrics

Silk, lace and sheer net items should never be tumble dried as the high temperature will set in wrinkles.

4. Gym wear

Activewear is made from man-made fibres which are designed to keep you cool and supported, but they will not keep their shape in the dryer.

5. Athletic shoes

Shoes that are made from leather, canvas or the latest high-tech performance fabrics should not be tumble dried as the heat can

cause the soles to fall off.

6. Knitted jumpers/cardigans

Tumble drying knitwear can cause the items to lose their shape by causing the fabric to shrink or stretch.

7. Fur items

Real fur can crack in the dryer, whereas faux fur can melt or become tangled.

8. Swimwear

Costumes, bikinis and swim shorts should be washed or rinsed after each use, but avoid tumble drying as this can ruin the fabric.

9. Ugg boots

Although super cosy, Ugg boots are not the best footwear to get caught in the rain in, and when they do get wet it can be tempting to throw them in the dryer. Don't. Sheepskin will shrink in the heat.

10. Tights/stockings

Even a few minutes in the tumble dryer can cause irreversible damage to hosiery: think tangles, knots and even runs.



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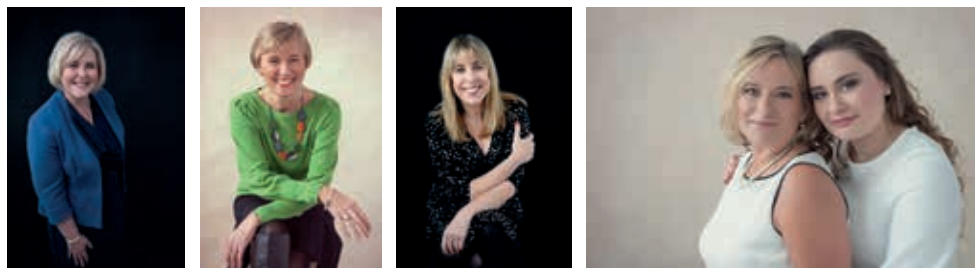
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TRAVEL

Things to consider for a NEW YEAR BREAK on a budget

Whether you fancy some winter sun or a romantic city break, booking a last-minute New Year break on a budget can be a challenge, to say the least.

But fear not – it can be done.

Choose a less-popular destination

Certain areas of the globe are known for their New Year's Eve party extravaganzas – think New York, Las Vegas and Sydney – but if you don't want to be paying off your New Year break for the next 12 months, consider going to a less-popular destination such as Budapest or Prague.

Consider going en masse

If you have a large group of friends who enjoy going away together, look into the option of renting a house rather than staying in a hotel. For those who don't have their heart set on going abroad, there are some great deals to be had on shared

accommodation in the UK – you could even rent out a castle.

Take the risk of booking last minute

Most people like to have their New Year's Eve plans set in stone at least a few weeks before the big event, if not more, but one way of finding a super-cheap deal is to wait until the very last minute. Yes, this is risky, and you may not have a lot of choice in terms of your destination, but if you can't be spontaneous on New Year's, when can you be?

Compare prices

You may think it would be cheaper to book a budget package deal with flights, accommodation and transfers included, but that is not always the case. It is advisable to shop around to get the best deals.



From NETWORK to NETWORTH

The concept of network marketing may be nothing new, but the rewards of time and financial freedom have never been greater... providing you do your homework first.

Those of us of a certain age will remember the Avon lady coming round and selling her beauty wares on weekday nights. For this journalist at least, it was a first initiation into network selling (not that anyone had thought of such a snazzy name for it back in the 1980s).

With the advent of the internet and a surge in the number of people registered as self-employed in the UK, the concept of embarking on a business model that promotes person-to-person selling, often with home as an office, is an appealing one.

From a consumer perspective, the concept works best and gleans the most trust from a single-tier network – in other words, being sold to by one person, be that sponges and make-up, food, computer equipment or anything else. It's the most basic form of selling, with one person selling

products to another having acquired stock from a supplier, even if that includes an initial set-up fee.

Where network marketing's reputation becomes sullied is when multiple tiers come into effect, and where the premise is to recruit other salespeople further down the chain. While in some instances this may be legitimate, the set-up of this begins to lean towards a pyramid scheme, where exploitation of those lower down the chain is compounded by the risk that the structure will collapse completely.

If you've been attracted by network marketing, here are a few things to tick off before pursuing:

- ✓ Is the company reputable?
- ✓ Are you responsible for selling tangible products rather than recruiting others to sell for you?
- ✓ Are you enthusiastic about the products?
- ✓ Is there a clear and quick path towards you making money, with little or no investment? If so, your business awaits...



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Q What Can Coversure Brentwood Help With?

A With our wide suite of insurance products, it'd be easier to list what we can't help you with! Whether it's insurance protection for your house, your business or even your van, we can help you find the cover you need for less.

Q Why Should You Use Coversure Brentwood?

A We pride ourselves on our exceptional customer service. No risk is the same and we'll take the time to truly understand your needs before recommending a product that's tailored to you. We have access to some of the UK's biggest and best insurers, meaning that you get the strong customer service of a local broker with the insurance policies of a national chain.

Q How Can Insurance Protect You?

A Depending on what kind of cover you're after, insurance can provide a safety net against a variety of risks you face on a daily business. Insurance can be the difference between your business running smoothly or going under. The difference between your delivery vehicle being off the road for months or days.

Q How Can You Save Money On Your Insurance?

A Whether combining multiple risks on to a single policy or simply looking at your cover levels, there's plenty of ways you could save money on your insurance. Why not get in touch with us and see if we can save you money?

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How to clear festive debt

According to a national debt charity, nearly eight million people in the UK expect to fall behind in their finances in January after overspending on Christmas.

1. Don't bury your head in the sand

If you are serious about clearing your debt, you need to know exactly what you are dealing with.

2. Look at areas of spending you can cut back on

Whether that be your daily shop-bought coffee or cancelling your gym membership.

3. Switch providers

An ideal time to evaluate all direct debits and see if you can save money by switching providers.

4. Look for 0% balance transfer deals

If you have overspent on your credit cards, now is the time to switch to a 0% balance transfer deal.

5. Set a realistic budget

Once you have paid all your bills, set a budget for any disposable income and utilise the rest to pay off your debts.

6. Pay off your most expensive credit card first

There is no point paying equal amounts off all of your credit cards if one has a much higher interest rate than the rest.

7. Pay more than the minimum amount

Paying back the minimum amount on your cards means you will likely only be paying off interest, not actual debt.

8. Sell any unwanted gifts or home stuff

January is the ideal time to have a good clear-out and sell any items you no longer want.

9. Consider a personal loan

It could make financial sense to take out a personal loan to consolidate your existing debt into one manageable monthly payment.

10. Ask for help

If you are struggling with debt, consider seeking the advice of a group such as Citizens Advice.



ON YOUR RADAR – KEY PERSONAL FINANCE TIPS

Taking the time to tune in to a few key pointers can really benefit your finances, helping you plan and manage them effectively.

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The ISA allowance for 2019-20 is £20,000. Don't miss this opportunity to save or invest tax-efficiently. We can help you choose the right ISA for your needs.

KEEP TABS ON YOUR PENSIONS

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insurance company reduce your payout. It may be time to increase your sum insured in line with the value of your contents.

YOUR MORTGAGE RATE OF INTEREST

With the monthly mortgage repayment often a family's largest outgoing, it's important to review your mortgage, as there may be a better deal to be had by remortgaging, especially if you're currently paying interest at your lender's standard variable rate.

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Fuelling THE THEORY

IS PREMIUM FUEL REALLY WORTH THE EXTRA INVESTMENT?

We've all seen those suffixes at the petrol station – "Super", "V-Power", "Premium", "Nitro+", or "Ultimate" – luring you to the more expensive pump as you prepare to dole out anything up to £100 to fill up your tank.

For some of us, whether it's petrol or diesel, simply filling up is enough of a financial chore, without wanting to contemplate voluntarily spending more on jazzed-up fuel. For others, premium denotes performance and longevity, but does the added investment pay back? In the long term, the answer is, surprisingly... yes; but don't bother if you're driving a Nissan Micra.

In short, if you own a high-spec vehicle, then filling up from the premium pump could be a sound move. The fuel's higher-octane rating means it works better with engines of a higher compression, so that leads to increased performance and more-efficient maintenance of your system.

The downside is cost – on average, performance fuel will cost you around 10p per litre more. Spin that out over the course of a year's motoring and you've added on a fair whack to your road bills, but on the plus side your car will be running more efficiently, and for longer. There's also the prevention of "engine knock" to consider – that's where unburned fuel pre-ignites in a vehicle's engine, damaging interior components.

But all this largely only applies to premium vehicles, where higher-octane motors mean higher-octane fuel. For what you might describe as "everyday cars", go for the cheaper option. Your little run-around will have a standard octane rating of 95, meaning that the electronics are configured so that the vehicle will run in a satisfactory way on the regular fuel.

Put another way, there's a good chance upgrading your fuel will make little noticeable difference... except to your wallet.




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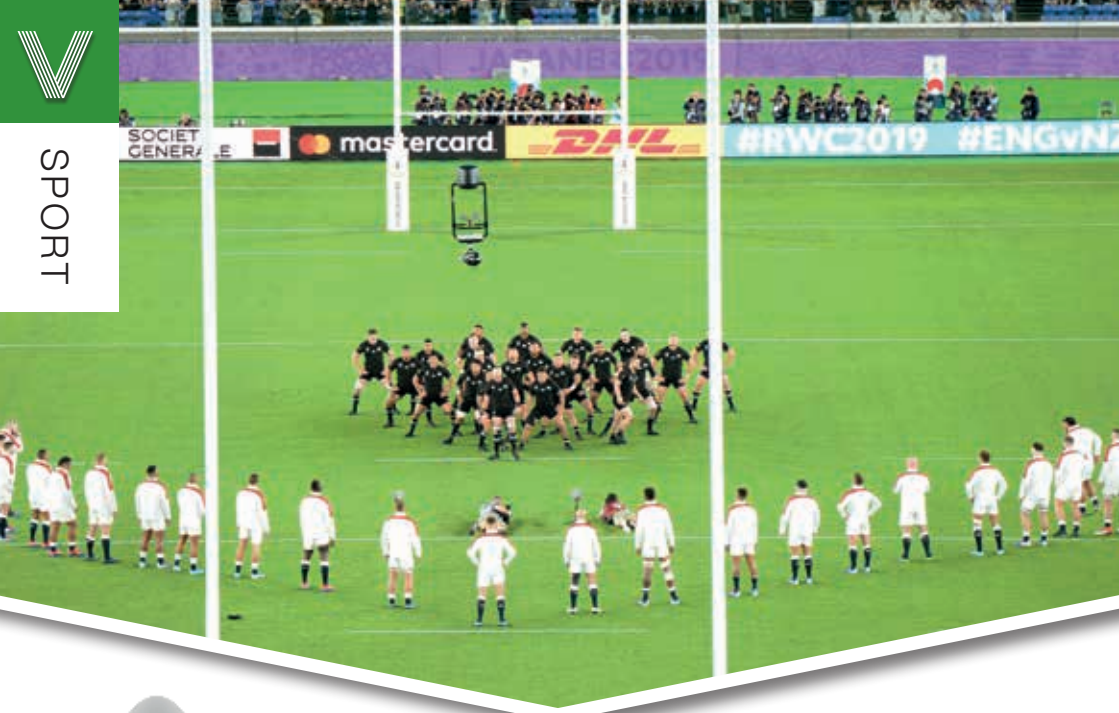
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The FINAL HURDLE

England's 2019 World Cup might have ended with defeat to a familiar foe, but in the land of the setting sun there was at least a sporting silver lining on show.

You would suppose that any team capable of beating the Wallabies and the All Blacks in a Rugby World Cup should go on to clinch the Webb Ellis Cup with something to spare, but England's failure to drag themselves over the final hurdle in Yokohama was as much down to South Africa's dogged spirit as it was the Red Rose running out of steam.

Some 16 years on from England's only World Cup win, Eddie Jones's side looked set to exorcise demons of pitifully poor recent tournaments, especially after scoring in excess of 35 points in each of their pool matches.

Then, beating South Hemisphere giants Australia and New Zealand respectively in the quarter- and semi-finals, they set up a huge final clash with the

Springboks.

However, England's final was over almost as soon as it began, with prop and vital scrum component Kyle Sinckler accidentally caught by the elbow of his own team-mate Maro Itoje after just two minutes.

It left them susceptible in the scrum, and South Africa won five penalties on their way to a 32-12 victory, with a somewhat deceptively large margin of victory opening up in the closing stages as England went for broke. Their opponents were as decisive as England were wasteful, and the experience will go down as a case of what might have been.

And yet, what we should gain from this is the confidence to compete with the very best. The Six Nations begins in less than three months' time and, with Wales, Ireland and France all in periods of transition, it would be a brave person to bet against the World Cup experience making England even more likely to land silverware in the spring.

Photo credit: Ato/Shutterstock

RACING LINE

LEWIS HAMILTON WINS SIXTH WORLD TITLE TO CLOSE IN ON MICHAEL SCHUMACHER'S RECORD

He may have lost "the battle" in failing to fight off a late rally by his Mercedes-Benz team-mate Valtteri Bottas, but Lewis Hamilton won the war by finishing second to secure his sixth world Formula One championship title in Texas at the start of November.

The Stevenage-born driver needed to be within seven places of the Finn to clinch the drivers' title, and even though he started fifth on the grid, Hamilton came within four laps of sealing the championship win with a race victory.

But in the end, Bottas' DRS overtake was irrelevant, such was the Briton's advantage on the season leaderboard. This latest crown took him past Juan Manuel Fangio's five titles and within one of Schumacher's tally.

The 2019 renewal of the championship has had it all – dull and one-sided races, intriguing battles and unexpected results. Hamilton, by his own admission, won the "boring races", often leading from the first corner to the chequered flag.

Germany's Hockenheim circuit saw his only uncharacteristic mistake, as he exited with 11 laps remaining in treacherous track conditions. At the time he

commented that it was his "worst day at the office".

Winning more than half of the 19 races is one big reason why Hamilton has topped the table for the third straight season, not to mention the fifth time in six years, and yet there are still two immediate records in the racer's sights.

He currently equals his own highest seasonal points total of 408, so any scoring finish in either of the last two races will see him surpass that. In addition, his 10 GP wins this season leave him just one short of his previous best.

The sign of a true champ is one who keeps on winning despite his success, and Hamilton this season has once again embodied that unrelenting spirit.

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WHAT'S ON

in your area

Santa's Special Trains

Epping Ongar Railway, Ongar Station,
Station Approach, Ongar, CM5 9BN
Various dates from
November 30 – December 24



Meet Santa on board the train as you take a journey through the Essex countryside.

All children will receive a present from Santa and there will be a festive drink and treat for the adults.

For more information, visit www.eorailway.co.uk

Peter Pan & Hook

Zinc Arts Centre, Great Stony, High Street,
Chipping Ongar, CM5 0AD

Various dates and times from
December 6 – December 30

Fly away to Neverland this Christmas with this year's panto *Peter Pan & Hook*.

With great music, dance and panto giggles, this year's show will be a swashbuckling adventure.

Visit zincarts.org.uk for tickets.

Brentwood parkrun 5th anniversary

Weald Country Park, Brentwood, CM14 5QS
December 7, 8.30am – 11.30am

This year, Brentwood parkrun will be collecting for Brentwood Foodbank.

Any donations of tinned or packaged food and Christmas sweets would be gratefully received.

People taking part can run or walk the course, bring their dog, or volunteer.

Luxury Christmas door wreath making workshop

Brentwood Kitchen, 3 Shenfield Road,
Brentwood, CM15 8AA

December 11, 7pm – 9pm

Learn to create a traditionally mossed and foliage

door wreath to hang on your door and be the envy of your neighbours.

A range of festive foliage and natural decorations will be provided to create our own unique design.

This workshop costs £60. Price inclusive of all tools, materials, warming drinks and freshly made festive treats.

Parking available. To reserve your place, email hello@littletinshed.com

Christmas family quiz night

Hopefield Animal Sanctuary, Sawyers Hall
Farm, Sawyers Lane, Brentwood, CM15 9BZ
December 20, 4pm – 8pm

Join Hopefield Animal Sanctuary for an evening of family fun. Quiz subjects include; Christmas, general knowledge, music, sport and many more.

Tickets are £5 for children and £8 for adults. Please note, teams can be made up of no more than eight people.

Finger food and nibbles will be included, along with unlimited squash for children. Other drinks will be available to purchase on the evening.

Please contact events@hopefield.org.uk or 01277 201110 to book your spaces.

New Year's Eve with Shaun Colwill

The White Hart, Bridge Road, Chipping Ongar,
CM5 0LF

December 31, 7pm – 1am

Celebrate the new year in style at The White Hart. Staff are pleased to be welcoming Shaun Colwill, a singer and DJ.

There will be a three-course menu available at £40 per person. A £15 deposit per person is required. Call 01277 890890 to book.



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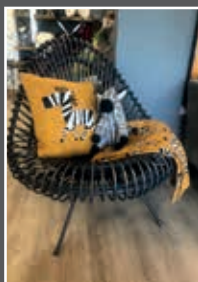
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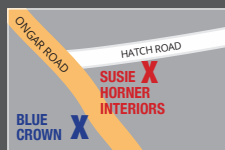


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