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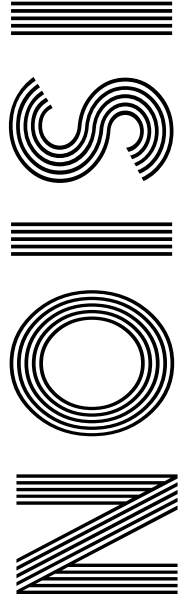
UK'S  
NOT SO  
SMART  
MOTORWAYS

LOVE IS IN  
THE AIR

Online dating tips

CHOCAHOLIC

*Ways to use leftover Easter eggs*



FREE

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MARY BERRY

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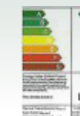
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At the time of print all content in **VISION** was relevant and up to date according to COVID-19 government guidelines

# Editor's notes...



Nik Allen, Editor

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

As you will know, we're all about keeping the £ local - that's Andy the architect, Bev the beautician, Claire the, err, clairvoyant! The

point is, whatever the product, service or craft, we make a point of supporting local trade over the big brands and multinational conglomerates. Why? Well, for trust, for expertise, for local knowledge and for the familiarity of a personal touch that can only come from small businesses, independent experts.

There's a wonderful contrast between the pandemic that's sweeping the globe and the idea of going right back to the smallest tradespeople in the heart of our communities, but it's one we have to throw all our weight behind now. Why? Because those who suffer from a commercial downturn as a result of coronavirus won't be the big chains - they've got resources aplenty and can take the strain.

It's Andy, Bev, Claire and others - their partners and their dependants - who will rely on 'business as usual'. Once these small businesses are gone, there's little chance of them coming back.

Some of us may be spending time away from the office over the coming weeks, so let's make the most of it. If you are in good health, support the local businesses by getting some of those outdoor jobs done - they need us now more than ever before.

Remember to keep your distance and keep washing your hands.

*Nik*

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# *(not so)* SMART MOTORWAYS

## ARE SMART MOTORWAYS ONE OF THE TRANSPORT INDUSTRY'S LEAST CLEVER IDEAS?

The concept of the smart motorway is, on initial inspection, a good one... a smart one, in fact. It uses active traffic management to increase the capacity of a motorway, with the main premise being to free up the hard shoulder for regular traffic use.

Also factoring in variable speed limits, the aim is smoother flow of traffic, quicker journey times, a reduction in both noise and air pollution, and fewer road traffic collisions.

On that basis, the concept, first introduced back in 2006 on the M42 in the West Midlands, is a sound one. The vast majority of us will have been in a situation where overhead information boards divert, guide and advise us in smart motorway settings, and we'll have experienced the benefits.

Sure enough, more than £2billion of contracts

have so far been issued in order to extend, renovate and convert existing routes into smart motorways, with the M1, M4, M5, M6, M60 and M62 all actioned. In addition, other variations, such as controlled motorways, dynamic hard shoulders, all lane running and through junction running routes – which use the same concept but cannot be fully utilised for hard shoulder use, for instance, because of bridges – have come into effect.

However, in recent years, the effectiveness and safety levels of this traffic management solution have been called into question. Despite a conversion cost of between £5million and £15million per mile, the Campaign for Better Transport has consistently claimed no positive impact on CO<sub>2</sub> emissions.

Most alarmingly, though, is a swell of evidence suggesting that rather than reducing collisions and

accidents, smart motorways are actually causing them.

This point was first raised by the RAC, who discovered that motorists' confusion over whether a smart motorway was, effectively, 'in use', led to many driving on the hard shoulder when they were not permitted to.

Then, in January of this year, a Freedom of Information Act revealed a 20-fold increase in near misses on smart motorways, caused when a motorist has broken down and has with no hard shoulder or safe space to retreat to.

The original M42 pilot scheme offered emergency refuge areas (ERAs) 500m apart – that's less than a third of a mile. The logic therefore is that anyone sensing they are breaking down can 'limp' to the next safe space.

However, some stretches of the M25 have these spaces up to 1.6 miles apart, leaving motorists in real danger in the event of mechanical failure or a collision, with no means of removal. In real terms, this has led to 38 deaths on smart motorways across the UK.

To that end, Police Federation of England and Wales chief John Apter said, "I do not like the term 'smart motorways' because it infers they're a good idea. They're anything but, and a recipe for disaster. It's a death trap. It's inherently dangerous and putting lives at risk."

It seems a full-scale review of smart motorways is imminent, and this apparently innovative measure to alleviate the ever-increasing demands we have on our roads could find itself consigned to the annals of road traffic experimentation.





# It's a date...

## TOP TIPS TO GET YOU BACK IN THE GAME

**A**re you single, spent too long huddled around your radiator and run out of shows to binge on Netflix? Now's the time to revamp your online dating profile, ready for when you can start getting out there again – hopefully in time for a summer romance...

### NAIL THE PROFILE

- ♥ Use recent and unfiltered pictures. Most people who are serious about dating prefer to see the real you as opposed to manipulated images. Don't just post selfies – include pictures with friends too.
- ♥ Be honest. Don't lie about your age or your past, and if you're between jobs, that's fine too.

- ♥ Be open, but don't give it all away – mention that you like travel, for example, but leave it to them to find out what your top five destinations are.

### FIRST DATE TIPS

- ♥ Activities such as minigolf or bowling are low-pressure ways of getting to know someone.
- ♥ Avoid the conventional cinema, but an open-air cinema is a fun alternative. And a great excuse to cuddle if the weather turns chilly.
- ♥ Go to a comedy club to see if you share the same sense of humour.
- ♥ If you both listed a love of food on your profiles, then dinner should definitely be on the cards.
- ♥ Stay safe. Let someone know where you are going, and share your location via WhatsApp once you get there. Have someone nearby so they can come to the rescue, if needed.

### RED FLAGS

- ♥ Run away if they're a sore loser or an ungracious winner on your activity date.
- ♥ If they spend longer staring at their phone than into your eyes, hit the road.
- ♥ Beware if they have absolutely everything in common with you – they might have stalked your social media.
- ♥ Everyone has a past, but constantly mentioning their ex is not okay.
- ♥ Neither are any of these things: ordering for you, being overly critical of everything, and arriving late with no excuse or apology.



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# Hone your health with HOUSE PLANTS



HOME & DIY

House plants have become increasingly popular in recent years, along with a sudden shift in focus on sustainability and the natural world around us. With the ability to not only brighten up your home and increase your productivity, these versatile plants can also boost your physical and mental health.

## SPIDER PLANTS

These attractive plants are ideal for people who want a low-maintenance house plant that has the ability to improve the air quality within their home. Specifically, spider plants are great at removing formaldehyde from the home, which is known for causing eye, throat and nose irritations.

## ALOE VERA

Chances are you have a moisturiser or other skincare product in your bathroom cabinet that contains this anti-inflammatory substance. So, why not have your own natural source of aloe vera in your home? Use the gel-like matter from the inner leaf to treat burns, sunburn, psoriasis and cold sores.

## LAVENDER

The ideal plant for your bedroom, lavender is known for its calming and stress-relieving aroma. If you suffer from insomnia or find it difficult to switch off in the evening, a lavender plant can help soothe any restlessness, anxiety or feelings of nervousness that you are experiencing.

## PEACE LILY

Not only will this beautiful plant lift your home this spring, it will also help to remove a whole host of toxins, including ammonia, benzene, xylene, formaldehyde and trichloroethylene. However, these plants produce pollen so should be avoided if you suffer with hay fever.

## SNAKE PLANT

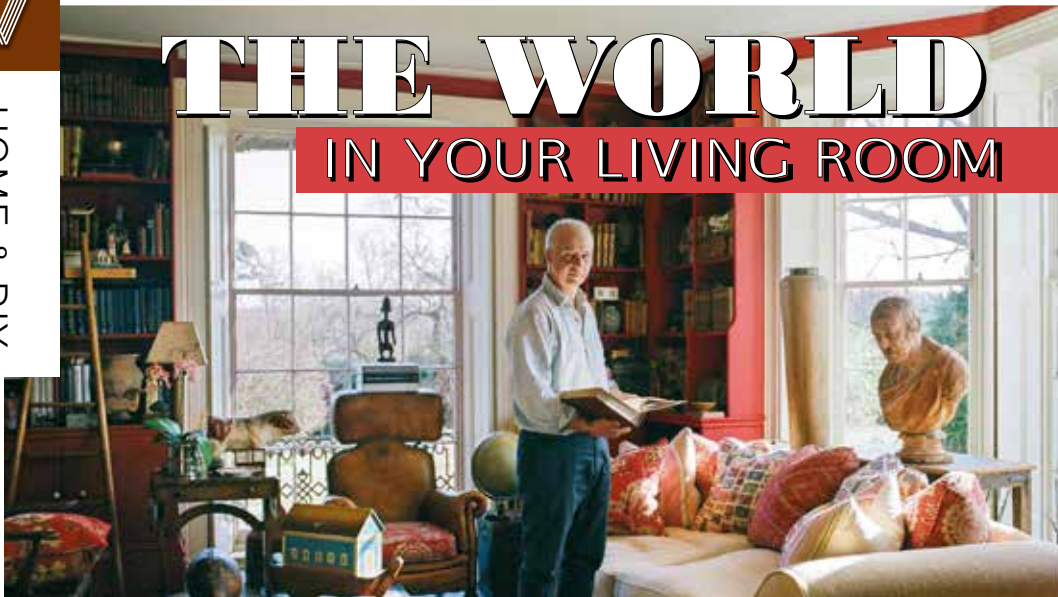
These clever plants are amazing at improving indoor air quality, but be warned, you need several plants for the job to be done properly, so this is a good choice if you are happy with an abundance of greenery in your home.







HOME & DIY



# THE WORLD IN YOUR LIVING ROOM



Recreating the idea of interior discovery from one of the UK's most dynamic brands

The fact that interior designer Andrew Martin delivers his brand of playful, adventurous, multifaceted design from a showroom in Chelsea is perhaps at odds with the area's formal, stuffy, rather bland feel.

Sure, SW3 presents arguably London's finest exemplar of pouting, polished, Victorian and Georgian wealth, but its look jars slightly with the bright, breathless brilliance of a designer who recently celebrated 40 years at the front of a mode that celebrates intrepid spirit, hidden cultures and the world's kaleidoscope of customs and crafts.

Consider wallpaper that displays excerpts from *Pride and Prejudice*, or takes the form of old maps or sheets of stamps; think of stools, coffee tables, seats and sofas inspired by 1960s and 1970s looks, but that retain a cheeky modern-day irreverence; or what about Muhammad Ali, Kate Moss or Britain-themed cushions...?

From statement pieces to one-offs, Andrew Martin's position as an interiors visionary is exemplified in the sense that its flagship store in London has the feel of a mid-level nightclub. There is warmth, variety, detail and depth at every turn, but even the most playful of items has quality at its heart.

Founded by Martin Waller in 1978, the brand trod carefully through the somewhat cheap sheen of the 1980s, then flourished in the decade that followed as multiculturalism became a buzzword for style. Bolstered by the exposure of more than 20 books on the subject and a celebration of travel, in 2020 the Andrew Martin brand is now a platform for discovery in our own homes. And whether you've got a stool made to look like a petrified log is irrelevant.

"What we are about is detail, culture and the ability to have fun," says the founder. "It is about turning away from the formal and having fun – it is about injecting humour and philosophy into our surroundings, and this is something anyone is capable of."

Photo credit: andrewmartin.co.uk, Jooney Woodward via howtospendit.fr.com



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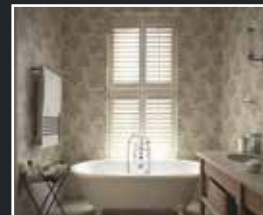


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# Dishwasher

## NO-NOS



**A** dishwasher is designed to make your life easier. That being said, there is nothing easy about trying to salvage your kitchen treasures.

Therefore, it is a good idea to know exactly what you can and can't put in your dishwasher.

**1 SHARP KNIVES:** If you have invested in a set of self-sharpening knives or the one that claims to be the sharpest knife in the world, don't go and ruin its reputation by putting it in the dishwasher, as the cycle can warp the metal and cause the blade to become dull.

**2 CAST IRON PANS:** Although cast iron is known for its durability, put it in the dishwasher and all that changes, causing rust and stripping its non-stick properties.

**3 CRYSTAL:** If you have a set of expensive crystal glasses, you will want to avoid cleaning them in the dishwasher as the high temperatures can cause them to chip and become cloudy.

**4 ALUMINIUM PANS:** Even if you have old aluminium pans that you are not worried about staining or damaging, putting these pans in the dishwasher can lead to other items becoming marked. Always check to see if your pans are dishwasher safe before adding them to the cycle because harsh dishwasher detergents can dull the finish.

**5 WOODEN UTENSILS OR KITCHENWARE:** Your wooden spoons or bowls, should never be put in the dishwasher as the very hot water can cause the wood to crack or become warped.

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## WILD LIFE



HOME & DIY



*biophilic design*

BIOPHILIC DESIGN CAN BRIGHTEN YOUR MOOD, YOUR OUTLOOK ON LIFE AND YOUR HOME

For many years, people have been saying that feeling glum can be countered by getting outside and being at one with nature. But with wet, long winters, and given that many of us live in concrete jungles, spending time outdoors is neither practical nor desirable. The solution is to bring the outside in... biophilic design.

Of course, no one is suggesting you start knocking down any of the walls of your home or take inspiration from the set of the film *Jumanji* as far as interiors go; this is a subtle trend in which nature leads the way. And the best part? You get all the benefits of the great outdoors – calm, clarity, peace of mind – without having to go near a campsite.

### HOW TO CREATE YOUR BIOPHILIC HAVEN...

#### *Let the light in*

Pull back the curtains, wash the windows and let the natural light flood in. If your home is naturally gloomy, use large mirrors to create the illusion of space and brightness, and don't forget to fill the place with fresh air too.

#### *Go green*

Not only does the colour green bring life and vigour to your home décor, it also possesses meditative qualities which quieten and soothe the mind.

#### *Plant life*

Possibly the most obvious way to bring nature into your home: is to buy a plant. Hanging baskets with vines that adorn your walls, potted herbs on your windowsill and a gorgeous succulent on your coffee table. Beautiful, oxygen-giving and living works of art.

#### *Texturise*

Reclaimed wood is very popular in interior design right now, and this characterful, evolving material also adds an earthy warmth to your home. Any natural material, in fact, is ideal for the biophilic trend, from wool blankets to granite countertops and stone ornaments – just be ambitious, and let the outdoors flow in.







HOME & DIY

# A LIVING WALL... for all

## MAKING A DIY LIVING WALL IN YOUR HOME

**W**e'll go to extraordinary DIY lengths when it comes to making our homes look welcoming, inviting and homely, but why not just let nature do the job for us?

The growing trend in living wall art has reached the UK from its origins in south-east Asia, with green and flowering creepers adding benefits to your home that paint and wallpaper simply cannot provide.

*Conservation* – With the protection of nature and wildlife so talked about, the wall of your home can providing a truly functional base for new life, as well as improving air quality.

*Money-saving* – For only a small set-up cost, the subsequent insulation savings from prevention of heat loss can be considerable.

*Peace and quiet* – Your sea of green will also act as a noise insulator, softening the sound of passing traffic or people.

*Visual evolution* – Your living wall will grow, flourish and interact with walls, ceilings and furniture. It will reinvent with every passing season and disguise cracks, splits, faults and other wear-and-tear aberrations.

### *Here's how to make one:*

Choose an appropriate wall. You'll need a space with good exposure to sunlight | Screw in the planters at the bottom. Make sure you have good soil | Plant and train your plants up through a mesh, adding hooked-on pots at regular intervals | Keep regularly watered (about once a week). Either water manually or install an irrigation system to water the plants for you on a timer | Fertilise to keep plants healthy | Experiment beyond the usual perennials and introduce flowering plants, herbs and even edible plants into your wall design.





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## MODERNISE YOUR mantel



You may not think that spring is the right time of year to be considering upgrading your fireplace, but you couldn't be more wrong.

As most people's thoughts turn to their outdoor space, winter-focused products such as fireplaces and their surrounds are cheaper and more readily available.

### HOW TO CHOOSE THE RIGHT FIREPLACE MANTEL FOR YOUR HOME

Before deciding what mantel you want to use, you need to assess a number of key elements:

- > What type of fireplace do you have? Electric, gas or solid fuel?
- > What is your home décor like?
- > What size surround do you need?
- > What material would you prefer your mantel to be made of?

### WHAT MATERIALS CAN I CHOOSE FROM?

Whichever type of fireplace you have, you will be able to find the perfect mantel or surround to suit your property.

#### MARBLE

Arguably the most luxurious type of surround,

marble is a unique type of rock, which means that no two marble mantels will ever be the same. Ideal for a classic or traditional-looking home, marble suits all fireplace types.

#### CAST IRON

Perfect for period properties, cast iron mantels are durable and make an impact. Although expensive, they are highly sought after by people who like original features, so purchasing a cast iron mantel for your home should be seen as a solid investment.

#### WOOD

A cost-effective option, there are many different types of wood to choose from to suit every budget. Some of the main advantages of wood are that it is extremely versatile, easy to fit and non-imposing, making it ideal for first-time homeowners.

#### TILED

Tiled mantels are perfect if you want your fireplace to be the stand-out feature within a room. There are many tile designs to choose from and they also act as a non-flammable barrier, making them a good option for a wood fireplace.



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## Scout headquarters set to rise from the ashes

A scout headquarters in Brentwood is set to rise from the ashes after a devastating fire five years ago left the building in ruins.

The 1st Warley Scout HQ, called Eagle Hall, was devastated by an arson attack in August 2015. Now a new building is in place and the group is looking to raise the final funding to make it ready for use.

Thanks to some dedicated fundraisers, support from Brentwood Borough Council and a bucketful of enthusiasm from the Beavers, Cubs, Scouts and Explorers, the new HQ will be of a higher standard than the original.

The main hall, breakout rooms and kitchen will continue to be used by the 1st Warley Scout Group and the new community hub will be used for Scout leader training and community meetings and events.

The 1st Warley team is hoping that success in an

application to the Aviva Community Fund will bring in the final funding to complete the HQ so it can be in use by this summer.

Success depends on securing public support and donations as well as votes from Aviva employees.

Chief fundraiser Kevin Chandler said: "The Aviva Community Fund allows Aviva employees to browse fundraising pages and support the causes that resonate most with them. But it allows members of the public to support us with donations too, so we really hope our page attracts the attention of everyone who supports Scouting and community services in Brentwood and beyond."

To secure the extra funding, at least £1,500 has to be pledged by April 22.

To donate, visit [www.avivacommunityfund.co.uk/completing-1st-warley-community-hub](http://www.avivacommunityfund.co.uk/completing-1st-warley-community-hub)



# Pervert jailed for life after abusing boys



A man has been jailed for life for assaulting young boys while he lived in the Brentwood area. David Hough assaulted three boys between 1996 and 2010. The offences came to light after officers from Humberside Police searched his current address in Scunthorpe as part of an investigation into indecent images of children.

the public. The vet believed the cats died as a result of being hit by cars. A sixth cat, which had similar injuries, was being treated at the time of writing. Upon further inspection, it appeared that the fatal injuries could have been caused by the cats being struck with an object. Investigating officer PC Faye Matthams said: "We believe the cats were injured in the Pilgrims Hatch and Kelvedon Hatch areas of Brentwood between Friday, February 28 and Tuesday, March 3. "We would like anyone who has witnessed any suspicious behaviour or thinks a cat may have been in collision with their car during this time to get in contact with us. "We would like the kind people who took the cats to the vet surgery to get in contact with us too. "We need to find out where the cats were found, so we can establish if they were in the same place." Anyone with information is asked to contact Brentwood local policing team on 101, quoting reference number 42/34438/20. Information can also be given completely anonymously to Crimestoppers by calling 0800 555 111 or visiting crimestoppers-uk.org

## Schoolboy proves to be top pick for elite ensemble

A schoolboy from Brentwood has been awarded a prestigious place with the National Youth Guitar Ensemble (NYGE). Tom Hodgkinson, who attends Brentwood School, not only earned his place with the ensemble but, as the top auditionee, will also join the upcoming NYGE Camerata tour of Spain. The Camerata summer tour, the first overseas tour for the NYGE, will see him perform three concerts in Granada and Seville. Director of music at Brentwood School, Mr Florian Cooper, said: "This is amazing news and I am delighted for Tom, who is so deserving of this achievement."



## Investigation launched after cats are found dead

A police investigation is underway after a number of cats in Brentwood died. A concerned vet contacted Essex Police after five cats were brought into their surgery by members of

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## News from THE ROTARY CLUB

Brentwood a Becket

**B**rentwood Half Marathon helps to change lives of troubled youth.

A generous donation from Rotary Club of Brentwood a Becket Half Marathon and Fun Run in 2019 enabled a group of young people with significant mental health and behavioural issues to have a seven-day break canoeing on Loch Lomond.

The club funded a challenging expedition, which was part of the TurnAround programme for struggling youth run by the Wilderness Foundation and was one of two major journeys the young people take. The programme is six months long and includes one-to-one mentoring, therapy, personal behaviour change programmes and social events to break the cycles of loneliness and enabling the learning of positive social behaviour. 85 per cent of the young people enter further education and employment after engagement and all show significant increases in their self-esteem, confidence and emotional well-being.

1st Vice President Peter McAllister and 2nd Vice President Carol Bannister, along with the Lord High Sheriff of Essex and Deputy Chief Constable Pippa Mills, attended the graduation ceremony of some of the young people who took part in the canoeing break.



Chairman of community service and vocational committee Greg Roberts, who has attended several graduation ceremonies of the TurnAround programme, said: "Brentwood a Becket Rotary Club strives to make a difference to the next generation and to help young people with significant problems find ways to improve their life chances and build positive futures."

Jo Roberts, CEO of the Wilderness Foundation, said: "The Rotary Club of Brentwood a Becket has been a lifesaver for many of our young people. It delivers a range of really positive outcomes and we are so grateful for the support."

## Group offering help to vulnerable people

**A** volunteering group in Brentwood has come together to help vulnerable people during the coronavirus outbreak.

The Brentwood Residents' Action Group (BRAG) is the brainchild of Molly Miller.

Molly revealed: "While getting my shopping I was aware of many elderly panic buying and struggling to get their shopping. One woman was shaking so much she couldn't put her pin number into the card machine. I thought there must be something I can do."

"I put a local advert up on a community online group help page for DBS-checked volunteers and within two days had more than 70 volunteers locally."

The group grew so quickly that it now has a board to make decisions.

She said: "We have an amazing team of volunteers who've distributed leaflets and targeted shops, to help us with our distribution of essential food items."

The group is collecting and delivering shopping for

those over 60, with a £5 limit for essentials.

Molly added: "We have a secure system set up and strict protocol to ensure that the elderly can trust us. For anything we cannot help with, we refer to the relevant charity that can."

For help, call 07553 788099, 07961 972917 or search Brag Brentwood on Facebook.



Photo credit: 135045/shutterstock.com

# BURGHART for BRENTWOOD



Alex Burghart MP for Brentwood and Ongar



The COVID-19 coronavirus will affect the daily lives of many people. As I write, the latest advice is to stay at home for 14 days if someone in your household has symptoms. The same advice applies to those who are over the age of 70, or who are pregnant or have pre-existing health conditions, while everyone else is being encouraged to observe social distancing.

By the time you read this the advice will have been updated and further measures may have been introduced to stop the spread of the virus. You can get the latest advice here: [111.nhs.uk/covid-19](https://111.nhs.uk/covid-19), [nhs.uk/coronavirus](https://nhs.uk/coronavirus) and [gov.uk/coronavirus](https://gov.uk/coronavirus). I've also put the link on my website.

The most important thing you can do to protect yourself is to wash your hands more often, for at least 20 seconds, with soap and water. Make sure you cough or sneeze into a tissue, put it in a bin and wash your hands.

I am aware of how disruptive and worrying this is

to many people. Fortunately, the innate goodness of the people of Brentwood is clear, and huge efforts are being made to make sure older, more socially isolated members of our community are supported.

Brentwood CVS, which acts as an umbrella group for many Brentwood charities and support organisations, is compiling a network list of contacts in the different villages and areas in and around Brentwood that can help those most in need during this virus pandemic ([www.brentwoodcvs.org.uk](http://www.brentwoodcvs.org.uk) or contact them at the Brentwood Town Hall Community Hub).

Most of us have access to wifi and technology, which means we can keep in touch with each other whether we are next door or in a different country. But do keep in mind those who don't have a smartphone or computer – pick up the phone or write a letter if you think it might cheer up someone who is on their own and needs to hear some friendly words.

As Health Secretary Matt Hancock has made clear, combating this virus will require a huge national effort. We must do all we can to save lives, protect the NHS and keep the vulnerable people in our society safe.

## Coronavirus

Trusted sources of information

Check your symptoms  
[111.nhs.uk/covid-19/](https://111.nhs.uk/covid-19/)

Travel guidance  
[gov.uk/coronavirus/traveladvice](https://gov.uk/coronavirus/traveladvice)

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# LOCAL NEWS

*from your neighbourhood*



LOCAL NEWS ONGAR



## Family continues to fight for treatment for brave teenager

A teenager who grew up in Ongar is bravely battling a disease which only she has in the UK.

Madeleine Thurgood, 17, has spastic paraplegia type 15 (SPG15), which affects the body's muscles and nervous system.

She is thought to be the only person in the UK to have the condition, and her family is desperately seeking a cure to help save her life.

They are fundraising to help pay for research and treatment, which could cost £2million.

To help in the fundraising bid, the charity The Maddi Foundation was established in 2016 by the teenager's family.

SPG15 will eventually begin to shut down various motor functions and Maddi will lose the ability to walk, talk and swallow.

She may also suffer with visual impairment and could develop Juvenile Parkinson's Disease.

The charity aims to continue to support medical research to help cure this disease and other similar rare diseases, such as SPG11.

Natalie Emuss, from The Maddi Foundation, said: "After many months of research following Maddi's diagnosis, it became clear that some genetic diseases benefit from gene therapy.

"The Maddi Foundation approached Professor Mimoun Azzouz of the Sheffield Institute for Translational Neuroscience (SITraN) for help.

"He leads an extensive programme at SITraN aiming to replace or silence faulty genes in forms of neurodegenerative diseases, which are caused by a known gene mutation.

"Our research project with Professor Azzouz, which began in June 2017, aims to create strategies for a gene therapy for SPG15. Conditions this rare receive very little attention and funding.

"There are, in fact, no funds in the UK for such a rare disease; consequently, The Maddi Foundation has been actively fundraising to cover the cost of the project."

For more information, visit [www.themaddifoundation.com](http://www.themaddifoundation.com)

## County's brightest stars aim to hit the right note



This year's Essex Young Musician of the Year has been launched, with the competition to be held in Ongar.

The annual event, organised by Ongar Music Club, was established in 1984 and aims to support and encourage young Essex musicians of talent and potential.

Instrumentalists and singers aged under 25 who were born, live in or have studied across the county are eligible to enter.

The deadline to enter is May 31, with the competition due to take place on July 5 at Budworth Hall.

Entrants in the first round must provide a programme of 10 to 15 minutes that must include at least two works or two movements from different works.

Musicians who reach the final will perform a programme lasting 15 to 20 minutes that must also include at least two contrasting works not performed in the first round.

The winner will receive £1,000, the John Lill Awards Trophy to hold for one year, and the offer of a recital for Ongar Music Club.

Other prizes will be awarded, totalling more than £1,000. Many of these have been donated by supporters of this competition and Ongar Music Club.

For more details visit [www.ongarmusicclub.org.uk](http://www.ongarmusicclub.org.uk)

## Town's success halted amid fears league may not finish

Ongar Town FC's impressive performances on the pitch this season may end up being in vain after officials postponed the league.

The Prokit Essex Olympian League (EOFL) made the decision to postpone all football in its divisions as the coronavirus spreads through the UK.

The unprecedented decision to postpone the league

puts into doubt whether the season will finish.

Ongar Town FC were enjoying a remarkable season as they battled for cup glory and posted impressive league form which saw them go unbeaten.

With a fixture backlog inevitable should the season resume in early April, Ongar Town asked the EOFL if the season could be extended.

EOFL said: "We have contacted the FA requesting our current season be extended but, owing to things like pitch leases expiring before June, this could be in doubt, I'm afraid.

"This is an everchanging situation and updates will be regularly posted on the website."

## Disability games postponed as virus fears grow

Ongar was set to host this year's Rotary East London and Essex Disability Games (RELEDG) in May, but amid coronavirus fears the event has been postponed.

The Games will now take place in October for what will be the second time they have been held, and they will take place at the Ongar Leisure Centre.

This year, the indoor activities will include boccia, bowls, table tennis, darts, bagatelle, stick ball, quoits, wheelchair slalom, new age curling and several more challenges.

Organisers are inviting participants to enter, with all activities for those aged 18 and over. Entrance will be completely free of charge, although competitors are urged to register as early as possible.

Medals will be awarded to the first three places in each event and certificates will be given to all participants.

The games will be open be opened by Paralympian wheelchair racer Anne Wafula Strike, who also opened the event last year.

For further information email [hilary.wrightman@gmail.com](mailto:hilary.wrightman@gmail.com)



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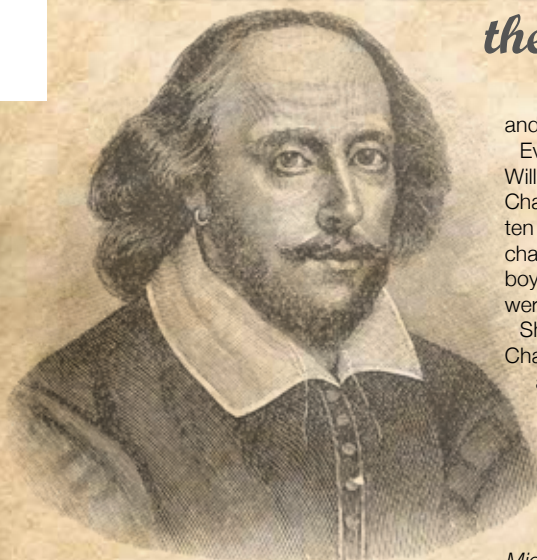






# SHAKESPEARE

*the great English icon*



and twins Hamnet and Judith.

Eventually the family ended up in London, where William was part of an acting company called Lord Chamberlain's Men. There were typically around ten actors in a company, comprising a lead actor, character actors and some comedians. Young boys typically played women's roles as women were not allowed to act.

Shakespeare wrote plays for the Lord Chamberlain's Men. He worked as an actor as well. His plays became very popular in London and soon the Lord Chamberlain's Men was one of the most popular acting companies in the city, even performing for Queen Elizabeth I and James I. Some of Shakespeare's early plays include *The Taming of the Shrew*, *Richard III*, and *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.

After a theatre landlord closed down the premises, several members of the company dismantled the theatre and moved the timber across the River Thames to another spot. There they built a new theatre called the Globe Theatre.

The Globe Theatre became the place to be in London. It could house up to 3,000 spectators and had a uniquely designed stage with a painted ceiling, columns and stage wall. They had specially trained musicians who made special effects noises during the plays.

Many of Shakespeare's greatest plays were written in the last half of his career. These included *Hamlet*, *Othello*, *King Lear*, and *Macbeth*. His success in the theatre, as well as his investments in land and the Globe, made Shakespeare a wealthy man. He purchased a large home in Stratford for his family, called New Place. William retired to his home in Stratford and died on his fifty-second birthday.

But he did not forget his unique link to St George, and Henry V's speech, in which he urges his troops into battle, ends with this classic line: "Cry God for Harry, England, and Saint George."

It is perhaps apt that two of England's greatest heroes share the same date for their death, although centuries apart.

St George and William Shakespeare have been continually linked as they both died on April 23 and they are celebrated in the UK each year.

Shakespeare, coincidentally, was born on the same date in 1564.

Shakespeare is considered by many to be the greatest writer of the English language and is also one of the most influential. Through his works he is credited with introducing nearly 3,000 words to the English language. In addition, his works are the second most often quoted after the Bible.

Many of his plays are taught in schools not only in the UK but around the world.

Shakespeare was born in Stratford-upon-Avon, the third of six children. His family was reasonably well off and he went to the local grammar school where he learned about poetry, history, Greek and Latin.

When William turned 18 he married Anne Hathaway. They soon started a family: daughter Susanna

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# JUICER OR BLENDER?

With many health professionals now advising that you eat a whopping 10 portions of fruit and vegetables a day for optimal health, it can be a good idea to drink your recommended daily intake rather than struggle to eat it. However, should you be juicing or blending?

## Pros of a juicer:

- ✓ Juices provide the majority of vitamins and minerals found in whole fruits and veg
- ✓ Juices are healthy meal replacement options

## Cons of a juicer:

- ✗ Juicer removes vital fibre from your produce
- ✗ Juices made from only fruit are high in fructose which is absorbed quickly, leading to a sudden spike in blood sugar
- ✗ Juicing can be expensive – you need a lot of produce to create one glass of juice

## Pros of a blender:

- ✓ Smoothies include fibre so leave you feeling fuller for longer
- ✓ No waste – you will drink the whole fruit or veg that you add
- ✓ The fibre helps to aid your digestive system, flushing out any toxins in your body

## Cons of a blender:

- ✗ Messy to clean
- ✗ You need to add liquid, and ice is preferable
- ✗ Can struggle to blend hard fruits and veg



## Best health-boosting combinations for juicing

Apples, carrots and parsley | Carrots, oranges and ginger | Beetroot, carrots, lemon, ginger and apple | Spinach, cucumber, celery, lemon, ginger and apple

## Best health-boosting combinations for blending

Mango, turmeric, orange, banana and almond milk | Pineapple, coconut water, spinach, ginger and banana | Kiwi, flaxseed, berries, spinach and Greek yogurt

V  
TECHNOLOGY

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AT 85 YEARS YOUNG, MARY BERRY IS STILL  
AT THE PEAK OF HER POWERS

For so long one half of *The Great British Bake Off*'s dynamic judging duo alongside Paul Hollywood, Mary Berry coached amateur bakers through years of soggy bottoms and wheat-free triumphs. Yet in the context of her wider career, the baking doyenne's stint on the hit BBC reality show – which ended when Channel 4 swiped the contract, leaving Mary to mark her loyalty by refusing to move with it – accounts for only a very small part of a baking success story that has seen her rise to prominence with every bit the beauty of a loaf of bread.

In more than 50 years delighting on screen, at cookery demonstrations and in the pages of countless cookery books, Mary Berry's culinary career has taken her far and wide. Ever since discovering a passion for cooking in her domestic science classes at school in Bath ("the first thing I made was a treacle sponge and everybody seemed to enjoy it"), Berry's career has always revolved around the kitchen in some way, shape or form.

There were home visits to show people how to use their electric ovens in the early days, studies abroad at France's prestigious Le Cordon Bleu, plus cooking for the Egg Council and the Flour Advisory Bureau. She even worked as a magazine food editor while raising her family – it's been a varied but produce-led career.

Berry penned her first culinary tome, *The Hamlyn All Colour Cookbook*, back in 1970, and since then she's overseen a further 75 tomes of kitchen cleverness.

Like many chefs, her preference for fresh, locally sourced produce shines through. A Royal Horticultural Society Ambassador who proudly tends her own vegetable garden at home in Buckinghamshire, Mary places great importance on the idea of home-grown, seasonal produce. "I think people more and more are wanting to know where their food comes from," she says. "If it comes from your own garden or your allotment, you know all about it, don't you?"

When it comes to home cooking, Mary follows the traditional route, favouring what is available rather than sugar-free or pesticide-ridden fodder. "We grow what we eat," she says.

Famous for her bakes, Mary likes to use "all the natural ingredients", and you won't catch her shaping her recipes to fad diet requirements. "I don't do low fat," she says firmly. "I'd rather have a smaller portion." Perhaps these calorific but micro portions are the answer to Mary's trim figure. "I don't have a slimming secret; I believe in everything in moderation," she says.

That moderation now sees her 85 years young, fit as a fiddle and, inevitably, eyeing up the next project. This year she is fronting BBC show *Best Home Cook*, and as the weather warms up, she will be seen around the country at a number of food events.

"The great thing about food is it keeps on evolving," she says. "It's so rich, so diverse and, more than anything else, so tasty. It keeps us all coming back for more and I'll never tire of sharing my passion with other people."





WHAT DOES YOUR

# birth flower

SAY ABOUT YOU?

Everyone knows what star sign they are, and most know their birthstone, yet not very many are aware of what their birth flower is.

Starting in our next issue, we will be running a regular feature on each month's birth flower, revealing what your birth flower says about your personality, plus tips on how to grow your flower in your own garden.

## WHAT IS A BIRTH FLOWER?

Every month has a flower that symbolises that month, and it is said that the characteristics of this flower may be inherited or passed on to the people who are born during that month. These flowers are known as birth flowers.

## WHAT IS THE HISTORY OF THE BIRTH FLOWER?

It was the Romans who first started the concept of flowers as gifts rather than just as

decorations, by giving flowers to people on the day of their birth becoming commonplace. It was this act that led to the creation of the birth flower.

## WHY DO WE GIVE FLOWERS AS GIFTS?

Today, people tend to give flowers as gifts to convey a certain message, normally of love, congratulations or commiserations. Flowers are a simple and effective way to express emotions without actually saying a word. As gifts, flowers are always warmly welcomed owing to their sweet fragrance and visible beauty, but they are actually so much more than that, with each flower symbolising something different.

## WHAT IS THIS MONTH'S BIRTH FLOWER?

Just to give you a little taster of what is to come in next month's first birth flower feature, the birth flower of April is the daisy. This flower is known for conveying innocence, love and purity, with people born in this month being playful and loyal.



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# USE YOUR *noodle* in the Garden

## FIVE WAYS TO USE A POOL NOODLE IN YOUR GARDEN

If you think the only purpose of a pool noodle is to keep your child afloat, then think again.

There are many ingenious and innovative ways that you can use these naturally buoyant and highly water-resistant swimming aids in your garden.

### Home-made sprinkler system

Whether you want to regularly water your grass or your flower bed, a sprinkler system is a handy tool to have. However, you don't need to go out and buy one. Simply puncture holes in your noodle, stuff one end with foam and secure with duct tape and then insert your hose into the other end. Place vertically for a kids' fun water toy.

### Trampoline springs cover

Improve the safety of your trampoline by using pool noodles. Simply cut a slit down one side and slot over the springs and metal edges.

### Plant protector

It wouldn't be spring without the arrival of sunflowers and other big, beautiful blossoms. Unfortunately, the more towering the plant, the more likely they are to bend and snap. However, if you surround each stem with a pool noodle, they will stand tall and proud throughout the summer.

### Drinks holder

If you find your cans of fizzy drinks often get knocked over in the garden, then a pool noodle drinks holder is exactly what you need. Glue two pieces of noodle together, then simply cut out a small circle, insert your drink and you can sip safely in the knowledge that your beverage will not be spilt.

### Floating mood lights

Lighting is a key component in creating a relaxing and inviting summer garden vibe, but you don't need to spend a fortune on outside lights. Just take a selection of different coloured noodles, cut into rings and insert LED tea lights (don't use real tea lights).



GARDENING

Photo credit: capturingparenthood.com, sharealby.net, hometalk.com, createcraftlove.com





# What a Buzz

Bees aren't just a summer visitor – they require nectar and pollen across all four seasons and are pivotal to stable, vital food supplies. So many of our varied, colourful and nutritious diets are driven by the work of the simple bee, which boasts more than 20,000 varieties. From helping plants grow and flower – producing everything from almond to vanilla, apples to squashes – to making our wildflower meadows beautiful, bees are understated in their importance.

With all this in mind, the protection of our beautiful and curious bees has really come to the fore in recent years. Their decline across wild spaces has been caused by loss of habitats and food sources as well as exposure to pesticides and the effects of climate change.

The good news is that protecting these little wonders is not just good for the environment, but is also a joy in itself. Several organisations run bee initiatives, from Bee Walks, in which volunteers traverse set routes to map out observations of bee activity, to community and education groups at libraries, stalls and fetes that raise money and awareness.

You can also create a buzz in your own back garden, by...

- using bee-friendly plants. Patio pots, herbs in a planter, hanging baskets and crocuses create colour and help bees flourish;
- considering fruit and veg as well. Bees will be instantly attracted to these;
- planting throughout the seasons to provide food and shelter all year round;
- keeping the grass long. This is another way to provide shelter;
- removing pesticides. Throw away that 'bug gun' and let nature do its bit;
- welcoming in 'beneficial insects'. Hoverflies, beetles and ladybirds will all help your bees flourish.

Why not start a buzz in your community, and help nature in the process

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## THE BENEFITS OF HAVING A PET FISH FOR CHILDREN WITH AUTISM

You'd need to have a heart of stone to not feel a sense of joy when watching a fish perform its underwater ballet. Graceful, quiet and strangely hypnotic, the simple, soothing sight is one of life's simple pleasures, and one that can be appreciated in your very own home.

It makes perfect sense, then, that fish make ideal pets for autistic children. Studies have shown that gazing at aquariums, whether small or large, can lower blood pressure and heart rate. This also makes our marine life an effective antidote to highly emotional outbursts, which can be so severe in some with autism that they can physically endanger the child. Better still, an aquarium in the home can prevent fits of rage by offering a soothing constant for the highly sensitive.

Pets in general have been found to benefit those with autism, and while cats and dogs have many wonderful attributes, they aren't quite as easily attainable or maintainable as our finned friends. For starters, fish are low maintenance, requiring very little from their owner other than a daily sprinkle of food and the occasional tank clean. They are also very unlikely to respond when a child is emotionally charged, unlike their four-legged counterparts who are armed with claws and teeth.

Another benefit of investing in an aquarium is that it helps development and social skills. Fish don't judge; they are patient listeners and offer unconditional love. They also teach empathy and a sense of responsibility for your child. A fish cannot feed itself; it has

needs that must be met by its caregiver, and such obligations can lay the foundation for helping your little one lead an independent life in the future.

And finally, there is that bond, for there is very little that can come between a child and their fish.

# Happy Fish





LOVE YOUR LEFTOVERS:

## Easter Eggs

With the average child set to receive eight Easter eggs over the Easter weekend, worth a whopping £56, it can be a good idea to find out some interesting and fun ways to use up any leftover chocolate to avoid unnecessary waste.

## CREATE A CHOCOLATE FONDUE

What could be more fun than making your own chocolate fondue? You could even ask your little ones to make a selection of tasty and nutritious fruit kebabs to dip in the decadent dish. Simply melt your leftover chocolate in a bowl and then get dipping.

## MAKE A CHOCOLATE FACE MASK

If you have girls who love a pampering session, why not make your own chocolate face masks? They can even lick them off after. All you need to do is melt a quarter of a cup of chocolate (preferably dark), add one tablespoon of cream and a few drops of honey, and then apply to the face.

## CONCOCT A CHOCOLATEY DRINK

Everyone loves hot chocolate with a few marshmallows thrown in for good measure, and thankfully, now you have all this leftover chocolate, you can make your very own version. Simply heat 150ml milk and 50ml double cream in a pan and then add 50g chocolate. Optional: add the zest of half an orange.

## CHOCOLATE MUG CAKE

If your kids love baking but you hate the mess, then this is the perfect idea for you. Start by cracking an egg into a cup, then mix in 4 tablespoons of flour and 2 tablespoons of cocoa. Finally add 3 tablespoons of milk, 3 tablespoons of oil, ¼ teaspoon of vanilla extract and a tablespoon of broken-up chocolate Easter egg. Mix well and pop in the microwave for 3 minutes.

Still got some chocolate left? Why not donate it to your nearest food bank or homeless shelter?

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Natasha 07545 810037

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Tracy 07584 676670

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## HOW TO ACHIEVE THIS LOOK:

**STEP 1:** Pick up a section of hair on the left side of your head and divide into two sections.

**STEP 2:** Take a small piece of hair from the back right side of your chosen section, cross it over the top and add to the front of your chosen section.

**STEP 3:** Then take a small piece of hair from the front left side of your chosen section, cross it over the top and add to the back of your chosen section.

**STEP 6:** Continue step 2 and 3 until your braid reaches the top part of your left ear.

**STEP 7:** Once you reach the ear, continue



Photo credit: www.missysue.com

braiding your hair down in a standard fishtail braid.

**STEP 8:** Gently loosen the sides of the braid and tie the end with a hairband.

**STEP 9:** With the rest of your hair, create a standard fishtail; taking sections from each side and crossing over until the hair is fully braided.

**STEP 10:** Gently loosen the sides of the braid to create a fuller look and then tie off with a band.

**STEP 11:** Twist the back braid into a bun and pin securely.

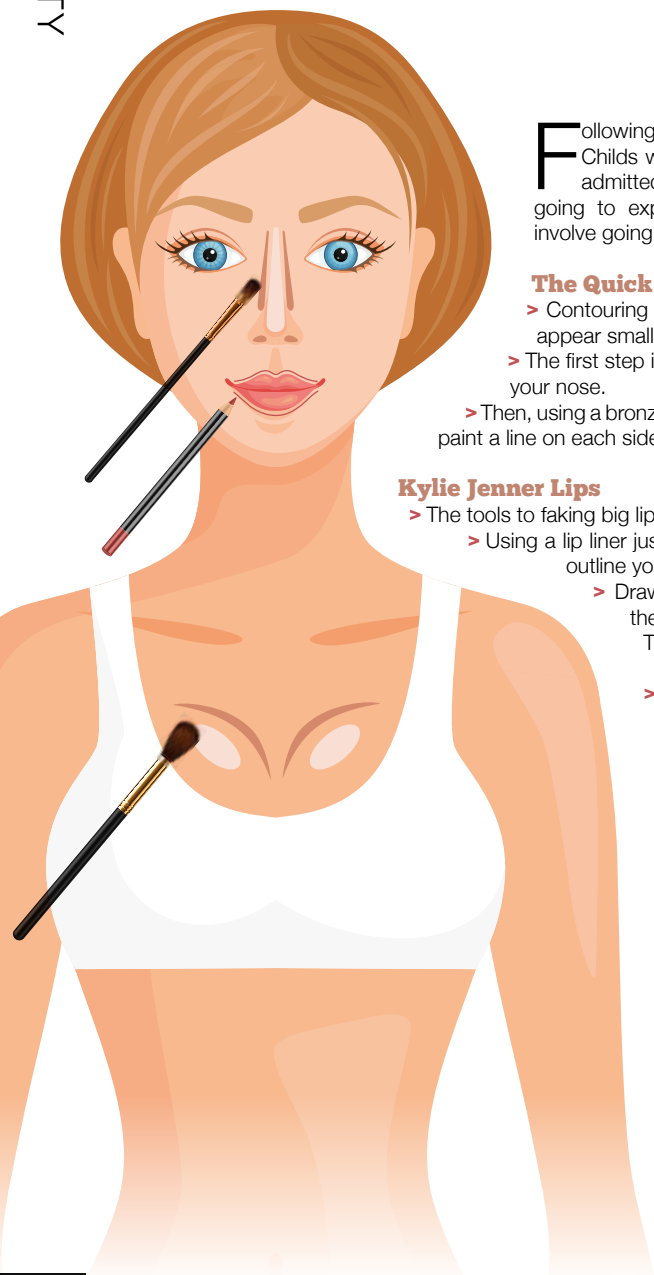
**STEP 12:** Wrap your first fishtail braid over the top of and around your bun in a clockwise direction and pin in place.

**STEP 13:** Use your fingers to gently make the fishtail braid fuller to cover the pins.

**STEP 14:** Add a decorative clip or hairslide for an ultra-glam finish.



# Anti-cosmetic surgery fixes



Following the news that former *TOWIE* star Amy Childs was among a long list of celebs who openly admitted to having cosmetic surgery regrets, we're going to explore some quick beauty fixes that don't involve going under the knife...

## The Quick Nose Job

- > Contouring the side of your nose will instantly make it appear smaller.
- > The first step is to use concealer to highlight the middle of your nose.
- > Then, using a bronzer a few shades darker than your foundation, paint a line on each side of your nose, and blend, blend, blend.

## Kylie Jenner Lips

- > The tools to faking big lips without fillers are all in your make-up bag.
- > Using a lip liner just one shade darker than your lipstick, over-outline your lips.
- > Draw an 'X' just above the Cupid's bow, and then complete the lip outline from that point. This creates an exaggerated outline, while still sticking to the natural shape of your lips.
- > After you've applied your lipstick, add a hint of concealer or highlighter to the centre of the lips. This will create an ombré effect, which makes the lips look even bigger. This can also be achieved by using a lipstick in a slightly lighter colour in the centre, for a more subtle and natural effect.
- > Go one step further with ombré lips by playing with more than one shade of liner and lipstick. The internet is filled with helpful tutorials to nail this trick.

## Bigger Chest

- > A push-up bra is a girl's best friend if you want that extra lift. However if that still doesn't cut it, a silicone insert can also be used inside each cup.
- > Contour. Contouring isn't just for your face – you can fake a rounder and bigger bust by contouring the top of your chest and creating a fuller, more voluptuous shape.

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With that in mind, there's nothing more satisfying or motivating than the feeling of working out. But across warm-ups, nutrition and body conditioning, what if the thing that is stopping us from achieving our full potential in the gym is something as simple as the music being piped out of those little buds that rest in our ears?

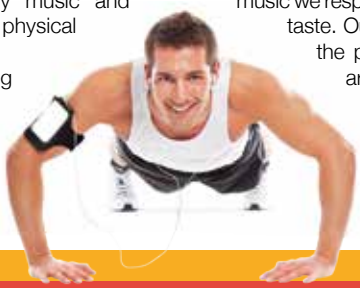
Scientists now believe that what we listen to, if anything, when working out can have a dramatic effect on performance. There have been countless studies over the years that all point to the reality that the brain is stimulated by music and converts that motivation into physical energy.

There are other strands. Listening to music can also act as a distraction technique from the pain of exercise, as well as fending off boredom. Indeed, a study in 2018 conducted

by the University of Maryland found that having a soundtrack to your workout meant a 28 per cent increase in enjoyment compared with no auditory stimulus.

But what about the genre of music? Typically, we would expect high-energy styles to engage and motivate us most. Dance music, tracks with strong percussion, heavy riffs and even the rather cliched genre of 'driving music' can all work well. Certainly, regular and repetitive rhythm is a big driver to adopting a 'trance-like' state for exercising, taking a level of consciousness out of what we do and ensuring we can compete harder and for longer.

Ultimately, though, scientists found that the music we respond to best is a matter of personal taste. Our own music preferences dictate the positive effects, but those effects are real, given that listening to music we like can expand blood vessels by up to 26 per cent, helping the flow of oxygen-rich blood to improve performance and, with it, PBs.



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## Keeping children healthy



HEALTH & FITNESS

**A**re you worried about the amount of sugar your child is getting from the food and drinks they consume every day?

One of the main issues with young children is that some parents use sweets and chocolate as rewards for good behaviour. But do you ask yourself what effect sugar can have on your children?

For children between the ages of 2 and 18, the recommended daily sugar intake is a maximum of 6 teaspoons, which is equivalent to 25 grams or 100 calories. To put this into perspective, an average milk chocolate bar has 23 grams of sugar which is the vast majority of your child's limit for the day. Sugar is also hidden in so many foods and drinks that we would never expect. It's hidden in juices, pasta sauce, rice and even bread.

If you are a parent of a picky eater, you likely cater to what your child wants. As long as they are eating something, you are satisfied. What you may not know is that catering to your child's pickiness can have a negative effect on their behaviour, health and overall well-being. For example, if your child will only eat certain foods such as macaroni cheese and chicken nuggets, each one of their meals is loaded

with calories, sugar and carbohydrates. When every meal that your child eats is so high in calories and sugary carbs, it won't be long before they start putting on weight and developing vitamin deficiency from not eating fruit, salad and vegetables.

### What can you do about it?

When it comes to reducing your child's sugar intake you need to make the changes gradually, otherwise it will have a negative effect.

Instead, one or two everyday swaps per week can make a huge difference. For example, put a low-sugar (full-fat) yoghurt in their lunch box, swap fruit juice for water infused with chopped-up fruit, or swap a chocolate bar for an apple. A prime example to avoid is Innocent Smoothies for kids. Despite the marketing hype, these "healthy" fruit juices are concentrated sugar, and can contain more sugar than full-sugar (Original) Coke. CoCo Pops is actually a staggering 84 per cent sugar. Frightening.

If you would like more information on this, contact Graham Phillips at Prolongevity, call 07768 275802 visit [www.prolongevity.co.uk](http://www.prolongevity.co.uk) or email [graham.phillips@manorpharmacygroup.co.uk](mailto:graham.phillips@manorpharmacygroup.co.uk)



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FASHION

## Building a CAPSULE WARDROBE

With the rise of sustainable fashion and consumers beginning to understand the need for having a conscience in their fashion and style decision making, building a capsule wardrobe makes more sense than ever before. We live in a world where convenience is key, and fast fashion retailers have made it all too easy to buy into new trends every season. Yet so many women still find themselves standing in front of their bulging wardrobes at a loss, with nothing to wear. A capsule wardrobe saves you time and money in the long term, and means less of a headache.

You can build a capsule wardrobe from 20 key items. From these 20 items it is possible to create 30 different outfits (and more) – you just need the know-how to pull the pieces together. All of these pieces will last a lifetime in your wardrobe and are worth investing in. Once you are happy with your reduced wardrobe, you can still add some fresh new pieces in each season, but in a more considered way, knowing what else you already have to work with. Accessories can be a great way to do this, and they are the best way to add some print and colour into your wardrobe.

### TOP 20 KEY ITEMS

1. The Leather Biker Jacket
2. The Pleated Midi Skirt
3. The Basic T-shirt with a Twist
4. The Slogan Sweatshirt
5. The Cashmere Sweater
6. The Block Heel Boot
7. The Slip Dress
8. The White Shirt
9. The Buffet Dress
10. The Coated Jeggings or Leather Leggings
11. The Straight-leg Jeans in a mid-blue wash
12. The Lace-up Boot
13. The Blazer
14. The Trainers
15. The Loafers
16. The Breton T-shirt
17. The Denim Shirt
18. The Aviator Jacket
19. The Statement Bag
20. The Jumpsuit

Alex Standley is a personal stylist with 15 years' experience in the fashion industry. If you would like to find out more, please visit [www.luxeopardlifestyle.co.uk](http://www.luxeopardlifestyle.co.uk) or get in touch at [alex@luxeopardlifestyle.co.uk](mailto:alex@luxeopardlifestyle.co.uk)







# PUZZLES & TRIVIA

PUZZLES

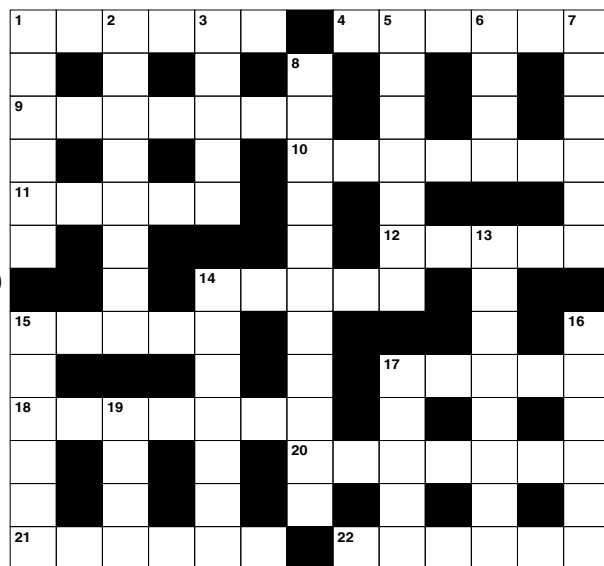
Answers can be found on the Contents Page 4

## ACROSS

1. Rhesus (anag) (6)
4. Less attractive (6)
9. Slope (7)
10. Freshness (7)
11. Female relation (5)
12. Words that identify things (5)
14. Mistaken (5)
15. Covered with water (5)
17. Breed of dog (5)
18. Have a moderating effect on (7)
20. Strong desire for a thing (7)
21. Votes into office (6)
22. Unkempt (of hair) (6)

## DOWN

1. Workers' groups (6)
2. Large Spanish estate (8)
3. Lift up (5)
5. Incandescent (7)
6. Indolent (4)
7. Cooks in the oven (6)
8. Goodwill (11)
13. Infallible (8)
14. Stand for small objects (7)



15. Assent or agree to (6)
16. Regal (6)
17. Smash into another vehicle (5)
19. A fever or shivering fit (4)

## DID YOU KNOW?

- Newborn puppies are born with their eyes and ears sealed shut. It takes around a fortnight for their sight and hearing to develop
- The dog Laika is thought to have been the first animal to go into space and orbit the Earth
- Dalmatians are all white when they're born. Their spots start to appear when they're around two weeks old
- A dog's sense of smell is much more sensitive than a human's. Dogs are often used by the police to search for missing people
- Wild dogs evolved over several hundred years to become the domestic dogs of today
- There are more than 400 different breeds of dog

## SUDOKU

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# FULL OF THE joys OF spring

Fancy putting a spring back into your step this season? Why not try one of these nourishing and nutritious, not to mention tasty, spring vegetables that are in season this month?

## SPRING GREENS

You may not know this, but spring greens are actually the first cabbages of the year, although they do not have a hard core but instead can be recognised by their thick, green leaves. Part of the brassica family, spring greens contain a whole host of essential minerals and vitamins, including vitamins A, C, K and iron.

Spring greens peak from April to June and are best served in a stir-fry or added to a stew or soup.

## SPRING ONIONS

Spring onions are incredibly versatile vegetables as they have a milder taste than most other onions, meaning they can be eaten raw or cooked. Often used in Asian cooking, spring onions, or scallions as they are also known, are an excellent source of vitamin

C and calcium.

Add to a spring vegetable omelette, make a pea, mint and spring onion soup, or simply chop up and scatter over a salad.

## SPRING PEAS

The spring pea season is short but is definitely worth taking advantage of as fresh spring peas are sweet and delicious. You have two options when it comes to spring peas – garden or sugar snap. Both can be eaten raw or cooked and they have identical nutritional profiles; however, sugar snap peas can be more flavourful.

Peas are surprisingly high in protein compared to other vegetables and are a great source of dietary fibre.

Make a pea pesto with rocket and parmesan, add to a kedgeree or create your own homemade mushy peas.

## OTHER VEG IN SEASON IN APRIL INCLUDE:

- Asparagus
- Kale
- Chard
- Spinach

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FOOD & DRINK



## Fine Foodies

Last month we introduced the first five of our ten finest foods to keep you looking young and healthy, on both the inside and the outside. Here are the final five.

### Chocolate

Not only is chocolate a proven mood enhancer, but chocolate that contains at least 70 per cent cocoa is loaded with proteins and vitamin B, meaning just a couple of squares will help burn fat and improve your skin and hair.

### Tomatoes

You say: "Tomato;" I say: "Wow, you look fantastic." Tomatoes have proven to be double trouble for ageing. Brimming with those brilliant antioxidants and carotenoids that help fight the oxidation that ages skin cells, they also boost collagen production, keeping skin taut and youthful.

### Wild salmon

Wild salmon, though more expensive than farmed, is thought to be better for you as it is lower in fat

and there is less chance of contamination from pollutants, but both kinds are loaded with omega-3 fatty acids. These nutrients not only protect your heart by boosting arterial function, but they also help you produce sebum, your skin's natural oil, which keeps hair healthy and skin plump and youthful.

### Nuts

These delectable delights are literally small anti-ageing bombs, thanks to their concentrated sources of vitamins, minerals and other phytochemicals, including antioxidants. Though all nuts offer nutritional benefits, walnuts in particular are high in omega-3 and omega-6, which help keep your hair glossy and your brain young, as they are proven to help prevent cognitive decline.

### Wine

If you want to age like a fine wine, then start drinking in moderation. Studies have shown that wine protects against heart disease, diabetes and age-related memory loss. Red wine in particular contains resveratrol, a compound that may activate genes that slow cellular ageing.



part 2





# BREXIT & THE HOUSING MARKET

NOW BORIS'S BREXIT IS SECURED, WHAT DOES IT MEAN FOR OUR BRICKS AND MORTAR?

The brazen upward surge of the UK housing market offers cause for both celebration and concern for the nation's population.

A seemingly unerring rise over the past decade sees house prices currently at record highs. For those looking to get on the ladder, the task seems less achievable than ever before, while even property owners find themselves on a runaway train that demands even more from them should they wish to step up.

The only real winners in the housing market are those looking to sell up and drift away from the madness, and in some quarters the uncertainty over Brexit has only exacerbated fears of what may happen with our biggest life investment.

In the first instance, however, the UK experienced a positive surge in the aftermath of the Conservatives' comprehensive General Election victory in December 2019. A stable and growing economy

clearly bolsters the housing market, and the 'getting done' of Brexit appeared to release waves of pent-up uncertainty that had stagnated the market for the best part of three and a half years.

It's perhaps no coincidence then that prominent 'remain' UK cities such as Cambridge, Bath, Bristol and York are now top of the tree in terms of an upturn in buyer demand.

Before COVID-19 hit the country, this 'gloves off' idea was great news. With the ability to invest, and continued government house-building programmes, the market was set to be boosted.

That said, with stagnancy comes stability, and in the past few years the market has been fairly steady. The fears from experts were that when sellers got a little carried away, it would rock the property ladder somewhat, and that would mean uncomfortable exchanges for those looking to put down roots.



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## PENSION INEQUALITY STARTS AT BIRTH

In recent years, the gender pay gap has been a rather hot topic. However, the difference between the pensions savings of men and women – or gender pension gap – is perhaps less discussed. By the age of 50, women have accumulated an average of just £56,000 in pensions savings against £112,000 for men<sup>1</sup>.

### GIRLS ARE LOSING OUT

What's more, HMRC data shows that the gender pension gap begins as early as infancy. According to recent statistics, 13,000 girls had money paid into a pension on their behalf by parents or grandparents in 2016/17, compared with 20,000 boys<sup>2</sup>.

### WHAT YOU CAN DO

Starting to save for your child or grandchild early in life can make a huge difference to their pension pot down the line. If you'd like to find out how much you can pay into a pension on behalf of your child, or explore which plan might best suit their needs, we can help.

## STAY PROTECTED IN 2020

Don't overlook the importance of having the right plans in place to protect yourself, your family, your valuables and your home, in case an unexpected event should happen.

Insurance cover isn't just about a payout when you die. It can also give you peace of mind in knowing that you would be able to cope financially if you were ill, have an accident, lose valued possessions or suffer damage to your home. We can help you find the right cover, so you stay protected.

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<sup>1</sup> Aegon, 2018

<sup>2</sup> HMRC, 2019

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# ASPIRE to Inspire

If you are feeling your new year optimism already starting to wain and you could do with a little motivation, check out our top four inspirational businessmen and women for 2020. They will activate your ambition in no time.

### JUSTINE ROBERTS

Founder and Chief Executive of Mumsnet, an online parenting community that brings mums together, Justine Roberts has campaigned on issues including special educational needs, improvements in miscarriage care, freedom of speech on the internet and, most recently, #PublishParentalLeave.

*Motivational quote:* "Good enough is good enough" (on juggling parenting and business).

### JAMAL EDWARDS

Having begun his love of videoing by filming foxes in his West London council estate garden, Jamal is now the proud owner of SB.TV which has attracted more than 300 million hits globally for its music videos. Arguably his most viral moment was guiding Princes William and Harry through their first Google Hangout.

*Motivational quote:* "The only failure is not trying."

### BETHANY FIRTH

Paralympic swimmer and gold medallist Bethany Firth was all set for Tokyo 2020, which has been postponed to 2021 due to coronavirus sweeping the globe. But this doesn't mean she isn't still dedicated to encouraging people to get in the pool when they re-open following the pandemic. Bethany is a proud supporter of Swimathon, the annual fundraiser for Cancer Research UK and Marie Curie, which has also been postponed.

*Motivational quote:* "You can achieve anything if you put your mind to it."

### TIM COOK

When Tim Cook took over as Apple CEO, critics were unsure about whether he would be able to deliver. However, Apple stock increased by a whopping 480% after he took over in 2011, and in 2018 it became the first publicly traded company to reach a \$1trillion market cap. And, with the greatly anticipated AR headsets and glasses launching in the next few years, his reign is only set to strengthen.

*Motivational quote:* "Let your joy be in your journey, not in some distant goal."







# BECKHAM'S MIAMI VICE

DAVID BECKHAM IS SETTING HIS SIGHTS ON NEW SUCCESS, ALBEIT FROM THE DIRECTOR'S BOX

Almost 20 years after the Miami Fusion franchise folded, the Miami Beckham United group bid was successful in purchasing an expansion team and, with it, giving top-level soccer its own name again in the area.

For Becks, it's the latest indelible imprint in a career of firsts. His love of the US is only secondary to his love of football, and stepping up from the changing room to the boardroom was a pathway the former Manchester United, Real Madrid and AC Milan star was always going to tread.

Just a month after the official founding date of Inter Miami – January 28, 2020 – the team played their first match. It came away at Los Angeles – a trip of some 2,700 miles – and ended in a narrow 1–0 defeat, with former Arsenal man Carlos Vela scoring the only goal of the game. However,

head coach Diego Alonso, the ex-Uruguay striker who played for five Spanish clubs across two divisions, won't be dismayed.

In fact, a squad that should already be decent enough to compete for minor honours could soon be bolstered by the arrival of some big names from the European football scene.

Giants of the game Lionel Messi and Cristiano Ronaldo – who have won 11 of the last 12 Ballon d'Or trophies between them – plus other big names, have been linked with future moves to the club, so you could say that the future looks bright for the Herons.

There's also a new stadium to look forward to in the form of a purpose-built, 25,000-seater stadium at Miami Freedom Park in Fort Lauderdale, at a construction cost of \$60million.

The facility will offer restaurants, retail outlets and hotels, as well as a training centre.

By now, the team were expecting to be playing home matches at the temporary ground of Inter Miami CF Stadium, which is on the former site of Lockhart Stadium – the home of the Fort Lauderdale Strikers. However, the blanket postponements of sporting events, almost globally, has delayed the early days of this football revolution.

When live action does return, Inter Miami have said they will be entering a reserve side into the third tier of US Soccer, USL League One. That will allow them to keep their match-day squad in the MLS competitive, while also giving those players fitness and game time.

Another impressive marker in an incredible

sporting legacy, Beckham made just short of a century of appearances for LA Galaxy in the MLS and scored 18 goals, in the process becoming the first Englishman to win league titles in four countries (having also achieved the feat with Manchester United, Real Madrid and PSG).

Ten league titles in England, Spain, France and the United States, 100 Champions League appearances, the first English player to score at three World Cup Finals tournaments and the fourth-highest number of games as captain of the national team – Beckham's place in football folklore, as a player at least, is assured.

If he can achieve even 10 per cent as owner of a football club as he did as a player, he will be adored on both sides of the Atlantic Ocean – watch this space.





# TOKYO 2021

## THE NEW SPORTS

### 4. SURFING

In the latest instalment showcasing sports set to debut or return at the Olympics in Tokyo, which has been postponed until 2021 due to coronavirus, we take a look at surfing.

The sport of surfing has had a choppy ride with Olympic chiefs over the years. It was more than half a century ago that the pioneer wave rider Duke Kahanamoku encouraged the IOC to make it an official Olympic sport.

He passed away in 1968 at the age of 77, and it has taken until now for the decision-makers to agree to the Hawaiian's proposal. His name will no doubt be mentioned this summer.

Shida Beach, around 40 miles from the Japanese capital, was due to be the venue for the surfing event.

Ocean-based, rather than in a wave pool, heats will be 20-25 minutes long, with four people going at a time. The best two from each will advance.

There will be the usual rules of surfing protocol to adhere to, with penalties and possible points deductions given

to those who infringe, such as interfering with the competitor closest to the wave.

Speed and power, plus the difficulty of each manoeuvre attempted and completed, will impact the judges' scores.

As a sport, surfing pays less attention than most to age. It is possible that an athlete approaching their fifties could compete in the event, but that would still be some distance short of the age of the oldest Olympian, Oscar Swahn, who was 72 in the 1920 Antwerp Olympics when he triumphed in shooting.

Kelly Slater, who is probably the most famous surfer ever, said that he could be convinced to come out of retirement to compete, although that's yet to be confirmed. Regardless, it will be one of the more entertaining art forms on show at this year's games.



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## Changes to the driving THEORY TEST

### OUTLINING RECENT CHANGES MADE TO THE DRIVING THEORY TEST

The safety of drivers and pedestrians on our roads has rarely been a hotter topic, particularly with car ownership now at a record high in the UK.

And with the ongoing evolution of the motorcar, so too has the driving theory test developed to suit the times, as well as to keep prospective drivers on their toes... or is that pedals?

#### What is changing?

The theory test is moving with the times and will now be using video clips instead of written case studies. It follows that visualisation is a common-sense route to take, given the nature of driving itself, and the government expects this linear delivery – whereby the user will then have to answer multiple-choice questions on what they see – to be a more realistic representation of our roads.

The new format also compensates

for reading, learning and developmental difficulties that, while disadvantaging someone on a written theory test, wouldn't necessarily have any adverse effect on their ability to drive a car or 'read' the road.

#### What's not changing?

Remaining the same is the process by which those taking their theory test will revise: they will use the same books and software as before. In addition, users will still have to answer 50 multiple-choice questions in 57 minutes, with a requirement to answer at least 43 correctly.

The hazard perception part of the test also remains the same as before.

These changes to the driving theory test will not apply to those looking to qualify for motorcycle, lorry, bus or coach licences.

The changes come into effect from April 14.



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# PUZZLES & TRIVIA

PUZZLES

Answers can be found on the Contents Page 4

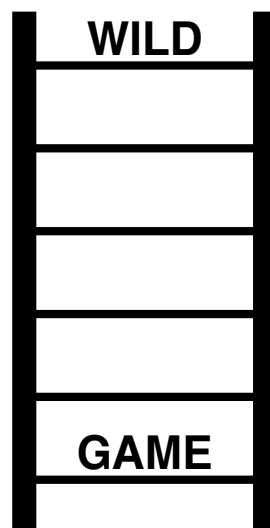
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- ▶ JOYCE
- ▶ KING
- ▶ LEWIS
- ▶ LUDLUM
- ▶ MARTEL
- ▶ ORWELL
- ▶ PLATH
- ▶ RANKIN
- ▶ RENDELL
- ▶ ROWLING
- ▶ TOLSTOY
- ▶ TURGENEV
- ▶ TWAIN
- ▶ WOOLF



## DID YOU KNOW?

- ▶ If an adult's blood vessels were laid end to end, they would go around the Earth's equator four times
- ▶ Newborn babies don't shed tears, as their tear ducts are not fully developed at birth
- ▶ The lung on your left side is slightly smaller than the one on your right
- ▶ The removal of wisdom teeth is one of the most common procedures in the UK
- ▶ A person's ears and nose keep growing for their entire life
- ▶ Around 25 per cent of all the bones in the body are in the feet
- ▶ Your heart beats around 100,000 times a day, 36.5 million times a year

## WORD LADDER

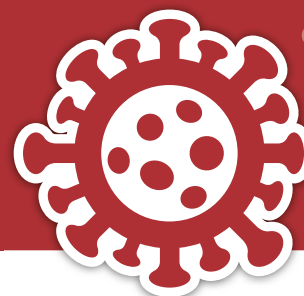


THE AIM: Change the word at the top of the ladder one letter at a time to make the word at the bottom.

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

DO NOT rearrange the order of the letters.

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



# CORONAVIRUS

Advice on how to combat Coronavirus (COVID-19) Supplied by GOV.UK

## THE ADVICE FOR ANYONE IN ANY SETTING IS TO FOLLOW THESE MAIN GUIDELINES.

The most common symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19) are recent onset of a new continuous cough and/or high temperature. If you have these symptoms, however mild, stay at home and do not leave your house for 7 days from when your symptoms started. You do not need to call NHS 111 to go into self-isolation. If your symptoms worsen during home isolation or are no better after 7 days, contact NHS 111 online. If you have no internet access, you should call NHS 111. For a medical emergency dial 999.

Wash your hands more often than usual, for 20 seconds using soap and hot water, particularly after coughing, sneezing and blowing your nose, or after being in public areas where other people are doing so. Use hand sanitiser if that's all you have access to.

To reduce the spread of germs when you cough or sneeze, cover your mouth and nose with a tissue, or your sleeve (not your hands) if you don't have a tissue, and throw the tissue away immediately. Then wash your hands or use a hand sanitising gel.

Clean and disinfect regularly touched objects and surfaces using your regular cleaning products to reduce the risk of passing the infection on to other people.

At the current time and based on our understanding of what is known of COVID-19 and other similar respiratory viruses, it is likely that older people and those with chronic medical conditions may be vulnerable to severe disease. As more information emerges, recommendations may change.

## PREVENTION:



wash hands often with soap



avoid touching your face



disinfect objects and surfaces



avoid close contact with people



stay home



Avoid contact with sick people

## TREATMENT:



no vaccine to prevent 2019-nCoV



no specific treatment for 2019-nCoV



drink plenty of liquids



take pain and fever medications



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