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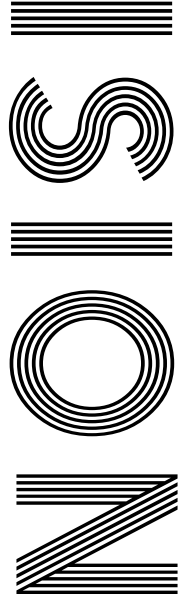
HOW TO  
UPCYCLE  
*your lampshade*

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HOROSCOPE  
CHANGED?

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*the Battle of Britain*

Andi  
PETERS

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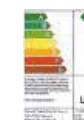
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# Editor's notes...



Nik Allen, Editor

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

It's fair to say we've all undergone a significant process of self-reflection over the past few months - we've probably altered

our views a little on ourselves and those around us - hopefully, overall, for the better.

Personally, during lockdown, I found it was a great time to hit the reset button and look at what I loved about my life and what I was grateful for, but also what I would like to change. Some of us fell back in love with fitness during lockdown, albeit running or our daily walks, some watched nostalgic TV and films from our childhood or younger years, others connected with hobbies or interests we may have let life get in the way of doing more frequently, such as drawing, writing or some other skill.

Human beings are reflective, sentimental, sometimes even soppy creatures; but through all the challenges we face - and we have confronted many this year - our true purpose, for our friends, family, for society and, mostly, for ourselves, is to keep looking forward, keep building, keep growing. That's how life works.

By all means, gaze over that postcard from a wet week in Brighton in 1998 - good, happy, probably simpler times. But remember, truly respecting the past means focusing on building your future, and right now that's something we all need to do.

Until next month, take care of yourself and each other.

*Nik*

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# THE KINGS of the castle

Celebrating 30 years together, Ant and Dec remain at the top table of British entertainment... which may come in handy for this year's *I'm A Celebrity... Get Me Out Of Here*.

From spotty lads in Ellesse jumpers, baggy jeans and Fila trainers skulking their way round the streets of Newcastle, Ant and Dec's rise to becoming the modern-day majesties of light entertainment has been unparalleled.

Now, 30 years after Anthony McPartlin and Declan Donnelly first met on the set of kids' BBC drama *Byker Grove* – a series based around a tatty youth club and the life events of its members – the duo are celebrating the three-decade milestone by swapping the Australian jungle for a couple of weeks bolted up in a haunted castle.

The coronavirus outbreak has made even the most basic travel arrangements complicated, and as for transporting a film crew and a selection of celebrities halfway around the world... forget it. So rather than give up entirely on a television experience that is one of the keystones of ITV's autumn output, the show's producers have kept things much closer to home, with Gwrych Castle in Wales providing the base for what will be a unique spin on the *I'm A Celebrity... Get Me Out Of Here* format.

With an experience that will be less bugs and more bumps in the night, the 200-year-old Conwy residence has a chequered history, one that its presenters are certain to work to their advantage in their own inimitable style.

The ghost of Countess of the Dundonald is said to prowl the castle ruins, with reports detailing the outline of an angry woman dressed in white. And during the Second World War, the castle housed 200 Jewish refugee children who had made it to Wales having fled the Nazis.

The much anticipated Bushtucker Trials will find themselves transformed this year, with the as yet unrevealed celebrities undertaking ghastly gothic, mind-bendingly medieval and ruggedly ruined challenges.

For Gwrych Castle, which has regularly been threatened with closure and was saved by the campaigning efforts of a 12-year-old boy back in 1997 when he wrote to then-Prime Minister Tony Blair, it is an incredible rebirth, and one that is hoped will protect its future.

As for what is to come for Britain's favourite presenting duo, anything is possible. Ant and Dec have ridden the waves of success for so long, the spotlight has become second nature. That means when controversy does arrive – notably the playing out of Ant's personal troubles over the past couple of years – the duo have stuck together in much the same way as they did when PJ and Duncan first buddied up way back in 1990.

"I think it's clear now we are going to be side by side until the day we die, like it or not," Declan commented recently. "People look at the shows and the awards, but what we have is friendship, respect and an affection that only comes between two best mates. We both feel very lucky."



# HORROR-scope

IF YOU'RE A SCORPIO, BAD NEWS COULD BE ON THE WAY, WITH A 13TH SIGN OF THE ZODIAC COMING INTO PLAY.

NASA's apparent 'discovery' of a 13th star sign has created furore in the astrology world... if you'll excuse the pun. From way back, 3,000 years ago, when the Babylonians created the zodiac chart, we have always recognised 12 star signs or constellations, representing the 12 months of the calendar.

In recent times – aided by the Twitterati wind-up merchants – a 13th sign has come to the fore: Ophiuchus, the serpent-bearer. Recognising this, with a proposed window of between November 29 and December 17, has meant true Scorpios now have a timeframe of just seven days, beginning on November 23.

Worse news is to follow, with the revelation that because constellations have shifted so much in the time since the Ancient Greeks first threw together a chart of the skies, the dates of all the other star signs have changed too, as follows:

**CAPRICORN:** January 20 – February 16

**AQUARIUS:** February 16 – March 11

**PISCES:** March 11 – April 18

**ARIES:** April 18 – May 13

**TAURUS:** May 13 – June 21

**GEMINI:** June 21 – July 20

**CANCER:** July 20 – August 10

**LEO:** August 10 – September 16

**VIRGO:** September 16 – October 30

**LIBRA:** October 30 – November 23

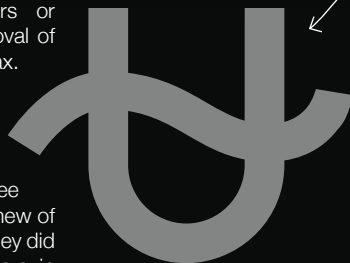
**SCORPIO:** November 23 – November 29

**OPHIUCHUS:** November 29 – December 17

**SAGITTARIUS:** December 17 – January 20

Yet before you rip up your posters or begin laser removal of that tattoo, relax. NASA's 'new discovery' is anything but – even Ancient Greeks from three millennia back knew of Ophiuchus, as they did another eight stars in the sky that could legitimately have been included on the zodiac. Simply, some appear much less prominently in the sky, so only the largest 12 were chosen.

And the shifting of dates? Well, astrology is a very personal thing, and whether we follow a star sign of what we once were or what we are now, it makes little difference – we are all invested in this existence, and no matter what star sign we are, none of us is getting out of here alive!



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HOW USING PEACEFUL PASTELS CAN BE SO GOOD FOR THE MIND

**W**e're all looking for elements of peace in our life – this year more than ever – but forget yoga, hypnosis and pan pipes; it turns out you can attain a heightened sense of calm simply by adding some sympathetic pastel shades to your home.

**BEAUTIFUL BLUE:** Blue offers us echoes of seascaped bliss and sumptuous skies, and provides a haven of calm and escape. Drop a shade of blue in with oranges and yellows to offer a perfect offset, or better still, mingle with whites and greys in throws, across patterns and on floors. There is no colour a pastel blue won't complement.

**GENEROUSLY GREEN:** Green represents freedom, the outdoors and natural harmony, and is the best colour to return your home to a peaceful, relieved, relaxed state of mind. Combined with white it can blow a gentle breeze through even the darkest of spaces.

**PERFECT PINK:** We've come a long way from lazily associating pinks and purples with girls' bedrooms – now pink is regarded as a versatile, seductive shade, and in pastel form limits the sometimes harsh undertones of reds and browns. Pastel pink offers tranquillity and feelings of flowery goodness.

**GRATEFUL GREY:** Contrary to what you might imagine about grey, this is a detailed, intelligent pastel shade that stimulates energy and ideas. For a work room or creative studio, grey can focus and free the mind without bogging it down with darker tones that subconsciously bring on thoughts of sleep and rest.

**MELLOW YELLOW** And finally to yellow – perhaps the least pastel-like of the selection, but a tone that offers warmth, safety, depth and a flourishing of life. For freshness and homeliness wrapped in one, yellow can work with almost any other colour in complement or contrast.





# SHOW TIME for your DIY

Gone are the days of cheap interior design shows produced on a shoestring budget – TV DIY these days is big business and even bigger impact.

### INTERIOR DESIGN MASTERS

Fearne Cotton is the perfect foil for a show that delves into the personal stories of the amateur designers featured, even if the end assessments can be brutal. The aim is to win a major design contract, and because of that the tasks are on the edgier side, from minimalism to brutalism to over-the-top floweriness.

### ABSTRACT: THE ART OF DESIGN

An intense watch that really delves into the elements of design and form, this Netflix series tours a number of salubrious destinations (from Soho House to Michelin-starred restaurants) in search of not just the art of design, but also how structure and form works to create something that fulfils a purpose, both in provision and comfort.

### AMAZING INTERIORS

From indoor roller coasters to secret bedrooms and cinemas in the basement, *Amazing Interiors* looks behind the door of supposedly ordinary homes to find inspiring spaces lurking.

### GRAND DESIGNS

Arguably the most popular design programme of the past decade, host Kevin McCloud MBE is the perfect master of ceremonies in overseeing renovations across a lengthy time period that often – though not always – go to plan.

### THE GREAT INTERIOR DESIGN CHALLENGE

While the producers of this show may have been short of a catchy title, they more than make up for it with a vast array of brilliant platforms on which contestant designers work their magic – from 17th-century cottages to seaside villas and Victorian terraces.

### TIDYING UP WITH MARIE KONDO

No matter what style guide you apply to your living space, without tidiness and a desire to remove the clutter, you'll quickly have something resembling chaos. Step in Marie Kondo, the queen of declutter, and a show that offers a bevy of brilliant tips for keeping your home in great shape.



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# Love YOUR

# LAMP SHADES

If lockdown has unleashed your inner craft fiend, you won't be able to wait to get stuck into the following ideas for transforming any uninspiring and unimaginative lampshades you have lying around the house. Be prepared to be amazed.

### FABULOUS FABRIC

One of the simplest ways to change a lampshade so that it matches the rest of a room's décor is by covering it with fabric. All you need to do is purchase enough fabric in your chosen colour or pattern or, if you are feeling particularly thrifty, you can use a selection of different scrap fabrics that you already have, and then glue it around your shade using an adhesive spray.



### WONDROUS WALLPAPER

If you have recently decorated one of the rooms in your home or added a feature wall and you have some wallpaper left over, instead of throwing it away, why not use it to upcycle a lampshade? In the same way that you can attach fabric, simply use adhesive spray or craft glue to stick the wallpaper around your shade.

### STUNNING STENCILS

For those who are feeling a bit more ambitious, you can transform a dull lampshade into a thing of beauty using just a stencil and a little paint. Simply purchase a stencil design from your local craft shop or make your own using plastic or vinyl and gently dab on your choice of paint.

### GORGEOUS GOLDEN LEAF

Looking for a decadent design? By applying gold leaf, either in a particular pattern using painter's tape or all over, you can create a luxurious and expensive-looking lampshade at a fraction of the cost.

**NB:** Make sure you let all of the above designs dry fully before reattaching your shade to the lamp.



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# HOW CLEAN is your kitchen?

Hand-washing and social distancing have been the buzzwords for 2020 so far, but forget about the enemy outside; it's the humble kitchen that apparently poses one of the greatest everyday threats in our fight against bugs, according to recent research.

### Sponges

The sponge is by far the go-to item for nuisance nasties. It draws in bugs and baddies like no other, and in the study commissioned by Currys PC World and undertaken at the University of Lincoln, scientists found that 35 per cent of kitchen sponges included faecal streptococci (FS) colonies. And if you think that sounds like something you may want to keep strictly in the lavatory... you'd be right. Found in the intestines of humans and animals, contamination can lead to symptoms of food poisoning, such as vomiting, diarrhoea and nausea.

### That sinking feeling

The study revealed that the pathogen *P. aeruginosa* was present in 100 per cent of sinks. Found in soil and vegetation, it sounds harmless enough, but can cause skin irritation, abscesses and wounds.

### This will floor you

And as for our trusty, lovingly maintained wooden, tiled, laminated or concreted flooring, our attention should perhaps be directed a little closer to some decent antiseptic mopping, with both *aeruginosa* and FS found in significant quantities on the floor.

Meanwhile, it appears it's time to debunk the five-second rule, because any contact with a surface will contaminate food. And as for our ovens, only 37 per cent of us clean our oven handles. But it's not all bad news: lead researcher Dr Hughes admitted that our kitchens are not as dirty as they might be. "The good news is surface levels of bacteria are usually well below the levels required for infection of healthy individuals, so are unlikely to lead to illness – unless coupled with a pre-existing health complaint, or if the person infected is immunocompromised."

Even so... who's for a takeaway?





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HOME & DIY

**W**hen German astronomer Johannes Kepler said, "Geometry is the archetype of the beauty of the world," the chances are he wasn't referring to that pink lampshade on your bedside table. And yet, where our inspiration from shapes in architecture and interiors is concerned, he might well have been.

That's because scientists believe that not only do shapes influence matter around them, but when humans look at a circle, a square, an octagon, a hexagon, a rhombus, a crescent or any other geometric form for that matter, they instantly receive energy from the brain. Here are some classic geometric forms that can inspire not only your home, but your mind as well.

HOW TO ADD  
GEOMETRIC  
SHAPES TO  
YOUR HOME



**TILES** – Perhaps the most obvious form, tiles provide lines, patterns and perspectives that the brain understands and loves, be they on the floor or on walls, highly decorated or plain.

**WALLPAPER** – While heavily patterned wallpaper designs had their heyday in the 1970s, there is still a range of subtle patterns that can really inspire a wall. These days, the most popular technique is to be brave and bold on a feature wall.

**WALL FRAMES** – The shape and form of the modern wall frame is almost as important as what's hung inside it, with a cluster of wooden or metal surrounds offering a feature that is as engaging, inspiring and unique as any wall.



**THROWS** – The shabby chic era really brought throws into their own, but a simple geometric pattern across a plain sofa or chair can offer a contrast in style that heightens the senses without complicating things.



**LAMPSHADES** – And finally back to Kepler's lampshade, where the poise and perfection of geometric lighting will complement a variety of living spaces, including kitchen and dining areas. During the day, the contemporary nature of a hanging or grounded lampshade can inspire, while at night when lit up, it takes on a whole new aura.





HOME & DIY

# SHRED IT or FILE IT?

## Documents: what to keep and what to shred

While moving so much of our lives online means the amount of paper we have to deal with is perhaps not as great as it once was, it's still very easy to get swamped by documents, forms, booklets and more.

Here's a simple guide to what you should be keeping and what can be satisfyingly put through the shredder:

- > **Home documents:** This includes everything from your car logbook (V5C) to building and contents insurance printouts, house deeds, mortgage statements, vehicle records and any rental agreements. These should be kept for as long as they are valid. Utility bills should be kept for a year.
- > **Personal documents:** Birth and marriage documents obviously sit high up on this list and should be kept forever; but consider as well life insurance, Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) certificates, medical records, driver's licence and pension details. These should be kept for as long as they are valid.
- > **Financial documents:** These include National Insurance cards, which should always be kept, to tax affairs and recent bank and credit card statements, even if you access these online. Financial documents should be accessible for seven years, but taking this online means your provider can store them rather than you.

For the most part you should now be able to shred anything else, but if you've something you're uncertain of, by all means hold on to it until your next sort-out.

The important thing is to keep hold of what's still relevant and rid yourself of what isn't. On that note, it's a good idea to keep some documents for a year after you dispose of the thing it relates to – for instance, a rented car – in case you need to check back for the purpose of a tax return, or similar.

And it's a good idea too to go back over all paperwork every now and again. Some personal effects that were important then may now be outdated, and keeping your documents organised and up to date is vital.



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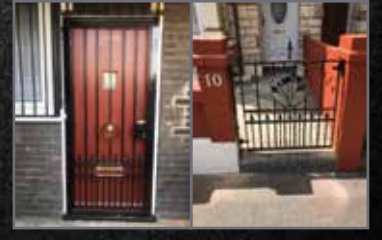
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# LOCAL NEWS

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LOCAL NEWS BRENTWOOD



## Town centre police duo celebrate a year on the job

Two Brentwood police officers are celebrating a year of keeping shoppers, visitors and businesses safe in the town centre.

PCs Gary Barnes and Michael Davey, of Essex Police's Brentwood Town Centre Team, reached their first anniversary in the job in early August.

The team, who are managed by sergeant Lauren Sharland, regularly attend Brentwood Business Partnership meetings and give out purse chains to help keep shoppers safe.

Gary was thanked recently by a woman he arrested in 2018 for theft offences.

The woman was sent to prison and, since being released, has not drunk alcohol for 25 months and now leads a football team in Kent.

Asked for their highlights over the past year, the team said: "Supporting a man and a woman who were

withdrawing cash for bogus gardeners in Nationwide. Following partnership work, the bank raised the alarm and Gary and Michael took both victims home and supported them.

"Quickly arresting three people for stealing several expensive phones from O2. Following an investigation by the officers, they received a total of 18 months in prison for various offences.

"Responding to reports that a man had fallen ill in Sainsbury's – the quick actions meant paramedics were in the best place possible to help him.

"Securing a four-year sentence against a 48-year-old burglar from London who targeted four businesses – two in Brentwood, one in Ingatestone and one in Loughton."

PCs Barnes and Davey are encouraging anyone to approach and engage with them.

## Students celebrate impressive A Level results

After an extraordinary year, Sixth Form students at Brentwood School received their A Level results.

19 of the students received all A\* and A grades, with four going on to Oxford and Cambridge universities and 59 receiving places at their first-choice university.

Headmaster Michael Bond commented: "I'm very

proud of the resilience and resolve of our Sixth Form students.

"I'm pleased to see so many gain their first choice university and wish them every success in the future."

This article is based on students' results before the government U-turn.



# Alex does the double

A Brentwood man with motor neurone disease (MND) completed a mammoth fundraising challenge by walking a double marathon.

Alex Gibson walked more than 50 miles from Brentwood to Bishop's Stortford to raise more than £14,000 for Challenging MND.

MND is a rapidly progressing neurological disease that affects the brain and the spinal cord.

Alex himself was diagnosed with MND in January 2018, but still continues to push himself to his limits.

His latest challenge, the double marathon, took place on July 31, and 16 people joined him for the 52.4-mile distance, which took 25 hours to complete.

Alex said: "This is a fantastic achievement. Thank you to everyone who was a part of this walk. I hope that it will be a memory we can savour for many years to come."

Andrew Cappaert, chief executive at Challenging MND, said: "Walking a double marathon in a single day is not for the faint-hearted, even without the double challenge of doing it with MND."

"But Alex always defies the odds – his name should be next to the definition of 'determination' in the dictionary. I'd like to thank everyone who took part in the event, supported us and donated. On to the next challenge."

To support Alex and donate towards his challenges, visit [uk.virginmoneygiving.com/AndrewCappaert1](http://uk.virginmoneygiving.com/AndrewCappaert1)

# Eddie Hearn builds unique boxing ring



Brentwood has become one of the most watched sporting locations in the world after promoter Eddie Hearn built a boxing ring for pay-per-view bouts.

He had the boxing ring and venue made in the garden of his Matchroom headquarters in Brentwood so fights could safely go ahead.

Known as Fight Camp, the venue is being used as a bubble so that fighters can compete safely amid health and safety concerns regarding the pandemic.

All boxers stay at a hotel nearby and travel back and forth between the Fight Camp and accommodation.

Hearn and Matchroom have taken the steps of building their own boxing camp as many venues across the world are closed because of the pandemic.

In the garden, flooring has been laid out on the lawn to provide stable grounding for those behind the scenes and television crews, a canopy has been put up for when it rains and the pristine gardens provide a unique backdrop.

Hearn, who used to attend Brentwood School, explained more about Fight Camp on talkSPORT.

He said: "You've heard of Madison Square Garden and this is the new garden."

"I just feel like when you are talking about a gladiatorial sport, like boxing, you need to create that moment, that energy, not just for the viewer at home but for the fighter as well."


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## High Street closure comes to an early end



Brentwood High Street's closure to cars has been scrapped after the council was inundated with feedback from the community.

In July, a section of Brentwood High Street was closed to most traffic to enable social distancing for people in the town centre.

At the same time, Essex County Council (ECC) and Brentwood Borough councillors set up a monitoring group.

The group has heard from a wide range of people during the closure period and recently agreed to lift it. Brentwood High Street was therefore fully reopened from August 7, once again allowing all traffic, including private vehicles, delivery vehicles, taxis and private-hire vehicles access to the entire High Street.

Barriers, parking bay closures and other temporary measures were also removed.

Councillor Chris Hossack, Brentwood Borough Council leader, said: "We were pleased to work with ECC on the measures introduced initially and we are pleased to be continuing to work with ECC on future safer, greener, healthier ideas and opportunities.

"Feedback and analysis made it clear that there are risks and opportunities with any closure of Brentwood High Street. It has allowed people to social distance well and the closure served that purpose for the time it was in place."

were seen in the area at the time.

Chief Inspector Darren Deex said: "We are investigating five reports in a short period time of objects being thrown at vehicles travelling along one of the country's busiest roads.

"Fortunately, no one was injured, but the actions of the people involved put motorists at serious risk of harm.

"I understand that some children, possibly in their early teens, were seen on the bridge.

"We are investigating these reports and we are looking to identify those involved. If you have information, please call us on 101 or visit [www.essex.police.uk](http://www.essex.police.uk)

"Alternatively, please call Crimestoppers anonymously on 0800 555 111."

## Schoolboy's formidable form continues

A Brentwood schoolboy is a step closer to realising his golfing dream after winning both the U16 and the U18 Essex Boys Championships.

Max Porteous, 14, who is Brentwood School golf captain, won both titles despite being several years younger than most of his competitors.

Max was in sizzling form, taking both competitions, held at Burnham-on-Crouch Golf Club, by storm.

Proud mum, Liz Porteous, said: "Max started playing golf at the age of four while we were on a family holiday at a golf resort in Portugal. He just picked up a club and discovered he had a natural swing.

"He was also encouraged by watching his dad, John, play golf – although not to the same standard."

He was the only competitor to shoot under par over the 36 holes, taking the titles by four shots.

Chris Long, Brentwood School's head of golf, said: "This is a remarkable achievement by somebody so young, and is the first time the competition has been won by a pupil from Brentwood."



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## Police investigate after objects thrown at vehicles

Police are investigating reports that objects were thrown from a bridge at vehicles travelling along the M25.

Officers received five reports between 11.15pm on Monday, August 17 and 9.55pm on Tuesday, August 18, after stones had struck vehicles travelling between junctions 27 and 28 near Brentwood.

Officers believe they were thrown from a bridge. Two of the vehicles involved were HGVs, and all the drivers reported damage to their windscreens.

Police are now hunting for a group of teenagers who

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Alex Burghart MP for Brentwood and Ongar



LOCAL NEWS BRENTWOOD



Photo credit: Ian Davidson

As this month's **VISION** Brentwood Ongar magazine is delivered across Brentwood, there will be a hint of autumn in the air and our children will be returning to school, many of them for the first time since schools were closed in March for the coronavirus lockdown.

As the start of term approaches, now is the time for families to think about the practicalities of returning to school in September – safe in the knowledge that schools are prepared for their children's return.

Some children were in school during the lockdown – mostly those whose parents are key workers, plus Reception, Year 1 and Year 6 once lockdown was lifted a little. For the others, this is the first time they have entered the school buildings in almost six months.

I wrote to every headteacher at every school in Brentwood and Ongar during the lockdown to offer my support as they coped with the huge responsibilities and demands of setting up online teaching, checking in with their pupils and making sure vulnerable children were being supported effectively. I can tell they have done an amazing job – and are certainly even more appreciated by the parents who have had to homeschool their own children for the duration.

There is no doubt all these children, be they the youngest infants or next year's GCSE and A Level students, have missed a huge part of their education

and, indeed, childhood. So many milestones and key events have been missed, from last days at school and proms to school plays, sports and playing with friends.

There is some concern from parents, teachers and young people alike, but the government has a #backtoschoolsafely campaign to reassure parents and students that schools and colleges are safe and ready for their return in September. This aims to help reassure parents that school is the best place for their child to be, that schools and colleges are ready and waiting to get back to teaching, and that they have the right protective measures in place. The campaign will also help parents plan the school run to avoid public transport where possible.

I am all too aware we will be seeing the effects of this six-month period of missed education for many years to come, but it is time for the children to return. All children deserve to be back in school as it is the best place for both their education and their well-being. Having played their part to help combat this virus by staying at home, now is the time they should get back to the education they deserve. I have no doubt the teachers and support staff are ready to meet this challenge, and I am here to support them in whatever they need.

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## Grace's killer appeals against his sentence



A man who murdered a former Brentwood schoolgirl has begun an appeal against his murder conviction and sentence.

Grace Millane, a former Ursuline Convent High School pupil, was murdered in New Zealand last year by a 28-year-old man, who can't be named for legal reasons.

He was sentenced at Auckland High Court on February 20 to life in prison with a minimum of 17 years.

On August 6 he began his appeal, which is based on the trial process as well as the length of the minimum non-parole period.

When he was found guilty, the court heard that Grace's body was found in a hotel, but the man found guilty of her murder claimed throughout that she had died accidentally, after the pair engaged in "rough sex that went too far".

New Zealand media outlet, Stuff, said the appeal was based on how much emphasis was placed on the element of consent, expert evidence, probability and the negative evidence given by other women about his character.

The killer's defence, according to the *New Zealand Herald*, claimed that the jury should have had more direction around consent issues and "more balanced" direction on the expert evidence, and said the sentence was "manifestly unjust".

Crown prosecutors said the appeal grounds around consent instructions were "flimsy" and the sentence was not manifestly excessive, the *Herald* reported.

The appeal court has reserved its decision to a later date.

## Film-makers make big-screen debut at festival

A movie shot by a Brentwood film-making group has had its big-screen debut at a socially distanced film festival.

*Little Love*, the latest short film from award-winning local film-making group Brentwood Movie Makers, was shown at the Romford Film Festival, which ran from August 13 to 19.

The film, which was shot in Havering and in Essex, picked up a nomination in the Best Local Film category.

The 16-minute film tells the uplifting story of an army veteran and an asylum seeker, both damaged by the horrors of war and struggling to find their place in society, whose paths collide in unexpected ways.

The short film has already received critical acclaim from judges for the forthcoming British International Amateur Film Festival, where it secured the Cavendish Prize, an accolade bestowed on a four-star film considered worthy of special merit.

Writer and producer Michelle Devadas said: "It's a gritty, redemptive story, with the importance of community at its core, a theme very relevant to the world in which we now find ourselves."

## Squad takes shape for the new season

Brentwood Town Football Club are continuing their preparations for the new season after signing a host of players.

All areas of the team have been strengthened as they work towards a likely start date for the season of September 12.

In total, eight players were signed ahead of the club's first pre-season game on August 15.

They include Jake Gould, Adam Vyse, Rob Harvey, Sam Bantick, James Love, Joe Heath and Matt Cripps.

One of the stand-out signings is Rob Swaine, who joins Brentwood having played for National League South club Welling United last season.

Rob said: "I am really looking forward to coming in and hopefully being a catalyst in helping the club achieve its goals. I have travelled for my football in recent seasons and, with my growing personal training business and other business interests requiring more of my time, I feel I need to be playing more locally once again."



Photo credit: Nicky Hayes Photography



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# LOCAL NEWS

*from your neighbourhood*



## Plans to reinvigorate town centre fast tracked

Plans to reinvigorate Ongar town centre and its leisure centre have been fast tracked by the council in a bid to boost the local economy following the pandemic.

Epping Forest District Council (EFDC) has voted through plans to start building projects earlier than originally planned.

The projects will be delivered by Qualis, which is the council's own development company, with five projects identified for fast tracking.

They include the £60million improvements to the town centre and leisure centre, with both now expected to be delivered two years early with a target date of March 2024.

It's hoped that by bringing the projects forward, it will boost the local economy as the council counts the

estimated £8million the pandemic has cost it.

The district's unemployment also rose by 343 per cent between January and May. It now stands at 4,985 (6.1 per cent of the workforce).

Car parking revenue is down 79 per cent from last year, equating to losses of £318,737, and the closure of leisure centres during lockdown, including at Ongar, has cost the council approximately £717,000.

Councillor John Philip, finance and economic development portfolio holder, said: "We do not have enough money to do everything that we would like to do. We may not even have sufficient amounts to do everything we ought to do.

"So we need to focus our efforts particularly on those things that we think will give the most benefit to our district and to our residents."

## Man airlifted to hospital following collision

Essex Police are appealing for information following a collision in Ongar.

They were called to Moreton Road at around 4.10pm on Thursday, August 20, after reports that a blue Ford Galaxy had collided with a tree. The man driving the car

was airlifted to hospital in a life-threatening condition.

Anyone with information or dashcam footage is asked to call Chigwell Roads Policing Unit on 101 quoting incident 861 of 20/08 or visit [www.essex.police.uk](http://www.essex.police.uk)



## Ongar Town FC prepare for new season



Ongar Town FC are now preparing for the new season after the league confirmed it will start on September 5.

Ongar were denied a historic season last term as their march towards league and cup glory was curtailed by the pandemic.

They were unbeaten in the Prokit Essex Olympian League (EOFL) and in the BBC Essex Premier Cup semi-final thanks to their free-flowing attractive style, which has

brought praise from far and wide.

Now they are set to once again start an EOFL campaign, where they will look to pick up where they left off.

They kick off the campaign with a trip to Laindon Orient in the Senior League Cup before home league games on each following Saturday in September.

An EOFL spokesperson said: "Even though we are still awaiting some information, there is no reason for us to delay the preparation of September fixtures.

"Some of our clubs have still to confirm their pitch availability and they are urged to confirm their dates to the league as a matter of urgency. There may, however, be fixture changes if this information is not available when the fixtures are initially produced."

## Firefighters act fast to tackle field fire

Three fire crews were called to action after a huge fire was reported in a field in Ongar on July 31.

On arrival at the incident at Hastingwood Road, crews, who were from Harlow and Epping, discovered that 30 acres of stubble, left over from harvesting a 63-acre field, was on fire.

Crews then worked with a farmer to create a fire break, where the farmer turned over soil to stop the fire spreading to a neighbouring field of crops, and were able to extinguish the fire by 11am – just over an hour after it was reported.

The cause of the fire is unknown, but crews believe it had spread from a nearby road.

Steve Harrison, watch manager for Essex Fire and Rescue, said: "The farmer turned up at the same time we did and offered to make a fire break. It was a really big help and it would have been much harder for us to extinguish the fire without his help.

"Please ensure all cigarettes are properly extinguished and do not leave glass bottles in direct sunlight in this heat. We believe this fire started from the road and it spread very quickly on this hot and windy day."

## Joy as railway reopens its doors to visitors

The popular Epping Ongar Railway (EOR) welcomed its first passengers after the pandemic on August 1 after months of hard work by volunteers.

The heritage railway was forced to close its doors after the coronavirus outbreak, but over the months it was closed, volunteers prepared it to ensure appropriate social distancing measures were in place throughout the facilities.

Robert Good, from the EOR Volunteer Society, said: "We were very pleased to welcome customers back to the railway and initial passenger numbers were just right for us to thoroughly test all our new procedures. A big thank you to all those who were able to attend.

"We introduced a new timetable, with services running from North Weald to Ongar and then non-stop into Epping Forest, where we came to a stand approximately 200 metres from our boundary with the London Underground, before reversing to North Weald and then returning once more to Ongar.

"Initially, the service was provided by our Class 117 Diesel Multiple Unit, paired with a Class 121 making up a two-car unit. If, as expected, our passenger numbers continue to grow, we will offer more diesel and steam-hauled services, including dining trains, in the near future."

Visit [www.eorailway.co.uk](http://www.eorailway.co.uk) for details of the current services.



Photo credit: Chris Kennedy



LOCAL NEWS ONGAR



# Mother celebrates the miracle of babies with new book

A mother from Ongar who conceived her baby through IVF has created a story to allow other families to celebrate the many different ways babies arrive into the world.

Laura Gallagher decided to write *Robo-Babies* after the birth of her son Rafe from just one viable embryo.

The story for preschool children introduces a variety of robot families and their babies, of all shapes and sizes, and explains the different ways families can be formed as well as the range of emotions parents can feel in relation to starting a family.

Laura said: "I never lost hope that one day I would become a mother but never imagined, when I was a little girl, that having a family would not be an easy road. Having gone through IVF myself, I became more

aware of the many journeys parents take to complete their families.

"I felt this was an important book to write for children, so they can begin to understand the subject in a way that focuses on the love, determination and strength of all grown-ups who wish to become parents, and emphasises that all children are special."

*Robo-Babies* was created in consultation with a focus group of 50 families who have experienced fertility issues, IVF, surrogacy, adoption or donation to ensure an accurate and sensitive representation of all family types.

Laura also hopes the book will help to break the taboos around fertility issues.

## Headteacher hails students' GCSE results



Students and staff at The Ongar Academy were celebrating last month after this year's GCSE results were published.

Executive headteacher Allan Osborne said: "We can celebrate in our own community. We must show how proud we are of our Year 11s.

"The students have done outstandingly well.

"We had so many students who scored straight 9s and 8s and 7s and 6s and 5s. We are so proud of them. However, Ongar is much more than that. The fact that 100 per cent of students achieved a grade that allowed them to access the next stage of their careers is what matters."

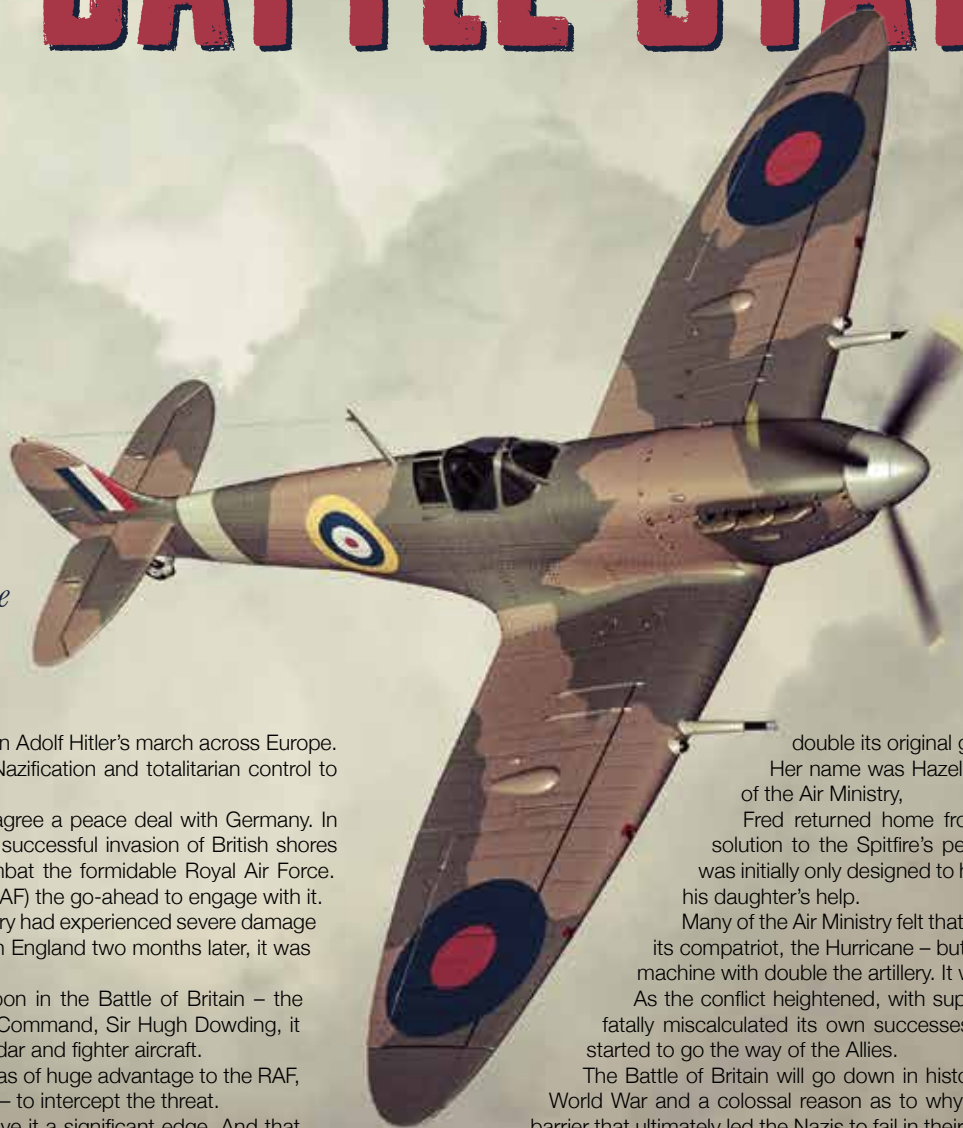
The Ongar Academy opened in 2015 and Mr Osborne paid tribute to parents and governors who have supported the school.

He said: "We must celebrate to honour those parents who took a chance with us back in 2015 and those governors and parents who worked tirelessly to bring a school back to its community. Now it's not just a school, but an academic, artistic and sporting place of excellence."

Top performers were Leyla B, Kassie B, Isobel J, Oscar F, Oscar S, Emily W and Kirsty N who amassed 35 Grade 9s among them. Harrington K showed most progress.



# BATTLE STATIONS



*This year marks eight decades since one of the most important British victories during the Second World War: the Battle of Britain.*

It's June 1940 and France has been quickly defeated by Germany in Adolf Hitler's march across Europe. His aim: to bring Gleichschaltung (coordination), the process of Nazification and totalitarian control to the continent.

Hitler was expecting the British to also fall into line and to try to agree a peace deal with Germany. In the first instance, he knew that to have any chance of setting up a successful invasion of British shores (which was codenamed Operation Sealion), he would need to combat the formidable Royal Air Force. Subsequently, he gave the Luftwaffe (the German equivalent of the RAF) the go-ahead to engage with it.

Even though the German occupation of France was rapid, the country had experienced severe damage to its air fleet; yet when asked to go to battle in the skies of Southern England two months later, it was ready.

However, the Luftwaffe hadn't reckoned on Britain's secret weapon in the Battle of Britain – the Dowding System. Named after Commander in Chief of the Fighter Command, Sir Hugh Dowding, it was a remarkable network that brought together ground defence, radar and fighter aircraft.

Knowing where and when the Luftwaffe was on its way to Britain was of huge advantage to the RAF, whereby it could then scramble fighters quickly – notably the Spitfire – to intercept the threat.

However, in truth, it was in the way the Spitfire was armed that gave it a significant edge. And that was thanks to a young mathematician, whose brilliant calculations meant it could leave the ground with

double its original gun capacity.

Her name was Hazel Hill, and she was the daughter of Fred, who was part of the Air Ministry,

Fred returned home from work one day and asked for help in providing a solution to the Spitfire's perceived lack of firepower. The iconic British warplane was initially only designed to have four guns on it; he felt it could be more but needed his daughter's help.

Many of the Air Ministry felt that eight guns would be too heavy for the Spitfire – and for its compatriot, the Hurricane – but Fred and his daughter Hazel found a way to equip the machine with double the artillery. It was a significant advancement, and it worked.

As the conflict heightened, with support from Commonwealth pilots, and as the Luftwaffe fatally miscalculated its own successes, a three-month-long skirmish in the skies eventually started to go the way of the Allies.

The Battle of Britain will go down in history as one of the most important parts of the Second World War and a colossal reason as to why Germany was unable to seize Great Britain. It was a barrier that ultimately led the Nazis to fail in their attempt to take control of Europe, and it preserved the freedom that we acknowledge with gratitude and humility today.



# PUZZLES & TRIVIA

PUZZLES

Answers can be found on the Contents Page 4

- ▶ ANTLIA
- ▶ AQUILA
- ▶ BOOTES
- ▶ CARINA
- ▶ CASSIOPEIA
- ▶ CENTAURUS
- ▶ COLUMBA
- ▶ CORVUS
- ▶ DELPHINUS
- ▶ ERIDANUS
- ▶ HERCULES
- ▶ HYDRUS
- ▶ LEO MINOR
- ▶ MENSA
- ▶ PEGASUS
- ▶ PHOENIX
- ▶ SAGITTA
- ▶ SCULPTOR
- ▶ SERPENS
- ▶ TUCANA

Y	T	R	S	B	S	U	N	A	D	I	R	E	A	O
X	E	U	A	U	S	S	U	S	A	G	E	P	I	W
S	T	S	A	B	N	C	O	L	U	M	B	A	E	S
N	Q	E	G	I	C	I	U	A	Z	E	I	L	P	B
R	H	R	R	S	E	S	H	L	M	P	U	U	O	V
A	U	P	E	S	N	S	Q	P	P	E	Z	C	I	C
N	J	E	Y	R	T	E	P	D	L	T	N	R	S	O
A	I	N	B	S	A	L	A	X	A	E	O	S	S	R
C	O	S	O	I	U	U	H	Q	I	I	D	R	A	V
U	K	A	O	V	R	C	T	Y	U	N	L	T	C	U
T	S	N	T	R	U	R	I	S	D	I	E	T	A	S
R	P	I	E	K	S	E	R	K	H	R	L	O	N	T
A	F	R	S	J	U	H	R	A	V	E	U	A	H	A
O	A	A	K	R	O	N	I	M	O	E	L	S	R	P
R	H	C	A	T	T	I	G	A	S	E	L	A	Z	H

## DID YOU KNOW?

- ▶ Wall-E was named after Walter Elias Disney
- ▶ Disney animators often hide classic characters in scenes of their films
- ▶ There is a tunnel system in Disney World so characters aren't seen in the 'wrong' lands
- ▶ Dumbo is the only lead character in a film who doesn't speak – he only makes a few noises
- ▶ Disney World in Orlando is around the same size as San Francisco
- ▶ The original *The Jungle Book* was the last film to be overseen by Walt Disney before his death in 1966
- ▶ The first animated character to receive a star on the Walk of Fame was Mickey Mouse
- ▶ Mickey Mouse ears are one of the most popular souvenirs bought from Disneyland

## WORD LADDER

PREP
WORK

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

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

DO NOT rearrange the order of the letters.

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



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PETS

# Captain S L O W



Low maintenance, cute, curious and asleep for half the year, a pet tortoise is both intriguing and easy to cater for, which is why this crafty crawler is coming back into fashion.

For those of us of a certain age, tortoises were once all the rage. Right up there with rabbits, guinea pigs and hamsters, these sluggish, shelled reptiles were extremely popular in gardens all across the UK.

Their popularity waned around the turn of the millennium when regulations surrounding their arrival in the UK started to kick in. Too many weren't surviving our frosty winters and their importation – at its peak, 150,000 of them each year – was said to be cruel.

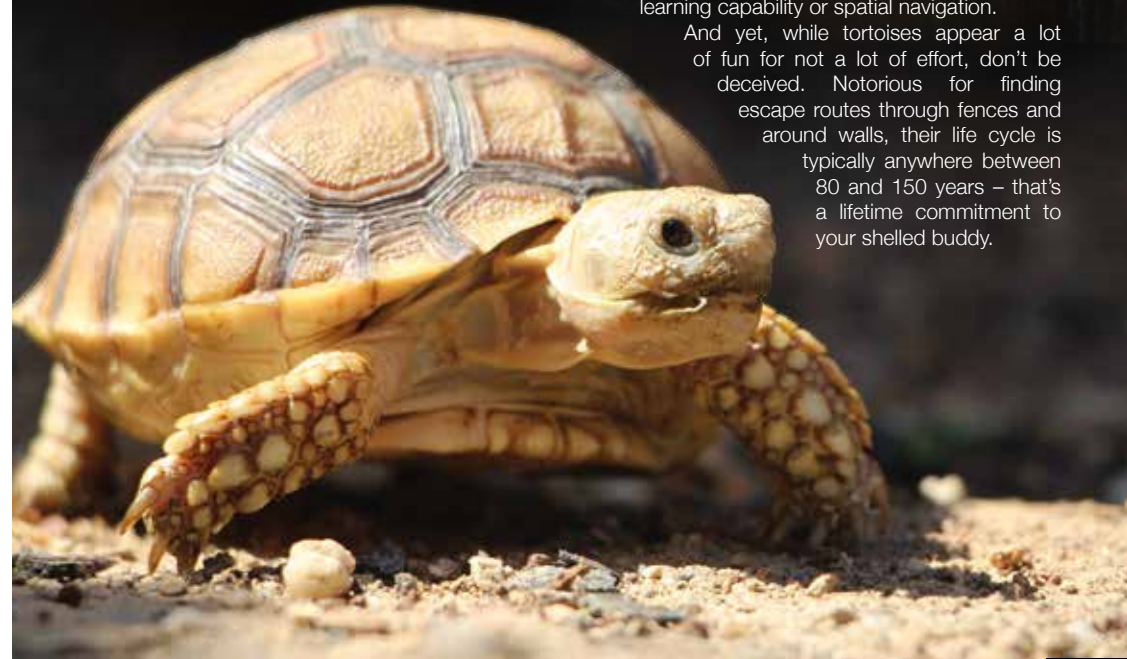
And yet, owning a tortoise bred in captivity in the UK is still perfectly legal. While you may need to 'shell out' (sorry) anything between £50 and £500

for one of these incredible creatures who originate from the Americas and Africa, people find their laid-back, plodding attitude to life as inspiring as it is humorous.

They will generally eat from your garden, with their diet also featuring the likes of cucumber, carrots, lettuce, fruit and flowers; and can be safely tucked up in a hutch overnight, content by themselves or alongside a life partner.

Resilient and tough, curious and playful, cats soon get bored of them, though some breeds of dog are known to pester them and can damage their shells. And you'll struggle to get too much emotion from these garden dwellers – their lack of a hippocampus means tortoises have little emotion, memory, learning capability or spatial navigation.

And yet, while tortoises appear a lot of fun for not a lot of effort, don't be deceived. Notorious for finding escape routes through fences and around walls, their life cycle is typically anywhere between 80 and 150 years – that's a lifetime commitment to your shelled buddy.



# HANDY ANDI

*The Peter Pan of daytime TV and a career both in and out of the spotlight*

If you're of a certain demographic, you've undoubtedly seen the Twitter posts, Facebook pictures and Instagram uploads detailing the so-called 'golden era' of kids' TV, when terrestrial television was a metaphorical playground for some of the biggest stars of our time.

From the basics of *Blue Peter* and *Grange Hill* in the 1970s through to big-budget kid-themed quiz shows and youth soaps, the presenters were our link between a mind-boggling array of British brilliance that has since gone by the wayside in favour of American imports.

To consider that Andi Peters was at the centre of such an era is remarkable, for two reasons. First, he's still on our screens today, most recently covering for Lorraine Kelly on her eponymous weekday morning chat show. Second, there's the small point that Andi barely looks any older than the bunch of Generation X youngsters currently at the forefront of youth entertainment.

Chelsea-born presenter, journalist and actor is 50. That makes him less Andi Peters and more Peter Pan, though securing both longevity and relevance is no pantomime in the current era where TV producers are even more cut-throat than Captain Hook.

Peters' ability to survive and, indeed, flourish has as much to do with his proficiency behind the camera as in front of it. He started out in the famous CBBC broom cupboard (where he succeeded the likes of Andy Crane and Philip Schofield), and despite retaining presenting duties alongside Emma Forbes in the hugely successful *Live & Kicking*, his skill as commissioning editor, producer and versatile creative is ultimately what has kept him in such high demand.

Always affable and famously clean-living, from continued BBC work with *The O-Zone* and *Top of the Pops* to *The Noise* (ITV), *T4* and *Shipwrecked* (Channel 4), diversity and desire to keep adapting have always been at the forefront for Peters.

And discovering Dermot O'Leary, who introduced him to the world of adult programming (*Dancing on Ice*, *Ant & Dec's Saturday Night Takeaway*), proved a joint enterprise that has garnered more success.

"At the heart of it I am just someone in love with TV," he says. "To bring so much joy, entertainment and fun into people's front rooms has always been a pleasure, and to this day I still get the same thrill at being broadcast live on air that I did all those years ago.

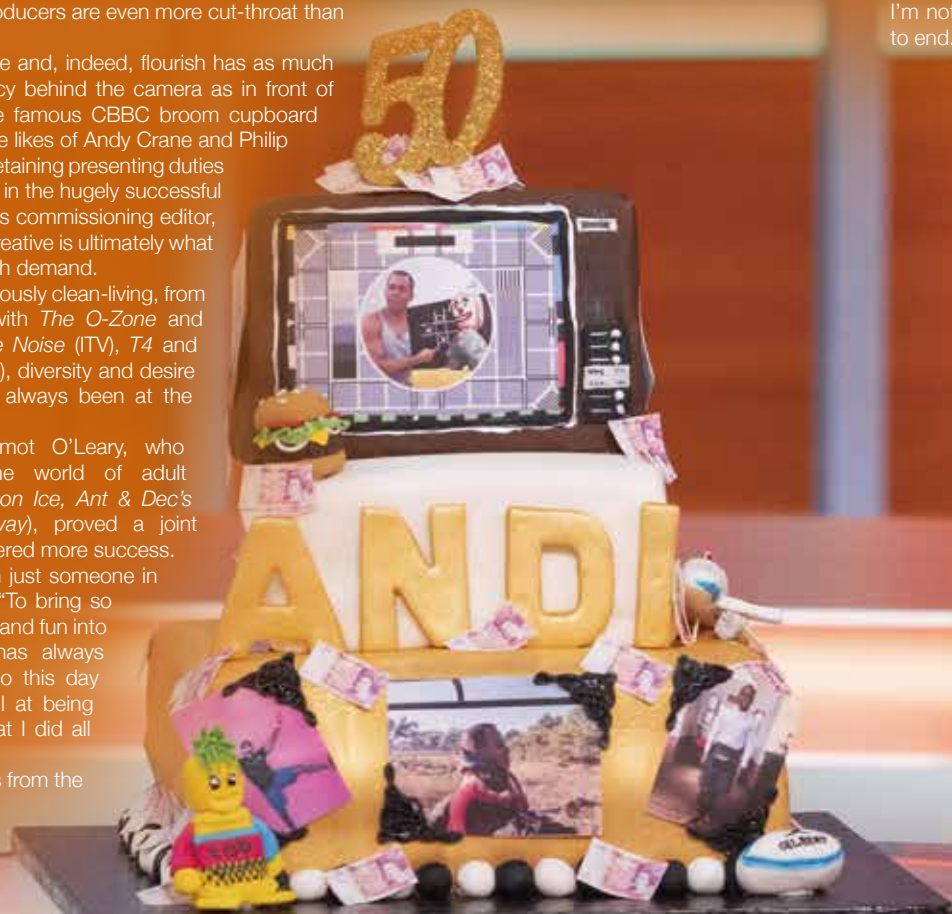
"I have had odd breaks from the cut and thrust of it,

but it is always something I know I will come back to, and of course I count myself very lucky to have been able to sample this from so many different sides."

Being the first man to stand in for Lorraine for more than a decade proves Peters' relevance and ability is still as strong at 50 as it was when he started out on radio way back in the 1980s, on the advice of Schofield.

"If the work keeps coming, I'll keep doing it," he says.

"It's a dream come true, and even at 50 I'm not ready for it to end."







# Aster

SEPTEMBER BIRTH FLOWER OF THE MONTH

If you were born in September, your birth flower is one of the most colourful flowers of autumn: the aster. Part of the daisy family, this wild flower is known for its tiny flowerheads and long petals. Loved by pollinators, asters are ideal for growing in mixed borders around your garden.

### WHAT DO ASTERS SYMBOLISE?

Asters come in a variety of vibrant colours and each one carries a different meaning:

- Purple asters, the most popular colour, symbolise wisdom and royalty.
- White asters represent purity and innocence, as well as new beginnings.
- Red asters can be used to convey undying devotion.
- Pink asters symbolise sensitivity and love.

### WHAT DOES THIS BIRTH FLOWER SAY ABOUT YOU?

If your birth flower is the aster, you feel most at home on the stage and will embrace any opportunity to entertain others. You are an

optimist and are devoted to living life to the full. You are also predisposed to good luck.

### HOW DO YOU GROW ASTERS IN YOUR GARDEN?

Asters offer great beauty with little work and are therefore ideal for less-experienced growers. You can either choose to plant them from seed in spring or purchase a potted plant later in the year.

Plant in full to partial sun in loamy, well-drained soil and keep new plants moist until they stop blooming.

### WHAT ARE THE MOST COMMON ASTER PESTS AND DISEASES?

Asters attract aphids, spider mites, whiteflies and leafhoppers, all of which can be kept under control with the use of pesticides. They are also prone to stem rot, a fungus that can begin at the start of the germination process. Prevent this by not overwatering and ensuring the soil is well drained.



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WASTE NOT.

# WATER BUTT



GARDENING

If you are looking for something useful to do in the garden this month then look no further than the installation of your very own water butt. Did you know that almost 100,000 litres of rainwater falls on our roofs each year in the UK and literally just goes down the drain?

### WHY INSTALL A WATER BUTT?

If every home were to install a water butt in their garden, the UK would save an estimated 30,000 million litres of water each summer. That's enough to fill 12 Olympic swimming pools. Therefore, if a hosepipe ban were to come into effect next year, you would have more than enough clean water to care for your plants and fill a paddling pool or two. Plus, you could save on your water bills.

### HOW TO CHOOSE A WATER BUTT FOR YOUR GARDEN

Simply head to your nearest garden centre or local DIY store for a wide range of water butts, with options to suit all budgets. If you have a small garden, choose a slim, square-edged design that can sit flush against a wall. For those with more space, the bigger the better. You should also purchase a diverter kit.

### HOW TO INSTALL YOUR WATER BUTT

- Choose a suitable location next to a drainpipe.
- Always install a water butt on a firm and flat surface that is strong enough to hold its weight when full.
- Consider investing in a stand so that you can fill your watering can from the tap at the bottom of the butt with ease.
- Follow the instructions on the diverter kit – this will involve cutting through your chosen drainpipe with a hacksaw.
- Cover your water butt with a lid to prevent insects from flying in and to stop children falling in.
- Wait for the rain to fall.





The battle between gardener and slugs has never been so ferocious, but getting things back in your favour may not be as difficult as you think if you follow these handy tips.

**Objects of desire**  
Slugs love to slither under pots, planks and other objects left lying around. If those bricks serve no purpose, remove them from your garden, otherwise all you're providing is a perfect hiding spot for this gastropod mollusc who will nibble away at your finest crops, herbs and flowers.

**Grass borders**  
Slugs love to conceal themselves in grass. The moisture keeps them happy and the protection of long blades means they can keep themselves hidden until darkness falls, when they'll venture out and demolish your prized produce. Keep your grass short and you take away their hiding place.

**Bramble ramblers**  
A good way to keep slugs away is to build up

bramble borders to your garden. Spiky canes will also work as a barrier to keep these slimy invaders away – they'll take one look at those sharp thorns and unwelcoming lengths of wood and head straight for next door's garden.

**If slugs are already in your garden**  
These tips will be a bit late in the day. In that case, here are a couple of handy tricks to rid yourself of guests who have already taken up residence.

**Back to those objects of desire**  
Use those planks and pots to your benefit by propping them up so slugs crawl underneath – you've created your very own slug trap. Now, regularly, scrape the slugs from the underside and deposit them well away from your garden.

**Night-time nasties**  
For three or four nights in a row, venture out into your garden with a torch, a shovel and a bucket and remove as many unwelcome guests as you can find. You'll find your slug population quickly diminishes.



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# Bangs

ON TREND



BEAUTY

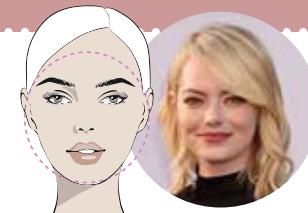
The flexible and fabulous fringe rarely goes out of fashion. Instead, it adapts to the season at hand and offers a simple yet stylish way to update your look.

However, to get it right and avoid the common pitfalls of bad bangs, you need to choose the right fringe for your face shape.

## THE SIDE FRINGE

### Best for round face shapes

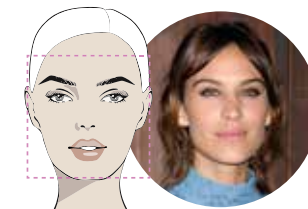
Popular with the likes of Mila Kunis, Emma Stone and Renée Zellweger, the side fringe is incredibly flattering for those with more round faces. Opt for a feathered fringe to give your face a more slender look and to draw attention to your eyes and mouth.



## THE A-SHAPED FRINGE

### Best for square and oblong faces

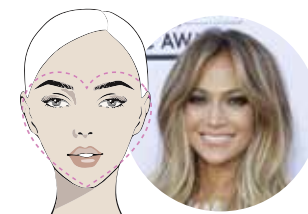
This face shape tends to be wider at the cheeks and more angular around the jawline. A soft A-shaped fringe can help soften your features and switch the focus to your eyes.



## THE CURTAIN FRINGE

### Best for heart-shaped faces

A long side fringe, aka the curtain fringe, is ideal for those with a heart face shape as this style will help widen out a narrow chin and highlight both your cheekbones and jawline. Ask for a feathered look to perfectly balance softness and structure.



## THE FULL BLUNT FRINGE

### Best for those with a small forehead

You may think that having a small forehead means you cannot pull off a fringe, but this is simply not true. A full and blunt fringe will instantly add length to your face and broaden your forehead. This style suits those with poker-straight hair better than those with waves.



## THE FULL CHOPPY FRINGE

### Best for oval face shapes

With this face shape you want a full fringe that will cover your forehead but not one that will overpower your delicate features. Adding chopiness at the ends will create a softer and more textured feel.

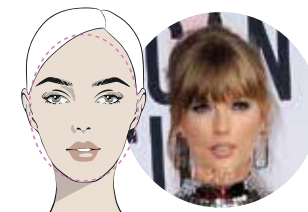


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# Make-up studio & body sculpturing clinic



Amy-Lucy

## Hello Vision readers

I am Amy-Lucy, I own Amy-Lucy Studio which is a home based make-up & body sculpturing clinic for women and men based in Brentwood.

## Make-up

I decided to become a make-up artist due to my love for make-up and always receiving compliments on my own make-up looks.

With some kind words from my friend, I was encouraged to train at a professional level.

From the moment I attended my first course I knew I had made the right decision. I furthered my education in make-up and went on to do a PLouise Make-up Academy course, learning all the latest techniques and using all the latest products on the market. I was in my element.

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KIDS



# NIGHT SQUATTERS

How to keep children in their own rooms – and out of your bed – at night

When your darling daughter or darling son is able to sleep in something that doesn't come with the design feature of prison-like bars as would a cot, it's a monumental moment – your little one's ascent into childhood now means they have their own bed.

Sadly, as many parents have discovered, the lack of those confines means it's effortlessly easy for your young one to embark on night-time expeditions into your bed, something that benefits the sleep patterns of no one.

Here are some tips for ensuring your sneaky non-sleeper stays put:

### Routine

As ever, a solid, settled night-time routine is essential. A set schedule and timing (dinner followed by bath followed by story, etc) will enhance and prolong sleep, as will avoiding 'over-napping' during the day.

### Light and dark

In these brighter, lighter mornings, it's imperative to

have a good blackout blind – there's nothing that lures a child out of bed more than the early rising of the sun... even if that's at 5am!

On the flipside, keep a subtle nightlight nearby. Fear of the dark will always get little ones heading for reassurance and comfort... and big ones too.

### Sound planning

Consider as well soundproofing and ensuring others in the home keep their nocturnal manoeuvres to a minimum, from loud late-night games to simple stuff like not flushing noisy toilets.

### Encouragement

At the age your youngster gets his or her first proper bed, you'll already be working on the greatest sleep stimulator of them all – words. Reaffirming that 'big kids' sleep in their own beds, and stay there, and perhaps a gentle reminder that sleeping in one means not having to go back into a cot, can get your precious cargo journeying off on to a dreamy voyage... speaking of which, you may want to grab a few hours yourself.



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TECHNOLOGY

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The man behind the idea was Sir Terry Leahy. A Liverpoolian who started on the shop floor, literally, he had risen to CEO level and was already well on the way to rejuvenating Tesco's fortunes; but his adoption of the Clubcard took the supermarket chain from a top three UK retailer (in terms of profit) to a top three global entity.

The introduction of the Clubcard drove both him and the supermarket on to unparalleled heights – the most efficient method ever for analysing consumer spending behaviour. It also sparked ferocious loyalty, and enabled Tesco to

extend into sectors it had never before touched – from tech to travel to insurance – with a certainty of success brought about from truly knowing who their customers were and how they would respond to products and offers.

These days, 17 million of us have a Tesco Clubcard – that's more than one-third of the adult population in the UK. Relunched in 2009 and again last year with Clubcard Plus – which promised to save the average large family £400 a year on their shopping bill – our adoption of the technology has now become part of our daily routine.

Numerous other brands have followed suit and enjoyed the rewards over the past quarter of a century, yet none can boast a loyalty scheme that has had such a profound effect on an already successful business.



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# Weight WATCHERS

**The dream foods that burn more calories than they provide**

It seems perverse that the eating of food and quaffing of drink could actually lead you to lose weight, but this is the reality of 'Negative-Calorie' foods, even if their existence has been called into question by some.

Certainly, for dieters or those simply looking to watch their figure, the era of feeling guilty about burgers, sweets, biscuits and more could be over... that is, if you can stomach some of the following:

### CELERY

The go-to choice among Negative-Calorie foods – this peppery stick requires more energy to eat than it gives you in return.

### APPLES

A tough food item that requires a fair amount of mouth-work. Combined with the fact that our favourite fruit is high in water content, it's little surprise that the energy effect is minimal, although the fibre will do you good.

### TOMATOES

Another supermarket favourite that's high in water content. Eating a simple tomato often feels like a waterfall for the mouth. At just 18 calories per 100g there's little to worry about as far as the waistline goes, and the statins present offer a great potential fix for those suffering from high cholesterol or high blood pressure.

### CAULIFLOWER

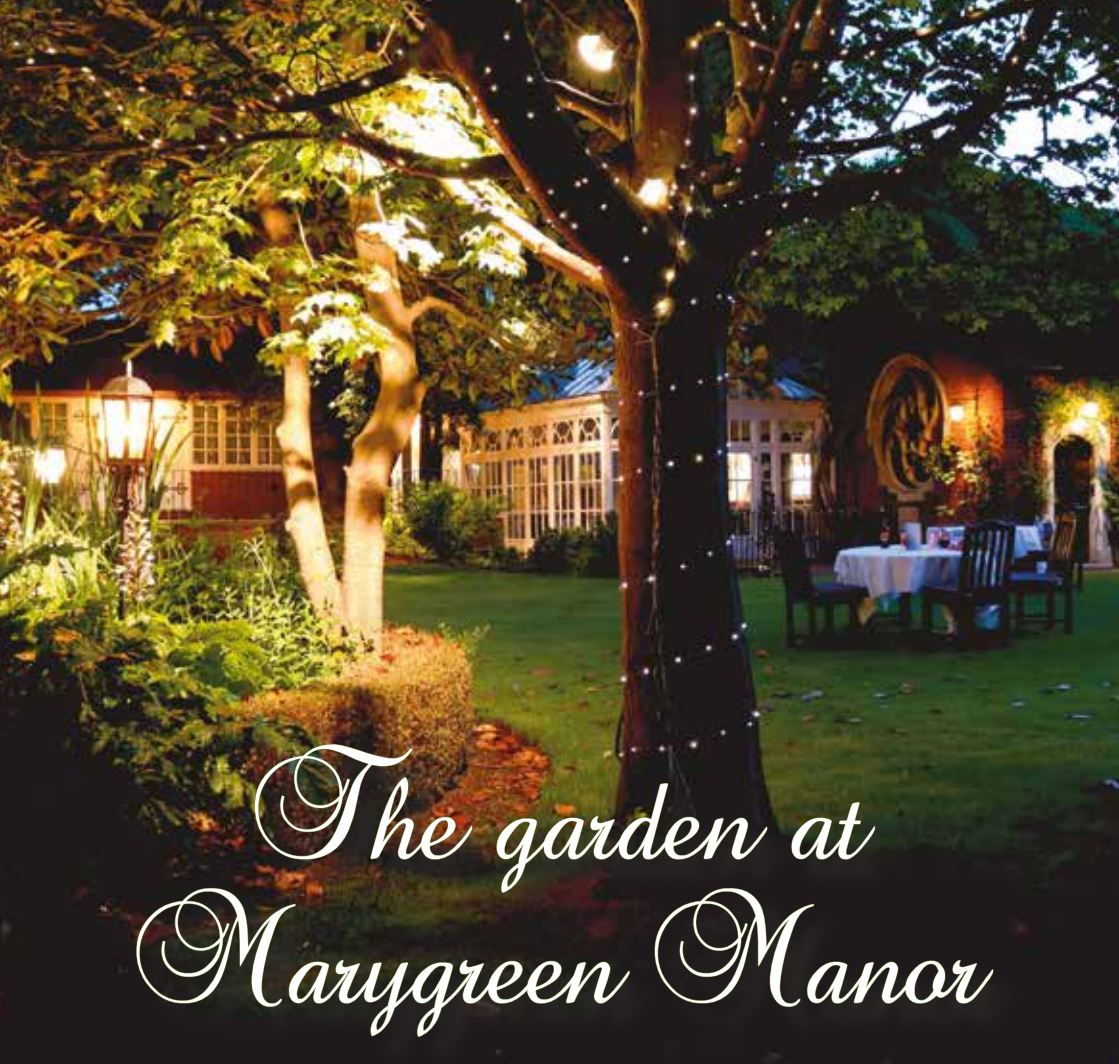
Tough as old boots and with the aroma of them too, cauliflower is a versatile veg that offers bags of vitamin C and contains absolutely zero fat.

### COFFEE

At just two calories per cup, coffee without the addition of milk, cream, sugar or flavourings is blissfully low, and, as a thermogenic, will actually stimulate the burning of fat for energy.







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# Sensational SLOW COOKER AUTUMN COCKTAILS

Although traditionally used for stews and soups, slow cookers are now being tested out on a wide variety of dishes, including cooked breakfasts, lasagne and even steaming hot cocktails. What more could you want on a blustery autumn day?

### BUTTERBEER RUM (YES, JUST LIKE IN HARRY POTTER BUT WITH A BOOZY HIT)

**You will need:** 6 cups water | 2 cans cream soda | 1 cup brown sugar | ½ cup unsalted butter | ½ cup butterscotch syrup | 3 cinnamon sticks | 1 tsp vanilla essence | 1½ tsp salt | 2 cups spiced rum | Whipped cream and golden sparkling sugar crystals for decoration

**How to make:** Put in the water, cream soda, sugar, butter, ¼ cup of butterscotch, cinnamon sticks, vanilla and salt | Cover and cook for 3-3½ hours | Stir in the rum | Use the remaining butterscotch to coat the rims of your glasses | Pour, top with whipped cream and sprinkle with sugar crystals

### INDULGENT HOT CHOCOLATE

**You will need:** 1 litre milk | 300ml double cream | 200g chopped dark chocolate | 100g chopped milk chocolate | Whipped cream, marshmallows and chocolate shavings to serve | Optional: liqueur or schnapps – coffee, peppermint or cinnamon

**How to make:** Pour the milk and double cream into your slow cooker | Add the chocolate | Cover and cook on low for 2 hours | Remove the lid, give it a good stir, then replace the lid and cook for a further 20 mins | Add 4 shots of your chosen liqueur | Spoon into mugs and top with marshmallows, cream and chocolate shavings

### CARAMEL APPLE CIDER

**You will need:** 2 cups vodka | 8 cups apple cider | 1 cup caramel syrup | 2 tsp ground cloves | 2 tbs cinnamon | ¼ cup brown sugar | Apples to garnish

**How to make:** Add all the ingredients to your slow cooker | Cook on low for 3 hours | Serve in mulled cups or glasses with sliced apples and cinnamon sticks



Photo credit: realhousemoms.com, amindfullmom.com



# That's salty...

Salt has been used for thousands of years to preserve food and is the most common seasoning that we use today. However, do you know your Kosher from your Celtic? Your Himalayan from your Hawaiian?



**1. Table Salt:** Table salt is typically mined from underground salt deposits and is highly processed, containing additives to prevent clumping. This type of salt dissolves very quickly owing to its small grains and is therefore great for use in baking.

**2. Sea Salt:** Obtained from evaporated seawater, sea salt is typically unrefined and contains minerals including zinc, iron and potassium. Ideal for pairing with delicate foods like fish and shellfish or for sprinkling over salads.

**3. Kosher Salt:** Used for drawing out the moisture in meat, this salt is perfect for use in the koshering process. Once dissolved in food it tastes the same as table salt, but its unique texture sets it apart. Use to season meat and vegetables.

**4. Himalayan Pink Salt:** The purest form of salt in the world, Himalayan pink salt is mined in Pakistan. As well as its distinctive colour, this variety of salt has a much higher nutritional value than table salt. Use as a finishing salt on popcorn, steamed fish or even toast.

**5. Celtic Sea Salt:** Originally popular in France, Celtic salt is distinguishable by its greyish colour and moist texture. Lower in sodium than table salt, Celtic sea salt has many health benefits, including promoting brain function and improving cardiovascular health. Great on fish and meat.

**6. Hawaiian Red Salt:** Also known as Alaea salt, Hawaiian red salt is a type of unrefined sea salt that has been mixed with volcanic clay. It is instantly recognisable by its brick red colour. Discerning palates will be able to identify a slight sweet finish to this salt. Pair with seafood and pork.

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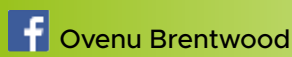
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HEALTH & FITNESS

THE WORLD OF

# Mr Smith



In the age of Instagram personal trainers, it takes quite something to stand out from the crowd, though British muscleman and health heavyweight James Smith seems to have achieved just that.

James Smith, a personal trainer (PT), body coach, diet expert, life guide and educator, is the perfect foil to all the impossibly toned, happy, talented, loaded influencers that saturate our Instagram feeds.

Sure, the 31-year-old Bondi-based trainer has a physique most of us will never get anywhere near, and if you look at the simply seductive backgrounds on his photo shoots you will get the impression his is a life to be craved. Yet as soon as James begins speaking on health, fitness, well-being and our ability to be better people both physically and mentally, you discover that this is someone not dressed up in the fake realities of so many PTs.

He is self-deprecating, funny and, while a slight upper middle-class twang may tell us more about his background than he would like to give away, his expletive-decorated videos and posts paint someone fully appreciating the fact that inspiring people to be better means being down to earth.

His Instagram feed (@jamesmithpt) has more than 640,000 followers; and in November, his book *Not a Life Coach* hits the shelves, following on from the hugely successful *Not a Diet Book* which, somewhat fortuitously, was released just a month before lockdown.

Whether focusing on diet or self-help, his mode is as the maverick, and someone bringing enjoyment into personal improvement.

"For me, real help must come in the form of true honesty. If you start from a point of wanting to achieve something unrealistic, you will never get there," he says.

"Start low, hit your target, then restart at a higher level. By trying not to change your life so much, you may inadvertently do just that!"

Photo credit: www.jamesmithacademy.com



# BOXGYM FITNESS

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HEALTH & FITNESS



# ARE YOU AN *emotional eater?*

**M**any people have understandably struggled with healthy eating during lockdown, with stress, boredom and increased feelings of wanting to treat ourselves all being contributing factors.

However, now that we have started to return to normality, are you still eating for reasons other than hunger?

## MINDLESS EATING

Do you often find yourself eating for no particular reason? Do you simply take mouthful after mouthful without even registering what the food tastes like or whether or not your appetite has been sated? If yes, you need to stop eating in front of the TV and start appreciating your food more. Ensure you chew your food as many times as you can and listen to your stomach when it tells you that it's full.

## BOREDOM EATING

If you find that you reach for the snacks when you

have nothing else to do, then you are eating out of boredom rather than because your body needs sustenance. Try to find yourself something else to do, such as read a book, phone a friend or go for a walk: any activity that will take your mind off eating.

## STRESS EATING

We've all been there. Perhaps you have an important meeting at work, you are struggling to make ends meet or maybe your relationship is going through a rough patch. Whatever the reason, eating when you are stressed can help to alleviate anxiety, even if only momentarily. The key to avoid stress eating is to know your triggers and to actively try to avoid them.

## EATING TO MASK YOUR FEELINGS

Whether you feel sad, depressed or lonely, eating to try to push down your feelings is never the answer. Instead, try to identify why you are feeling this way and talk to someone if you need to.



# ORGAN DONATION

*awareness*



**D**id you know that there are currently 3,108 people in the UK waiting for a transplant at this exact moment?

Organ Donation Week is designed to encourage people to make a decision about organ donation and to share their choice with their family and friends.

### WHAT IS THE CURRENT LAW REGARDING ORGAN DONATION?

You may not know this, but the English organ donation law has changed to a 'opt out' system rather than an 'opt in' one.

What exactly does this mean? In a nutshell, if you are not in an excluded group and you have not confirmed whether you want to be an organ donor or not, it will be considered that you agree to donate your organs when you die.

### CAN ANYONE REGISTER TO BE AN ORGAN DONOR?

There is no age limit for organ donor registration, and anyone can decide to become an organ donor after death. However, if you

want to add your name to the NHS Organ Donor Register, you will need to live in the UK, Channel Islands or Isle of Man.

### WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT THE ORGAN DONATION PROCESS

- All donors are treated with dignity and respect.
- There are strict regulations in place to help care for the dying, and organs will not be removed until a patient's death has been confirmed in line with these criteria.
- Organs cannot be sold or bought.
- Your body will be returned to your family after donation.
- Families are always consulted before organ donation goes ahead.

### WHAT CAN I DONATE?

If you decide to register as an organ donor, you have the choice to donate organs such as your heart, lungs, kidneys, liver, pancreas and small bowel. You can also choose to donate your tissues, including your bone and corneas.



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TRAVEL

**W**e've all arrived at a getaway destination to be confronted with that sickening feeling of having left the crumpers at home, and it's not a pleasant one.

Well, with the hope and expectation of the travel industry restarting as the weeks go by, it seems pertinent to get some early planning in, so here's our all-encompassing rundown of the travel essentials you really can't leave home without:

1. Currency and cards, ensuring you have enough for both holiday treats and emergencies
2. Documents – printed is still best, from hotel information to outbound and return flights
3. Passport, if travelling abroad
4. Driver's licence – essential for car hire, but good for additional ID
5. Mobile phone and tablet, plus chargers
6. Plug adaptor
7. Daily toiletries, such as toothpaste, toothbrush, travel-size shower items, shaver, hairbrush
8. Paracetamol, ibuprofen and any prescription drugs – better to take from your home country rather than trying new drugs in a foreign country
9. List of emergency contacts to keep about your person
10. Flip-flops, for any shared bathroom space where avoiding contact with icky floors is probably smart
11. Practical essentials, depending on destination – e.g. somewhere warm, sun cream and swimming gear (including goggles); somewhere rugged, walking boots and fleece
12. Spare underwear and socks will always come in handy and weigh very little
13. Deodorant and aftershave/perfume, for basic hygiene and those special nights out
14. Microfibre towel, which takes up less space than its fluffy cousin
15. Mini first aid kit
16. Earplugs – whether for the flight or noisy guests around the hotel, these are essential
17. Glasses, sunglasses, and a protective case
18. Spare shoes, to switch things up and give your feet a break
19. Padlock, for extra security
20. Rain cover, should the heavens open



# RED alert

## AFTER 30 YEARS OF HURT, LIVERPOOL FINALLY GOT THEIR HANDS ON THE BIG PRIZE

It's somewhat ironic that for a club who have struggled, grasped and flailed desperately for three decades in their attempts to restore themselves as the best club in English football, their unassailable lead at the top of the Premier League in March almost counted for nothing as a global pandemic swept in. For a couple of months, Jürgen Klopp's side looked

as if they might be denied the prize they have striven for so long to win – through near misses, bad luck and a long duration of underachievement, the Reds have found the likes of Manchester United, Arsenal, Chelsea, Manchester City, Blackburn Rovers and even Leicester City in their way when it came to securing the biggest prize in domestic football.

Yet after Premier League chiefs, fan groups, police forces and local councils approved measures to get the competition restarted on June 17, Liverpool's history-makers were back on track. Predictably, after all the speculation, the hype and a 100-day gap in action – the longest since Second World War – the Merseyside Derby was something of a damp squib as Liverpool and arch rivals Everton played out a goalless draw.

Ultimately, Manchester City's improved form post lockdown saw Liverpool's significant gap at the top narrowed, but when the Merseysiders crushed Crystal Palace 4-0 at home on June 24, they knew that if Chelsea could beat Pep Guardiola's Citizens side 24 hours later, the title would be theirs... and that's just what happened.

True, it may have been seen as a disappointing climax for Liverpool to have had such a season of domestic dominance ended in empty stadiums and without even so much as an open-top bus ride around their famous city to savour. It's a lack of the true adulation deserving of any Premier League

champions, let alone a side who ended the campaign with 99 points and only three league defeats all term.

Yet, the record books will always point to the efforts of captain Jordan Henderson, top scorer Mohamed Salah, the rest of the first-team heavyweights and even the young starlets – Curtis Jones, Harvey Elliott and Neco Williams – who are gradually making their mark in the best club side in world football.

Two seasons ago the Reds finished 25 points behind champions Manchester City. Their winning margin this term confirms a 43-point shift in dominance that will impress Klopp as much as it worries Guardiola and the rest of the chasing pack.

The Anfield club's achievements are monumental – Champions League winners, World Club Championship holders and Premier League victors all at the same time. And yet, as manager Klopp states, defending their title crown is not the Liverpool way – attacking it is, and that's undoubtedly what they'll do.



Photo credit: Paul Ellis/AP/Shutterstock







# ENSURE *you* INSURE

## Your home insurance checklist

Insurance is about protecting ourselves and those around us, so here's a handy checklist outlining what you definitely need, and what might be worth considering.

### CONTENTS INSURANCE

In the event of an accident or theft from within your home, it's vital your possessions are covered. Many see paying out for contents insurance as a waste of money, but we will all claim for something at some point.

Knowing you're covered can bring a huge sense of relief in the midst of what is likely to be a disappointing event or episode.

You can also extend your contents insurance to items you take outside the home – consider bikes, watches, phones and more; but read the small print to ensure you're covering what you think you are.

### BUILDINGS INSURANCE

Also known as house insurance, this covers your bricks and mortar, and whilst not a legal stipulation, most mortgage lenders will insist on you taking it out if you are embarking on home ownership.

### LIFE INSURANCE

Purely for the protection of those around you; should the day come when you're not around, you will want to ensure your dependants have enough to get by. For what is often a small amount each month, life insurance can at least mean you are not adding financial loss to the emotional loss experienced by loved ones.

### INCOME PROTECTION

Particularly good for those who are self-employed, income protection means that in the event of illness, bills can still be paid. If 2020 has taught us anything where health is concerned, it's to expect the unexpected!

### CRITICAL COVER

Different from life insurance, critical cover will pay out a lump sum if you are diagnosed with a critical illness during the life of your policy. That means you'll be provided for by the policy to restore some sense of comfort and peace.



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**Q What Can Coverisure 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 Coverisure 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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# SAVE

*yourself the effort?*



It's fair to say savings accounts have probably never seemed less appealing. From buoyant interest rates well into double digits back in the mid-1990s, the Bank of England base rate has plummeted in recent years, dropping to a historic low of 0.1 per cent in March.

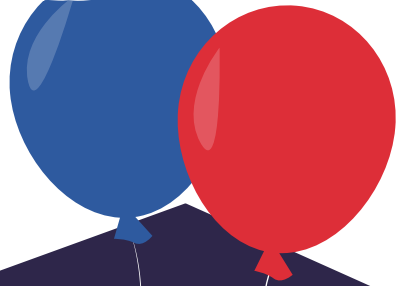
The recent lockdown means government initiatives to stimulate spending are additionally affecting the appeal of savings accounts, to the point where the consideration of a negative base rate has come into view... and with it the possibility that savers will actually have to pay to 'store' their money.

But it's not all bad news for savers:

> One-year fixed rates for savings accounts are still tracking considerably above the Bank of England base rate, with rates of around 1 per cent still possible... although in relation to a similar level of inflation, there isn't any real 'gain' to be had; in fact, with most 'everyday' savings accounts you're losing money.

> For those still looking to gain a return on their savings, it could be that switching from a traditional savings account to a Lifetime, Fixed Rate or Easy Access cash ISA is the sensible way forward. The former will give you a 25 per cent return (up to £4,000 only), while a Fixed Rate ISA can still net you up to 1.3 per cent.

> Finally, remember savings aren't all about profit – many people save for security, to have a feelgood 'project', and to put money away for a rainy day. Unlike investments, savings accounts are protected to the hilt, so when you want your money it is protected and will be there.



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## ON THE MONEY

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### KNOW YOUR NUMBERS THIS TAX YEAR

It is well worth being aware of the tax allowances and exemptions available in 2020–21 to be able to maximise them for your own individual financial planning. In this first of a two-part article we look at some of the figures that are worth knowing regarding personal taxation and pensions.

#### PERSONAL TAXATION

The National Insurance threshold is now £9,500. The Personal Allowance remains at £12,500, while the £50,000 higher-rate threshold remains unchanged in parts of the UK where Income Tax is not devolved.

#### PENSIONS

A major attraction of paying into a pension is the tax relief available: 20 per cent for basic rate taxpayers, 40 per cent for higher rate and 45 per cent for additional rate taxpayers. The Annual Allowance for pensions remains at £40,000. It will begin to taper for those who have an income above £240,000 (the £200,000 allowance plus the £40,000 you can save into a pension).

This means that for every £2 of adjusted income above £240,000, the Annual Allowance for that year reduces by £1. The minimum Annual Allowance has reduced from £10,000 to £4,000.

The Lifetime Allowance – the maximum amount you can have in a pension over a lifetime – has increased to £1,073,100.

Since April 6, the new single-tier State Pension has risen to £175.20 per week and the older basic State Pension increased to £134.25 per week.

In our next article we will look at savings and inheritance tax.

**At HCR we can advise you on the sensible steps to reduce the amount of tax you pay, safeguarding your wealth for the future. We take the time to understand our client's unique planning needs and circumstances, so that we can provide you with the most suitable solutions in the most cost-effective way. For a free review of your current financial situation, please contact Karyn Vogel on 01277 654153.**

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# Motoring Madness

## AVOIDING THE PITFALLS OF SELLING YOUR CAR PRIVATELY

**S**elling your motor privately can be good for a number of reasons. It's the best way to get a high price for your old set of wheels, if organised you may be able to secure a sale quickly, and in most instances you won't even need to leave the comfort of your own home... well, the driveway, at least.

However, if you are keen to strip out the middleman, beware some of the pitfalls that may lie in wait:

traders who would rather negotiate a part-exchange than an offer of straight cash.

### Larry Hagglers

A huge worry for many vendors is agreeing a price over the phone, only to find someone at your door pressuring you for a discount.

### Comeback Kings

In the event of something going wrong with the car soon after it's bought, you won't have anyone to sort this out but yourself. The buyer will also have your home address so is likely to come knocking if anything seems wrong in those weeks post purchase.

### Telephone time-wasters

You may get countless people phoning up asking endless questions - remember, buyers will be as wary about the process as sellers. The best way to avoid this is to make your listing as detailed as possible, adding lots of photos.

### Go-slow no-showers

Ever waited in for a delivery that never arrives? Welcome to the world of private car-selling.

### Part-ex stress

You may find your motor is attracting the interest of

### Not-so-smooth criminals

And of course, the biggest fear for those who sell privately is that someone will run off with your motor. Ensure all monies have been transferred before handing over documentation, be wary over PayPal transactions (which can be refunded) and, if accepting cash, check notes carefully.

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