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# Editor's notes...

Nik Allen, Editor

Hello and welcome to this month's edition of VISIONBrentwoodOngar.

Even now things have calmed down, it still hurts to say it... football didn't come home. The Three Lions fought, battled and impressed at almost every turn, but came up painfully short, as has been the case on so many occasions before.

Of course, as the song goes, 'We still believe', and within a day or two of that painful penalty shoot-out defeat by Italy, I couldn't help but accept some simple truths: England didn't lose a single game; we conceded just two goals in more than 11 hours of football; we played great football;

we saw the emergence of yet more brilliant youngsters; and mostly, even in defeat, even with lingering thoughts of 'what if we'd done that differently?', we will take the positives forward.

Football, and life itself, is about coming back from the challenges that confront us; it's about striving to be better than before - wiser, stronger, more equipped. That resilience is inbuilt - it's a natural human trait, and it's arguably our most inspiring. Our armoury is now hardened ahead of the not insignificant World Cup in Qatar at the end of next year.

So while we failed to make it to the ultimate destination, we are at least on the road, and the journey continues. What better inspiration than that to take into every other aspect of our lives?

Mik Allen

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**CONTACT US:** www.visionmagessex.com | brentwood@visionmag.co.uk | 01277 554045

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Vision Magazine Essex

CONTRIBUTORS | Tabatha Fabray, Geraint Roberts, Ruby Ward

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

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USTICE?

SUE BARKER CBE'S DEPARTURE AS A QUESTION OF SPORT HOST INFURIATED AN ADMIRING BBC AUDIENCE. BUT THE PRESENTER'S CAREER IS ONE TO BE CELEBRATED.

The ever-evolving world of sport is perhaps only rivalled these days by the BBC's drive for diversity and representation, so the fact Sue Barker CBE has managed to keep pace over the past 24 years is

Alas, the 65-year-old former British tennis star has fronted her final show as presenter of the iconic A Question of Sport (AQoS). When news of her departure first broke towards the end of last year, there were clamours of resistance and dismay from every corner - after all, not only is Barker's demographic one that arguably struggles for airtime in the BBC's revised content package, but hosts with her informed, cheeky,

Barker certainly won't be short of new projects – she has always combined presenting duties across AQoS. BBC Sports Personality of the Year, Wimbledon, athletics and the Olympics. While many of those other engagements will carry on, the AQoS team will need to pull out all the stops to replace not just Barker, but also team captains Matt Dawson and Phil Tufnell, with personalities able to knit together format and team mechanics with such precision. It was Barker's infectious laugh, slightly mumsy approach to the captains, and an ability to keep up with the cut and thrust of fast-paced questions that saw the show strip off its slightly stuffy demeanour of the Eighties and Nineties, when it resembled a more sporty version of Mastermind, and

'The presenter has never been afraid to push forward ideas – it was that courage and confidence that put her in the spotlight...'

The presenter has never been afraid to push forward ideas – it was that courage and confidence that put her in the spotlight as a tennis player back in the 1970s. At the age of 17, she turned pro, and captured the hearts of the nation three years later when she won the French Open, defeating Renáta Tomanová in the final. On home soil, Barker reached the Wimbledon semi-finals in 1977, but was surprisingly beaten by Betty

She continued to vie for titles and, at her peak, sat as the third best tennis player in the world. But injury and loss of form followed, and she retired in 1984, aged 28. Nonetheless, Barker claimed 15 singles and 12 doubles titles across her career, and her popularity was such that, on retirement, she slipped almost seamlessly into the media world, initially with Australia's Channel 7.

After three years at BSkyB, she joined the BBC in 1993, assuming the role as AQoS host four years later. While the years managing charismatic AQoS captains such as Dawson and Tufnell, plus Ally McCoist, Frankie Dettori and John Parrott, have certainly given Barker an occasionally dominant exterior on-screen, she is someone who carries herself with humility, humour and no small amount of style. Her contribution to television over the past three decades was reflected in the Queen's Birthday Honours List in June, with Barker awarded the title of CBE for services to broadcasting and charity, having previously been given an

The presenter, who is married to landscape gardener, Lance Tankard, and lives in the Cotswolds, presented her final show in May. The new series will be fronted by comedian Paddy McGuinness. The Top Gear, Take Me Out and I Can See Your Voice host said: "It's an honour and opportunity I'm certainly not taking lightly".



at all started with Mr Tickle, a seemingly innocent, curly-armed cartoon character created by Roger Hargreaves. The illustrator was, at the time, a 36-year-old Yorkshire-raised writer and designer who, having become disillusioned with working in advertising and copywriting, developed characters to entertain his children.

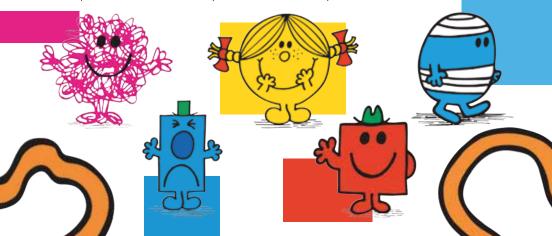
The Mr Tickle book came first and sold a million copies in its first three years on the shelves. Perhaps it was the simplicity of the stories, perhaps the wonderful illustrations, perhaps the fun and colourful tales – whatever it was, Hargreaves had landed upon a series that was about to explode when the BBC picked it up and began broadcasting the stories, narrated by Dad's Army's Arthur Lowe.

With *The Mirror* and the *Daily Mail* getting in on the act in the form of comic strips, other characters came to the fore. Now titled *Mr Men and Little Miss*, the illustrations and instantly recognisable bold capitalised font became a staple for kids

Sad news was on its way when Roger passed

away unexpectedly in 1988. A publishing legacy that had its roots in a father wanting to create captivating stories for his kids was suddenly under threat. It was therefore somewhat apt that his son, Adam, just 25 at the time, would take over the reins. By the turn of the century, he had developed a number of new characters for a new generation of kids whose languages, tastes, interests and fashions had moved on from those early days.

To date, the *Mr Men and Little Miss* series has developed characters based on real-life icons as diverse as the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge and the Spice Girls, as well as being featured across the London Underground and on Royal Mail stamps.



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#### ARE HYBRID MATTRESSES WORTH THEIR HEFTY PRICE TAG OR IS IT A LOT OF HYPE?

rist came spring mattresses, then foam, and then came the exalted combination of the two. Every reinvention brings new promise of "the best night's sleep you'll ever have" - along with an ever-expanding price point.

New kids on the bedding block, such as Simba, Eve and Emma, have all devoted themselves to giving you the most dream-inducing, pain-relieving eight hours of rest. But regardless of their lofty claims, it is still a leap into the unknown for those accustomed to traditional brands.

So what exactly is a hybrid mattress? Well, it's a multi-faceted design combining layers of both pocket springs and breathable foam to create a mattress that offers mouldable, gravity-defying support AND resistant buoyancy. This means not only will you feel supported in all the right places, but also that the surface resists dipping and sagging over time. They also keep you cooler during the warmer months and are less reactive to movement - ideal if your partner tends to toss and turn.

Another benefit that sets these flexible beauties apart from other mattresses is that they generally come vacuum-packed in relatively small boxes. Not only does this make them ideal for top-floor flats in narrow buildings, but it is also a marvel in itself as you watch your new bedfellow expand from a tightly-packed roll into a welcoming crash pad.

Not found on the high street, these hybrid designs still remain a reasonably left-field take on the mattress concept - hence the current lack of a big name, bargain equivalent. Pioneers in the field pride themselves on the huge amount of technology and design that goes into creating each prototype, with Simba bedding even boasting 'space-inspired' fabric. All also offer a limited-time sleep offer in which you can change your mind - creating a second market for the refurbished rejects.

So is it worth splashing the cash? If you are perpetually unsatisfied with your sleep options, you definitely ought to give one of these a try. After all, what's worse - counting pennies or counting sheep?





# BANISH BATHROOM

ave you ever thought about how often you should clean and replace items in your bathroom? If not, the below advice from our cleaning experts may come as a shock to you.

#### BATHROOM TOWELS

You may be surprised to find out that bathroom towels should be washed after every three uses. Furthermore, they should be replaced entirely every one to three years. TOP CLEANING TIP: Always hang up your towels to dry fully after each use.

#### BATH MATS

This essential is one of the most germ-ridden areas of your bathroom and needs to be washed every three to seven days and thrown away after two years. For mats with rubber backing, spray generously with white vinegar weekly and wash in cold water every three to four weeks.

TOP CLEANING TIP: Clean on a 40-degree wash and hang to dry.

#### TOILET BRUSHES

Covered in lots of harmful bacteria, your toilet brush should be cleaned weekly and replaced every six to eight months. Soak in a mixture of boiling water and bleach and allow to drip dry. TOP CLEANING TIP: Rinse after every use for maximum longevity.

#### SHOWER HEADS

Shower heads should be cleaned monthly and replaced every six to eight months as harmful bacteria thrive in this moist environment, which can be harmful to the respiratory system, especially for at-risk patient groups.

TOP CLEANING TIP: Soak in a mixture of three cups hot water and one cup white vinegar for 30 minutes and then scrub with an old toothbrush.

#### LOOFAHS AND TOOTHBRUSHES

Both these items should be replaced every one to three months. Toothbrushes should be rinsed after every use and the handle should be wiped down once a week. Your loofah



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THE SMART BRICKS THAT CAN REVOLUTIONISE HOW WE USE ELECTRICITY IN OUR HOMES

ost of us know that bricks are brilliant insulators against the cold. In warmer periods, their thermal mass qualities can mean heat is released very gradually over time - something that's perfect for maintaining the temperature of our homes.

However, advances in construction technology are set to take our desire for energy- and cost-efficient warmth to another level.

Scientists have developed a new type of brick that works more like a battery, thanks to fine strands of special conductive polymer fibres, called PEDOTs.

The new bricks. which appear a darkish brown colour instead of the standard red, are coated

with an epoxy in order to waterproof them, and are then connected to a power source. The result is that the heat stored within a single brick can power a LED light for 10 minutes.

At present, the technology on offer won't allow the bricks to be used for construction purposes because they contain an acid component in their ingredients, but scientists are looking for alternative

> constituents that would mean safe and durable building blocks that can be used to power the very homes they act as a border for.

> > What's more, it's said each brick can be charged 10,000

> > > times without losing any more than 10 per cent of its storage capacity, suggesting Iongevity when put into a physical built-in structure.

At present, each brick would cost around £2 to make, though if the necessary adjustments could be made to ensure the product becomes construction-friendly, that cost would be brought down dramatically - as would energy bills.



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grillo designs:

# inspiration FOR EVERY HOME

Get to know Grillo Designs, a UK-based interiors blog that has all the inspiration you need to transform your home

he internet is full of incredible home inspiration, but let's face it - not all of it is achievable. Those Pinterest perfect homes are often only possible with a huge budget and a team of professionals to pull it off.

So it makes a refreshing change when someone like Medina Grillo comes along. Medina's love all of things interiors led to her starting her own Facebook page back in 2014, and she now runs an award-winning blog, Grillo Designs.

Full of inspiration showing renters that they too can do incredible things with their homes. Grillo Desians is the style auide vou've been looking for to transform your space.

Medina describes herself as "an IKEA-loving-upcycling-junkie-DIY-passionatehome-décor-crazy momma and wife", who shares her cool and unique designs with the world. A healthcare worker by day, she works with her partner, Vince, to bring her design ideas to life.

Grillo Designs has more than 174,000 followers on Instagram, while the blog has won several awards.

In addition to Grillo Designs, Medina is the voice behind #HowlRent - "a celebration of all the amazing renters out there who, in spite of it all, have managed to transform their homes into abodes of personality and style".

Medina's style is contemporary, blending muted shades with pops of yellow and creating interest through textures and patterns. With Grillo Designs, you can find all kinds of inspiration to create beautiful, stylish looks for your space.

#### BRINGING GRILLO DESIGNS INTO YOUR HOME

Grillo Designs highlights fun, quirky DIY projects you can bring into your home, whether rented or owned. Here are some amazing ideas to help you transform your own space:

#### 1. CREATE A DIY COFFEE CORNER IN YOUR KITCHEN

Using some shelving, hooks and maybe a few pieces of artwork, you can create a stylish space to display your favourite mugs and coffee items and celebrate your love of the bean.

#### 2. UPDATE DATED DRESSERS TO GIVE THEM A NEW LIFE

Dresser or chest of drawers chipped, covered in scratches or just a bit dull? Give it a simple makeover. You could stain the wood, paint using multi-surface paint and add some new hardware to create a complete transformation.

#### 3. CUSTOMISE YOUR IKEA ALEX DRAWERS

Most people have some trusty IKEA Alex drawers around – especially if you've built a home workspace for yourself during the COVID-19 pandemic. Make yours a little more unique with some stickers or contact paper to add your own quirky design.















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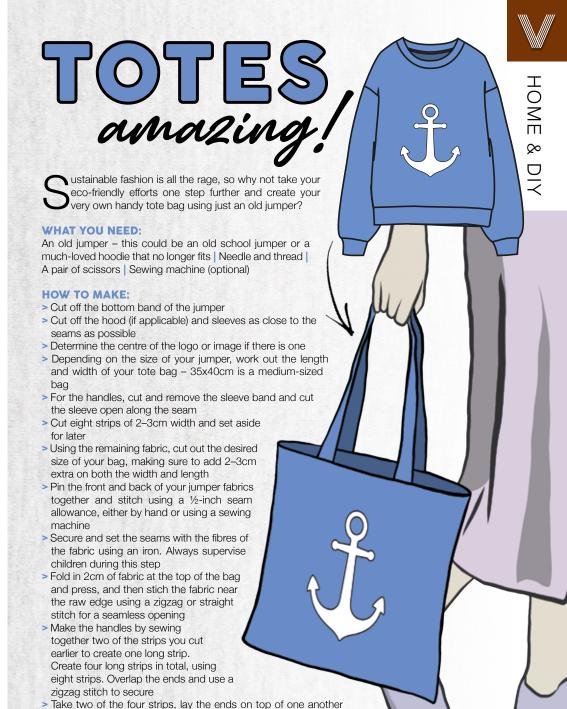
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and stitch together. Repeat with the other two strips > Stitch the handles to the top of your tote bag

> Voila! Your finished jumper tote bag.

# MAKEASTATEMENT THE STATEMENT VASE TREND THAT'S TAKING OVER HOMES (AND THE INTERNET) THE STATEMENT VASE TREND THAT'S TAKING OVER HOMES (AND THE INTERNET)

TAKING OVER HOMES (AND THE INTERNET)

ases have always been a practical necessity as something to display your flowers in. Now, it's the vases themselves that are on display.

One of the key home trends of the moment is the statement vase. With the ability to bring new life to an interior, or the perfect finishing touch to your tablescape or shelfie, having some statement vases in your home brings instant style.

From unusual textures and shapes to bold colours, this is one trend that anyone can get on board with. Discover the statement vase trend and how to make it work in your home.

THE QUIRKY ONES: A cool and quirky vase is a great way to dress up your home. A bold shape draws the eye, making an excellent impression in any space. From your hallway display to your coffee table, a quirky vase will add some style interest to any home.

THE CLASSIC VASE: Just because something is a

classic, doesn't mean it can't make a statement. Traditional style vases, such as busts or a ceramic vase, are gracing Victorian-style homes all over Instagram and Pinterest, bringing an expensive, luxury look without the antique price tag. Choose a smaller vase for a more understated look, or go large if you want to create a bolder, more striking look.

THE BOLD VASE: If you want to liven up your neutral decor, or celebrate your love of colour, then a bold and bright vase is the way to go. There are some incredible pieces to choose from right now, blending vibrant colours with floral patterns to create a fashion-forward look. Keep the rest of your look simple to let the vase do the talking.

Whether you're looking for the perfect centrepiece or a dash of colour, or you want to dress up your space, there's a statement vase out there for you. Flowers or no flowers, your new vase will always have a place in your home.



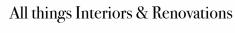








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RENTWOOD

# LOCAL NEWS

from your neighbourhood



# Boyruns 20 miles in 20 days to raise money for homeless charity

A10-year-old from Brentwood has raised more than £600 for a local charity that supports homeless people in Essex.

Olly Burridge was inspired to run 20 miles in 20 days throughout July after seeing a lot of homeless people in Chelmsford Park.

He became determined to do something to help and contacted Churches Homeless Emergency Support Scheme (CHESS), which provides practical help for homeless people.

Following his struggles with autism, which caused him to leave his school and be home-schooled instead, Olly has been determined to improve the lives of others.

Olly's mum, Emily, told VISIONBrentwoodOngar: "We're all so proud of what he's managed to achieve in a short amount of time. There's a lot of stigma when people have learning difficulties and people tend to write them off, but this shows how strong-willed he is.

"He really loved taking on the challenge and was really determined to get out every day and raise as much money as possible. He's immensely proud of himself."

Olly completed his 20th mile on July 13 and updated everyone on his progress on his fundraising page.

A spokesperson for CHESS said: "Our congratulations and thanks to the fantastic Ollv Burridge for his 20 miles in 20 days fundraiser. Olly has raised more than £600 and is very proud of himself, as he should be."

To donate, head to www.justgiving.com/fundraising/ emilv-burridae1

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Aprivate healthcare provider has won a prestigious award.

Spire Healthcare, which runs Spire Hartswood Hospital in Brentwood, has been named as Best Healthcare Provider Partnership with the NHS at this year's HSJ Partnership Awards.

The award recognises Spire Healthcare's hard work and dedication to healthcare in what has been an unprecedented 15 months.

The long-awaited awards evening on June 29 was the first in-person event for a few lucky attendees from both the NHS and the private sector.

Spire Healthcare was recognised for its support of the NHS in responding to the COVID-19 pandemic. Between March 2020 and March 2021, it put its services, colleagues, facilities and equipment at the disposal of the NHS, and cared for more than 260,000 NHS patients who would otherwise have seen their treatment or diagnosis delayed or cancelled.

Spire Hartswood Hospital cared for more than 9,000 NHS patients during this period, many of whom had critical conditions.

**ENTWOO** Jo Dean, hospital director for Spire Hartswood, said: "We are absolutely delighted to have been named as the winners in the Best Healthcare Provider Partnership category. It means a great deal to all our colleagues to be recognised.

"While being singled out as winners from a group of such remarkable nominees is hugely gratifying, most importantly we're proud to be part of a sector bound by a commitment to improve healthcare for all."

# Four-piece student band releases debut EP

Astudent indie band is making headlines with the release of its debut EP, a collection of original summer tunes.

The News - made up of Brentwood School Upper Sixth students Neo Merrell, Eshan Chopra, Will Johnson and Charles Tomlinson - recorded the EP, Headlines, at the school.

Formed 18 months ago, The News took to the recordina studio durina lockdown.

Will said: "The News was primarily a way for us to jam and have fun as a group of mates. We began by performing covers, exploring our interests in an eclectic mix of genres, from jazz to rock. For us, performing live is our passion.

"With venues closed over lockdown, we shifted our focus to the recording studio with great help from the immensely talented Mr Matt Charlesworth, the school's digital production engineer. This has let us



continue to create while exploring a new avenue.

"Headlines, our debut EP, is a refined collection of our favourite original material. A special thanks to James Maltby for his help along the way and insane photography. We hope you enjoy listening to it as much as we did making it."

You can stream The News' four-track EP at ditto.fm/ headlines-the-news

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NEWS

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# **Ski-loving siblings**Henry and Scarlett make history

Two young snowsport enthusiasts have made Brentwood School history as the first pupils to compete in the National Schools Race League Finals.

Not only did 11-year-old Henry Pratt and his eightyear-old sister, Scarlett, both pupils at Brentwood Preparatory School, put in determined performances in the junior competition in Swadlincote, South Derbyshire, but they also finished in the top 10.

Headmaster Jason Whiskerd said: "I am thrilled for Henry and Scarlett as they are wonderfully committed to their skiing, and a place in the national top 10 is a tangible reward for their hard work and talent.

"I am also pleased that a so-called 'minority sport' has rightly been given the spotlight on this occasion."

Brentwood School's ski team, under the leadership of head of skiing, Mrs Zeta Hill, first competed in the Independent Schools Ski Championships in December 2019.

Henry and Scarlett, who both took up skiing on a family holiday four years ago, attend Brentwood Senior School's weekly training sessions at the Brentwood Park Ski & Snowboard Centre in Warley.

Proud dad Andrew said: "Brentwood is lucky to have its own dry ski slope and both Henry and Scarlett have developed their race skills via the Essex Ski Racing Club, which provides great opportunities for children of all ages and abilities."

Art trail helps bring communities together

ye-catching displays and unusual exhibits attracted the attention of residents and visitors during the Brentwood Art Trail.

With more exhibits than ever before, art from 64 local artists was displayed in windows across 35 venues in Brentwood, Ingatestone and Shenfield, with the event sponsored by the Brentwood Business Partnership.

Venues acting as pop-up galleries reported a positive response to the displays, including Liquorice in Shenfield, where work from Alison Cook and Neil Milton was on show.

Owner Jo Eastwood said: "I'm delighted to have been selected again as a venue for the Brentwood Art Trail and to be involved in such a brilliant local initiative."

The day before the trail commenced, local artist Sue Mills was commissioned by the Brentwood Art Trail to deliver a live Zoom workshop to local primary schools, including Larchwood, Long Ridings, St Peter's South Weald and Woodlands Preparatory.

More than 600 children took part in the free session, creating their own abstract portrait under Sue's expert tuition.



### **BURGHART for BRENTWOOD**



**Alex Burghart MP for Brentwood and Ongar** 

∧ s the sun shines, at last, the move to Astep 4 of the Government's roadmap out of lockdown means we have the freedom to make up for lost time last year and travel to meet friends and family for social occasions and holidavs.

I want everyone to enjoy this time – I certainly intend to enjoy all that the great British beach holiday has to offer with my family - but there is a note of caution. The pandemic is not over. and we still need to act responsibly.

The emphasis of the national response to coronavirus has shifted from rules and regulations towards expecting people to protect themselves and others through informed choice. For example, while the one-metre-plus rule on social distancing has ended, as has the legal obligation to wear a

face covering, it is still expected and recommended that face coverings are worn in crowded and enclosed

spaces, such as on public transport, in hospitals and in other health premises.

The virus is still with us and so we must continue to act with caution and take up the offer of vaccination. So far, 96 per cent of over-50s and 83 per cent of 30-50-year-olds have taken up the offer in England. But 35 per cent of 18-30-year-olds - three million people - are completely unvaccinated.

With the prospect of some venues being accessible only to those who can show an NHS COVID-19 Pass which shows proof of vaccination, a recent negative test or natural immunity later this year, it is even more important for everyone, especially the under-30s and those who love nightclubbing, to get both doses of the vaccination as soon as they are able.

Anyone aged 18 or over can book a vaccine now via the 119 telephone line, or by visiting www.nhs. uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/coronavirusvaccination/book-coronavirus-vaccination

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# **Estate agent wins big award**

An estate agent in Brentwood has recently been named as the Best Family-run Estate Agent in The British Property Awards after their team performed outstandingly throughout the extensive judging period, which focussed on customer service levels.

HS Estate Agents has now been shortlisted for a number of national awards, which will be announced later in the year.

A spokesperson for HS Estate Agents said: "We are proud and delighted to announce that we are the winners of the British Property Awards 2021.

"We would like to say a big thank you to our hardworking and dedicated team."

The British Property Awards provide agents throughout the UK with an invaluable opportunity to compare the service they provide against the service provided by their local, regional and national competition.

Robert McLean, from The British Property Awards, said: "Our awards have been specifically designed to

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# LOCAL NEWS

from your neighbourhood





# **Councillor lays flowers** as tribute to frontline workers

Alocal councillor marked the 73rd anniversary of the NHS with a special tribute.

Ongar and Rural county councillor and North Weald district councillor, Jaymey McIvor, marked the occasion by paying tribute to NHS staff who have died as a result of COVID-19.

Cllr McIvor laid flowers at the Debt of Honour in North Weald and at Ongar and District War Memorial Medical Centre in Fyfield Road in memory of those who have died of COVID-19 while serving on the NHS frontline.

Cllr McIvor said: "While many key frontline workers have passed away from COVID-19, the 73rd anniversary of the NHS seemed the appropriate time to take a moment to remember those who have died on the frontline during this pandemic.

"We owe a huge debt to the men and women of our NHS who fight for us daily, both during and long before the pandemic."

Cllr McIvor laid pink roses, which are symbolic of thankfulness, and white roses, which are a symbol of

### Summer of exciting events at railway revealed



ervices at Epping Ongar Railway are gradually returning to normal now that Olockdown has ended.

Upcoming events at the railway include a visit from PAW Patrol characters on August 8 and 15, and the chance to meet dinosaurs on August 22.

For those interested in classic cars, 70 vehicles will be on display at the Classic Car Rally on August 29, followed by a visit from the Gruffalo the following day.

For full details of all events, visit www.eorailway.co.uk

As restoration work on the railway continues, the team would like to invite new members to join the team. If you are interested, email 45132.d22@gmail.com



Town council awards grants totalling more than £4k

Ongar Town Council (OTC) has given grants to local causes totalling more than £4,000.

A grant of £2,000 has been awarded by OTC to The Ongar Academy's Parent Teacher Association (PTA) towards the £4,000 cost of a planned sensory garden at the school.

The school says the garden will provide "the perfect opportunity" to research and practise art and design technology techniques in a real-life scenario and will be an extra tool to help manage behaviour and encourage extracurricular interests.

The council will encourage the school to apply for additional funding through Essex County Council's Community Initiatives Fund scheme.

Ongar Netball Club was awarded a grant of  $\mathfrak{L}1,707$  for training facilities, new kit and other items.

The club will also use the funding to send two people on a first aid course and two people on a safeguarding course.

The council awarded another grant of £460 to Ongar Millennium History Society to cover the cost of a coach for an educational trip for society members.

# **Council continues to oppose High Street flats**

Ongar Town Council (OTC) has repeated its objections to plans to build nine two-bedroom apartments on the site of the Ongar Bridge car dealership on the High Street.

The planning and environment committee has underlined its previous comments about the plans, which were rejected by Epping Forest District Council last October.

The applicant states that the latest proposals make several changes to the rejected scheme, including an increase in the number of parking spaces, the addition of balconies, increased provision for bicycles and electrical charging facilities.

However, an OTC meeting at the end of June heard



concerns that the amendments did not answer all the previous concerns.

OTC has expressed concern that insufficient parking spaces are proposed, that the design is too cramped for the site, and that the development would not enhance the conservation area.





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importantly - comfort in mind. Gone are the clunky thermostats of yore that were either painfully complex to programme, or frustratingly simple with nothing more than a temperature dial. Both Nest and Hive boast app that gives you full control over both your heating and hot water even

Better still, this level of control helps you save money in the long run. Going to be home an hour late from work? Simply delay your heating until while you're away for the weekend? Enable the frost setting via your app to protect your pipes. You can even create zones within your house by buying smart radiator valves, to reduce your overall energy output while

Going forward, it seems likely that devices such as these will become as ubiquitous as the kitchen sink as we edge closer towards the reality of the



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# WHEN THE MONA LISA went missing

DETAILING THE 110TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE THEFT OF THE ICONIC PORTRAIT

tealing the world's most famous pieces of art is usually about status, spite or financial gain, yet for Vincenzo Peruggia, the architect of the theft of the Mona Lisa on August 21, 1911, it was none of these things... or so he said.

Painted in 1503, the painting ended up in France following Napoleon Bonaparte's widespread plundering of art during the Napoleonic Wars. Many of its various mysteries - the creeping smile, the haunting face, even the lack of eyebrows - can only be answered by its long-dead creator, Leonardo da Vinci.

The masterpiece had hung in the Louvre for more than a century before Peruggia, an employee at the museum on the banks of the Seine, snuck it out under his smock after having hidden in the building overnight. The gendarmerie were at a complete loss as to

who stole the artwork and the theft created a media sensation, with the mystery featuring on the front pages of newspapers worldwide.

Peruggia kept the painting in his apartment in Paris for two years, then took it back to Italy. Herein lies his claim that it was removed expressly with the intention of returning it to its homeland. The thief's explanation was undermined by the fact that when contacting Florence art dealer Mario Fratelli, he placed a 500,000 lire price tag on the piece.

No sooner was the deal discussed than the prospective buyer contacted the police and Peruggia was arrested.

For his crime, the Italian received only a short prison sentence - he served seven months and was hailed a patriot upon his release. Alas, his attempts were in vain, as the Mona Lisa was returned to the Louvre, where it has been on display ever since, its notoriety merely enhanced by the theft.

Peruggia died in 1925 on his 44th birthday, leaving behind a wife and daughter.













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**MYTH:** There is no need to use flea and tick treatment during the winter. TRUTH: Though we refer to 'flea season' during the summer months, these critters don't just die off in winter, particularly as we generally keep our pets inside our warm homes. So keep your furry friends topped up whatever the weather, because prevention is definitely better than cure.

**IIIYIII**: Cats always land on their feet.

TRUTH: While they do possess an 'air-righting reflex' - meaning they can adapt their bodies quickly in order to land safely - this isn't an exact science. Too short a fall and they often land on their side, while too large may cause damage to their ligaments and bones.





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TRUTH: The sight of a hamster spinning on its wheel is a familiar one as it powers relentlessly through its daily exercise. While this is an excellent way for them to burn off all those honey treats, the classic hamster wheel is actually now thought to be detrimental to spinal health, unlike its 'flying saucer'-shaped counterparts.

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I think we can all agree that the sooner we see the back of 2020 and this dreadful corona virus the better. That said, there are also some heart warming positives that we can take out of this situation. It has often been said that we can only really get to know one another and realise what is truly important in times of crisis. I think few would argue that in this case what has proven to be important is local community spirit.

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#### HOW SIR RICHARD BRANSON MADE THE ULTIMATE JOURNEY AND FIRED VIRGIN GALACTIC INTO THE ANNALS OF HISTORY

ir Richard Branson has been the voice of countless business tomes and multiple entrepreneur tutorials, all advising successhungry go-getters how they can flourish in the relentless world of enterprise.

And that's great, until you consider how many times he himself has come close to what we might deem ultimate bankruptcy – death.

In his second autobiography, Finding My Virginity, the 71-year-old self-starter lists 75 occasions when the end might have been nigh – from swimming to shore from a sinking fishing boat on honeymoon (he and first wife, Kristen, were the only survivors), to falling down a gaping gorge on Necker Island, to so many serious airborne emergencies you'd be surprised if he ever wanted to leave terra firma again... except, this is Richard Branson.

A man who has never admitted defeat, the Virgin founder has now ascended to a level of human achievement that sets him apart from anything he has achieved in an office or on a shop floor. That's because on Sunday, July 11, the daredevil journeyed 53 miles to the edge of space on his craft, Unity, ably supported by two pilots and three employees. He departed from the Spaceport America facility in New Mexico, with the intergalactic trip and re-entry completed in around an hour.

Branson said: "I have dreamt of this moment since I was a kid, but honestly nothing can prepare you for the view of Earth from space.

"The whole thing was just magical."

Branson's competitive streak is the thing that has kept him going for more than half a century in business, and the fact that he is the first to successfully complete a space tourism venture ahead of Amazon's Jeff Bezos and SpaceX's Elon Musk didn't stop his rivals from congratulating him afterwards.

Ever the type of person to prepare a platform for future exploration, he admitted afterwards: "I've had my notebook with me and I've written down 30 or 40 little things that will make the experience for the next person who goes to space with us that much better."

While Branson's innovative endeavours in space tourism are clearly a unique first for 'everyday' humans, we are a long way from the days of the Space Race and an era where countries were driven to send rockets into space with competitive regularity. In a sense, that makes his daredevil ways even more applaudable, although it was

always destined that he would be the first. From hot air balloon near-disasters over the Atlantic in the 1980s to bungee jumping off Victoria Falls in Zambia, Branson has always put himself forward as the exemplar not just of his Virgin brand, but also of a mindset that insists everything is achievable if you have the courage and conviction.

Perhaps such a desire to explore comes from when, as a four-year-old, his parents used to drop him off on one side of Blackheath and tell him to find his way home. Perhaps his brand of risk dates back to the early days of Virgin Records when he narrowly avoided a prison sentence after illegally importing records; or perhaps this addiction to adventure is the very thing that fuels Sir Richard Branson on to future innovation and further greatness. Whatever it is, he is a unique inspiration and someone we rightly revere.



# PUZZLES & TRIVIA

#### ACROSS

- 1. Bog (4)
- 3. Difficulties (8)
- 9. Settled oneself comfortably (7)
- 10. Flower part (5)
- 11. Cook in hot oil (3)
- 12. Mother-of-pearl (5)
- 13. Name of a book (5)
- 15. Drives out from a place (5)
- 17. Up to the time when (5)
- 18. Cereal plant (3)
- 19. Mental impressions (5)
- 20. Not tidy (7)
- 21. Mobster (8)
- 22. Young kangaroo (4)

#### DOWN

- 1. Making (13)
- 2. Tarnished (of a metal object) (5)
- 4. Least polite (6)
- 5. Efficient (12)
- 6. Anticipates (7)
- 7. Obviously (4-9)

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►Almonds are actually seeds, although

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- 18. Lover of Juliet (5)

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

| o. Decomposition by a current (12) |  |  |  |  |  |
|------------------------------------|--|--|--|--|--|
| 14. Among (7)                      |  |  |  |  |  |

- 17
  - 16. Safe (6)





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then add the plaster of Paris and the paint or food colouring Carefully pour the mixture into the toilet roll

KIDS

- >The plaster of Paris should begin to set after around 15 minutes. You can tell when it is about to harden as it will warm up
- Leave for a couple of hours or ideally overnight.
- > Peel off the toilet roll cardboard, and voila!

#### **700 WILL NEED**

wash off in the rain.

- > 1 cup of water
- 2 cups of plaster of Paris
- 3 tbs of food colouring or poster paint
- An old tin or plastic cup
- > Cardboard toilet roll tubes (one for each colour of chalk

low-cost summer activity that kids of all ages

of hitting the shops and make your own

super-sized coloured chalk that is perfect for using on the pavement, exterior walls and anywhere else

your kids fancy getting crafty? Don't worry, it will all

COLOURED

- > Baking paper
- Masking tape

#### HOW TO MAKE

- > Seal one end of each of your toilet roll tubes with masking tape. Ensure neat seals to avoid leakage
- > Line your toilet roll tubes with baking paper
- Pour the water into a fin or large plastic cup,

#### OTEER CHALK CREATIONS TO MAKE AT HOME

- > Chalk rocks. Use balloons to mould your chalk recipe into the shape of rocks
- > Chalk pops. Insert wooden craft sticks and use a silicone pop mould or ice cube tray to create a lollipop shape. But remember these are not for eating. They are for drawing purposes only
- > Glitter chalk. Add glitter to the mixture for some added sparkle
- > Squirt chalk. Fill a squirt bottle two-thirds full with a mixture of corn starch and baking soda, add your preferred food colouring and fill to the top with water. Fill another bottle with vinegar and squirt on chalk patterns for a fizzy surprise.



Te cherish our gardens for the freshness, variety and life they bring to our homes, but a bit of cultivated creativity can add a whole new level of interest to your luscious lawn.

#### PERFECT PATTERNS

You can achieve the most wonderful lawn patterns simply by adding a striping kit to your lawnmower. This bends the blades of grass, meaning that stripes can be achieved by leaning the grass towards or away from the eye.

#### THREE OR MORE STEPS TO HEAVEN

From stepping stones to a mosaic path, breaking up your lawn with a decorative stone or wooden walkway will give it personality and depth, as well as preventing the gradual wearing away of grass marking out the path to the shed.

#### SIMPLY SULAR

Give your lawn light and radiance, even when the nights begin to draw in, with a selection of solar lights which can be inserted into the beds around the perimeter.

#### WILDLIFE

Section off a quiet part of your lawn in order to create your own mini wildflower meadow. Plants and grasses such as cowslip, red clover, hoary plantain and birds-foot trefoil can be bought from garden centres and will add a rustic feel to your garden, where plants and insects can thrive.

#### MAIN FEATURE

A water feature will bring extra life to a lawn, as well as providing an audible, gentle backdrop to days spent in the garden. The hard work is in the installation, but with a variety of traditional and contemporary features, coming in all shapes and sizes, you can quickly bring extra interest to your lawn space.

#### STONE THE CROWS

Finally, how about making a focal point out of large rocks, an old tree trunk or some scattered driftwood as an artistic feature on your lawn? Not only will your garden space have abounding personality, but you'll also be encouraging natural life into the various nooks and crannies.



Our wonderful customers like our service so much, that over 40% of new customers joined us through their recommendation which, if you think about it, is a recommendation in itself.

So, if you've been thinking about enjoying a great lawn this year - green, lush and weed-free, why not contact us today and let us bring your lawn to life.

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ether you love to garden or not, there are several jobs that need to be taken care of during the last few weeks of summer if you want your garden to remain intact over winter and thrive come spring.

#### DIG UP ANNUAL FLOWERS

Although annuals are great for a single season, providing vibrant colours and stunning scents, they do need to be dug up and added to your compost heap before

#### ADD FERTILISER TO YOUR LAWN

You may not usually fertilise your lawn, but your grass needs this in order to maintain healthy growth. Typically, plants absorb nutrients through their roots, but you can give your lawn an extra boost with a good quality lawn fertiliser such as Growmore Garden Fertiliser.

#### CLEAN AND COVER YOUR POND

If you are lucky enough to have a garden pond, you should remove any leaves and other gunk before the weather turns cold. You should also cover it with a net to protect against falling leaves and other debris.

#### CUT YOUR PERENNIALS

Perennials will survive all year round, but they can also dominate your garden over winter if you let them. Avoid this by cutting them back to soil level and disposing of the cuttings to prevent further growth.

#### DE-WEED YOUR GARDEN

One of the least appealing garden tasks, but if you don't get your weeds under control before winter, you face a mammoth job come spring. Always remove weeds by the root and refrain from using weedkiller near other plants.

#### PROTECT YOUNG TREES

Young trees need protection during the winter months as they are more susceptible to damage from frost, ice and wind. Tree-guarding wraps are ideal for protecting their trunks.

# Scrap that!

f you are looking for ways to reduce waste and save money on fresh produce, then growing scraps – also known as garbage gardening – is the way to go.

#### Bulb vegetables

Vegetables such as spring onions, leeks and fennel can be grown in a similar way to leafy greens. Cut off the end with the tiny roots so that you have a scrap about one-inch tall. Place root down in half-an-inch of water in a saucer and keep fresh. A supply of shoots will soon appear, which can be immediately harvested. Alternatively, transplant into soil to enjoy these veg indefinitely.

#### Leafy vegetables

Leafy vegetables that grow in heads, such as celery, romaine and bok choy, are some of the easiest scraps to grow. Cut off the plant's base (around an inch tall), place it cut side up in a saucer and add half-aninch of water. Water regularly and place in a sunny spot indoors. Leafy scraps will grow on a sunny indoor windowsill all year round or can be transplanted into soil when they show roots.

#### Root vegetables

When it comes to root vegetables such as beetroots and turnips, you can grow tasty leaves that are ideal for salads and sautés. Just cut off the top, leaving half-an-inch of the vegetable attached, and place cut side down in water in a shallow container so that only the root is covered. Fresh greens will soon appear.

#### avocados

This fruit regrows easily in water. Just clean the pit, stick in three or four toothpicks around one-third of the way down from the pointy end and sit the pit on a glass so that the toothpicks support it on the rim. Add enough water to cover the pit's bottom half and refresh regularly. Once the pit has roots and a sprout, move to a container with soil, keeping the top half of the pit above the soil line.











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# UNUSUAL FRUIT OF THE MONTH:

e kiwano - also known as the horned melon owing to its spiky exterior - is an exotic fruit that is native to Southern Africa. Boasting an incredibly versatile flavour, kiwano can be enjoyed in many different ways.

at room temperature. An unripe kiwano can last for around 20 days at room temperature; whereas a ripe one will stay fresh for up to 10 days. Once cut, it needs to be used by the next day.

#### WHAT DOES KIWANG TASTE LIKE?

Th flavour of kiwano has been unusually likened to that of a cucumber, a banana and a lemon/lime. Its texture is similar to a passion fruit or pomegranate. with ripe kiwano showcasing orange skin and limegreen, jelly-like flesh. The skin, flesh and seeds are all edible, although be careful when eating the horns

#### WHAT ARE THE HEALTH BENEFITS OF KIWANO?

Kiwano is a low-calorie fruit that is high in vitamin A. beta carotene and magnesium. The seeds contain antioxidants, which can help to boost your immune

#### HOW TO PREPARE KIWANO

- Take a knife and slice in half either through the middle or lengthways
- Gently loosen the pulp away from the skin using a knife
- Scoop out the pulp with a spoon or by squeezing it with both hands over a bowl
- Alternatively, slice into wedges and eat in the same way as you would an orange

#### WAYS TO EXT KIWAND

- As a simple snack
- In a juice or smoothie.
- In a cocktail such as a kiwano margarita or kiwano daiguiri
- Added to a tornato salsa
- Frozen into an ice lolly
- Blended into ice cream

#### HOW TO STORE KIWANO

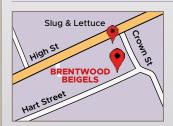
The kiwano fruit does not like the cold, so it is best kept out of the fridge and instead stored





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# SIMPLE SCONES

o celebrate Afternoon Tea Week, we are treating you to a delicious and simple scone recipe that anyone can master. Plus, discover the proper way to enjoy a quintessentially British afternoon tea.

#### YOU WILL NEED (makes 8 scones):

350g self-raising flour | 1 tsp baking powder | 3 tbsp caster sugar | 85g butter, cut into cubes | 175ml milk | 1 tsp vanilla extract | 1/4 tsp salt | Squeeze of lemon juice | Beaten egg for glazing | 30g sultanas if desired | Jam and clotted cream to serve

#### HOW TO MAKE:

STEP 1: Heat the oven to 220°C/200°C fan/gas

STEP 2: Pour the flour into a large bowl and add salt and baking powder. Mix well

STEP 3: Add the butter and rub with fingers until vou have a crumb consistency. Stir in

the sugar and sultanas if desired

STEP 4: Heat the milk in the microwave for 30 seconds until warm and then add vanilla extract and lemon

STEP 5: Place a baking tray in the oven.

STEP 6: Make a well in the dry mix and add the liquid.

Combine guickly.

STEP 7: Scatter flour on a clean surface and tip out the dough. Dredge the dough with more flour and fold over until

STEP 8: Pat into a round shape, around 4cm deep, and then take a 5cm-diameter cutter and dip it in flour. Plunge into the dough and repeat until you have all your scones.

STEP 9: Brush the scones with beaten egg and arrange on the hot tray.

STEP 10: Bake for 10 minutes until risen and golden on top. Enjoy with jam and clotted cream.

#### AFTERNOON TEA FTIQUETTE TIPS:

- Sandwiches must be eaten first with fingers, not cutlery
- Scones should be second and eaten warm
- Scones should be broken in half by hand and each half eaten separately
- One person, 'mother', is elected to pour the tea. Guests can then add milk and sugar
- Tea should be stirred back and forth, never in a circle
- A touch of fizz is allowed.



# THE ULTIMATE VECCIE BBC

or too long, vegetables have been sidelined at BBQs in favour of carnivore classics such as pork sausages and steak burgers. No more. Vegetarian or not, these top meatfree alternatives are guaranteed to tantalise your tastebuds and impress your guests.

#### **CHARGRILLED VEGGIE KEBABS**

Simple yet stunning, vegetable kebabs can be just as exciting as their meaty counterparts. Just chop up your favourite veggies such as peppers, red onion and tomatoes, as well as some big chunks of salty halloumi, place on a skewer and drizzle with oil.

#### **VEGGIE BURGERS**

Whether you favour falafel, love the tang of beautiful beetroot, or want the meaty texture that only the humble mushroom can deliver, there are so many veggies you can use to make great burgers. Simply combine your chosen cooked veg or preferred canned pulse or bean in a food processor with some herbs and spices, a binding agent such as eggs, oats or breadcrumbs, and then form into thick patties.

#### **SUPER SALADS**

Every BBQ needs a salad or two and there is no reason why you can't create one using a few chargrilled veggies. How about a traditional Italian Caprese salad with grilled peppers? Or chargrilled aubergines topped with salsa verde and some creamy white beans?

#### FRESH 'N' FRUITY DESSERTS

Forget boring, shop-bought puddings and use your grill to transform seasonal fruits into something spectacular. From warm grilled peaches to juicy slices of charred pineapple, enjoy both served with crème fraîche and plenty of zingy fresh mint.

#### **VEGETARIAN/VEGAN WINES**

Although wine is made from grapes, the fining agents used may not be. Fortunately, all the major supermarkets now offer vegetarian and vegan wines. Below is our selection of the best for your BBQ:

- Aldi Toro Loco Reserva 2015
- M&S Tapa Roja Old Vines Monastrell 2019
- Co-op Irresistible Gavi Broglia 2017
- Sainsbury's Taste the Difference Alvarinho 2017
- Lidl Comte de Senneval Brut Champagne





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# CAR TRAVEL etiquette

### THE SIX RULES PASSENGERS MUST OBEY ON LONG JOURNEYS

hether setting off for a jaunt across the middle of America or simply on a work trip up the A1, it's important to recognise the hidden hierarchy that exists when it comes to car journey etiquette.

While our top six rules are all slightly tongue-in-cheek, we can all probably pick out times when we've heard the person behind the wheel pull rank.

#### THE HEAT IS RISING

It's a confident – and possibly rude – passenger who starts messing with a car's climate control. Sit tight and sweat it out... it's still better than walking.

#### **DRIVER DJ**

From the minute you leave to the second you arrive, the soundtrack of your journey is deemed to be in the hands of the person behind the wheel. If you are graced with the opportunity to "put something else on", choose decisively and wisely.

#### IT'S A CAR, NOT A BIN

One for the kids – whether chocolate bar wrappers, Happy Meal toys or poorly mopped-up orange squash, there is nothing that angers a driver more than finding his or her car resembling a bin lorry at the end of a long trip.

#### **FREE PETROL**

Contributing towards petrol is usually something that's laid out before a journey starts, but if this hasn't been discussed and you find yourself pulling up at your destination, it's usually polite to offer.

#### THANKS FOR THE RIDE

Gratitude costs nothing, and a simple 'thank you' to the driver will make him or her feel that much better about themselves after suffering half an hour of you bemoaning Arsenal's recent woes.

#### THE FEET TREAT

Your pinkies should always be kept out of sight and in the footwell (there's a clue in the name). Raising them to the height of the dashboard – and leaving them there – is a one-way ticket to taking the bus next time.



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comfier alternative to regular heeled boots.

Wear to the beach, a casual occasion or lunch with the girls.

#### Why choose heels?

There are several types of heels, including stilettos, kitten heels, block heels, mules and heeled boots, with each one providing a slightly different look and feel. If you are a pro at walking in high heels and want a showstopping look, then stilettos are the shoe for you. However, if you struggle with too much height, opt for a more modest kitten heel.

As a general rule, the wider the heel, the easier it is to walk in and the more support it offers your

Wear to a formal occasion, a night on the town or an important meeting.

Protect your feet by limiting wearing high heels to three times a week, regularly stretching your calf muscles and soaking your feet in an Epsom salt bath for 10-15 minutes after wearing.

THE SWEEP BACK

Best for square-shaped faces

THE TEXTURED CROP

Best for triangle-shaped faces

your man

nlike women, most men seem to have an "if it ain't broke, don't fix it" approach to getting a

new hairstyle. But does your current cut really

complement your face? Discover the latest hairstyle

If you've got a commanding jawline that outmeasures your cheekbones, then you have the perfect face shape to rock the textured crop. Seen on the likes of Chris Hemsworth and Jake Gyllenhaal, ask your barber for some extra weight on the sides

Great for showcasing length on the top and natural texture, this

is an easy style that requires little maintenance. Make sure to ask for plenty of length in the fringe, getting shorter towards the back.

If you are growing out your hair and you have a square-shaped

face, you are the ideal candidate for a swept back look. Enjoying renewed interest since the series Poldark hit our screens, ask

your barber to balance your hair for this longer style.

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#### HOW TO

# **PERFORM CPR**

ON AN ADULT

ardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) could save your life, the life of a loved one or the life of a stranger. Find out how to perform CPR on an adult below.

#### **HOW TO DO CPR ON AN ADULT:**

- > If you find someone collapsed, do not place your face close to theirs. Instead, check to see if they are responsive by asking them questions. If they do not respond in any way, they are unresponsive and should be treated as soon as possible.
- > Next, check that their airway is open and clear by placing one hand on their forehead to tilt their head back and using two fingers from your other hand to lift their chin.
- > To check if they are breathing, do not place your face close to theirs. Instead, watch to see if their chest moves.
- > If an adult is unresponsive and not breathing, ask someone to call 999 or 112 for emergency help and to find a defibrillator while you commence CPR as detailed below.
- > Place a towel or piece of clothing over the mouth and nose of the casualty to protect yourself from the risk of infection.
- > Kneel next to the person and put the heel of your hand on the middle of
- > Put your other hand on top of the first and interlock your fingers, making sure that they do not touch the ribs.
- > Keep your arms straight, lean over the person and press down hard to the depth of 5-6cm before releasing pressure.
  - > Allow the chest to come back up.
  - > In line with new COVID-19 guidelines, do not give rescue breaths.
  - > Continue to perform CPR until emergency help arrives, the person starts to show signs of life and starts to breathe normally, or until a defibrillator is ready to be used.

IN NEXT MONTH'S EDITION, LEARN HOW TO PERFORM CPR ON CHILDREN AND BABIES.

















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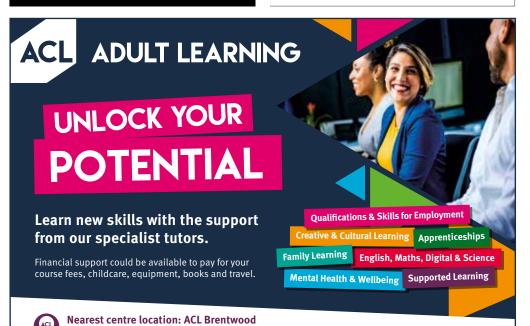
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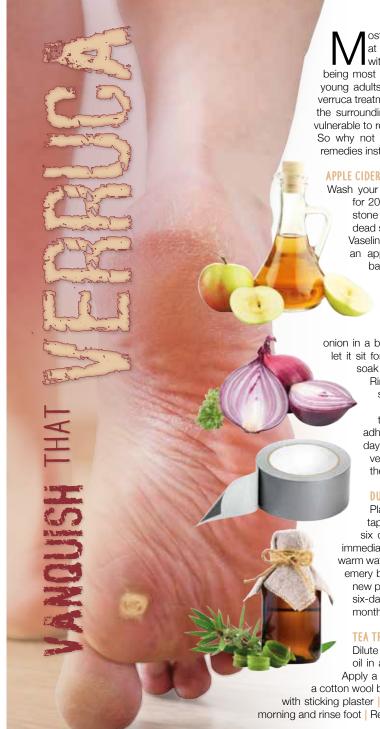
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ost people will get a verruca at some point in their lives, with this unsightly virus being most common in children and young adults. Although you can buy verruca treatments, these can damage the surrounding skin, making it more vulnerable to reinfection.

So why not try the following natural remedies instead?

#### APPLE CIDER VINEGAR

Wash your foot and soak in water for 20 minutes | Use a pumice stone to gently remove any dead skin | Apply a thin layer of Vaseline around the verruca | Fix an apple cider-soaked cotton

ball over the affected area | Check and replace until the verruca has

Place several 1/2-inch slices of onion in a bowl, sprinkle with salt, cover and let it sit for one hour | Wash your foot and soak in soapy water for 20 minutes

Rinse and pat dry | Break an onion slice and rub over your verruca Take another slice, place it on the verruca and cover with an adhesive bandage | Leave for three days and then check to see if the verruca has shrunk | Replace until the verruca has gone.

#### **DUCT TAPE**

Place a suitable-sized piece of duct tape over the verruca | Leave for six days. If the tape falls off, replace immediately | Immerse the verruca in warm water | Gently rub the verruca with an emery board | The next morning, apply a new piece of duct tape to begin another six-day cycle | Continue for up to two months or until it's gone.

#### TEA TREE OIL

Dilute three or four drops of tea tree oil in a small amount of aloe vera gel Apply a small amount to the verruca with a cotton wool ball Tape the cotton wool in place with sticking plaster | Leave overnight | Remove in the

morning and rinse foot | Repeat until verruca has gone.

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# ON YOUR BIKE

earning to ride a bike is a rite of passage for most children, yet only three per cent of adult Brits cycle daily. It has the ability to transform your health and reduce the cost of your commute, so—let's take a closer look at the benefits of biking. Plus, our tips to help you get started.

#### WHAT ARE THE HEALTH BENEFITS OF REGULAR BIKE RIDING?

Riding a bicycle regularly provides one of the best ways to reduce your risk of health problems associated with a sedentary lifestyle. A low-impact activity that can be enjoyed by people of all ages, consistent cycling can:

- o Increase cardiovascular fitness
- o Improve muscle strength and flexibility
- c Enhance joint mobility
- o Decrease stress levels
- o Improve posture and coordination
- o Strengthen bones
- o Lower body fat levels
- o Reduce anxiety and depression

#### VISIT YOUR LOCAL BIKE SHOP

Rather than shopping online, it can be a much better idea to visit your local bike shop as they will be able to offer advice on choosing the right bike for your needs.

#### ADJUST YOUR BIKE ACCORDINGLY

For maximum comfort and to avoid injury, you need to find your optimal saddle height. This can be carried out by placing your heel on the pedal at its furthest away point. Your leg should be straight so that when you clip in, there is a slight bend.

#### **BEST BEGINNER-FRIENDLY BIKES**

- o Apollo Slant Men's Mountain Bike
- o Cross Daisy Classic 26 Inch Wheel Size Heritage Women's Bike
- o Pinnacle Lithium Two

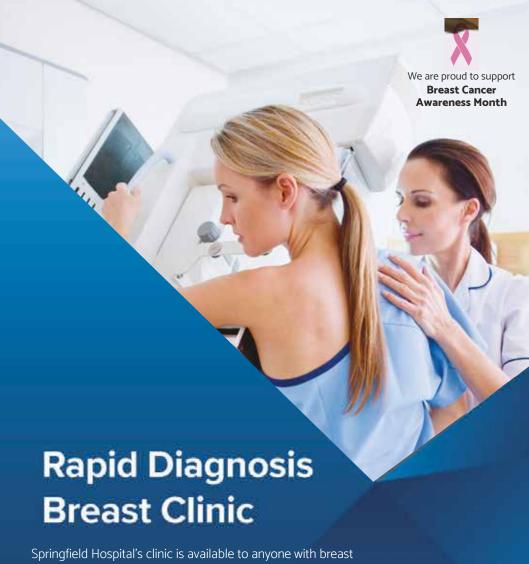
#### NOT READY TO GET ON THE ROAD?

If you invest in an exercise bike instead, you can enjoy all the benefits of cycling without having to step foot outside your front door.

#### **BEST INDOOR SMART BIKES**

- o Peloton Indoor Training Bike
- o Echelon Smart Connect EX3
- o Sportstech SX400 Speedbike





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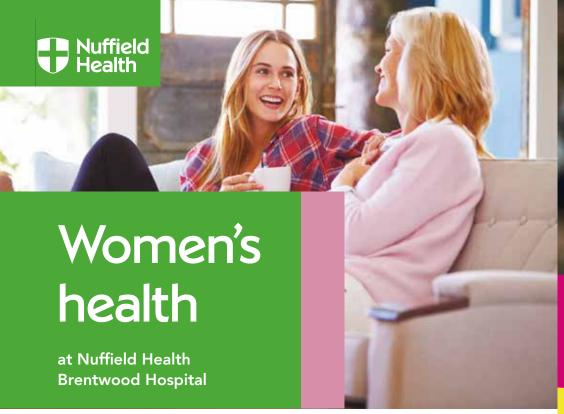
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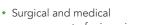


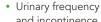
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Each month, we look at some of the most significant events in British sporting history. Proving that good things really do come in threes, we recall Super Saturday at the London 2012 Olympics.

ugust 4 always had the potential to be one of the defining days of the London 2012 Olympics.

Of course, Team GB had a memorable campaign anyway, accumulating a total of 65 medals, 29 of them gold. But sometimes events come together to produce a compilation of such exhilarating determination, skill and sporting endeavour, that a nation feels truly united.

And so it was at the Olympic Stadium on the first weekend of August when, within a 45-minute period, three British athletes wrote themselves into sporting folklore.

First up was Greg Rutherford in the long jump. The toiling set of leaps eventually ended with him setting a benchmark of 8.31m - one that nearest rival, Mitchell Watt of Australia, couldn't better.

Jessica Ennis-Hill then stepped up in the 800m. The Brit needed victory in the event to take heptathlon gold and led from the start. Having dropped to third by the time the final straight emerged, she powered home to the roar of a deafening crowd, and gold was secured at 9.02pm.

Confirmation of Rutherford's gold came at 9.24pm, and with the Brit still soaking up the applause from his winning jump, Mo Farah tore past the bell on the final lap of his 10.000m run. Leading into the bend. he powered away from the pack to land the ultimate middle-distance prize - Olympic gold.

Farah's achievement came at 9.42pm. It was an evening - 42 minutes, in fact - of athletics that will never be forgotten and, perhaps, never bettered.





#### HOW GARETH SOUTHGATE'S ENGLAND HEROES CAME SO CLOSE TO ENDING 55 YEARS OF HURT

utting to one side the sour way it ended, the UK's Euro 2020 experience was undoubtedly the tonic the whole nation needed.

While, as a country, we are certainly not alone in the mental and physical setbacks encountered over the past 18 months, the spectre of COVID-19 loomed particularly large over these shores. Even as the showpiece final played itself out at Wembley on July 11, the banks of empty seats showed that the pandemic is not over yet.

Add in economic and societal tensions, and a successful England team was the boost everyone was hoping for. And for a few weeks, we were uplifted, inspired and full of admiration for our heroes.

In Gareth Southgate, England had a manager of wisdom, yet weighed down somewhat by the

expectation of what this team should do. Making it to the World Cup semi-final three years ago became a standard to replicate, at the very least, and with home advantage for all but one game in the tournament, there was always the justified belief we should go far.

Many label the former defender a 'yes man', but his team selections clearly showed a resilient, stubborn side to his character. Blessed with an unprecedented array of attacking flair, Southgate opted for a 'safety first' strategy, nullifying the opposition's forward threat in three group games – two of which saw 1–0 wins (versus Croatia and Czech Republic), with the other an admittedly dour goalless draw against Scotland.

In the first knockout game, a 2–0 win against old rivals Germany: in the guarter-final, a totally

dominant showing as Ukraine were hit for four; in the semi-final, the courage and fortitude to come from behind (and the shock of actually seeing someone put the ball in our net) as we defeated Denmark 2–1.

Southgate's confidence in his stubborn 5–3–2 formation was upheld in every game. When he switched to a 4–3–3, we marvelled at the sudden versatility of the squad. It's this very thing that will give us the confidence to succeed at the World Cup in Qatar next year, when expectation levels will once again be incredibly high.

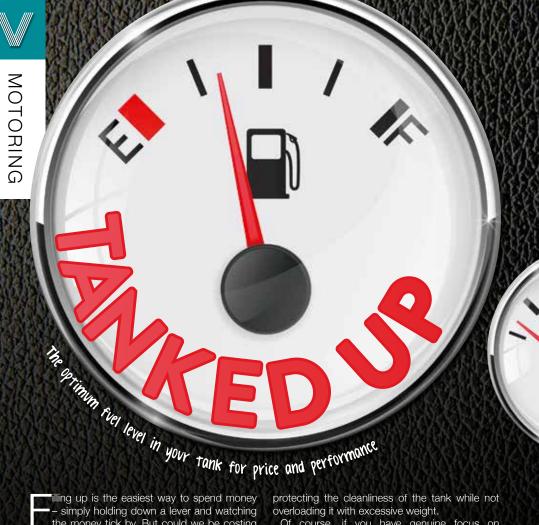
Regrets? Well, the horror of the penalty shoot-out came back to bite us. But apart from that, some will feel we should have been more positive going forward. In Raheem Sterling and Harry Kane, we always had matchwinners. Even with five at the

back, the wing-back play of Kyle Walker and Kieran Trippier offered attacking intent. But many will point to the lack of real opportunities for Jack Grealish, Jadon Sancho, Jude Bellingham, Marcus Rashford, Phil Foden and others, and wonder what those talented lads might have achieved with longer on the pitch.

The good news is that 'youth' is almost a byword for England now. We had the second-youngest squad in the whole tournament and, arguably, on paper, the most talented. It's been some time since we've been able to lavish such high praise on our Three Lions, even if we still find ourselves ticking the box titled 'unfulfilled potential'.

In Gareth we trust, and he will know better than anyone else how we can take that one last step forward into football folklore.

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the money tick by. But could we be costing ourselves even more by having too much or too little petrol or diesel in our tank?

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Conflictingly, while having a full tank may give you a feeling of power and motoring potential, the weight of the fuel can end up costing you more, since that same additional weight requires more power to lug it around.

The general recommendation is to try to keep your tank above a quarter full at all times, and not beyond three-quarters. Within this range you're protecting the cleanliness of the tank while not overloading it with excessive weight.

Of course, if you have genuine focus on optimising fuel cost and efficiency, you're probably already looking at the dawning of the greener fuels era, which could be heading to our fuel station forecourts as early as next year.

Transport Secretary Grant Shapps recently unveiled plans to introduce E10 as the standard grade at pumps in the UK. The current E5 petrol contains five per cent bioethanol; by embracing a minimum 10 per cent renewable energy ratio within the fuel, it is expected we will reduce CO<sup>2</sup> emissions by 750,000 tonnes per year - that's the equivalent of taking 350,000 cars off the road. And while an estimated 600,000 vehicles won't be compatible with the fuel, these concerted efforts to continue to reduce the nation's carbon emissions have been welcomed by environmental campaigners.







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If you are a first-time land buyer, the process of picking the right plot can be more than a little daunting. In fact, it can be completely terrifying.

Fortunately, our land-buying guide will help you every step of the way.

Think about why you want to buy land. Do you see it as a better investment than stocks and shares? Are you looking to build your forever home? Or perhaps you're seeking a smallholding (a piece of land of less than 50 acres) so that you can become more self-sufficient?

Development land can be either a greenfield or a brownfield site, with the former never having been built on before and the latter having either been built on or having buildings on it. Each is subject to different planning requirements.

In the same way that you would check out the local property market if you were buying a house, you need to research the land-buying market in your preferred areas. Land values can range from £5,000 to £15,000 per acre, so you need to find out what is a reasonable price to pay for a piece of land before committing.

The land market is plentiful, so you will have lots of choice when it comes to finding the perfect plot. Plotfinder.com is the UK's leading land-finding service, but you can also try land auctions if you are prepared to move quickly.

You should always hire a chartered surveyor to inspect a plot of land before you make a purchase. They will be able to establish which category the ground is and whether it is fit to build on. They will check for risk of flooding, pollution and subsidence.





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#### **REASONS TO BE CHEERFUL**

As the country emerges from lockdown, an increasing: sense of optimism has filled the air as normality returns this summer.

#### **FASTER RECOVERY PREDICTED**

There also appears to be a similar air of optimism in relation to economic matters, with data across the first half of this year proving to be stronger than analysts had expected. As a result, there now seems to be a good chance that major economies on both sides of the Atlantic will have recovered the lost ground caused by the COVID-19 pandemic before the end of 2021.

#### GLOBAL GROWTH FORECASTS UPGRADED

This has led to a string of renowned international forecasting agencies upgrading their global growth projections during the past few months. The UN's mid-2021 World Economic Situation and Prospects Report, for instance, revealed an annual growth forecast of 5.4 per cent for this year, up significantly from January's 4.7 per cent estimate. This brighter outlook largely reflects the rapid vaccine rollout in a few large economies, principally the US and China, as well as an increase in global trade.

#### **DIVERGING FORTUNES**

UN economists, however, did warn that inadequate availability of vaccines in many countries was threatening a more broad-based global recovery. The report did strike a note of caution, suggesting that: "The economic outlook for the countries in South Asia, sub-Saharan Africa and Latin America and the Caribbean remains fragile and uncertain."

#### **ADVICE REMAINS PARAMOUNT**

While the outlook has certainly improved significantly across the first half of this year, the UN forecast reinforces how the pandemic continues to create a relatively uncertain economic backdrop. This inevitably means the provision of expert advice is a vital component of investor success. We can help you make the most of any investment opportunities that do arise.

At HCR, we take the time to understand our clients' 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 Karvn Vogel on 01277 654153.



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