

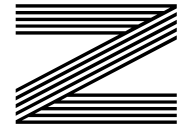
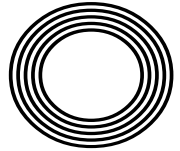
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# Editor's notes...

NOVEMBER 2021



Nik Allen, Editor

Hello and welcome to this month's edition of **VISION**BrentwoodOngar. I am writing this after the recent death of Sir David Amess MP. Sir David was a monthly contributor to our **VISION**LeighThorpeBay edition. Over the past few days, I have read many articles and seen local people talk about their admiration of Sir David. For certain, he was a great person and a family man who cared greatly for the soon-to-be city of Southend, and his commitment to his role has been reinforced by the Prime Minister and the Queen in their recent speeches. For more than 40 years, he worked tirelessly for the area of Southend.

My thoughts and prayers are with Sir David's family and close friends.

If ever we needed a reminder to hold our loved ones close, this is it. Spread love, not anger. In a world full of hate and cruelty, it's moments like this, when honouring a true gent in Sir David, that remind us life is short and you never know what's next. His legacy lives on through the lives he's touched over the years and his mark in Essex and in politics. RIP Sir David Amess MP.

In this month's edition, we look back on Romesh Ranganathan's career and his new venture as host of *The Weakest Link*. We also discover Prince Charles's latest attempt to reduce his carbon footprint.

*Nik Allen*

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# ASTON *marvelling*

**HOW HRH PRINCE CHARLES, SOME LEFTOVER WINE AND A CONSTITUENT OF CHEESE ARE HELPING THE PURSUIT OF ECO TRAVEL**

It's a fine line between innovation and eccentricity, but HRH Prince Charles appears to have landed the right side of it... just.

The Prince of Wales, who turned 73 in November and is first in line to the throne, has converted his cherished Aston Martin DB6 so that it can run on cheese waste and surplus white wine. His move to decarbonise fits perfectly with a modern revolution in motoring, where electric cars, the future ban of the sale of petrol and diesel vehicles, and various road taxes designed to keep gas-guzzlers out of our city centre spaces are giving our roads a green makeover.

Charles revealed in a recent interview that he was offered the conversion some time ago and did not hesitate to accept.

"I think when opportunities and ideas come your

way, you need to judge them on their own merits," he says.

"Certainly, where classic cars are concerned, there is the temptation to leave them as they are and not tinker with them, but if we all thought like that, we wouldn't make the strides we have, and the strides we need to."

It was Gloucestershire-based firm Green Fuels – the company has since earned a Royal Warrant of Appointment – which suggested it could supply bioethanol produced from a combination of wine and cheese (whey).

Blending the fuel then adding 15 per cent unleaded petrol meant the car was more powerful than before, yet significantly greener.

Of course, this isn't

the first time Prince Charles has taken the lead where green and eco matters are concerned. He established The Prince's Trust and The Prince's Rainforests Project and has always been a passionate advocate for initiatives that put the planet's needs first. He became the first member of the royal family to adopt electric cars for official duties in 2018, and has rallied behind his son William's successful efforts with The Earthshot Prize, with its £1million bounty awarded to fund solutions to help tackle climate change.

However, Charles believes there is much still to be done. He says the world's leaders are big on environmental talk, but rarely take the actions required to back up the platitudes.

"It is time for a lot of

people, influential people, to stand up and make real decisions," he says. "They have the expertise, they have the wherewithal and they have the resources, so there is no reason why we can't be moving forward much quicker than we are."

"Green initiatives in the past always seemed to come with some sort of cost or inconvenience. A lot of those I see today have no such thing – look at my DB6, it is a better vehicle than it was before."

The classic Aston Martin emerged in 1969 and has been one of Charles's true joys. He even enlisted the services of two-time Formula One world champion, Graham Hill, to teach him how to drive the car to its maximum potential.

He added: "It gives me great pleasure every time I drive it – and to know I can do that while limiting harm to the environment is a wonderful feeling."



Photo credit: David Hartley/Shutterstock



### THE CHRISTMAS GIFT IDEAS THAT KEEP ON GIVING

A gift isn't just for Christmas, so treat your loved ones to a subscription box this festive season and leave it to the postman to deliver the perfect package to your friend or family member's doorstep each month.

**Flower and plant subscription service** – If you have a green-fingered friend, what better gift than a new potted plant or bunch of flowers each month? Also suited to remote workers who could do with freshening up their home working environment. You can even find sustainable providers who only work with Fairtrade growers.

**Cocktail subscription service** – For your boozy bestie or a mum who loves a mojito, a cocktail subscription service makes the perfect gift. Depending on the service you select, the recipient can expect to receive ingredients and instructions to make a new cocktail each month.

**Food subscription service** – Whether you know someone who is a real foodie or your loved one could do with a helping hand in the kitchen, a weekly delivery of high-quality, fresh ingredients is just what they need. Choose the size of the box depending on how many people they cook for. Subscriptions are available to cater for all dietary requirements.

**Gadget subscription service** – Being a tech enthusiast can be expensive, but what if you could enable your gadget-loving friend to try out a new device every month? Pick between health and fitness gadgets, entertainment devices and even relationship tech.

**Craft subscription service** – If you are looking for a subscription service for children, then a monthly craft box is a great idea. With subscriptions available for all ages, you can find boxes that contain a range of fun science, technology, engineering, art and maths activities.

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# Living the island lifestyle



Having completed projects for them in their two previous homes, it was probably no surprise that that Mr & Mrs Emerson contacted Regal Kitchens when they bought a new property in Benfleet, Essex.

With the aid of their sister company, Regal Developments, Phil Edgell was able to help design an open-plan living area. Knocking down the small, cramped, unwelcoming kitchen and extending to create a generous sized (over 40 sqm) area.

When the architect plans were drawn up, they asked designer John Martin, with whom they had worked with on both their previous projects to assist with the kitchen plan. After consultation they concluded that as well as a main kitchen, they needed a working utility space (with no visible appliances) & ideally a separate drinks area for hosting friends & family, also a dining area with additional soft furnishings, tv etc.

John explains the design: "By opting for the Schuller furniture, we were able to integrate the extractor above the induction hob yet keep the bottom of the wall cabinets in a straight line, creating a modern unfussy look. We ordered the handle less trims in brushed metal to compliment the seamless strips joining the Neff oven & combi.

Putting the sink in the island meant that we were able to keep that big kitchen feel without demanding the cook jog a marathon to create every meal.

Although the build granted both a sky-pod and bi-fold doors we didn't want to lose the natural light from the existing kitchen, so the window was replaced with a narrower one to allow for

the tall and wall cabinets in the new utility area. By housing the freestanding wet appliances in a bespoke deep & wide larder and duplicating that in front of the vertical beam, we were able to hide the structural support, giving us generous storage as well as creating a symmetrical look to the area & clearly defining each zone.

A free-standing wine cooler, a twenty-four-bottle wine rack, a worktop ice maker and wall cabinets with built in LED lights creates a Barkeeps dream area without compromising on the homogenous feel of the room.

Mr and Mrs Emerson had previously enjoyed the unrivalled capabilities of Neff products in their other two Regal Kitchens, this time they opted for a pyrolytic single oven, microwave-oven combi, flexinduction hob with hidden extractor, under counter fridge and freezer as well as dishwasher to complete their beautiful new space.

The counter tops are 40mm Schuller laminate to co-ordinate with the top cabinets with a warm grey Alusplash wall covering. The statement piece is the beautiful island worksurface, made from 20mm Cambria Quartz, it contrasts wonderfully in thickness, colour, material and look with the other tops as well as lightening the impact of the sophisticated, dark base furniture. The huge piece not only covers the integrated dishwasher, bins, sink, compulsory kettle tap it still leaves room for additional storage, pop up electrics and seating for four. Really creating that elusive WOW factor.

Overall Regal & (our hat trick achieving) clients are both proud and delighted with this project.



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# BREAK OUT THE Brake cleaner

**B**rake cleaner isn't just for vehicle maintenance. It can also be used in several household applications, with unbelievable results.

### How to use brake cleaner

If you have used brake cleaner on your car, then you won't have any problems using brake cleaner in your home as the application process is the same. However, if you haven't used brake cleaner before, simply follow the below steps:

- > Shake the can thoroughly to activate the formula.
- > Hold the can about 30cm away from the surface and apply.
- > Allow the brake cleaner to soak in and evaporate.
- > Reapply to stubborn areas and wipe away any excess dirt with a clean cloth before it evaporates.

Always wear gloves and use in well-ventilated areas. Do not allow brake cleaner to come into contact with plastic or rubber, and keep away from any open flames.

**To clean windows:** With the ability to cut through grease without leaving any residue, apply sparingly when using brake cleaner to achieve streak-free

windows. Wipe with a microfibre cloth for optimum results.

**To remove stains from a driveway:** Unsightly oil stains can ruin the look of your concrete driveway, but can be easily removed by throwing down some cat litter or sawdust to get rid of the worst of the spill and then applying brake cleaner.

**To remove ink and paint:** Brake cleaner can effectively remove stains made by permanent markers, paint and nail polish on surfaces such as walls, tables and countertops.

**To remove stains from fabrics such as tablecloths:** Perchloroethylene, a chemical that is commonly used in chlorinated brake cleaners, is also used by professional dry cleaners to remove food and oil stains. Always test in a non-conspicuous spot first and wash the fabric as usual after application.



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DULUX COLOUR OF THE YEAR

# Bright Skies

OPEN YOUR EYES TO BRIGHT SKIES



HOME & DIY



It's perhaps peculiar that Dulux waits for the time of year when the summer skies begin to seep away, and the radiant, elegant blueness of those warm months is dissipating, to name its much-heralded Colour of the Year... as blue.

The reveal of Bright Skies as a shade that is set to transform our homes for the next 12 months coincides with an autumnal browning and greying of life outside our windows. Yet the paint expert's choice has been met with approval for its ability to extend our elevated, enlightened view on the year for just a little bit longer, as winter gradually approaches.

Dulux's choice has much to do with the brightness and optimism that is being felt in the wake of the end of lockdown. The brand speaks of uplift and progression, with the colour working as an alternative to the mass of light grey shades that have

been so prevalent in offices.

The ability of Bright Skies to blend with all manner of other tones makes it stand up to scrutiny. Its pastel essence draws in other colours instead of repelling them, so use it in living spaces, against light or medium woods, and even on ceilings. Alternatively, pick out the colour on cushions or fabrics.

In the kitchen, a Blue Skies splashback can offer incredible contrast to silver or copper pots and pans; while in the bathroom, ditching formal white for this breathless, brilliant blue will give 'big sky' thinking to every groggy winter morning.

Where, in the past, light blue could feel cold and frosty, particularly when temperatures begin to drop in the winter months, Dulux is asking us to view it from a new angle, accompanying it with textures and tones to help us decorate even the gloomiest of days with bright, sunny, uplifting moments.

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HOME & DIY



## How to clean a COOKER HOOD FILTER

Can you remember the last time you checked underneath your cooker's hood to see if the exhaust fan filter needed a good clean? If it's been a while, we warn you, this is not going to be a pretty sight.

Fortunately, you can get your filter looking squeaky clean and grease-free in just eight simple steps.

### WHAT YOU NEED:

Boiling water | Washing-up liquid | Baking soda | A non-abrasive scrubbing brush | Paper towels or a tea towel

### HOW TO CLEAN:

- > **Step 1: REMOVE THE FILTER FROM THE HOOD**  
The filter should easily slide or pop out from underneath the hood.
- > **Step 2: FILL A BUCKET WITH BOILING WATER**  
You can use hot water from the tap, but boiling water is more effective.
- > **Step 3: ADD BAKING SODA AND WASHING-UP LIQUID**  
Pour ¼ cup of baking soda and a good squirt

of washing up liquid into your bucket of boiling water and swirl around with a brush. Be careful not to place your hands directly into the water, to prevent burns.

- > **Step 4: SUBMERGE YOUR FILTER IN THE WATER**  
Make sure the filter is completely covered by the boiling water.
- > **Step 5: LEAVE IT TO SOAK**  
Allow the filter to soak for a minimum of 10 minutes, longer if possible.
- > **Step 6: SCRUB THE FILTER**  
Once the filter has finished soaking, take it out of the water and scrub with a non-abrasive brush. Add more washing-up liquid to your brush if needed.
- > **Step 7: RINSE AND DRY YOUR FILTER**  
Rinse the filter in hot water and dry with paper towels or a tea towel.
- > **Step 8: REPLACE THE FILTER**  
Put the clean filter back into the hood and repeat as and when needed. It is recommended to clean your hood filter once a month to keep it working properly.



# LITTLE BIG BELL

ARE YOU IN NEED OF A COLOUR BOOST IN YOUR INTERIORS? LOOK TO BRIGHT AND BEAUTIFUL BLOG **LITTLE BIG BELL**

The world can be a little bleak sometimes; the last year has shown us that. Therefore, it's refreshing when a ray of sunshine comes into our lives that lifts our spirits and puts a smile on our faces. And that ray of sunshine is Little Big Bell.

Little Big Bell is the interiors blog of Dr Geraldine Tan, whose passion for design is clear to see. Little Big Bell is where Geraldine shares her incredible style, but by day, she's an NHS doctor based in London.

So what makes Little Big Bell's style so popular, and how can you get the look in your own home? Some of the most popular interiors trends at the moment favour muted colours and neutrals – a classic choice, but not everyone's cup of tea. So it's exciting to stumble across a style like Geraldine's. It's fresh, colourful and full of beautiful ideas. Her style is like pop art brought to life, and it's impossible not to smile when you browse through her incredible photos.

### HOW TO STYLE YOUR HOME THE LITTLE BIG BELL WAY

- Don't be afraid of colour. Geraldine uses all the colours of the rainbow for her interiors, creating a look that's light, energetic and so much fun.
- Use bold prints to brighten up your walls. Even if you're not confident enough to go for full-on colour, prints can be a subtle way to add colour to the most neutral of spaces.
- Go for the mix and match approach. Not everything has to be matchy-matchy – mix up your accessories to create a more interesting look. Geraldine's kitchen is the perfect example of how different types of vases and dinnerware can complement each other, even when they're all different. Using display cabinets can add colour and interest in your kitchen.
- Geraldine uses accessories such as cushions and rugs to inject some colour while bringing looks together. She uses cushions of the same shape and size in different colour and pattern variations, as well as rugs with complementary colours and patterns, to create a look that is cute and colourful but doesn't look over-the-top or gauche.
- In the bedrooms, Geraldine mixes muted colours with bolder hues that keep the room looking airy and spacious. A colour block wall is all you need as a starting point, and you can add furniture and accessories in different colours to create a similar look.
- Many people shy away from colour in the bathroom, but Geraldine's style provides the perfect inspiration for how pastel shades can make your bathroom look fun and interesting – a space that makes getting ready for the day all the more enjoyable.



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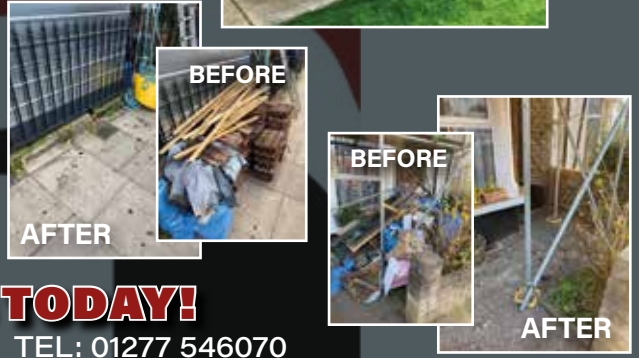
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HOME & DIY

# Trendsetting TERRARIUMS

Embrace the green interiors trend and bring a bit of nature indoors with our DIY guide to making your own terrarium.

Essentially a miniature glass plant display, a terrarium is simple to make and easy to look after, and each creation is 100 per cent unique.

### YOU WILL NEED:

A glass container such as a jam jar or a large pasta container – with or without a lid | Small stones or pebbles | Gravel | Potting soil – a small handful | Activated charcoal – you can buy this online and at some garden centres | Decorative items such as moss or marbles | Your chosen plants | A selection of small tools, including a little trowel and a pencil or chopstick.

### HOW TO PICK PLANTS:

Ideally, you should choose a slow-growing and small plant for your terrarium. You can consider a range of leafy plants, succulents and cacti depending on whether you are planning on having an open or closed ecosystem. Examples include:

Air plant | Nerve plant | Meadow spikemoss | Polka dot plant | Inch plant | Sweet woodruff | Earth Star bromeliad

### HOW TO SET UP YOUR TERRARIUM:

1. Add 2-3cm of pebbles to a dry and clean glass container. You could vary your design by turning the container on its side.
2. Add a scattering of activated charcoal. This will keep the water fresh and prevent bacteria from growing.
3. Layer on the potting soil. You need enough to comfortably cover the plant's roots.
4. Select your biggest plant first and then make a hole in the soil. Gently place the plant in and fill around it with soil.
5. Add any smaller plants that you want to feature in your terrarium.
6. Place in some more stones, pebbles, sand or moss.
7. Add any finishing touches.

### OUR TOP TERRARIUM DESIGN IDEAS:

- > Use a mini glass geometric terrarium container.
- > Create a hanging terrarium wall.
- > Make a miniature waterfall terrarium.
- > Design a lightbulb terrarium.
- > Add candles or fairy lights instead of plants to your container.





# SOFA, *so good*



From striking shades to fabulous fluting, tactile textures to durable designs, these five sofa trends for 2022 are anything but boring.

**Bold colours:** Moving away from more muted shades such as grey and dark slate blue, 2022 sofas are unabashedly bold and beautiful. Think bright blue and ruby red, as well as more subdued, warm colours such as paprika. Keep your walls neutral and let your sofas do the talking.

**Curves and fluting:** A key sofa trend that emerged in 2020 and is still going strong as we move into 2022, expect to see more intricate pleating combined with chunky quilting for a cosy yet stylish look. For an added sense of luxury, opt for velvets that perfectly complement the curves of the flutes.

**Raw materials:** Arguably one of the biggest sofa trends for 2022, the appearance of sofas will become more natural and pared back as people strive to embrace a more simplistic lifestyle. Look out for heavy textures such as bouclé which add softness, and more earthy tones like rust and green that simply scream 'au naturel'.

**Sustainability:** With consumers becoming increasingly interested in how their goods are made and how it affects the world they live in, ethical sofa designs are becoming much more mainstream. From sofas that are made using 100 per cent recycled fabric to styles that are designed with durability in mind, it has never been easier to buy a stylish sofa that also helps to reduce your carbon footprint.

**Mismatched sets:** Say goodbye to three-piece suites and hello to more eclectic, mismatched sofa arrangements. With spaces in the home now needing to be both versatile and tactile, regimented furniture schemes are no longer relevant. Instead, embrace different shapes, sizes, colours and patterns in your living room.



Photo credit: cloud-interiors.com, cocoonpublic.com.au, heels.com, Studio McGee via thespruce.com



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# LOCAL NEWS

*from your neighbourhood*



Photo credit: Essex Police

## Man charged in connection with murder of two teenage boys

Essex police have charged a man in connection with the murder of two teenage boys in Brentwood.

The two teenage boys who died have been provisionally identified by Essex Police as 16-year-olds Charlie Preston and Frankie Gater.

Charlie and Frankie died following a disturbance in Regency Court at around 1.30am on the morning of Sunday, October 24.

A post-mortem examination has been carried out and confirmed both boys had sustained stab wounds.

Frankie Watson, 19, of Baker Street, Orsett, has been remanded to appear at Southend Magistrates' Court, charged with two counts of murder, attempted murder, and possession of an offensive weapon.

Two men, a 20-year-old from Grays and a 21-year-old from South Ockendon, were arrested on suspicion of murder have been released on bail until November 19.

A 40-year-old man from Brentwood has been released under investigation.

The family of Charlie Preston have issued a short tribute.

It reads: "Forever our champ. Mummy and daddy love you."

Chief Inspector Antony Alcock was joined in Brentwood High Street by Brentwood borough council leader, councillor Chris Hossack, on October 28 and together they reassured residents that the town remains a safe place to live and work in.

CI Alcock said: "Officers in the Brentwood community policing team continue to carry out additional patrols and the boys families are being supported by our specially trained family liaison officers. The investigation continues to be conducted thoroughly and diligently by our Major Investigations Team."

Councillor Hossack said: "Our deepest sympathies are with the families of the boys whose lives were tragically taken."

Anyone who may be able to help the police with their investigation is urged to contact them on 101, quoting incident 125 of 24 October.

Alternatively, you can call Crimestoppers anonymously on 0800 555 111.



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# Schoolchildren make large foodbank donation

Children and families from Brentwood recently donated food to those in need as part of harvest festival celebrations.

Ursuline Preparatory School's donations – including tins, dried food, tea and coffee – have been given to Brentwood Foodbank.

Mrs Isabelle Parker-Litjens, deputy head, said: "I was overwhelmed with the generosity of the pupils and their parents. We are very happy that we can support

such an amazing cause, especially during these very testing times."

As well as collecting for the foodbank, members of staff also enjoyed a soup lunch and donated money to raise a total of £140 for Caritas in Canning Town, a charity that helps homeless people.

Mrs Sarah Macdonald, deputy head, who organised this event, expressed gratitude to the staff who contributed to this worthy cause.

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# Coffee van scheme to help pupils learn skills

Students with special educational needs in Brentwood will have the opportunity to gain work experience and new life skills in a coffee van.

Brentwood Borough Council, in a deal with Grove House School, has organised for the truck to teach young people customer-facing and retail skills, to help students increase their employability after they finish school.

Brentwood Council Leader, councillor Chris Hossack, said: "This proposal, while commercial in nature, also carries with it a high degree of social impact. The coffee van is a great way for students with special educational needs to gain new skills and grow in confidence, and we are excited to work with Grove House School to bring this to life.

"This experience will hopefully be a great help to the students to confidently approach potential employers with both skills and work experience that will put them in a much stronger position to secure employment."

The coffee van will be stationed outside the Town Hall, but can also be taken to community events.



Stock image



## Brentwood Town FC confirm new manager



Brentwood Town FC are "delighted" to have appointed Rod Stringer as their new first team manager. Stringer – formerly the manager of Aveley, Braintree, Bishop's Stortford and Chelmsford City – was confirmed as the new manager on Friday, October 8, following Adam Flanagan's departure.

A club statement reads: "It's exciting times at Brentwood Town and the real journey starts now." Rod was appointed while away, leaving Larry Bayford as caretaker manager for the FA Trophy match against Corinthian, which Brentwood won 2-1. Less than a week later, the club won their match against Coggeshall Town FC – their first under Stringer's leadership.

## Appeal for volunteers to help deliver blood to hospitals

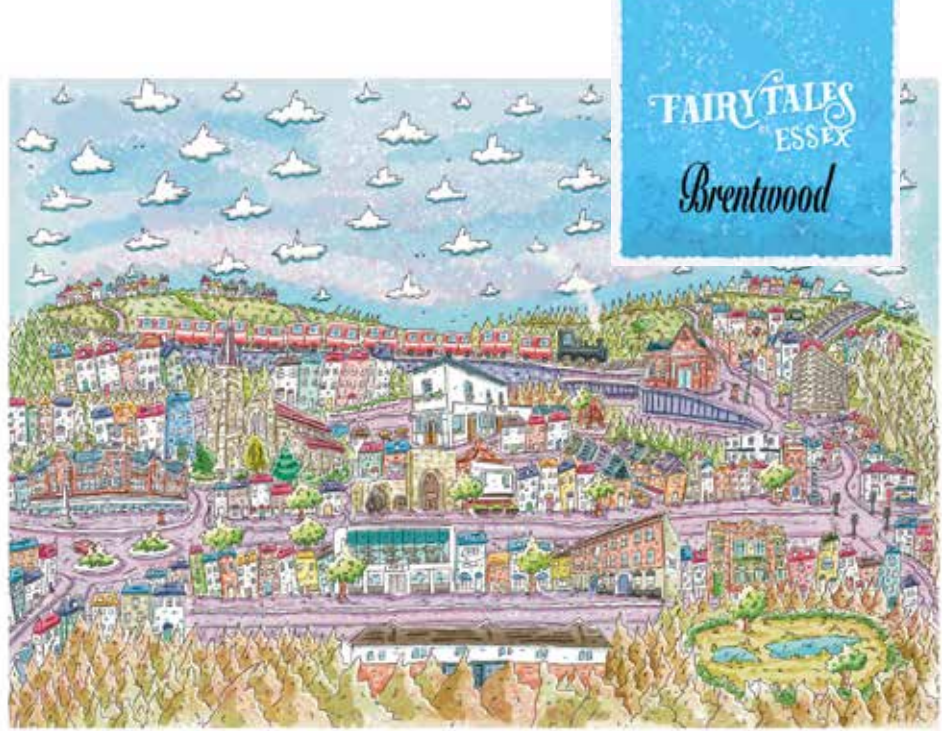
The Essex Voluntary Blood Service – known as Essex Blood Runners – is appealing for volunteers to help deliver blood. Blood Runners is a charity providing medical courier services to the NHS and local air ambulances, and Essex Blood Runners is one of 30 such organisations in the UK. The charity operates with unpaid volunteer riders and drivers, delivering blood and blood products to A&E hospitals in Essex and East London. The charity also transports breast milk from donors to the Hearts Milk Bank and Addenbrooke's Hospital. The volunteer team operates every weekday evening, as well as day and night shifts at weekends and on bank holidays. Carol Weller, chair and coordinator of Essex Blood Runners, said: "We have been extremely busy over the last 18 months and would not have achieved the

high level of service without our volunteers. "The demand on our services remains very high and we need more volunteers to ensure we can provide every single hospital in Essex and East London and our local air ambulances with the help they need when they need it." To fill out an application form to volunteer, visit [www.essexvoluntarybloodservice.com](http://www.essexvoluntarybloodservice.com)

## Hospital welcomes five new nursing apprentices

Five apprentices have begun their nursing degree at Spire Hartswood Hospital in Brentwood. Private healthcare provider, Spire Healthcare, has taken on a total of 165 apprentices in one of the largest nurse degree apprenticeship programmes in the country, designed to train the healthcare leaders of the future. The nurse degree apprenticeship is in partnership with the University of Sunderland and combines study and assessments with on-site placements to help the apprentices gain practical knowledge. Jo Dean, hospital director at Spire Hartswood, said: "Here at Spire, we're determined to play our part in training the clinicians of the future, and we don't know of any other healthcare provider that is investing so heavily in apprentices."

The scheme lasts between two and five years and sees participants gain a BSc degree on completion. Edie Davenport, new apprentice at Spire Hartswood, said: "I've been inspired by the amazing work that everyone in healthcare has done during the pandemic, and this made me want to become a nurse myself." Interest in apprenticeships has risen in recent years as an alternative to the traditional university degree route. The programme is open to applicants at all stages of life, including school leavers, university graduates and people looking to retrain. To find out more, visit [www.spirehealthcare.com/recruitment](http://www.spirehealthcare.com/recruitment) and search 'apprenticeships'.



### Hi Vision Reader,

I'm a local artist and illustrator and for Christmas 2021, I decided to create a "Fairytale of Essex" Art Collection. Above is the artwork I created for Brentwood.

I was overjoyed at the wonderful support and keen embrace of this project by the local residents. So many people reached out with suggestions and ideas of what could be included in this fairytale. I have learned so much about the history and community and it has really enriched my appreciation of Brentwood. I really hope that the local community enjoys the artwork I have created.

The Fairytale includes: St Thomas of Canterbury Church, St Thomas Becket Chapel Ruins, Wilson's Corner, Crown Street & independent shops, Brentwood Train Station, William Hunter Memorial & Clock Tower, Weald Country Park, the local M&S and Sainsburys and various pubs and other buildings & details from around the town – all wrapped up in a fairytale setting. If you would like to purchase this artwork or find out more about the collection, please visit my website or contact me through the details below.

300 A3 & 100 A2 (signed & numbered) Art-prints are available now, in time for Christmas!

Thanks & Merry Christmas,  
Mike Young


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# BURGHART for BRENTWOOD



**Alex Burghart MP for Brentwood and Ongar**



**LOCAL NEWS BRENTWOOD**

The shocking and violent death of Sir David Amess, MP for Southend West, last month has changed the lives of his family, friends and parliamentary colleagues, who mourn the loss of this decent, kind and good man.

It is a fitting tribute to his years of campaigning that Southend is to be given city status. I will always be grateful to him for his kindness when I arrived in parliament in 2017.

The circumstances of Sir David's death mean all of us working in parliament and our constituencies need to take stock of our safety and listen to the excellent advice of the police and security services. That said, at this stage, I do not intend to change the way I work and campaign locally – if we arrive at a place where MPs cannot meet their constituents, the terrorists will have won. We will not let them.

Sadly, since Sir David's death, we have also seen two teenage boys die in Brentwood, although in different circumstances. I understand how concerning and worrying it is for all of us living in the area and I am in regular contact with the Brentwood District Commander, Chief Inspector Ant Alcock, who is based in Brentwood Police Station at the Town Hall, and whose team has been extremely helpful and effective throughout this most difficult time.



# Bishop launches climate project

In response to the climate change crisis, a new project has been launched in Brentwood to encourage people to take action.

Laudato Si' Invitations, Commitments and Actions was launched in the Brentwood diocese on October 2 by Bishop Alan Williams (pictured) in a letter to all parishes.

Bishop Alan Williams said: "This is not just another environmental campaign; it is an integral part of our faith."

The letter reads: "Today, you are receiving information about what the diocese is doing, and what you are invited to do, as individuals and as a parish. As part of this, each of us is asked to make three personal pledges, three ways in which we will act differently.

"We find ourselves at a moment which will define how human beings respond to the challenges of climate change.

"In making your personal pledges – in working to heal the planet and in striving for justice for the poorest people in the world – you are a living witness to Jesus Christ. Do not be afraid to tell people why you are doing whatever you choose to do."

To read the letter, search 'Laudato Si' Invitations, Commitments and Actions' on Google.





# LOCAL NEWS

*from your neighbourhood*



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# Railway's Christmas events return for festive season

With the festive season approaching, Epping Ongar Railway has announced the return of its Santa Specials.

Santa will return to town next month, offering the chance for the whole family to meet him on a train journey through the Essex countryside.

Guests can enjoy the festive food and sweet stalls on the platform while listening to the live brass band, before boarding the train.

Children will also have time to write a letter to Santa and enter the drawing competition.

The Santa experience begins at North Weald Station and the service will run on various dates from

December 4 until Christmas Eve.

Dean Walton, general manager, said: "We've been running our Santa Specials since 2012 and have a loyal following of families coming year on year; many are from the local Ongar and Brentwood area, and this year is no different.

"Sales have been very strong indeed and people are urged to book up as soon as possible for this year's services.

"In 2020, we introduced our Light Fantastic to cater for older children and adults."

To book, please visit [www.eorailway.co.uk/events/santa-specials](http://www.eorailway.co.uk/events/santa-specials)



## New service for those with memory issues



A new free monthly community service launched in Ongar on Wednesday, October 20.

3Food4U, the emergency aid non-profit organisation which provides food and essentials to those in need, has launched 3MemoryCafe4U.

The café is open to anybody who wants to meet new people, but is particularly focused on people with memory issues and those who love and care for them.

The monthly community service will take place on the third Wednesday of each month from 10am to 12pm at St James' Church Hall, Ongar.

Pesh Kapasiawala, founder of 3Food4U, said: "One of our community's biggest issues is around social care and dementia. Dementia is not only about memory loss; it can also affect the way you speak, think, feel and behave. It's important to remember that dementia is not a natural part of ageing."

The activity-based event features singing, word games, puzzles, bingo and other activities, as well as complimentary light refreshments. No booking is required.

For more information, contact Pesh on 020 8500 2527 or 07973 166940 or email pesh@londonresidential.co.uk

## Motorcyclist killed in serious collision with car

A motorcyclist was pronounced dead at the scene following a serious collision in High Ongar.

Essex Police were called by their colleagues in the ambulance service to reports of a collision involving a car and a motorcycle on the A414 at around 1.49pm on Tuesday, October 26.

Despite the best efforts of the medical team, the motorcyclist, a man aged in his 50s, sadly died.

The A414 was closed between the petrol station at Norton Heath and Kings Street, High Ongar, whilst

officers were on scene, before being reopened at around 8pm.

Essex Police would like to speak to anyone who was in the area at the time and saw the collision.

Witnesses and anyone with dashcam footage is asked to contact the police, quoting incident 613 of 26 October.

You can submit a report online at [www.essex.police.uk](http://www.essex.police.uk) or use the live chat button to speak to an online operator between 7am-11pm.

Alternatively, you can call 101.

Information can also be given to Crimestoppers 100 per cent anonymously on 0800 555 111.

## Killer, aged 94, appeals for parole for tenth time

The man dubbed 'Britain's most notorious killer', who was first jailed for the murder of a teenage boy in Ongar, is preparing to make a new bid for parole.

Sidney Cooke, 94, is serving a life sentence in HM Prison Wakefield and has spent more than 30 years behind bars.

Cooke was the leader of a gang of paedophiles known as the Dirty Dozen, which has been linked to a string of unsolved crimes.

In 1989, the former fairground worker served nine years in prison for the manslaughter of Jason Swift, 14, who was found in a field in Ongar, Essex.

After being released from prison and taken into voluntary custody for his own safety, Cooke was accused of abusing two teenage brothers and the rape of a young woman. During a subsequent trial, he pleaded guilty and admitted to 10 offences and received two life sentences.

Cooke can seek parole every two years. Following nine prior rejections, if his tenth attempt fails, he will have to wait two years and resubmit his application at the age of 96.

The panel's verdict is expected to be published later this month.



## Fruit & Nut Bark - a great gift idea from OvenGleaners to make this Christmas

- Ingredients**
- 75g cup walnuts
  - 450g good white chocolate, finely chopped
  - 75g dried cranberries
  - 75g medium-diced dried apricot

- Directions**
- Preheat the oven to 180°C.
  - Using a pencil, draw an 8-by-10-inch rectangle on a piece of parchment paper.
  - Turn the parchment paper over so the pencil mark doesn't get onto the chocolate and place it on a sheet pan.



Immediately stir in the remaining chocolate and allow it to sit at room temperature, stirring often, until it's completely smooth. (If you need to heat it a little more, place it in the microwave for another 15 seconds.)

Pour the melted chocolate onto the parchment paper and spread it lightly to fill the drawn rectangle.

Sprinkle the top evenly with the cooled walnuts, the cranberries and apricots. Press the nuts and fruit lightly so they will set in the chocolate.

Set aside for at least two hours until firm or refrigerate for 20 minutes. Cut or break the bark into 16 pieces and serve at room temperature.

Great as Christmas gifts - present in a small box or cellophane bag tied with a pretty ribbon.

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KIDS

# TIME TO APPLY *for schools*

WHAT TO CONSIDER WHEN APPLYING FOR A SCHOOL PLACE

Applying for a school place can be a stressful time for parents, filled with worry and apprehension. While the criteria will be different depending on whether you're looking for a primary or a secondary school, what should remain the same are the checks and investigations you undertake before cementing your choices.

**CHECK OFSTED RATINGS:** Ofsted ratings exist to help schools to improve, while also enabling parents a full view of what level an institution is at. Although inspections are irregular, reports are always full and detailed and often provide a good read, so check them out.

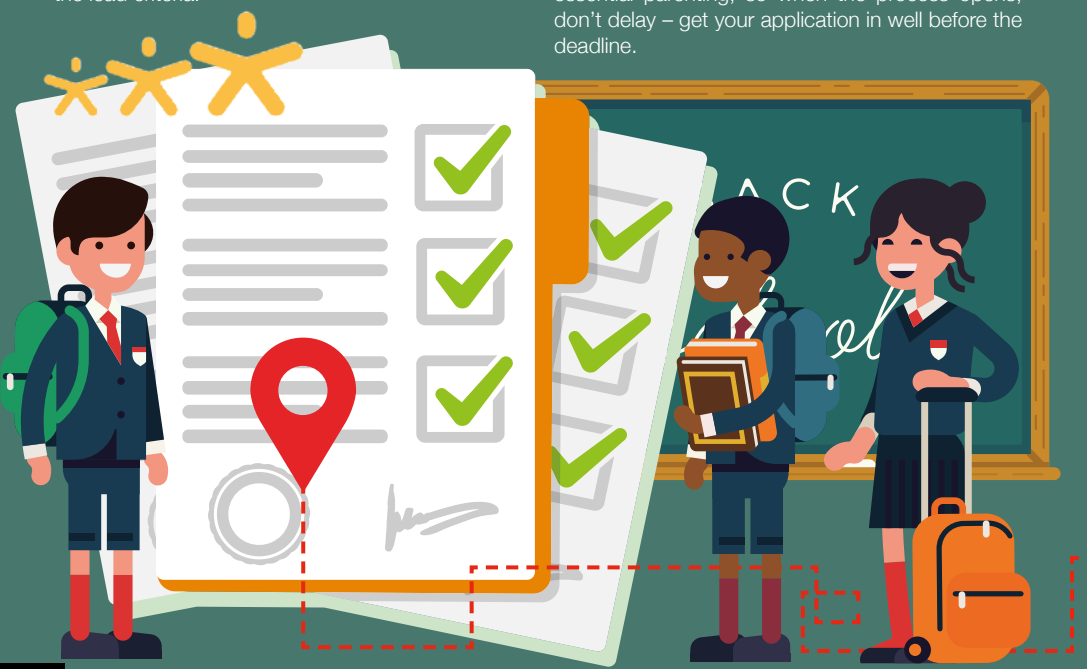
**CHECK YOUR SCHOOL RUN:** Have a look at the distance and route your child will be taking to school each day – is it practical, are there any hazards, does it fit in with your other morning commitments? Remember, for primary school children, proximity is the lead criteria.

**CHECK NUMBERS:** Being realistic about getting a place also means knowing the school's capacity, so have a look at last year's intake figures in order to give you a better idea of success rates.

**SPEAK TO PARENTS:** There's nothing quite like the experience of others, so chat to people locally whose kids already attend and gain a first-hand picture of what the school is really like.

**CONSIDER SECOND CHOICES:** If the worst thing happens and, for whatever reason, you don't land your first choice, look at and imagine your child attending an alternative school. Consider the positives, embrace the opportunity to go somewhere different and convey any optimism you have to your child – it will be vital should things not go to plan.

**DO NOT BE LATE:** Applying for a school place is essential parenting, so when the process opens, don't delay – get your application in well before the deadline.



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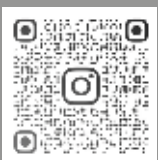
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30 years since the death of the icon  
**FREDDIE MERCURY**

It's somewhat peculiar that Freddie Mercury's only solo UK number one hit was in 1993, two years after his death – a remix of his track, *Living on My Own*, originally recorded eight years previously. And yet, in many ways, with its choral line, "I don't have no time for no monkey business", it provided the perfect posthumous legacy for a man who lived, created and inspired like every day was his last.

Naturally, solo work wasn't ever at the crux of what made Freddie Mercury great. As a founding member of rock bastion Queen, he was a singer, songwriter and producer with a four-octave range, a breathless flamboyance and a creative lit that put him in the same bracket as David Bowie, Sir Elton

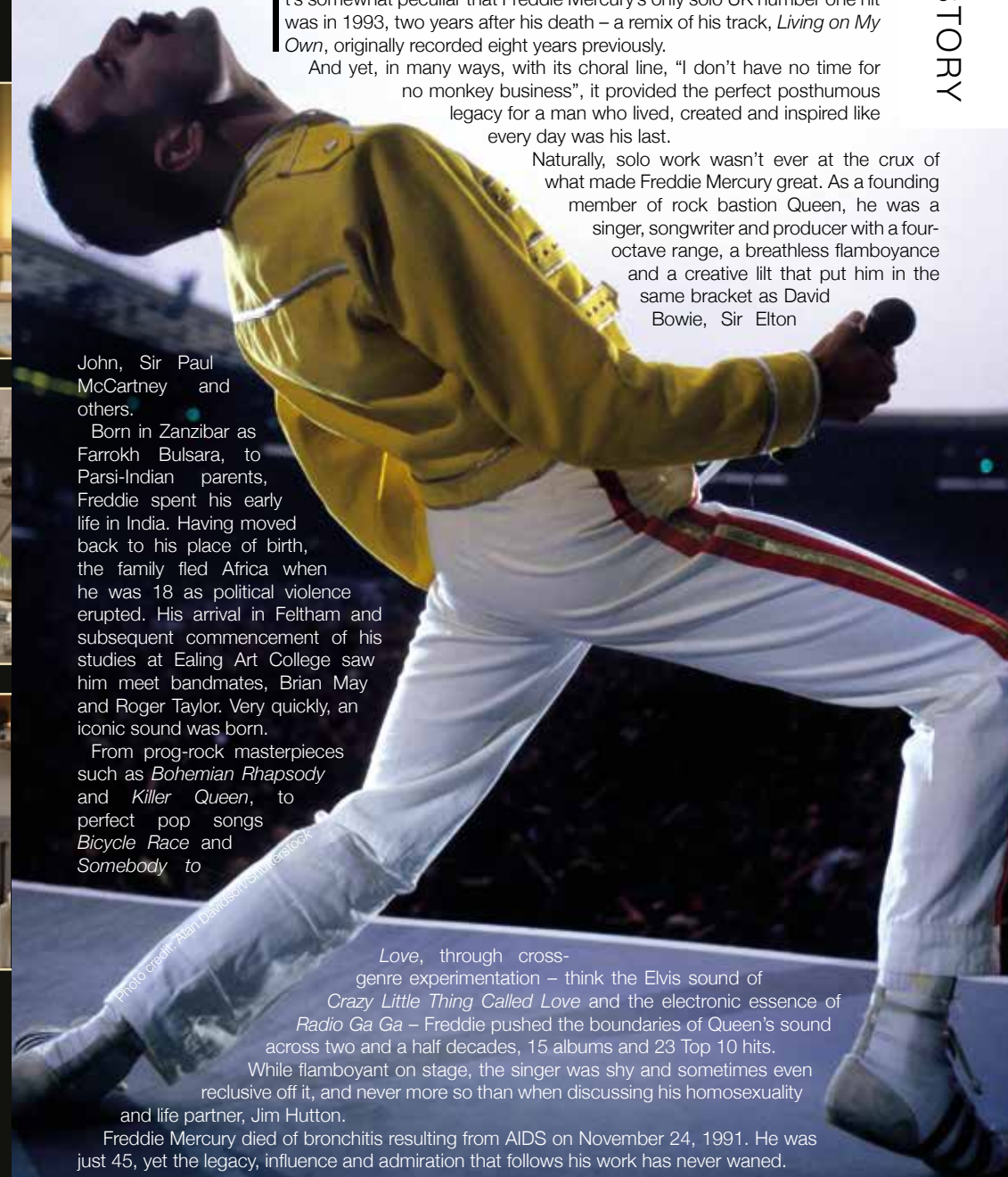
John, Sir Paul McCartney and others. Born in Zanzibar as Farrokh Bulsara, to Parsi-Indian parents, Freddie spent his early life in India. Having moved back to his place of birth, the family fled Africa when he was 18 as political violence erupted. His arrival in Feltham and subsequent commencement of his studies at Ealing Art College saw him meet bandmates, Brian May and Roger Taylor. Very quickly, an iconic sound was born.

From prog-rock masterpieces such as *Bohemian Rhapsody* and *Killer Queen*, to perfect pop songs *Bicycle Race* and *Somebody to*

Photo credit: Nan Davison / iStock

*Love*, through cross-genre experimentation – think the Elvis sound of *Crazy Little Thing Called Love* and the electronic essence of *Radio Ga Ga* – Freddie pushed the boundaries of Queen's sound across two and a half decades, 15 albums and 23 Top 10 hits. While flamboyant on stage, the singer was shy and sometimes even reclusive off it, and never more so than when discussing his homosexuality and life partner, Jim Hutton.

Freddie Mercury died of bronchitis resulting from AIDS on November 24, 1991. He was just 45, yet the legacy, influence and admiration that follows his work has never waned.



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# ROMESH RANGANATHAN

CELEBRATES 10 YEARS ON THE COMEDY CIRCUIT

Romesh Ranganathan is evidence personified that it's never too late to change direction in life. The 43 year old is a regular on the live circuit, on chat and panel shows and, from the end of this year, will take on the role of host of *The Weakest Link*. He is vastly experienced, wholly respected and has within his armoury the poise and potential to become one of this generation's stars of modern entertainment.

And yet, little more than 10 years ago, the Crawley-born-and-raised comedian was still a maths teacher. While his stock on the stand-up circuit was rising all the time, Ranganathan was another year away from turning professional. Instead, he was teaching at The Beacon School in Banbury and Hazelwick School in his home town, where he was once a student.

Indeed, Romesh – real name Jonathan – owes a lot to the West Sussex town. Rarely has Crawley found itself so namechecked in popular culture, yet Ranganathan has a peculiar affinity with it.

"I've just never seen the point in leaving," he says. "It's where I grew up, it's where my family are, it has a League Two football team. What more can you really ask for?"

The dad-of-three also launched a career as a rapper, under the name Ranga, and made it all the way to the finals of a UK freestyle competition.

The double BAFTA-winning star of his own series *The Ranganation*, *The Misadventures of Romesh Ranganathan* and *The Reluctant Landlord*, to name but three, Romesh's appeal is in his irreverent, somewhat sneering take on the world. In a world of increasing wokery, he's unafraid to examine and celebrate racial and societal differences, always with an undercurrent of self-deprecation.

Yet this is nothing new, nor an act. At school, he was the same, happy to deliver put-downs (or "slap downs" as he would call them), yet just as willing to accept them back from classmates.

"We've got to be able to take the mickey out of ourselves first and foremost," he says. "I think when you meet people who do that, you realise that the conversation is only ever going to be good."

"I often tell people who are easily offended not to come to my gigs. I don't set out to insult people, but I will highlight our failings as human beings – all of us."

"We need to get away from this veil of perfection, or the insinuation that if anyone pokes fun at us they must be racist or sexist or mentally damaged."

"I want us all to get back to having a laugh at ourselves and each other – I'm like a schizophrenic, Asian Jerry Springer. We should all have a set of put-downs ready to fire off at any moment."

There appears little danger that Romesh's refreshing brand of comedy is going to fall by the wayside. As he prepares to celebrate a decade in his entertainment career, his first move into quiz show hosting is an interesting diversion, with *The Weakest Link* returning to our screens after a 10-year absence.

"Obviously I've done stuff like *8 out of 10 Cats* and a couple of one-off projects such as *Have I Got News for You*, but this is the big one," he says. "I'm watching old shows with Anne Robinson wondering how I can possibly emulate this institution of TV."

"She's certainly much better than me at put-downs."

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# Cloudy2Clear, A Local Service With A Smile.

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.

When talking to the Manager of Cloudy2Clear windows Chris Miller it became clear that these values have been held dear for a number of years. Since starting the business some years ago Cloudy2Clear have remained true to their core values of

supporting the local community by providing a service that saves the public money.

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# Peculiar PET LAWS



PETS



**W**e are a nation of pet lovers, so we think you need to know about the following pet laws in the UK. Some are common sense, some are a bit weird, and others are just plain hilarious.

## 1. NOT HAVING POO BAGS

In Daventry, Northamptonshire, you can be issued a £100 fine for not having a spare poo bag, regardless of whether your dog has fouled or not.

## 2. BURYING YOUR PET IN THE WRONG PLACE

It is illegal to bury your pet anywhere other than the grounds of the home that they lived in. You need to own your home, not just rent it. If you plan to sell, it is not a legal requirement to tell buyers about the burial, but you may want to mention it as a courtesy.

## 3. NOT SECURING YOUR PET WHEN DRIVING

You can be fined up to £5,000 and have your insurance invalidated if you fail to buckle up your pet when driving. This law applies to all pets, as not only can they act as a distraction, but their wellbeing is also at risk without suitable restraint.

## 4. RIDING A HORSE OR CATTLE WHILE UNDER THE INFLUENCE

Everyone knows it's illegal to drink and drive, but did you know that this law extends to horses? Yes, under the Licensing Act 1872, it is illegal to be drunk and in charge on any highway or other public place of any carriage, horse or cattle.

## 5. MATING WITH A ROYAL DOG

Although we admit this scenario is unlikely, if you do stumble upon one of Her Majesty's corgis while walking your dog, it is illegal for your pet to mate with it without seeking permission first.

## OTHER UNUSUAL PET LAWS IN THE UK:

- > You are not allowed a pigsty in front of your house unless it is appropriately hidden
- > It is illegal to run cows through the street during the daytime, although after 7pm is fine
- > In the Lancashire coast area, it is illegal to encourage your dog to bark.





# PUZZLES & TRIVIA

PUZZLES

Answers: see end of The VISION Listings

- ▶ ALMOND
- ▶ BACON
- ▶ BANANA
- ▶ BLUEBERRY
- ▶ CARAMEL
- ▶ CHEESE
- ▶ CHOCOLATE
- ▶ CINNAMON
- ▶ CREAM
- ▶ HONEY
- ▶ LEMON
- ▶ MUSHROOM
- ▶ PEANUT BUTTER
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X	Q	C	A	A	T	P	D	N	T	F	P	L	G	H
Z	B	R	P	A	K	P	C	A	O	T	A	M	O	T
M	V	E	U	D	P	H	L	E	K	U	E	F	R	A
R	S	A	R	K	E	O	R	T	M	J	E	V	D	R
A	P	M	Y	E	C	C	I	N	N	A	M	O	N	R
S	I	R	S	O	T	M	O	O	R	H	S	U	M	E
P	N	E	H	B	G	C	Z	R	H	M	Q	R	K	T
B	A	C	Z	E	A	C	S	N	O	M	E	L	H	S
E	C	Y	Y	B	A	U	Q	U	N	E	J	Y	K	N
R	H	S	S	U	G	R	T	T	E	T	M	T	O	W
R	L	E	M	A	R	A	C	T	Y	E	C	Q	R	V
Y	Z	A	R	P	Y	R	R	E	B	W	A	R	T	S
P	E	A	N	U	T	B	U	T	T	E	R	A	L	O
Z	A	L	M	O	N	D	A	N	A	N	A	B	J	R

## DID YOU KNOW?

- ▶ The acronym ISS stands for International Space Station
- ▶ Before applying to be an astronaut, a pilot must have completed 1,000 hours of flying time in a jet aircraft
- ▶ Neil Armstrong was the first human to walk on the surface of the moon
- ▶ According to NASA, the Space Shuttle travels around 17,600 miles per hour when orbiting the earth
- ▶ Most of the elements found in the human body originated in stars that have gone supernova
- ▶ The Space Shuttle makes one complete orbit around the earth approximately every 90 minutes
- ▶ Alan Shepard hit a golf ball on the moon during the Apollo 14 mission

## WORD LADDER

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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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# BRUCE KING

*on how to sell yourself and what you do*



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**S**ales mentor and personal growth coach, Bruce King, begins an exclusive monthly column designed to help you organise, improve and maximise everyday life.

It's often said that people do business with people they like and trust, and that's most certainly true.

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But if you do exhibit any of those characteristics and you want to sell something to somebody, those are fairly easy to fix.

From there on, successful selling is nothing about you personally. In fact, most people have no interest in you whatsoever. The only thing they really care about is what the product or service you are selling can do for them.

Let's focus on what you sell and how to sell it. Here's a definition of selling I wrote many years ago: selling is the process of identifying problems

individuals and companies are suffering from – some of which they may not have known existed – and opportunities they could exploit, and showing them how your product or service can help them solve the problems and take advantage of the opportunities.

Therefore, we need to ask as many questions as possible to identify those problems and opportunities before presenting our products and services.

Even if they come to you with a problem and ask you to solve it, still question them further. It's likely you can discover other problems and be of even greater benefit to them.

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# IS NEW ALWAYS BETTER?

If you are thinking about buying a new build, you may be excited at the prospect of moving into a never-been-lived-in blank canvas that you can style into your perfect home. However, these types of properties are not without their pitfalls. Here are things to consider before committing to a new build.

**SNAGGING:** Snagging refers to teething problems in a new build, such as cracks appearing in the walls or loose guttering. Eighty-seven per cent of new build homeowners in the UK have reported snagging issues. Therefore, conduct a snagging survey to ensure everything is fixed ahead of moving in.

**LEASEHOLD OR FREEHOLD:** Many new build properties are sold as leasehold rather than freehold, although the government is planning to ban the sale of these types of houses (not flats). Leaseholders face maintenance fees, ground rent, annual service charges, a share of the building's insurance and restrictions on renovations.

**NEGATIVE EQUITY:** Make sure you do not pay over the odds for your new build. Although you may have seen the price of your preferred property plastered on hoardings around the development site, this is only the asking price, and you can and should negotiate before signing on the dotted line, because your extra costs will not be included.

**DELAYS AND EXTRA COSTS:** New build properties are often not completed on time, and if there is a hold-up during the construction of your future home, your mortgage offer could expire. You may also have to pay for essentials such as carpets, garden fences and even grass.

**SIZE:** New build homes are known for having smaller rooms than those in older properties, so you need to make sure that all your furniture and belongings will fit into your new space. Look out for (and avoid) 'micro homes', which have a total area of less than 37 square metres.



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**Q Why Should You Use Coversure Brentwood?**

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## GROUNDS FOR ECONOMIC OPTIMISM AS WE JOURNEY THROUGH THE AUTUMN

Although the strength and speed of the global recovery over the first half of this year exceeded most expectations, the economic outlook inevitably remains uncertain. However, while future growth prospects are likely to stay closely linked to the COVID-19 pandemic, as we journey through the autumn there do appear to be grounds for optimism.

### STRONGER RECOVERY PREDICTED

Over the summer months, forecasting agencies took turns to upgrade their growth projections for developed nations, as a succession of economic data proved stronger than analysts had predicted. In its latest assessment, for example, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) increased its combined 2021 growth forecast for advanced economies by half a percentage point, primarily due to the success of vaccine rollouts and government stimulus measures supporting recovery.

### RISKS AND UNCERTAINTIES

However, the IMF assessment did highlight a divergence in fortunes between rich and poor nations due to differing levels of access to vaccines. As a result, an offsetting downgrade across emerging markets and developing economies meant this year's overall global growth forecast remained unchanged. Ongoing concerns surrounding inflation also persist, despite policymakers' insistence

that the recent upward trend in prices will prove transient. Furthermore, the current mammoth levels of spending by governments and central banks can only be a temporary phenomenon and, when stopped, will impact on growth.

### GROUNDS FOR OPTIMISM

While the outlook is therefore expected to remain relatively uncertain, there are grounds for investor optimism. Market fundamentals, for instance, remain comparatively strong, with earnings growth still being fuelled by pent-up demand as economies reopen, and companies starting to invest again as the recovery gathers momentum.

### DIVERSIFICATION REMAINS KEY

There is no question that the world is in a period of immense change, with issues relating to the pandemic, as well as sustainability, fundamentally altering the investment landscape. Some things, however, do not change, like the importance of holding a diversified investment portfolio and the need for expert financial advice. That's where we come in.

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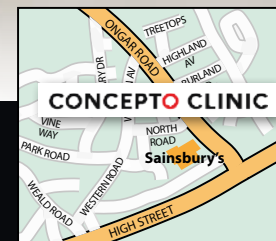
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Following last month's article on "How to build a raised bed garden", in this edition we are going to show you how to turn your raised bed into a cold frame. Ideal for hardening off seedlings, growing cool-weather crops and protecting tender perennials, a cold frame can extend your gardening season well into the winter months.

**WHAT IS A COLD FRAME?**

Essentially, a cold frame is a removable glass or plastic-covered frame that fits over the ground or over a raised bed garden. It is predominantly used to protect plants from the elements by keeping them warm using natural heat sources.

**HOW TO ADD A COLD FRAME TO A RAISED BED**

- > **Step 1:** Find a salvaged window frame that is roughly the same size as your raised bed. If it is slightly bigger, this is fine, but it cannot be smaller. Wooden frames work best as these provide ample space to affix the hinges.
- > **Step 2:** Drill holes into the window frame and the edge of the raised bed to match the holes on the hinge. Affix either one large hinge or two smaller hinges to the edge.

- > **Step 3:** Affix a handle to the opposite edge so that you can easily open and close the frame. You can find handles for this in your local kitchen design department.

**TOP TIPS:**

- > Choose a salvaged window that has small panes rather than one large pane if possible, as these are less likely to break.
- > Regularly check your cold frame over winter. If it snows, remove any build-up of snow straight away.
- > Keep a brick or stick nearby for hot days so that you can prop the lid open and prevent your plants from becoming overheated.
- > Remember to water your plants as they will not receive any rainwater.



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GARDENING

# Light up!

Who doesn't love going to see a wondrous winter light display in the run-up to Christmas?

If you're looking for the most dazzling lights and winter trails the UK has to offer, here we've gathered the best and the brightest.

### WADESSEDON MANOR, BUCKINGHAMSHIRE

Enjoy a fun-filled, festive day out for all the family at Waddesdon Manor, with a Christmas fair, winter light trail, manor illuminations and an exhibition in the Coach House. Plus, for the first time ever, see the parterre illuminated by a dazzling light show.

**From November 13 to December 23 and December 27 to January 3.**

### DUNHAM MASSEY, GREATER MANCHESTER

If you are willing to travel a bit further afield, the after-dark illuminated trail through the festive gardens at Dunham Massey is not to be missed. Marvel at the glittering deer, the gleaming waterside reflections and the multicoloured trees.

Plus, fill your belly with tasty treats from a vast array of seasonal food and drink chalets or toast some marshmallows at one of the purpose-built fire pits.

**From November 19 to January 2.**

### WIMPOLE ESTATE, CAMBRIDGESHIRE

Set to be Wimpole Estate's biggest Christmas extravaganza to date, take the kids to Percy the Park Keeper's winter wander trail by day, and enjoy a mesmerising walk through the estate's gardens by night. Expect sparkling lights, giant baubles and illuminated trees.

**From November 26 to January 2.**

### LIGHTOPIA, CRYSTAL PALACE PARK, LONDON

An award-winning light festival, Lightopia is an annual Christmas event that takes place in Crystal Palace Park. Featuring handmade Chinese lanterns, multi-sensory interactive lights and breathtaking illustrations that tell a story of wonder and rebirth, book your tickets fast as this is one winter light display that is guaranteed to sell out.

**From November 19 to January 2.**

Photo credits: waddesdon.org, nationaltrust.org.uk, london.lightopiafestival.com

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MOTORING

# Electric dream

## LEGISLATION ANNOUNCED TO HAVE CHARGING POINTS IN ALL NEW BUILDS

The UK government recently cemented legislation that will make our rapid adoption of electric and hybrid cars all the more attractive, with new builds now bound by law to provide electric charging points for vehicles.

While the charging of a car by use of a lead from a ground-floor home or office is straightforward, the government realises access is more complicated for those living in flats or working in office blocks with no private charging point access. As a result, it is moving forward with the Department of Transport's guidance that states any new work or residential construction projects must have built-in charging points. These directives could come into force as early as 2022.

As it stands, there are almost 26,000 electric charging points in the UK. Yet the number of electric and hybrid cars on our roads is doubling every six

months and an estimated 10 times the number of current charging points will be required by 2030, the target date for when petrol and diesel cars will stop being sold in the UK.

In the UK, the cost of charging an electric car from flat battery to full is around £7 (depending on your supplier). For an average vehicle, this would produce a range of around 180 miles. The equivalent petrol or diesel cost would be around two and a half times that amount.

Despite the challenges ahead, the UK is still one of the countries leading the way in the adoption of electric cars. As well as a rapid increase in charger provision, it is investigating moves to make night-time charging a preferred option for cars – this will ensure users don't overload the grid, and also means they can take advantage of cheaper electricity prices.



Whether you want to give the gift of gin this Christmas or your motives are a little more self-focused, making your own flavoured gin is simple to do – and it can save you money.

*How to make flavoured gin*

**Step 1: Choose your gin**

If you want to create a high-quality flavoured gin, you need to pick one that is both clean-tasting and uncomplicated. Any gin that already has a flavour will not mix well, so try to stick with a classic London dry variety.

**Step 2: Pick your flavours**

As Christmas is fast approaching, you may want to choose a seasonal flavour such as cinnamon, nutmeg or cloves. However, you can pick pretty much any fruit, vegetable or herb that takes your fancy, such as strawberries, damsons, rhubarb, chilli, mint or elderflower.

**Step 3: Bottle your gin**

Pour your gin into a sterile sealable container, such as a Kilner jar, and then add your chosen infusing ingredient. You can sterilise your glass container either on a hot rinse cycle in the dishwasher or in the oven for 15 minutes at 160°C. Use around 300g of produce per litre of gin.

**Step 4: Leave to infuse**

Depending on the potency of the fruit or herb you choose to add, you can leave your infusing ingredient in for anywhere from one day to one month.

- > Strong flavours such as chilli, vanilla and citrus = less than one day
- > Hardy herbs and strong-flavoured fruit such as rhubarb and lavender = five to seven days
- > Berries and other potent fruits = three to four weeks
- > Milder ingredients like apple or pear = up to one month

**Step 5: Strain and store your gin**

Once you are happy with the intensity of your gin, strain it through a filter or muslin cloth. Pour into a well-sealed bottle and store for up to one year in a cool, dark place.



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HOW TO SAVE MONEY ON YOUR

# Christmas shop

While you may have had the best intentions to save all year for Christmas, unfortunately, real life often scuppers our plans. If you haven't yet managed to put aside some extra cash for your Christmas food shop, the below tips will help you to save big on all those tasty festive treats.

### STOCK UP EARLY

Rather than leaving everything to the last minute, why not start stocking up on items such as chocolates, savoury snacks and Christmas liqueurs from now and spread the cost of your food shop over two months rather than one?

### GET SOCIAL

If you have a few favourite food brands, now is the perfect time to start following them on social media so that you can pounce on any early Christmas offers as soon as they become available. Don't forget to also sign up to their email newsletters for possible discounts.

### MAKE YOUR OWN

While some items are cheaper to buy in store – such as a Christmas pudding, which can be purchased for as little as 99p – there are some foods that are cheaper to make yourself. These include canapés, side dishes such as pigs in blankets, and even mince pies.

### SHARE THE BURDEN

If you are hosting Christmas dinner this year and are concerned about the cost, there is no reason why you shouldn't ask family members to help out. Rather than demand cash, ask each person to bring a different dish or drink.

### USE COMPARISON SITES

Simply type into Google 'cheapest supermarket for your Christmas food shop' and you will be met with a whole host of sources that can save you money. Compare turkey costs, Christmas pudding prices, and so much more. Plus, find out about home delivery and click-and-collect slots.




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# VICKS VapoRub

7 ALTERNATIVE USES

**K**nown for its ability to effectively manage cold symptoms, most households have a tub or two of this mentholated ointment in their medicine cupboard.

However, you may be surprised to discover what else you can use Vicks VapoRub for.

**1. TO BANISH HEADACHES:** When applied to the base of the skull, Vicks VapoRub has proved highly effective at relieving headaches, especially sinus headaches.

**2. TO SOOTHE SORE MUSCLES:** Two key ingredients in Vicks, camphor and menthol, are topical analgesics, which means they can be used to relieve pain when rubbed on to the skin. Creating a powerful cooling sensation – although the pain relief will be temporary – it can help you to get on with your day.

**3. TO HEAL YOUR FEET:** Vicks VapoRub is a popular home remedy for several foot conditions, including athlete's foot and fungal nail infections. The combination of its antimicrobial ingredients and the inclusion of petroleum jelly helps fight bacteria and lock in moisture.

**4. TO TREAT SKIN CONDITIONS:** If you suffer with either acne or eczema, Vicks VapoRub can be used to calm the skin and clear up your complexion. This is owing to its ingredients like camphor and eucalyptus.

**5. TO FADE BRUISES:** For minor bruises, Vicks can be used to reduce inflammation and cool the skin. The menthol can also help to reduce any pain you are experiencing.

**6. TO HEAL SCRAPES AND BURNS:** When applied twice a day, the petroleum in Vicks VapoRub can help to create a thick barrier on your skin so that any cuts or burns can heal. Its anti-inflammatory properties can also promote healing.

**7. TO EASE EARACHE:** If you are suffering with a mild earache, rub a small amount of VapoRub onto a cotton ball and gently place in your ear. This can help to reduce any pain, but will not clear up an infection.



HEALTH & FITNESS

Photo credit: pixino/Shutterstock.com, ashok india/Shutterstock.com



# JUST breathe



## Are you worried about a men's health problem?

### IMPROVE YOUR QUALITY OF LIFE WITH THREE EASY BREATHING TIPS

You don't need to be a philosopher to know that people can spend their days navigating between a negative inner critic and a more positive and less apparent inner believer. Allowing the latter to express itself more is a key part of healthy living, positive self-image and good self-esteem.

Well, imagine if something as simple as breathing could be the key to being more positive, more confident, less stressed and more physically strong to boot.

Check out these three easy ideas and get started today.

#### Five deep breaths

If you are feeling stressed or self-critical, take five deep inhalations and exhalations through the nose. Clear your mind and focus on the sensation of breathing. This is part of breaking the negative inner dialogue. Closing your eyes can also help. When ready, you can go back to what you were doing.

#### Diaphragmatic breathing

Another easy win is to breathe diaphragmatically. This means using the belly muscles to fully fill and empty the lungs with each breath. As well as being calming, this can help with public speaking, as it allows you to control your breath and voice far more effectively.

This breathing also helps the body discharge waste and take in more oxygen, which boosts brain activity.

#### Quick energy

For a short, sharp boost that will make you feel up for anything, take a deep breath and hold for a second or two, then make a loud 'hmm' sound on breathing out. Not only does this break negative thought patterns, but it will also provide you with a welcome mental lift.

Breathing is something we do every minute of the day – it's time to make it work for us more than ever before.

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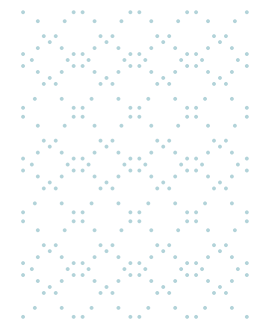
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# Self-care

*is not selfish*

To celebrate National Spa Week, which takes place from November 4-9, we thought we would share with you our top self-care practices that promise to leave you feeling physically and mentally rejuvenated. Plus, discover why you need to make time for self-care.

- > Lower your risk of mental health conditions, such as anxiety and depression
- > Increase your overall energy levels
- > Boost your self-esteem
- > Improve your relationships.

**Ten simple ways to practise self-care**

1. Get a good night's sleep – ideally between seven and eight hours per night.
2. Drink lots of water – up to eight glasses a day.
3. Go for a daily brisk walk – at least 30 minutes.
4. Take a relaxing bath using essential oils.
5. Say no to something you don't have time to do or don't want to do.
6. Listen to your favourite music.
7. Watch your favourite film.
8. Indulge in a massage.
9. Make something healthy and delicious for dinner.
10. Make a list of five things you like about yourself.

**What is self-care?**

While many believe that self-care is self-indulgent or even selfish, it is in fact a crucial process that allows you to tend to your physical and emotional needs. Essentially, it involves making the time to take care of yourself.

There are said to be eight main areas of self-care that you should focus on:

- Physical | Psychological | Emotional | Social | Professional | Environmental | Spiritual | Financial

**What are the mental health benefits of self-care?**

According to recent data from the Office for National Statistics, depression rates have doubled during the COVID-19 pandemic, with concerns growing over a nationwide mental health crisis.

When it comes to looking after your mental health, self-care has the unique ability to:

- > Manage your stress levels

If you are struggling with your mental health, there are several UK charities that can help, including Mind and YoungMinds, which is aimed at children, young people and their parents. To find out more, visit [www.mind.org.uk](http://www.mind.org.uk) or [www.youngminds.org.uk](http://www.youngminds.org.uk)



## Care home staff notch up 120 years' combined service, this is what they had to say

**STAFF across two care homes in Brentwood, Essex have been celebrating. A combined total of more than 120 years of service.**

Six employees of the 170 strong team at St Michaels Homes Ltd which comprises of Howard Lodge & Dudbrook Hall Care Homes which specialize in providing elderly residential & dementia care, have worked at the care home for 20 years on average, with receptionist Amanda Brewster at Howard Lodge chalking up 25 years of loyalty bosses say the company is bucking the national trend which has seen care homes struggle to recruit and retain staff. St Michaels Homes which is a family run care



**Amanda, Shabby & Isabelita outside Howard Lodge Care Centre**

home provider which has served the community of Brentwood & surrounding boroughs and Essex now for 30 years believes its all about our fantastic staff.

Director Sean Watson believes its down to treating all staff with the utmost respect, they are the heart & soul of our organization and they all make the difference for our residents lives, and now during this pandemic we are seeing who are our true hero's and we are forever thankful for all they have done for us and most importantly our residents."

Kerry Toulson manager of Dudbrook Hall Care Centre said: "I started as a carer at Dudbrook Hall in Feb 1998, Mrs Watson CEO took me under her wing and I was supported along the way with great training and support which then lead me to become the manager, can't quite believe it has been that long, however I have enjoyed every minute of it, caring for the elderly is all I love to do and St Michaels Homes allows me to concentrate on this important aspect of my career."

St Michaels Homes have always been very keen to invest in all its staff, and they have won awards for medium size employer by Cube in 2019 for their commitment to training staff to achieve all their goals & promote their own potential.

Jo Moss team leader has worked at Dudbrook Hall for 20 years now and said "In my eyes It is not just a job, the residents and staff are an extended part of my family, we are all there for each other all the time. St Michaels homes are very dedicated to providing the very best of care to our residents and staff and I would honestly never work anywhere else, they could not fire me if they tried lol."

Isabelita Oansasan was asked what has made you stay with Howard Lodge all these years "St Michaels homes was able to boost my skills and helped me learned more about my profession. I was able to execute the best of my abilities the best part is, the people around me appreciates my efforts and we are part of a great team of people, we are one big family."

Shabby Dude team leader at Howard Lodge added "Our residents are at the centre of everything we do here. Making sure that this is their HOME and we are part of their extended family. We laugh together we cry together and we support each other through good and bad times. I have been a valued employee, I have been listened to and I have been allowed to grow and learn a lot about caring profession.



**Dawn, Kerry & Jo at Dudbrook Hall**

Also over the years I have built everlasting bonds of friendship with relatives who trust us to look after their loved ones even long after their fathers and mothers have passed on. I feel truly blessed & honoured to care for our beautiful residents and work within the caring profession."

More than 40 per cent of the staff at St Michaels Homes have worked at the homes for more than five years or more. Sean Watson, Director said "we are extremely proud of our teams and their dedication. The staff turnover rate for the adult residential care sector currently stands at around two per cent so to be celebrating 40 per cent of our staff being here for more than five years is quite something.

We are currently recruiting for health care assistants to join our fantastic teams so if you wish to join a rewarding team, in beautiful surroundings and become a key worker with all the support and training you will need to take on a rewarding job in care call **01277 372095** or email [enquiries@stmichaelshomesltd.com](mailto:enquiries@stmichaelshomesltd.com) Thank you.



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BEAUTY

# Hairband HEROES

**D**oes your hair always fall out when you tie it up? Or perhaps you spend more time detangling your locks than enjoying your updo? If the answer is yes, you could be using the wrong hairband for your hair type.

*For thin hair*  
Thin hair that is prone to breakage needs a hairband that is gentle on your delicate locks. Opt for a silk hairband that will protect your hair and help to keep flyaway strands in check. When removing a silk hairband, you should notice significantly less pulling on the roots.

*For thick hair*  
If you have thick hair, you are likely to experience both tangles and a struggle to keep your voluminous hair contained. Look for spiral plastic hairbands that are specifically designed for thick heads of hair, as these are easy to use and remove without your hair becoming tangled in the tie.

*For wavy hair*  
Do you feel like no hairband can hold back your big mane of wavy hair? Forget elastic bands and scrunchies and, instead, invest in a hair bungee. Boasting a hook on each end, a hair bungee can be easily wrapped around your hair to keep it in place all day.

*For short hair*  
People with short hairstyles are always going to struggle to pulling their hair back into a ponytail. However, there is a solution. Polybands are great at gripping short hair and staying in place. Small and often clear, they will simply disappear into your hairstyle.

*For straightened hair*  
Bringing back a blast from the past, if you want to tie your straightened hair back without causing kinks, you need a scrunchie. These hairbands work best directly after a blow-dry to help maintain a smooth and straight look. However, they are also effective at keeping your hair in place while you sleep.



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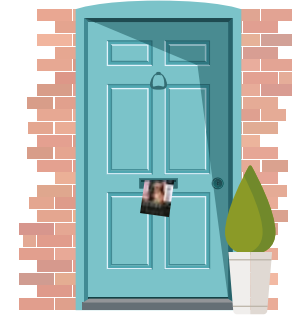
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TRAVEL

# PARK LIFE

Made famous by Disney World, Orlando is much more than that – it's the theme park capital of the world, bringing in more than 75 million holidaymakers each year. Here's our five-day guide to the ultimate thrill-seeker vacation:

**DAY 1 – UNIVERSAL ORLANDO** – Most people migrate towards Universal Orlando, one of the biggest theme parks in the world. Here, it's all action, adventure and showbiz, with rides and attractions focused on your favourite TV shows and movies.

**DAY 2 – ISLANDS OF ADVENTURE** – Universal's Islands of Adventure Theme Park – with combined tickets available for around £275 per person – showcases Hogsmeade and Diagon Alley (connected by a ride on the Hogwarts Express), plus everything from *Jurassic Park* to the Hulk. The £265million project is an escape among beloved fantasy characters.

**DAY 3 – LEGOLAND/DISCOVERY COVE** – This one depends on whether you're a bit of a daredevil or more the chilled-out type. If you're the latter, a semi-rest day at Legoland with the familiarity of some block brilliance is probably the way to go. Thrill-seekers may prefer Discovery Cove, where diving, snorkeling and sub-aqua pursuits invite visitors to literally immerse themselves in the action.

Photo credit: Chansak Joe/Shutterstock.com, Spinel/Shutterstock.com, Rob Hainer/Shutterstock.com, trailfinders.com, uk.hotels.com

**DAY 4 – MAGIC KINGDOM PARK** – Yes, Orlando is more than Disney World, but that doesn't mean its aptly named Magic Kingdom should be ignored. The theme park, which has more than 40 attractions, is divided into six themed lands, each with a different focus, but all catering to visitors of any age. After arriving at the park by your choice of ferry or monorail, you'll stroll through the gates into Main Street, USA. From there, the majestic land is your oyster – just be sure to head back to Main Street for the iconic fireworks display.

**DAY 5 – BUSCH GARDENS** – Finally, wrap things up with a trip to Tampa, 90 minutes away. Busch Gardens is a safari wonderland that feels straight out of Africa, yet with that unique Florida twist. It's bigger, better and more pumped up than any animal park you've been to before, with plentiful rollercoasters and rides.

**DURATION** – Park-to-park passes are available from some agents and can save you money as well as helping you stay organised. Rest time is recommended, as long days in the parks can be tiring.

**WHERE TO STAY** – Downtown Orlando is a good place to base yourself, combining great hotels with nightlife and shopping. It's also safe, making it suitable for families.



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BRITAIN'S GREATEST SPORTING MOMENTS...

# DENNIS TAYLOR

**W**e celebrate 50 years of the Crucible Theatre in Sheffield by remembering one of world snooker's greatest ever matches. To many, he was the quirky, pint-sized Irishman with glasses you'd more readily expect to see on Dame Edna Everage or Sir Elton John, yet Dennis Taylor's doubters were to be silenced on the night of April 28, 1985, when he completed one of the most dramatic fightbacks in sport to defeat Steve Davis and win the Embassy World Snooker Championship.

With a final stretched out over two days and four sessions, Englishman Davis strode into a commanding lead in the "best of 35 frames" match. The defending champion, who was looking for his fourth world title in five years, found himself 8-0 up and coasting.

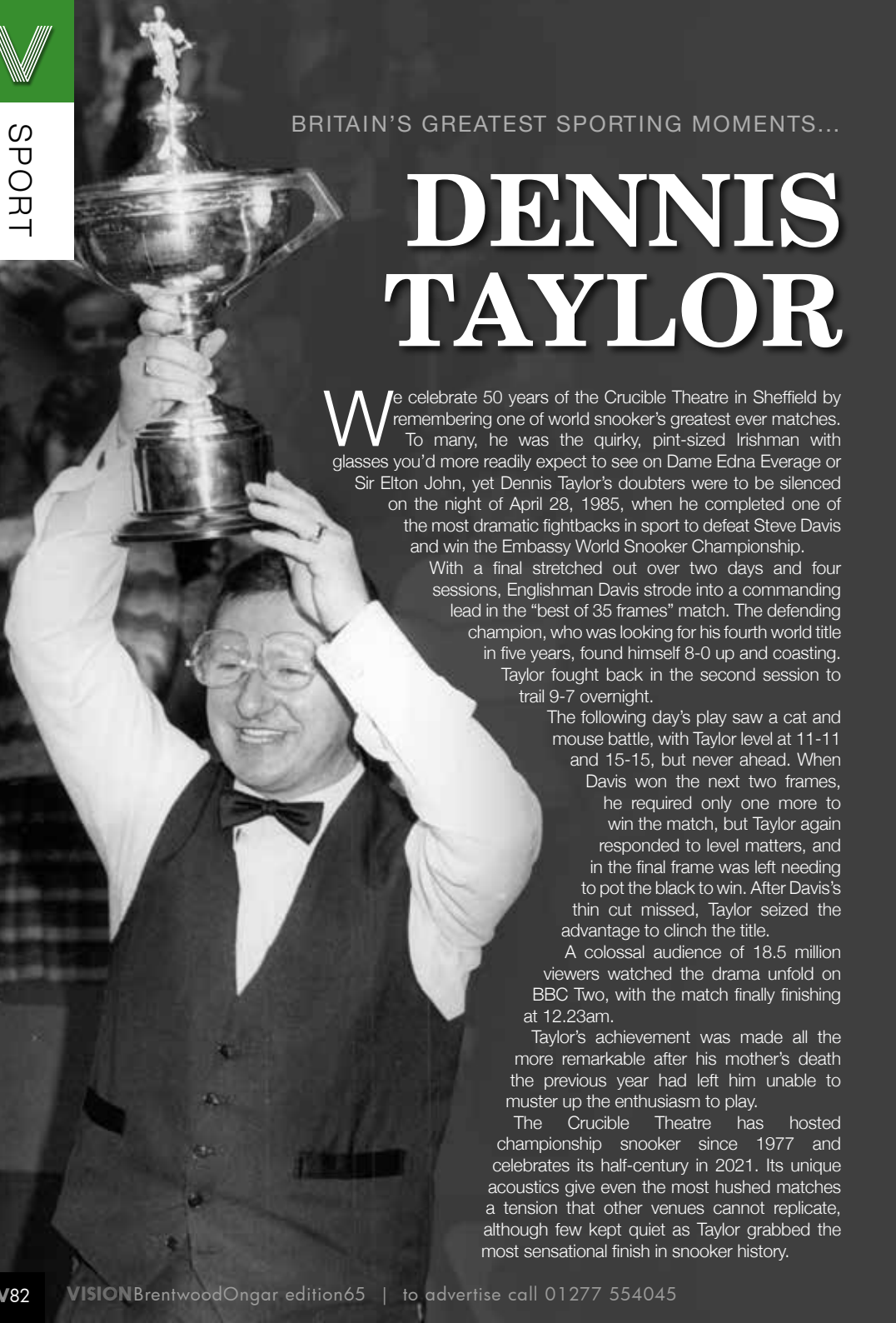
Taylor fought back in the second session to trail 9-7 overnight.

The following day's play saw a cat and mouse battle, with Taylor level at 11-11 and 15-15, but never ahead. When Davis won the next two frames, he required only one more to win the match, but Taylor again responded to level matters, and in the final frame was left needing to pot the black to win. After Davis's thin cut missed, Taylor seized the advantage to clinch the title.

A colossal audience of 18.5 million viewers watched the drama unfold on BBC Two, with the match finally finishing at 12.23am. Taylor's achievement was made all the more remarkable after his mother's death the previous year had left him unable to muster up the enthusiasm to play.

The Crucible Theatre has hosted championship snooker since 1977 and celebrates its half-century in 2021. Its unique acoustics give even the most hushed matches a tension that other venues cannot replicate, although few kept quiet as Taylor grabbed the most sensational finish in snooker history.

SPORT



# THE BOXING

# King

SPORT



Photo credit: Chase Stevens/AP/Shutterstock

## TYSON FURY TAKES ANOTHER MAJOR STEP TOWARDS THE ULTIMATE PRIZE

**M**any judge Tyson Fury as the best British fighter we have, even as the tormentingly long wait for him to prove that – when he steps into the ring with Anthony Joshua – goes on.

And yet, across two weekends, the armchair experts who decreed the Gypsy King as the ultimate number one added considerable weight to their argument.

First, on September 25, at the Tottenham Hotspur Stadium, Anthony Joshua lost his multiple heavyweight belts to Ukrainian Oleksandr Usyk. The manner of the defeat had echoes of Andy Ruiz Jr all over again, with Joshua looking unthreatening, hesitant and stuck in first gear. Subsequently, he lost to a unanimous points decision to take a major step back.

Then, just 14 days later, Tyson Fury stepped up once more against Deontay Wilder. After a draw in the first epic against the brazen American and a comprehensive victory in the first rematch, the

33-year-old Brit was looking to cement his reputation as the leader of the pack. And while, by his own admission, he was "rusty", Fury again showed power, guile, craft and the ability to pick himself up off the canvas as he despatched Wilder, finally seeing off his opponent in the 11th round with a devastating blow.

So over the course of a couple of weekends, we learned a bit more about how the heavyweight division would play out. We also have a new champion in Usyk, although many will speculate his victory had as much to do with the poor performance of Anthony Joshua.

As far as the prospect of a Fury v Joshua fight goes, we still seem some distance away. The most anticipated British heavyweight boxing bout of all time slipped through the promoters' fingers against Usyk.

Joshua will need to get past his dogged, clever and unrelenting opponent in the rematch for serious talk of the all-British showdown to restart.

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