

**100
YEARS
OF THE
BBC**

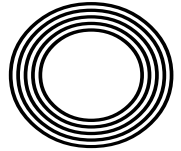
**PAYING
TRIBUTE**
to rock legend
Meat Loaf

THE SECRETS
to a successful stir fry

GET CLEANING
with our spring clean checklist

STEVEN BARTLETT

From university dropout to youngest ever Dragon



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Editor's notes...

MARCH 2022



Nik Allen, Editor

Hello and welcome to this month's edition of **VISION** BrentwoodOngar. Since the start of the year, I've managed to get through one book and am now halfway through another. I have always been interested in life stories and biographies. I find those who I am big fans of - actors, sportspeople or musicians - easiest to read.

One common trait I find comes up in many successful people's life stories is their ability to bounce back from failures - in fact, they glorify it more than their wins and wear them like badges of honour.

Whether it be a missed penalty in a cup final, bad auditions as an

actor or a comedian not making people laugh at a show - it is these moments of

feeling uncomfortable and wanting to hide away from the world that really does bring out the real winners in us all. Such moments in some cases can fire you up to never want to feel that way again, which can then propel you to success.

Getting comfortable being uncomfortable is one of my mantras for this year as I know the more I can put myself in situations that I may find uncomfortable, it means I am more than likely growing as a person.

Nik Allen

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YEARS OF THE

A CENTURY TO CELEBRATE – THE BBC HITS 100

It's perhaps ironic, maybe unfortunate, and undoubtedly inconvenient that the British Broadcasting Corporation's (BBC) 100th anniversary comes at, arguably, its lowest ebb.

The BBC has spent the vast majority of its lifespan as an exemplar for entertainment, across many strands of its output. From radio to TV, online to live events, it is a unique entity whose impact and prestige is felt and accepted in all corners of the globe.

'Auntie' deservedly holds that reputation, despite the 'new world' struggles the corporation now finds itself encountering. As publicly funded state broadcasters go, it has always been a world away from the controlling propaganda that many churn out overseas; it has a reputation of listening to those who fund it, and its output is as wide and varied as the UK's own demographic.

Yet there wasn't such a strong blueprint when the BBC set out. 2LO was the first radio station launched, in 1922, airing for just a few hours each day, with news, music, drama and conversation.

The publication of the *Radio Times* followed a year later, though it was during the general strike of 1926 that newspapers ceased printing and the BBC – who refused to stop broadcasting, or to hand over control to the government – subsequently gained the upper hand, and one it has assumed ever since.

In 1930, the BBC broadcast the first television play in the UK, named *The Man with the Flower in his Mouth*, with Broadcasting House opening two years later in London to provide the first purpose-built radio centre.

Regular scheduling of television programmes began in 1936, and within three years, as Britain descended into the Second World War, the BBC's broadcast bravery and expertise saw it endowed with a sense of trust and national pride it would never lose.

Post-war, as attitudes became less stiff and the prospect of colour television came into the equation, the BBC sought success in a vast array of programming. From *Woman's Hour* to *Last Night of the Proms*, *Blue Peter* to *Eurovision*, *The Archers* to coverage of the Olympics, *Songs of Praise* to *Top of the Pops*, every cultural shift was breathlessly played out across TV and radio.

As a state broadcaster, the Beeb also realised it needed to focus on smaller communities both in the UK and abroad. *Pobol y Cwm* started in 1974 and remains the BBC's longest-running soap, while Madhur Jaffrey, *Live Aid* and *Goodness Gracious Me* embraced diversity long before it was a trendy term.

The last 25 years have seen DAB and online move the corporation into vast new areas, while geographically the relocation to its new Salford HQ, MediaCityUK, has been a huge success.

For all the BBC's prolific legacy of success, the political hot potato that is the licence fee remains. There is an audience, particularly the young, who are consuming media now in very different ways, while the move to tax the elderly again has done nothing to change the perception that the broadcaster needs to push forward with a certain level of corporate responsibility.

And yet, despite the recent challenges and criticisms, the BBC remains a subject of huge national pride and an exemplar of modern media, in a landscape where so much output is dumbed down. Its century must be something we celebrate.



“THE BRITISH BROADCASTING CORPORATION HAS SPENT THE VAST MAJORITY OF ITS LIFESPAN AS AN EXEMPLAR FOR ENTERTAINMENT”

A TRIBUTE TO MEAT LOAF:

A ROCK LEGEND

THE LIFE AND CAREER OF MEAT LOAF, WHOSE TIME SPENT DINING AT THE TOP TABLE OF ROCK CAME TO AN END IN JANUARY

He was a rock god in an era where they were few and far between. He surfed on the heavy metal superhighway that his own iconic anthem, *Bat Out of Hell*, laid the foundations for; all the while going about his business with stagemanship, style and humour.

Meat Loaf plucked his last chord at the end of January, but the Texan's legacy will live on through his anthemic contribution to music and culture.

And yet the artist – real name Marvin Lee Aday – was so much more complex than his big, ballsy persona suggested. For starters, he arrived in the entertainment world via theatre – notably the

musical *Hair* – although he had already started making music with debut band, Meat Loaf Soul.

His time in theatre and film was significant – from *Rainbow* to *The Rocky Horror Show*, he brought a brand of unique showmanship to his roles. And when the album *Bat Out of Hell* arrived in 1977 (some five years after he and Jim Steinman began working on tracks), the stars had aligned perfectly. To date, the album has sold more than 43 million copies.

Further albums followed, including *Dead Ringer* and *Midnight at the Lost and Found*, before a career resurgence at the start of the 90s with *Bat Out of Hell II*, from which the single *I'd Do Anything for Love (But I Won't Do That)* took the rocker back to the top of the UK singles charts, as well as landing him a Grammy.

For all his continued success, Meat Loaf was shy and reserved behind the scenes. He admitted to never socialising, saying it terrified him even at the height of his fame, and he led a "largely boring life" away from the flashbulbs.

In his passing, the original *Bat Out of Hell* has surely assumed a new home... in rock heaven.



Photo credit: Shutterstock



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How To Match COLOURS In YOUR HOME



There are endless possibilities when it comes to decorating your home. So many, in fact, that you might struggle to choose. Learning how to match colours in your home will make the process a little easier, so that you can have fun creating your chosen look. Take a look at the following tips to get started.

CONSIDER THE MOOD OF THE ROOM

What sort of space do you want to create? Do you want a warm and inviting room that's perfect for socialising, or do you want something a little cooler to create a more relaxing environment? Think about what your room will be used for and the sort of vibe you want to achieve.

LEARN TO CREATE A COLOUR SCHEME

Colour schemes can be built in several ways. They could be based around your existing furniture, for example, or you could start completely from scratch. Choosing neutral colours gives you versatility – you'll be able to mix and match your furniture and accessories, and add pops of colour as desired. This also gives you flexibility to change your colours more often. You could also create a colour scheme around different shades of the same colour, creating a

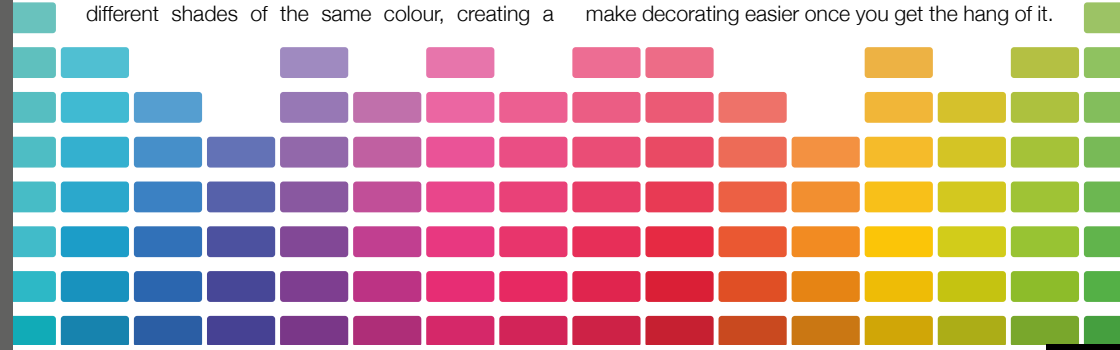
stylish, tonal look. If you want to use two different colours, consider using a colour wheel and choosing shades on either side of your primary shade to create a complementary look. Examples include pairing yellow with orange or green, or blue with green or violet. Choosing sides on the opposite end of the spectrum, such as blue and orange, can create a different kind of complementary look. You could also use a triadic scheme to help you bring three colours into your space. This means choosing colours that are far apart from each other on the spectrum, such as red, yellow and blue.

THINK ABOUT THE PRACTICALITIES

There are also practical considerations for your colour scheme. How much light does a space get? Will it be high traffic? These will help you work out what is realistic for your space.

USE TESTERS TO SEE WHAT WORKS BEST

Testers are a great way to experiment with how colours will look in your home. Use testers to help you see a shade in different lighting and at different times of day to make sure you're satisfied. Creating colour schemes takes practice, but it will make decorating easier once you get the hang of it.





Oh darling!

TIPS FOR CREATING FLAMBOYANT INTERIORS

Photo credit: Archive by Benderson Design via elledecoracion.co.uk

Do you want your interiors to be as fun and exciting as you are? Clashing prints, bold colours and a mix of textures can all be incredibly stylish in your home. The look is British Eccentric, and it is outgoing, quirky and vibrant.

With the right styling, you can bring the British Eccentric look into your own home. Here are some top tips for creating flamboyant interiors.

GET READY TO THROW OUT THE RULE BOOK

The great thing about flamboyant interiors is that there are no rules. Your space should be as quirky and colourful as you like, creating a look that's traditional in its basics but modern in its use of colour.

Make use of patterns and bold shades and simply have fun with it.

BUILD IT UP OVER TIME

Creating a flamboyant interior can take time. Think of it as an ongoing project as you fill your space with wonderful treasures. Start with a wall colour, then

add different accessories such as vases, light shades, plants and wall art. Building up your space over time will make it more of a passion project as you design a room you truly love.

MIX AND MATCH

Don't be afraid to mix and match patterns, colours and textures. Florals are a great option, especially for wallpaper, or you could look at stripes and other bold patterns to bring new life to your decor.

EMBRACE YOUR FAVOURITE THINGS

A flamboyant, eccentric interior should reflect you and your personality. Fill it with the things that you love, such as prints, ornaments and other features that will make your home feel more like you.



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6 SIGNS YOU NEED A NEW MATTRESS

If you're not sleeping well, you may blame it on stress, poor lifestyle choices or a health condition such as insomnia.

However, it might just be your mattress that is keeping you up at night.

1. SAGGING

All mattress types will start to sag eventually as the springs break down or the foam gets softer. However, even minor sags of one or two inches can result in insufficient support for the body.

2. INCREASE IN ALLERGIES

Over time, mattresses accumulate mould, mildew and dust mites, which can trigger allergies. If you notice you are sneezing when you get close to your bed or you feel stuffy in the morning, you may need a new mattress.

3. LASTING IMPRESSIONS

If you have a memory foam mattress, then you need to pay close attention to the impressions left behind when you get up. Although these types of mattresses are designed to remember your body shape, if your mattress has lost its ability to

bounce back, it needs replacing.

4. LUMPS AND BUMPS

When the padding within a mattress starts to shift around, this can cause visible lumps. This uneven density can result in uncomfortable pressure points which can cause pain, discomfort and a poor night's sleep.

5. PREGNANCY

If you are expecting, it can be a good idea to invest in a new mattress that provides the extra support your changing body needs. Look for a mattress with custom support for side sleeping, which will help to prevent back pain and offer extra support to your belly.

6. OLD AGE

Even if your mattress appears to be in good condition, once it reaches a certain age, it will not be able to provide you with an optimal sleeping experience. Typically, your mattress should be replaced every seven to 10 years.



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IT'S THAT TIME... Spring cleaning

YOUR CHECKLIST

Embarking upon a major spring clean can be overwhelming to say the least, which is why we've created this spring cleaning checklist that you can stick on your fridge. Remember to tick each task off as you go.

KITCHEN

- Empty all drawers and cabinets and wipe down
- Wash cabinet doors and knobs
- Clean and organise the fridge and freezer
- Vacuum under the fridge
- Clean the dishwasher
- Sanitise the sink drain
- Clean and organise the pantry

BEDROOMS

- Store out-of-season clothing
- Flip mattresses
- Clean and organise dresser drawers
- Shampoo carpets
- Wash pillows and duvets
- Clean and organise wardrobes
- Launder curtains
- Dust light fixtures/ceiling fans
- Wash windows

BATHROOMS

- Clean and organise cabinets and drawers
- Properly dispose of any old medicines and toiletries

- Descale the taps, hoses and screens for your shower/bath
- Wash shower curtains and bath mats
- Dust light fixtures
- Reseal grout lines if needed
- Clean bathroom extractor fan
- Sanitise and clean drains

LIVING ROOM

- Clean windows
- Dust light fixtures/ceiling fans
- Remove and launder curtains, throws, cushion covers and blankets
- Clean blinds
- Vacuum sofas and chairs
- Spot-clean upholstery
- Shampoo carpets
- Wash or dry clean rugs

HOME OFFICE

- Clean keyboard
- Disinfect mouse and office phone

OUTDOOR AREAS

- Remove any unwanted items and reorganise garage/shed
- Pressure wash decking, patio area and outdoor furniture
- Clean out and wash rubbish/recycling bins
- Wash outside windows





LOVE YOUR LEFTOVERS:

Laminate flooring



If you have just had new laminate flooring installed, then chances are you have a fair amount left over.

Rather than let this versatile material go to waste, why not use it to create something beautiful for your home?

CREATE A RUSTIC MIRROR OR PHOTO FRAME

If you have a basic mirror or photo frame that is less of a stylish feature and more of an eyesore, this can easily be remedied with a few pieces of laminate flooring. All you need to do is cut them to size and then attach them to your mirror or photo frame using a strong, clear epoxy glue.

RESURFACE A TABLE TOP

Give a table top an instant facelift by covering it in your leftover laminate. If you want a rustic look, scuff the laminate using sandpaper or, for a more modern look, prime and then paint in your preferred colour. Add edging for a smoother finish.

BUILD A HEADBOARD

If your existing headboard is looking a little worn, why not create a new one using your leftover laminate? First, you will need a piece of plywood as backing, and then just glue spare pieces of laminate onto it before fixing to your bed. Alternatively, why not cover the whole space behind your bed and create a feature wall?

MAKE PLANTING BEDS

Laminate flooring planks are weather-resistant and do not deteriorate as quickly as solid wood planks. This means that they are ideal for using in the garden. Simply cut a few pieces to size and use as fence panels to divide sections of your garden for planting beds.

INSTALL IN YOUR GARAGE OR LOFT

Make use of any unused space in your home by installing your leftover laminate on your garage or loft floor. Laminate is moisture and temperature resistant, which makes it ideal for these spaces. If you want to use your loft as a living space, you will need to ensure you install a subfloor and underlay first.

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The benefits of cleaning with soap nuts are:

- > They do not contain phosphates, parabens or sodium lauryl sulphate
- > They are hypoallergenic and odourless
- > They contain anti-fungal and anti-microbial properties
- > They are 100 per cent sustainable.

How to use soap nuts in your home

Soap nut laundry detergent

Place 4-6 soap nut shells into a small muslin bag | Add your laundry and the bag to your washing machine | Wash as per fabric instructions | Keep the used shells as they can be reused up to four times.

Soap nut liquid detergent

This can be used as a base to make many cleaning products. Pour 2 litres of water and 15 soap nut shells into a pan | Boil for 10 minutes,

turn off the heat, and cover | Once cooled, strain the liquid, pour into a bottle and store in the fridge.

Soap nut multipurpose cleaner

Mix 400ml of your soap nut liquid detergent with 100ml of white vinegar and 10ml of your preferred essential oil | Pour into an empty spray bottle and use to clean all surfaces in your home.

Soap nut pesticide

Fill a spray bottle with 500ml of your soap nut liquid | Add 10 drops each of lavender, rosemary and peppermint oil | Shake well and spray directly onto your plants.

Where to buy soap nuts

You can order soap nuts online. They are also available at some health and wellness shops.



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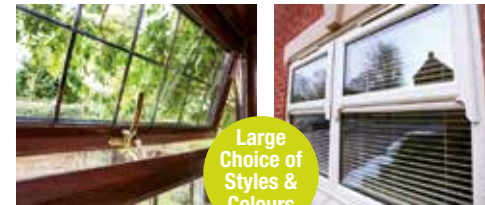
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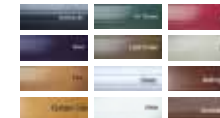
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LOCAL NEWS

from your neighbourhood



Photo credit: Essex Police

Man sentenced after driving at crowd outside club

A man has been sentenced to four years in prison after admitting to driving over an injured man as he lay on the ground in Brentwood.

Martin Stokes (pictured right), 28, of no fixed address, was sentenced at Southend Magistrates' Court after admitting actual bodily harm and causing serious injury by dangerous driving.

He was previously found not guilty of attempted murder and grievous bodily harm with intent.

The incident took place outside the Sugar Hut, in Brentwood High Street, on April 2, 2017.

Stokes' victim, then aged in his 20s, had been involved in a large disturbance outside the club and had been knocked out and was lying on the road.

Stokes was seen leaving the club before getting into the driver's seat of a car. Shortly afterwards, the car accelerated towards the group outside the club.

As a result of Stokes' actions, the victim was seriously injured.

Two other people, who were tending to the man on the ground, were also struck. Their injuries were not serious, but the incident significantly affected their mental health.

Following the incident, Stokes left the country and could not be located. He was finally arrested in London in April 2021, transferred to Essex and charged.

Stokes is the eleventh person to be convicted in relation to the disturbance in Brentwood. Eight men admitted affray in 2019 and were given suspended prison sentences. They were also fined and ordered to complete unpaid work totalling 880 hours.

In December 2018, two further men were fined and ordered to carry out unpaid work for affray.

Detective Superintendent Steve Jennings, of the Kent and Essex Serious Crime Directorate, said: "We never stopped pursuing Stokes after he fled the country and now he has been sentenced to an appropriate time in custody for his crimes."

BRENTWOOD PROPERTY NEWS



The Brentwood Realtor

Your REAL Estate Agent For Life!

Hello, I am Peter Garland-Collins and I am delighted to bring to you my monthly, property column, focussing mainly on Brentwood and the surrounding areas.

As hinted last month, it gives me great pleasure to announce the Peter Garland-Collins Real Estate Team to Brentwood. Introducing fellow Realtor Daniel Brown into the team, as well as now partnering with Lee Brown of Nicholson Brown, who are based in Brentwood and offer all of market mortgage services.

SELLERS MARKET IN BRENTWOOD!

Since the start of the year there has been no let up in the demand to buy property in Brentwood. This volume of buyers has created a sellers market in the area!

A sellers market is where there is way more buyers compared to sellers. What I am seeing more and more is that people are seemingly afraid to sell because they fear they will not find the right home to buy.

As a Realtor, living in the area, one of the parts of my business that I'm really proud of is helping people in our community move locally. The lack of available properties in the area means there are so many "potential" sellers out there and I've got a great way to reach them.

If you are looking to move then hopefully you've already found your next home, however, if you haven't then we would be more than happy to offer our services to you because we can help.

Once we understand your requirements, we can match your needs to any home that fits, even if its not currently on the market! We can reach out to these owners on your behalf to help make sure you have every opportunity to buy exactly what you want, where you want - even in this highly competitive market place!

Get in touch if you would like to know more. Best Wishes.

Peter Garland-Collins

Local Property Statistics

Current number of homes for sale in CM14. 204

Current average price per Sq.Ft. £516

Average asking price of 3 bed home. £541k

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Sporting hero helps launch club for young people

Famous sports promoter Eddie Hearn helped launch a new boxing club in Brentwood.

Brentwood Central Boxing Club, based at the Brentwood Centre, was set up by Florin Nicorici, a former boxer and England Boxing qualified coach, referee and judge.

Florin said: "It's always been my dream to open a boxing club for kids who really need it, ever since I was a child and boxed in Romania. The sport has opened me up to so many opportunities and I hope this club will do the same for young people in the area.

"I hope it will encourage local teens to stay off the streets and do something productive with their time. I have big dreams and I'm hoping we can lead some of them to great success, and who knows, even the Olympics."

Classes will run three times a week on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays and will consist of a Little Champs club for those aged six to 10, and a Youth and Seniors Carded Club for those aged 11 to 17. Sessions are £4 for ages up to 10 and £5 for those aged 11 and over.

The centre, managed by Everyone Active in partnership with Brentwood Borough Council, is expecting to see lots of interest in the sessions.

Brentwood Council Leader, councillor Chris Hossack, said: "It's not often a council gets a chance to make someone's dreams come true, so I'm pleased we were able to support Brentwood Central Boxing Club with the help of Everyone Active."

To sign up, email brentwoodcentral21@gmail.com or call 07930 903442.

Musical collaboration strikes a chord at school



Photo credit: Orchestral Outreach

Brentwood School's first Orchestral Outreach workshop proved a huge success, with more than 80 young musicians from the local area attending the inaugural event.

The workshop took place last month at the school's Wessex Auditorium, in collaboration with professional conductor Chloé van Soeterstède (pictured) and members of her professional orchestra, the Arch Sinfonia. It is hoped it will be the first of many community partnerships.

Brentwood School's director of music and performing arts, Mr Florian Cooper, said: "We invited young orchestral musicians from other secondary schools and youth music organisations in Brentwood. It was a fantastic opportunity to rehearse and perform in a professional setting. The afternoon culminated in a performance for parents, which was extremely well received."



LOCAL NEWS BRENTWOOD



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Young singer given place in national orchestra

A singer from Brentwood School has been awarded a coveted place as a vocalist in the National Youth Jazz Orchestra (NYJO) academy vocal team.

Murray Peat, 15, is now one step closer to his dream of performing in the world-renowned Ronnie Scott's Jazz Club in Soho.

As part of the NYJO team, Murray will hone his skills in everything from microphone technique and repertoire to reading and jazz interpretation.

Murray, who is in Year 11, said: "When I found out I had been awarded a place, I was very pleased and very excited as at the taster day, I'd had so much fun. I really enjoyed the atmosphere and making music there

and meeting some amazing jazz musicians.

"I started singing when I was young, but it wasn't until I became a student at Brentwood that I realised how much I loved music.

"In the long term, I want to be a jazz singer. My biggest goal is to perform at Ronnie Scott's and I want to perform with the Jools Holland Big Band."

Brentwood School's director of music and performing arts, Mr Florian Cooper, said: "Murray has been the consummate musical professional since he joined the school five years ago and it is not surprising to see his hard work and talent being recognised so significantly on the national stage."

Suspects appear in court following stabbing

Following our report in the January 2022 edition of VISION Brentwood Ongar of a fatal stabbing, four Brentwood men have appeared in court.

Xhovan Pepaj, 25, was fatally injured in Caley Road, Tunbridge Wells, on December 4, 2021.

Eight suspects appeared before Maidstone Crown Court on February 2, where they were formally charged. All pleaded not guilty.

Ray Renda, 21, of Sandringham Road, Pilgrims Hatch, Brentwood; Nathan Rainforth, 20, of Gloucester Road, Pilgrims Hatch, Brentwood; Nathan Turner, 28, of Myrtle Road, Brentwood; Zach Cutting, 23, of Roundhills, Waltham Abbey; Donte Simpson-Palmer, 18, of Norfolk Road, Ilford; Mohammed Miah, 25, of Highfield Road, Romford, have all been charged

with conspiracy to commit robbery.

Turner was further charged with possessing cannabis with intent to supply.

All were remanded to a hearing on April 29.

Two other men linked to the incident – Bartosz Malawski, 26, of Hainault Road, Romford, and Glen Hough, 51, of Larchwood Gardens, Brentwood – also appeared in court charged with conspiracy to commit robbery. The defendants are both remanded in custody awaiting trial.

Ciaran Stewart, 18, of Curtis Road, Hornchurch, and a 17-year-old boy from Ilford have been charged with murder and with conspiracy to commit robbery.

A 33-year-old woman and a 27-year-old man remain on police bail pending further enquires.



Photo credit: Essex Police

Seven charged and £100k of drug money seized

Seven people have been charged with drugs offences after officers executed a series of warrants last month, including one in Brentwood.

The properties in Brentwood, Billericay, Canvey Island and Benfleet are all linked to an organised criminal gang believed to be involved in the distribution of class A drugs.

Officers discovered substantial quantities of drugs and recovered approximately £100,000 in cash, some of it encased in concrete.

Several weapons, mobile phones and bags of counterfeit clothing were also seized.

Jimmy Heary, 57, of Oak Road, Crays Hill, Billericay, and Sheralee Heary, 51, of Oak Road, Crays Hill, Billericay, have been charged with conspiracy to supply a class A controlled drug, conspiracy to conceal/disguise/convert/transfer/remove criminal

property, and possession/control of material bearing a false trademark.

Anthony Serra, 82, of Oak Road, Crays Hill, Billericay; Violet Serra, 74, of Oak Road, Crays Hill, Billericay; Jade Sandell, 31, of Haarlem Road, Canvey Island; and Nicholas Axford, 35, of St Johns Crescent, Canvey Island, have been charged with conspiracy to supply a class A controlled drug and conspiracy to conceal/disguise/convert/transfer/remove criminal property.

Axford has also been charged with affray and intimidation of a witness following a related incident.

They have all been remanded in prison.

Jasmine Burrows, 28, of Norton Avenue, Canvey Island, has been charged with conspiracy to supply a class A controlled drug. Burrows was released on bail.

Six other people arrested have been released under investigation.

Council grant to aid businesses with big plans

Local businesses can apply for grants of up to £10,000 from Brentwood Borough Council.

The Brentwood Business Growth Grant will offer a share of the £250,000 Additional Restrictions Grant funding to support businesses operating in the borough which have ambitious plans to grow and create new jobs within the area. The grant will be open for applications from March 3 to 9, and grants will be distributed by March 31.

The grant will support projects such as purchasing new IT equipment or machinery, creating new services,

adopting new processes or new ways of working, and creating apprenticeships.

To help businesses prepare and develop their project ahead of application, up to 12 free hours of business support is available from the Backing Essex Business team. To find out more, email essex@ldbgroup.co.uk

Advice and support on applications is also available from BEST Growth Hub by emailing info@bestgrowthhub.org.uk

For more information, visit www.brentwood.gov.uk/-/funding-for-businesses

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LOCAL NEWS

from your neighbourhood



LOCAL NEWS ONGAR



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Celebrity couple's gates deemed 'unsuitable'

A proposal for new gates at the entrance to the Ongar home of celebrity couple, Mark Wright and Michelle Keegan, has been approved by the council.

The couple have won the approval of the council for two-metre-high gates at the property, as well as piers and walls.

Stanford Rivers Parish Council (SRPC) did not object to the proposal. However, it was concerned about the design of the gates – which would be of a similar design to the gate pictured right.

SRPC chairman John Glover, speaking at a planning meeting last month, highlighted the “opaqueness” of the proposed gates, adding: “It’s such a shame in the country that people want to fence themselves in.

“If you can see through the gates, it would be more rural to the countryside.

“I’m just against this ‘transport yard’ thing.”

However, parish councillor Robert Jackson said: “They are going to have photographers poking their lenses through them [if the gates are not solid]. I think they can justify it [solid gates] considering who they are.”

Parish council clerk Adriana Jones summed up the council's views, saying she would inform Epping Forest District Council that while SRPC has no objection to the application, it believes the proposed design is “unsuitable” and something “more fitting with the rural countryside” should be proposed.

A letter submitted with the planning application from Tom Wiffen, of Ongar-based M P Architects – which also designed the house – states: “The scheme is a revised one from a previous withdrawn application.

“Previously, walls were shown to the boundaries. However, these have now been removed and replaced with a bay hedge along the boundary for privacy.

“There will be a low-level 1.2-metre-high wall to the immediate sides of the gates. A six-metre entrance has been shown for a vehicle to pull into and is therefore off the highway.

“This revised scheme is sympathetic and improves the area and will provide a secure entrance for our clients.”

Essex Highways has expressed no objection.



Railway releases new programme for the year

LOCAL NEWS ONGAR



Epping Ongar Railway is preparing for an exciting programme of events for 2022. This month, essential maintenance activity at the railway will be completed ahead of the events due to take place later this year. On April 23 and 24, the Spring Diesel Gala will take place, with the railway's home fleet taking a starring role.

From May 27 to 29, the railway will celebrate the 10th anniversary of the reopening of the former London Underground line. This is expected to feature the British Railways Standard 4 steam locomotive, 75069, making its first visit away from the Severn Valley Railway since 1994.

The event will also feature the launch of a new book, *Epping Ongar Railway – The First Ten Years*, which details the enormous amount of work carried out to establish the fully working heritage railway that exists today. In addition, the Penny Salon Gallery at Ongar Station will be displaying a photographic exhibition showcasing the Epping Ongar Railway, entitled *10 Years of Progress*.

Other upcoming events include Dinosaurs at the Railway on June 26 and August 14, and a visit from the Gruffalo on July 3 and September 11.

For details of all these events and more, visit www.eorailway.co.uk

The railway is also looking for volunteers to help operate these events. To find out more, email volunteering@eorailway.co.uk

Forum seeks new members to support local businesses

Ongar Town Forum (OTF) is inviting local business owners and residents to join the group.

OTF is formed of local volunteers who are trying to improve the town for the benefit of local businesses.

In the past six months, OTF has successfully launched the monthly Farmers' and Craft Market and also organised the town's festive lights, with additions having been made to the display thanks to financial

contributions from local businesses, residents, Epping Forest District Council and Ongar Town Council.

OTF chairman Martyn Pattie said: "There is much that can be done, but it needs people. You don't need any special skills other than a willingness to get involved."

"The Forum is looking to attract additional members, whether they are local residents or from the local business community. Anyone who would like to help promote our local traders and have a say on issues affecting local commerce.

"These continue to be difficult times for businesses as we hopefully come out of the COVID-19 pandemic and local traders need all the support possible to help them promote their services.

"OTF currently has only a handful of members and we are keen to increase our numbers with more people interested in the town and Ongar's businesses."

For more information about joining OTF, please email info@ongartownforum.co.uk

Tributes to 'cherished' woman who died in car collision

An Ongar man has been released under investigation after a woman was killed in a collision in Abridge.

Eileen Tyler (pictured), 55, died following a collision with a car in London Road on January 20.

In a statement, her family said: "Our wonderful mum, wife, nanny, sister, auntie and cherished friend Eileen is totally irreplaceable.

"She has left a huge hole in all our lives but will forever be in our hearts.

"We ask that you please respect our privacy at this extremely difficult time."

A 61-year-old man from Ongar was arrested on suspicion of causing death by dangerous driving and driving while unfit through drink or drugs.

He has since been released under investigation.

If you have any information, you can submit a report online at www.essex.police.uk or use the live chat button to speak to an online operator between 7am and 11pm.

Please quote incident 933 of January 20.



Photo credit: Essex Police

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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.

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.

The Cloudy2Clear service only requires the glass to be replaced and not the whole window once the unit has failed. Chris commented "Cloudy2Clear were able to assist our community through the last financial crisis in 2008 due to the savings that can be made in using our service. Unfortunately we might be going through something similar again soon and the public can rest assured that we will be there to help again".

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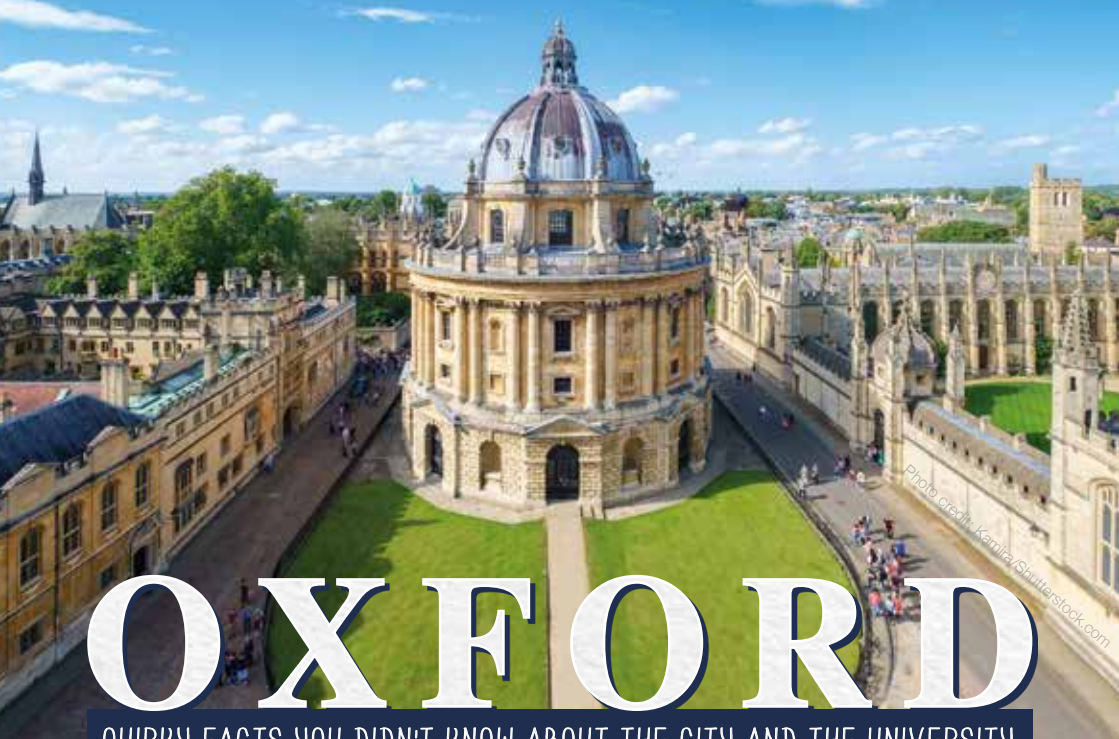


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OXFORD

QUIRKY FACTS YOU DIDN'T KNOW ABOUT THE CITY AND THE UNIVERSITY

Oxford is one of the most famous cities in the UK. Home to one of the most highly esteemed universities in the world, as well as glorious architecture and scenery, it's one of those cities everyone should experience at least once in their lives.

Here are some facts you might not know about Oxford and its famous university.

OXFORD UNIVERSITY WAS FOUNDED IN 1096: This makes it around 925 years old, and one of the oldest universities in the world.

IT'S A HUB FOR WRITERS: With more authors published per square mile than anywhere else in the world, Oxford is a great place to be a writer. Some of the most successful authors who attended the university include J.R.R. Tolkien, C.S. Lewis and Lewis Carroll.

THE LECTURERS WERE BANNED FROM MARRIAGE: Oxford University lecturers were trained to be priests and therefore upheld the value of chastity, even if they went on to other professions. That rule was overturned in 1877.

WOMEN WEREN'T ALLOWED TO STUDY AT OXFORD UNTIL 1878: Marriage wasn't the only

thing banned at Oxford – women were too. They were given permission to study in 1878, could be awarded degrees from 1920 and, finally, were allowed to study and stay at all colleges in 1974. Today, the number of male and female undergraduates is around 50/50.

FAMOUS STUDENTS: Oxford University has had some very famous students. Alumni include writer Oscar Wilde, *Harry Potter* actress Emma Watson, poets T.S. Eliot and Philip Larkin, and Professor Stephen Hawking.

WORLD'S LARGEST BOOKSHOP: Oxford is home to the world's largest bookshop. Built in 1879, Blackwells Bookshop's basement, the Norrington Room, is 10,000 square feet and has more than three miles of shelving and 150,000 books.

OXFORD ESCAPED THE BLITZ: No bombs were dropped on Oxford during the Second World War. It's believed that Hitler wanted Oxford to be the country's new capital if it was successfully conquered.

Now that you're armed with some fun Oxford facts, will you be paying this fascinating city a visit?

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STEVEN BARTLETT:

“QUITTING IS FOR WINNERS”



Steven Bartlett is rapidly becoming a fan favourite on *Dragons' Den* – an entrepreneur and the founder of one of the most influential social media companies in the world, and someone unafraid to rock the apple cart of business... as long as it turns him a profit.

It's fair to say the personalities on *Dragons' Den* are all cut from a certain cloth. They're wily, experienced, of a certain age, and have dined at the top table of business for a long while.

Indeed, when fellow Dragon Peter Jones launched his first business, aged 16, Steven Bartlett was still a decade away from being born.

Having young blood in any business environment is essential – even if the format is a reality TV show. Yet Bartlett, the Botswana-born whizz, brings about a digital edge to proceedings that not even tech-savvy Jones can rival.

After applying to pitch on *Dragons' Den* aged 18 – to no avail – the digital tycoon's first money-making venture came in 2013 when he founded Wallpark, a Manchester-based social sharing network that overtook his studies at the city's university, to the point where he quit his degree... after one lecture.

Social Chain arrived a year later – a social media marketing company that gained instant traction within a booming digital landscape. Bartlett exited the company six years later with a \$200million bounty and has since gone on to invest in numerous companies, both through and separately from the BBC reality TV series.

While success has been prolific and constant for the 29 year old, the catalyst for it comes from a much darker place. In a recent interview, the businessman admitted that his stimulation for making money came from feeling neglected and sidelined in his childhood.

"The reason I'm sat here today, I am 100 per cent sure, is because of things you would consider parental failures. I didn't have nice gifts and presents, and my parents weren't around much because they were so busy working," he said.

"My mum is the hardest-working person I've ever met – she would sleep in her shop in Plymouth in the back room on a bag of rice, wake up and run the shop.

"However, I learned that if I was to have anything in life, it wouldn't appear on the kitchen counter or under the tree by itself. It would need to be of my own doing."

This element of self-motivation epitomises Bartlett's style as a business leader who deserves to be respected – it's also why he loves being part of *Dragons' Den*, a programme he first started watching as a 12 year old and, pretending to be the sixth Dragon, would pause the TV between pitches as he decided whether to invest.

Ten years to the week since he first applied to *Dragons' Den*, it became official that he would be joining the show, bringing with him charisma, intelligence and positivity. Even the title of his debut book, *Happy Sexy Millionaire* – a *Sunday Times* bestseller in 2021 – outlines the entrepreneur's laser-guided focus; while his *The Diary of a CEO* podcast is currently on a sold-out tour.

Bartlett also has a canny ability to flip convention. One of his business mottos, 'quitting is for winners', comes from personal experience.

"In our society, we always glamourise starting, and quitting is seen as something losers do. But quitting is the incredibly important thing you have to do before you start," he said.

"I've been an unbelievably peaceful quitter for my entire life. I quit school, quit university after one lecture, started a company and did it for three years, raised investment and quit out of the blue, quit my last company which was generating £600million in revenue, because I knew within me that I'd overstayed my welcome and it could no longer serve me.

"I don't quit things because they're hard, but when things suck and they become not worth the fight it would take to change them, then you have to quit. I really believe quitting is for winners.

"We're in industries now in which to be noticed you've got to be bold, be brave and shout loudest.

"If you can do that, and back it all up with a solid, well-constructed, well-delivered idea that can make money, you've got half a chance."



PUZZLES & TRIVIA

PUZZLES

Answers: see end of The VISION Listings

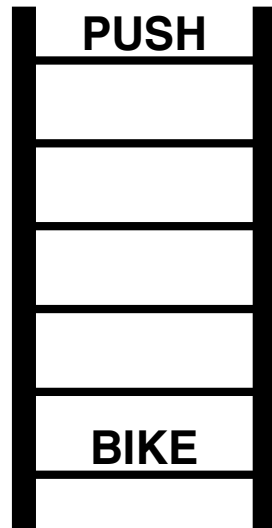
- ▶ BATON
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- ▶ FIELD
- ▶ HAMMER
- ▶ HEPTATHLON
- ▶ HIGH JUMP
- ▶ HURDLES
- ▶ JAVELIN
- ▶ LONG DISTANCE
- ▶ LONG JUMP
- ▶ MARATHON
- ▶ OLYMPICS
- ▶ PENTATHLON
- ▶ POLE VAULT
- ▶ RELAY
- ▶ SHOT PUT
- ▶ SPRINTS
- ▶ TRACK
- ▶ TRIPLE JUMP

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DID YOU KNOW?

- ▶ During the Victorian era, postmen were nicknamed 'robins' for frequently wearing red jackets
- ▶ House sparrows have chunky beaks which are excellent for opening seeds
- ▶ In the past, chaffinches were caught and used as caged songbirds
- ▶ Studies have shown that the front of a blue tit's head glows under UV light
- ▶ Blackbirds feed mainly on the ground. They continually run and pause, scanning the area for prey
- ▶ Dunnocks can raise a number of broods of chicks each year
- ▶ Most starlings live in the UK all year round, but some migrate here from northern Europe in the winter months.

WORD LADDER



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

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

DO NOT rearrange the order of the letters.

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

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On behalf of our staff and family we would like to thank everyone who has entrusted us with the care of their loved ones, and we would like to wish you and your families the best for 2022 from all at St Michaels Homes Ltd.

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CONSIDER ALL THE VARIABLES

From many people's perspectives, the Autumn Budget may have left a feeling that nothing much had changed in the world of personal financial planning, as there were no major changes announced to Income Tax, Capital Gains Tax, Inheritance Tax or pensions. However, the key consideration is how outside factors, such as higher inflation, could affect your finances and what steps you should take before the end of the tax year to make the most of any allowances and exemptions.

INHERITANCE TAX (IHT)

Official figures from HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) for April to September 2021 show that IHT receipts totalled £3.1billion, £0.7billion higher than the same period in 2020. With the nil rate band and residence nil rate band now frozen until April 2026 at £325,000 and £175,000 respectively, the importance of effective estate planning shouldn't be overlooked.

INDIVIDUAL SAVINGS ACCOUNTS (ISAS)

The annual ISA limit has now been frozen at £20,000 for five years. If the allowance had increased with inflation each year since 2017, it would stand at £21,440 today, sheltering an additional £1,440 from the taxman. Junior ISAs celebrated their tenth birthday in November - the allowance remains at £9,000.

DIVIDEND TAX

The government revealed in September that it would increase Dividend Tax by 1.25 percentage points from April 6, 2022 to help fund health and social care. This means investors will have to pay more on any income from shares held outside ISAs and above the £2,000 Dividend Allowance.

PENSIONS

The Lifetime Allowance remains at £1,073,100 and the Annual Allowance remains at £40,000. As these allowances haven't increased with inflation, it effectively means those saving to the maximum extent possible with tax concessions can save less in real terms each year.

VARIABLES AT PLAY

It's important to be aware of all the variables at play; inflation, interest rates, taxation and frozen allowances all affect your finances. Talk to us for help with your individual circumstances.

For a free review of your current financial situation, please contact please contact Karyn Vogel on 01277 654153.

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Q Who Are Coverisure Brentwood?

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Q What Can Coverisure Brentwood Help With?

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

Q Why Should You Use Coverisure Brentwood?

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

Q How Can Insurance Protect You?

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



Q How Can You Save Money On Your Insurance?

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

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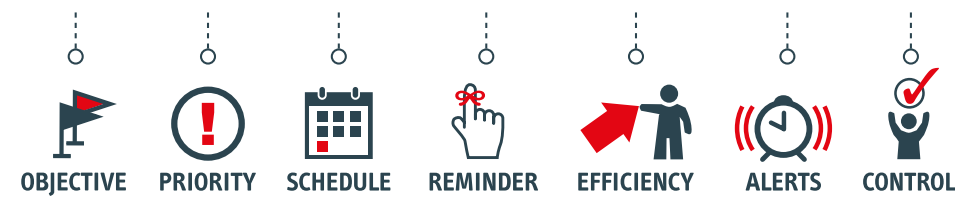
BRUCE KING

on the intricacies of time management



BUSINESS & PROPERTY

TIME MANAGEMENT



In his latest column, sales mentor and personal growth coach, Bruce King, discusses the intricacies of time management.

Here's a technique I developed many years ago, which I use to manage my time effectively and which I've taught to thousands of others. It's called the ISWAT Technique, and you can use this in every area of your life.

ISWAT stands for: Is what I am doing now or about to do now going to help me achieve my goals?

We all have goals we want to achieve. They could be complex goals such as a large work-related project that could take days, weeks or months to achieve; or something really simple like going for an enjoyable walk or having a great evening out with friends. Whatever you have planned to do is a 'goal', and your objective is to achieve the goal.

While investing your time achieving this goal, other things may come up. They may be interruptions from other people, or thoughts you have that start

to take you off in a different direction. Whenever that happens, you must stop and ask yourself: is what I am doing now or about to do now going to help me achieve my goals?

If the answer is 'yes', you can do it right away, or you can allocate some specific time to do it later.

If the answer is 'no', dump it right away.

To help remind you, get a pad of sticky notes. Write on five to 10 of them, in capital letters, ISWAT. You already know what that stands for.

Post these notes where you will come across them frequently during the day. Every time you're about to start a new task or project, make sure to read the ISWAT note.

More information:

Bruce King is recognised internationally as a leading sales, marketing and personal growth strategist, addressing audiences and coaching sales teams and managers in 23 countries. For more information, visit bruceking.co.uk



BROADBAND PAIN?



UK ADDRESSES WITH THE FASTEST (OR SLOWEST) BROADBAND SPEEDS

In recent years, our digital connectivity – boosted by the installation of fibre technology and backed with 4G and 5G mass integration – has never been better.

Rarely these days do we find ourselves bemoaning the speed at which we can connect and interact with others, and complaints about our broadband not working are increasingly rare.

And yet, there are still parts of the UK that can offer broadband efficiencies much greater than other areas. You may expect to find these dynamically digital hotspots in the major cities – London, Birmingham, Manchester, or Edinburgh.

Yet the place you need to head to for the fastest possible download of the latest movie or video game is... Haul Fryn, an innocuous-looking street in Swansea, South Wales. There, you can download a two-hour film in just 47 seconds, given a download speed of 882 megabits per second (Mbps).

Less fortunate are the residents of Wistaston Road in Crewe, whose paltry rate of just 0.24Mbps means the same movie would take more than two days to download.

The average download speed in the UK currently stands at around 80Mbps. The draw on our broadband depends on what we're doing at the time – simple social media browsing uses between 1 and 3Mbps, with video streaming and gaming using between 3 and 5Mbps. At the top end, streaming a video in high definition uses up to 7Mbps.

What is clear is that broadband speeds across the UK are experiencing a sharp increase. Almost half of UK customers are experiencing so-called 'superfast' speeds of at least 30Mbps – that figure stood at a quarter of this speed just six years ago. Although that may not come as much consolation to a group of residents in Crewe.

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The secrets to a successful STIR FRY



Although a stir fry may seem like a simple dish, the cooking process is actually fraught with potential disasters. From soggy veg to uncooked meat, find out below how to avoid these common pitfalls and create the perfect stir fry.

1. ENSURE YOUR WOK IS HOT

Although a stir fry is often the meal that you turn to when you want delicious food fast, you do need to exert some patience when waiting for your wok to heat up. Ideally, heat a dry, non-stick wok for 5-10 minutes over the highest heat on your gas range. If you have an electric hob, set to 6 or 7, as any higher could damage your pan.

2. COOK MEAT IN BATCHES

Meat intended for a stir fry should always be at room temperature, never chilled, and you should only cook up to 200g at a time or your meat will end up simmering or steaming rather than frying.

3. CUT YOUR VEGGIES TO THE SAME SIZE

If you want to save cooking time, cut up your veggies to the same size so that they can all be cooked together. If you are washing your veg first, make sure they are completely dry before adding to the wok. Any leafy veg such as spinach or shredded cabbage should be added last, as well as bean sprouts, to ensure they remain crisp.

4. ADD PRAWNS LAST

If you are using cooked prawns, add these last as they will only need one minute to heat through. For uncooked prawns, you are best off cooking them first, removing from the pan, and then adding again once your veggies are done.

5. MIX UP A SLURRY IF NEEDED

If you find you have added too much stock, wine or soy sauce, don't despair. Simply mix up a slurry of 1tbs cornstarch and 2tbs cold water and stir in to thicken your sauce.



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SORRY FOR

celery

THE UNFAIR WRAP THIS VIBRANT VEGETABLE GETS

If celery were an animal, it would be a black sheep. It's long, scrawny, feels like rubber, and resembles the world's smallest halfpipe. But worse than that, it gets labelled as the most useless of all vegetables; it's said that the exercise of eating a stick of celery actually uses up more energy than it provides in return.

However, it's not all bad. Celery is rich in vitamins – A, C and K respectively – which are good for boosting eye, bone, cartilage and even reproductive health, not to mention your immune system.

Then there are minerals such as potassium and folate, which will help you on your way to maintaining DNA health, fluid balance and muscle memory, as well as preserving nerve signals.

True, celery is an acquired taste, but its dark, rich, peppery flavour makes it a favourite for use in soups, stocks, stews, broths and more. It can add an edge to potatoes, gives a smoky aside to meats, and, of course, adds a nutty crunch to floppy salads.

Celery offers more than you think. The final proof – it's a major ingredient in everyone's favourite condiment, ketchup.

Celery and apple smoothie (serves 2)

Smoothies are an excellent way to get more veg into your diet, and this celery and apple smoothie comes packed with sweetness and has a creaminess you may not expect.

Ingredients:

- > ½ cup celery (chopped)
- > One apple (peeled and chopped)
- > 1 or 2 cups of milk
- > A pinch of sugar

How to make:

1. Puree the celery and apple together with the milk in a blender
2. Add the sugar
3. Strain before pouring into glasses.

Top tips:

- > Use a sugar-free sweetener instead of sugar
- > For a creamy texture, add a dollop of Greek yogurt, half an avocado or a frozen banana.



HIIT ^{VS} TABATA



THE SHORT WORKOUTS THAT COULD HELP YOU GET FIT

When it comes to fitness, the shorter the better, right? Well, high-intensity interval training (HIIT) and Tabata are all about short, sharp workouts. But make no mistake – these workouts are intense, designed to get your heart rate up and help you tone your muscles.

So what's the difference between HIIT and Tabata? And how can they help you get fit?

HIIT and Tabata workouts are very similar. They are based around high-intensity, short-interval training methods with minimal rest between sets. Typically lasting 20-30 minutes, they may be short, but they'll have you sweating.

Tabata is a type of HIIT workout based around eight 20-second bursts of intense exercise, with just 10 seconds of rest in between. There are generally four rounds of these eight exercises in a Tabata workout. It was developed by Dr Izumi Tabata based on these specific principles.

HIIT workouts will target muscle fibres that promote definition, boosting the testosterone production in both men and women that helps rebuild muscle fibres after exercise. Its other benefits include:

- Weight loss | Increased cardiovascular endurance
- Reduced body fat | Decreased blood pressure.

Tabata workouts provide a more intense HIIT workout, with benefits including:

- Boosted metabolism | Increased fitness levels
- Increased lean muscle mass | Raised heart rate in a short amount of time.

Creating HIIT and Tabata workouts

You can create your own HIIT or Tabata workout using just your bodyweight, or using weights and fitness machines to add variety. Some example routines include:

HIIT

- > Choose either four or five exercises that focus on one area of the body, or a full-body workout. Great examples include burpees, squat thrusts, jumping jacks and press-ups
- > Complete each exercise for 45 seconds
- > Rest for 60 seconds between each exercise
- > Repeat four or five times.

Tabata

- > Choose either eight exercises that focus on one area of the body, or a full-body workout. Examples of Tabata exercises include mountain climbers, squat jumps, crunches and reverse lunges
- > Complete each exercise for 20 seconds, allowing a 10-second rest between each exercise – this equals one round
- > Allow a one-minute rest between rounds and complete four rounds to complete your workout.

HIIT and Tabata workouts are intense, but they provide many benefits for your health and fitness. As short workouts, they're ideal for those who have a busy schedule, or those who hate spending hours at the gym.





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ENAMEL **ERODERS** vs. *saviours*

Enamel is the thin outer covering of the teeth and is vital for protecting them from daily activities such as chewing, biting, crunching and grinding.

However, as your body cannot repair chipped or cracked enamel, you need to make sure you look after it.

ENAMEL ERODER: SLEEP

Although your body needs sleep to remain in optimal condition, while you are in the land of nod, your saliva production decreases, meaning your tooth enamel is more at risk.

ENAMEL SAVIOUR: BRUSH TWICE A DAY

Always brush your teeth twice a day and ensure that one of these times is just before you hit the sack. Plus, if you do wake up in the night, moisten your mouth with a sip of water.

ENAMEL ERODER: FRUIT JUICE

Regularly drinking citrus fruit juice or fruit smoothies is hugely detrimental to your teeth's enamel, as fruit juice contains a lot of acid.

ENAMEL SAVIOUR: A STRAW

If you can't give up your favourite juices, minimise contact with your teeth by sipping them with a straw and swishing your mouth out with water immediately afterwards.

ENAMEL ERODER: SNACKING

Snacking on foods that are high in sugar and starches can increase your risk of tooth decay and damage your teeth's enamel.

ENAMEL SAVIOUR: CHEWING GUM

Chew sugar-free chewing gum between meals as this boosts your saliva production up to 10 times the normal flow and helps to strengthen your teeth.

ENAMEL ERODER: HARD-BRISTLE TOOTHBRUSHES

Brushing with hard-bristle toothbrushes that are often aimed at smokers and those with stained teeth can damage your tooth enamel.

ENAMEL SAVIOUR: SOFT-BRISTLE BRUSHES

Invest in a soft-bristle toothbrush and wait at least an hour after eating any acidic foods or drinks before brushing. Also use a fluoride toothpaste.





5 essential oils that ease PMS

At best, period pains are a nuisance. At worst, they can be completely debilitating.

Whether you have already tried every over-the-counter treatment available or are looking for more natural relief, these essential oils promise to help combat cramps and beat the bloat.



Lavender: Lavender is one of our favourite essential oils for PMS as it offers multiple benefits. Its anti-inflammatory properties help to reduce inflammation of the surrounding blood vessels in your uterus, which in turn relaxes the muscles and reduces any discomfort. Plus, this aromatic herb is also said to alleviate premenstrual emotional symptoms.



Rose: A menstruation must-have, rose essential oil can treat cramps, fight fatigue and prevent nausea. It also acts as a natural laxative and can help to trigger menstruation, which is helpful if you suffer from irregular periods.



Clove: If you experience a lot of pain and discomfort at your time of the month, then

this is the essential oil for you. One of the most effective oils for alleviating menstrual pain, clove can also help to stop excessive bleeding and lower your blood pressure.



Ylang-ylang: Do you suffer from stress during your period? If yes, ylang-ylang can help you feel cooler, calmer and more collected. With the ability to soothe both your brain and your central nervous system, this essential oil can make it easier to deal with stress and period-induced anxiety.

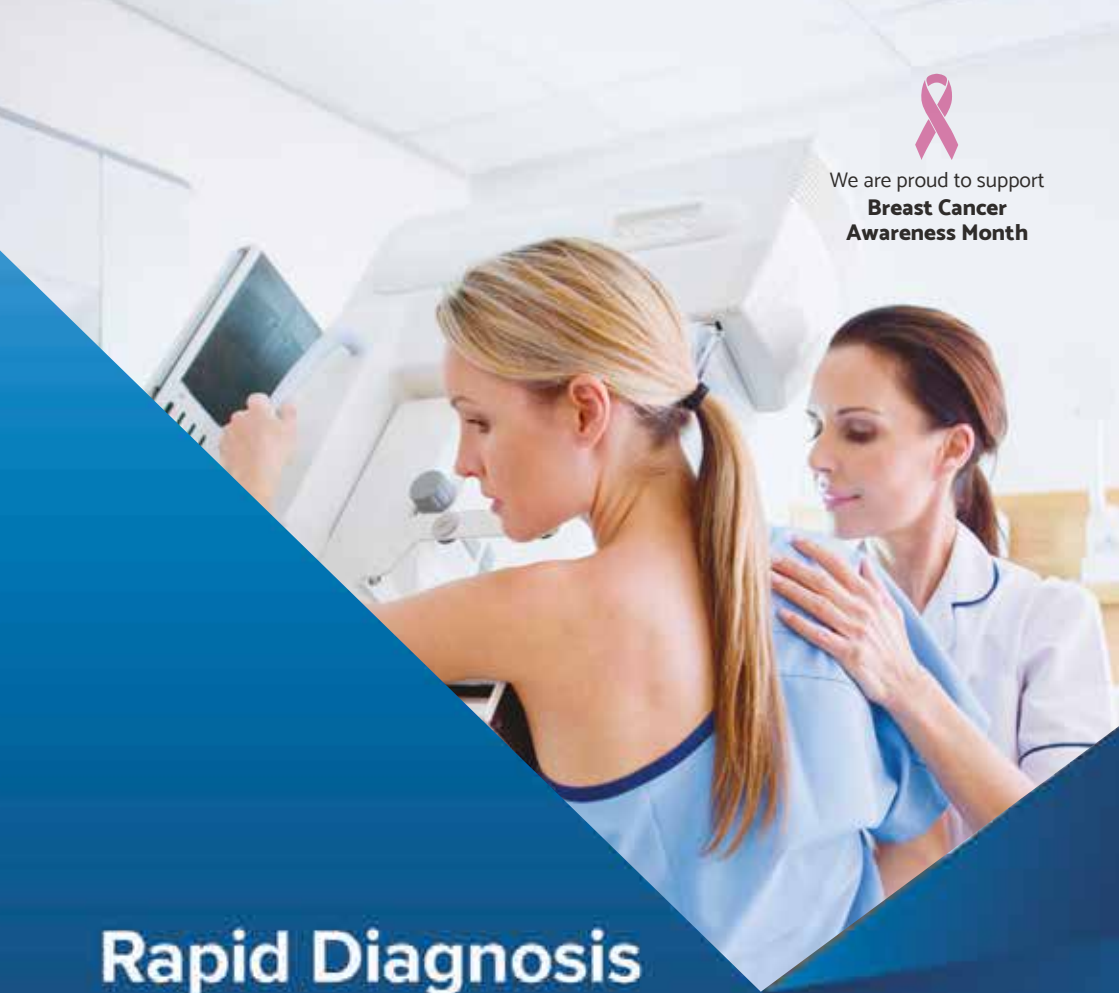


Peppermint: For those who need an energy boost, peppermint can give you the lift you need to get through your cycle. It's also great at relieving headaches and reducing inflammation.

- How to use essential oils**
- > Massage directly onto aching parts of your body
 - > Add a few drops to a warm bath
 - > Add food-grade essential oils to tea or baked goods.



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Kirby grips – or bobby pins as they are known in the USA – are a beauty essential for many families.

However, are you using them correctly? Or have you fallen victim to the five most common bobby blunders?

INSERTING GROOVE SIDE UP

If you have been putting your bobby pins in with the groove side up, then we are sorry to tell you that this is not right. These grooves are designed to help keep the grip in place, so facing them outwards is not effective.

USING THEM WHEN THE END HAS FALLEN OFF

You know the little plastic balls found on the end of the pin? These are there for a very good reason: to protect your hair from snagging and breaking. So, once a grip no longer has these, it is time to throw it in the bin.

PICKING THE WRONG COLOUR

Hair grips are there to do a job, not to be seen. Therefore, you need to pick a grip that matches your hair colour. If you are blonde, opt for a lighter shade, and if you have dark brown hair, pick either black or brown grips.

PLACING INTO WET HAIR

If you are in a rush, you may be tempted to pop a hair grip or two into wet hair. Don't. This will leave you with lots of little indents in your hair that will be hard to shift.

SPREADING THEM APART

As with most beauty items, hair grips become less effective over time. This is especially true if you spread them apart too much when fixing in your hair. If you find your grips are not doing their job anymore, it is probably time to throw them out.



TACKLE THAT



Not many children like having their hair brushed, especially if they are prone to the odd tangle or two. Fortunately, we have the low-down on how to detangle your child's hair in just five simple steps.

Step 1: Start with clean and conditioned hair

Wash your child's hair with detangling shampoo and then apply conditioner. If you see any tangles at this stage, gently comb through the hair while the conditioner is still in and then rinse.

Step 2: Use a hair towel

Once you have finished washing your child's hair, quickly and gently dry it by either blotting or wrapping it in an absorbent hair towel. Avoid rubbing the hair as this can create even more tangles.

Step 3: Loosen any knots

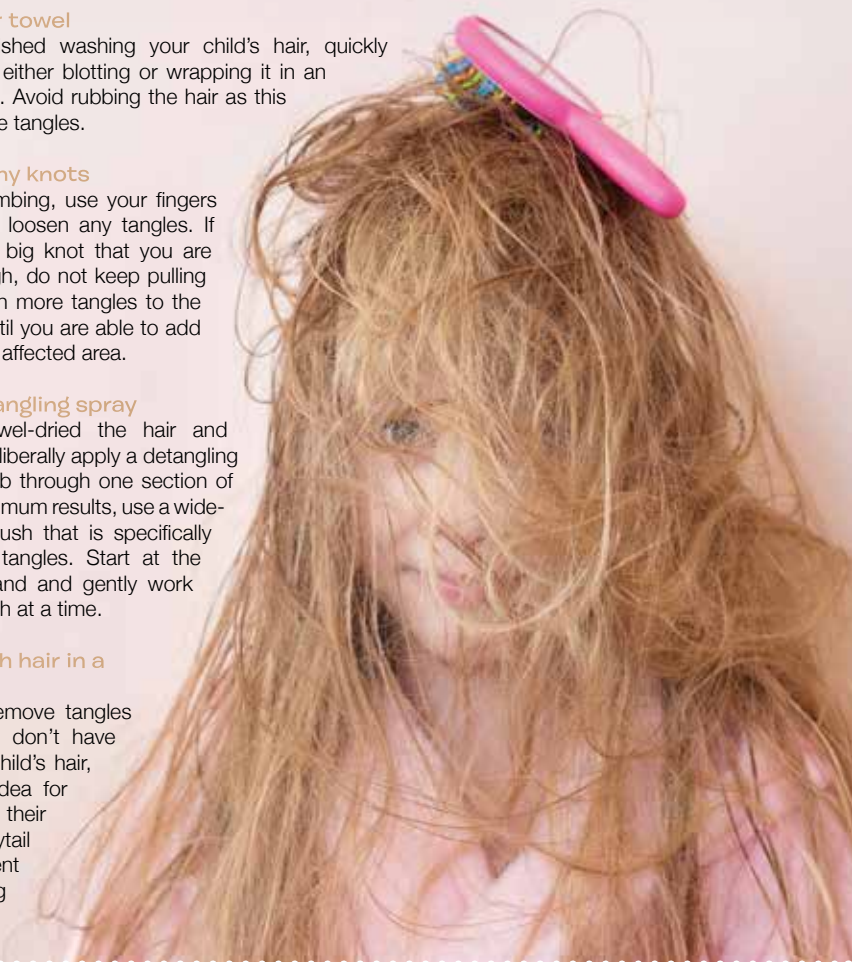
Before you start combing, use your fingers to gently break and loosen any tangles. If you come across a big knot that you are unable to pull through, do not keep pulling as this can add even more tangles to the hair. Instead, wait until you are able to add some product to the affected area.

Step 4: Try a detangling spray

After you have towel-dried the hair and loosened any knots, liberally apply a detangling spray and then comb through one section of hair at a time. For optimum results, use a wide-tooth comb or a brush that is specifically designed to tackle tangles. Start at the bottom of each strand and gently work your way up, one inch at a time.

Step 5: Sleep with hair in a ponytail

If you struggle to remove tangles in the morning and don't have time to wash your child's hair, it can be a good idea for them to sleep with their hair in a loose ponytail as this will help prevent tangles from forming overnight.



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STOP THE SHED



PETS

SHEDDING IS NATURAL FOR DOGS, BUT THAT DOESN'T MAKE IT ANY LESS FRUSTRATING. FORTUNATELY, THERE ARE WAYS TO MANAGE EXCESSIVE SHEDDING

BRUSH THEIR COAT: Although you may think that brushing your dog's coat would encourage more shedding, the opposite is in fact true. Regular brushing and a good grooming routine can minimise the amount of dog hair you find around your home. Bristle brushes are a great choice for all coat types.

USE A SHEDDING TOOL: Shedding tools are brushes with stainless steel tines which can be used to pull up and remove your dog's extra undercoat fur. Ideal for both year-round and seasonal shedders, shedding tools are inexpensive and highly effective.

FOCUS ON GOOD NUTRITION: Excessive shedding can be caused by undernourished fur, which is a result of a poor diet. Avoid this by ensuring your dog has healthy meals that contain all the nutrients they need.

KEEP THEM HYDRATED: Dehydrated skin can exacerbate shedding and hair loss, so make sure that your dog always has access to fresh water. This will not only keep their skin hydrated, but is also beneficial to their overall health.

BATHE THEM REGULARLY: Essential for keeping your dog clean, bathing your pooch regularly will also help remove excess hair, resulting in less shedding in your home.

OTHER REASONS WHY YOUR DOG MAY EXPERIENCE HAIR LOSS:

- > Parasites like fleas, mites or lice
- > Bacterial infections
- > Fungal infections
- > Allergies
- > Kidney disease
- > Liver conditions
- > Thyroid or adrenal issues
- > Pregnancy
- > Anxiety or stress
- > Cancer
- > Immune disease
- > Sunburn
- > Topical irritants

If you are worried that your dog's hair loss is more than just the usual shedding, book an appointment with your local vet as soon as possible.





SPORT

BRITAIN'S GREATEST SPORTING MOMENTS...

REDGRAVE'S OLYMPIC RINGS



Each month, we look at one of the most significant events in British sporting history. This month, it's rower Sir Steve Redgrave CBE's incredible gold medal haul.

It's 20 years since Steve Redgrave emerged from Buckingham Palace with the word Sir bolted onto the front of his name and the letters CBE trailing after it. In fact, the idea of trailing anything for the Olympic rower was an alien concept, even then at the age of 39.

Just nine months previously, Redgrave had done what many thought impossible and grabbed a fifth gold medal in rowing, this time in Sydney.

Dating back to the Los Angeles Olympic Games in 1984, the Marlow-born powerhouse's grip on the podium proved every bit as strong as the one he applied to his oars, with rival competitors relieved when the Brit finally announced his retirement in the year 2000.

He had previously suggested his time with a sport that embodies incredible strength, endurance and true battling spirit was done, most notably in 1996 when, after landing a fourth gold, he famously said: "If anyone sees me go near a boat, you've got my permission to shoot me."

Yet Redgrave was lured back by an invitation to row in the coxless fours for one final shot at glory at the 2000 Olympics. Adding to his gold medals in LA 1984 (coxed four), Seoul 1988 (coxless pair), Barcelona 1992 (coxless pair) and Atlanta 1996 (coxless pair), he wrote himself into the record books as, at the time, the most successful British Olympian ever.

In more recent years, Sir Chris Hoy and Jason Kenny have surpassed him in terms of gold medal hauls, but in 2001, this was Redgrave's day.

In retirement, the rower has stayed in incredible shape, and now works as an expert summariser for the BBC's Olympic and World Championship coverage.

Photo credit: Andrew Cowie/Shutterstock

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SPORT



A DISAPPOINTING WINTER OLYMPICS FINALLY CAME GOOD FOR TEAM GB ON THE CURLING ICE, AS OUR WOMEN BROUGHT HOME GOLD

For all the hype and outside medal prospects, Team GB's Winter Olympics campaign came down to five women, five men and a collection of 42lb stones with handles fixed to the top.

The simplicity of the sport of curling is, at times, what makes it a source of amusement for many. However, the skill, tactical prowess and precision with which our brilliant women and men battled to Olympic gold and silver respectively provided the very best moments at Beijing 2022.

After defeating Sweden 12-11 in the semi-final, the women lived up to their 'favourites' tag by seeing off Japan in style in the final.

Led by the mercurial Eve Muirhead – who had experienced two previous semi-final defeats – the team crushed Japan 10-3 in the final on Sunday, February 20. Fellow victors Vicky Wright, Jen Dodds, Hailey Duff and Mili Smith have become first-time Olympic champions after the group

squeezed through the round-robin stage with five victories and four defeats.

That victory made up for the disappointment of the men losing their gold medal showdown with Sweden 24 hours earlier. The final had ended in a tense 4-4 draw, with the Swedes, led by the brilliant Niklas Edin, digging deep to see off a brave British effort from captain Bruce Mouat and his side.

Beijing 2022 will forever be an Olympics embroiled in scandal and controversy, with the doping scandal and extreme COVID-19 restrictions providing an uncomfortable backdrop to events, right up until the closing ceremony, in which a medal presentation featured a competitor previously suspended for taking a banned substance.

Thankfully, the feel-good factor provided by our curling teams will leave us with a positive reflection of the 2022 Winter Olympics, and hope for greater rewards in Italy in four years' time.

Photo credit: Xinhua/Shutterstock



GARDENING

Photo credit: sarahraven.com



sarah raven

WHY SARAH RAVEN'S LOVE OF BUOYANT, BOUNTIFUL FLOWERS IS A WORLD AWAY FROM HER GENTLE COMMENTARIES ON OUR GARDEN SPACES

Sarah Raven, who gardens at her Perch Hill Farm base in Robertsbridge, East Sussex, is one of a modern breed of horticulturalists whose passion, enthusiasm and energy infuses everything they do.

The fact that the 58 year old opens up her gorgeous 18th-century home to all is evidence of the passion she feels for the colours and scents of the outdoors. To that end, it's probably no surprise that she names the dahlia as her favourite flower, with its bushy, patterned perfection lighting up gardens from spring through to autumn.

Sarah, whose talents extend into cookery and writing, has presented BBC *Gardeners' World*, *Great British Garden Revival*, the series *Bees, Butterflies and Blooms*, and showcased BBC2's *Big Dreams, Small Spaces* project, where she shared her love and enthusiasm for cut flowers.

Sharing her home with writer Adam Nicolson, her two daughters and three stepsons, Sarah admits that she will always come back to flowers over

anything else in pursuit of the perfect outside space.

She said: "Flowers bring such happiness and harmony, as well as encouraging a whole array of insects, who in turn feed all our other creatures.

"I like to think so much comes from our flowers, and the more I can give back in celebrating them and teaching others how to look after and maintain them, then great."

When she's not appearing on our screens, collating material for one of her hugely successful cookbooks, or scribbling a column for the likes of *The Daily Telegraph*, *Gardens Illustrated* or *Sainsbury's Magazine*, her eponymous garden brand provides the perfect digest for others looking to replicate what is a museum-like spread of flowering finesse.

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The many benefits of planting trees



Planting trees is good. This is not breaking news; we hear this message more and more these days and it must be tempting to roll one's eyes at yet another well-intentioned person calling for endless numbers of trees to be planted in every available space.

So trees are good. We get it. But how good are they? And what they are good for?

Well, there are of course some very obvious things that trees are good for, but there are many other, subtler, more surprising ways in which trees benefit us

It's no shock to anyone that trees clean the air we breathe, help combat the air pollution we suffer in the modern world by removing carbon dioxide from the atmosphere and storing it, whilst releasing oxygen to keep our planet habitable. Pretty important stuff but nothing you haven't heard or read before. The fight against climate change will take a vast, unified and sustained effort, and more trees – millions upon millions of them – will form a pivotal part of the strategy.

However, I'd like to zoom in closer, and discuss things in more local and immediate terms, to focus

on our personal interactions with trees and plants; thinking less of the positive global impact and more about the immediate enrichment and enhancement of our daily lives that can be brought about by planting trees in our own gardens and in our own communities.

Trees are good for our health. This is true in ways, both simple and complex. In a very straightforward way of course they provide our species with food, medicine and clean our water



Montrose Trees

supply by removing pollutants from the soil. They can protect us from floods, from extreme heat and they are an irreplaceable part of the eco systems our food supply relies upon. Again, these benefits are very real to all of us, but they can seem abstract, or distant; intangible to us. Trees are good for my health, as they are for yours and they do this good instantly, and constantly. Trees release phytoncides and these lower our blood pressure, decrease anxiety and boost our immune systems. Spending time around trees decreases levels of the stress hormone cortisol, physical symptoms of stress such as pulse rate or muscle tension are measurably lowered after being in a green environment for under five minutes.

Trees give us a cognitive boost; one university found performance on memory and tests improved by 20 per cent after subjects took a pause for a walk through an arboretum; when the walk was taken down a busy street there were no detectable signs of improvement. In Japan a practice called Shinrin-Yoku (or 'Forest Bathing') is supported by so much scientific evidence it is prescribed by doctors for its benefits to mental health. Shinrin-Yoku is, in essence, spending time in a forest quietly focusing on the sensory experience; the sound of the wind through the trees, the scents of the plants, the feel of bark, the patterns of light glimmering through the canopy.

The Duchess of Cambridge is a fan of Shinrin-Yoku and the RSPB have run series of forest bathing events that have proved hugely popular. It leads me to wonder if The Duchess of Cambridge's fondness for trees played any role in inspiring 'The Queen's Green Canopy', the wonderful tree planting initiative devised to mark Her Majesty's Platinum Jubilee that invites all of us to "Plant a Tree for the Jubilee"

The evidence is clear. Trees are good for our bodies; they provide us with food and protect us against pollution. Trees are good for our minds; they reduce stress and improve our cognitive abilities. Trees are good for our communities; there are various analyses showing that the savings made from the health benefits of trees in an area can exceed four times their cost. The data shows a 10 per cent increase in greenery can postpone the onset of health problems by up to five years and trees are even linked to lowering criminal activity; research has indicated a 10 per cent increase in tree canopy can be associated with an approximately 12 per cent reduction in crime.

If those aren't reasons enough, then trees are

good for us financially; a series of third-party studies have shown that trees can increase property prices anywhere from five per cent to 18 per cent. One estate agent I spoke with when researching this piece told me they have recently begun advising clients who had the aim of increasing a property's value prior to sale to "plant some good-sized trees in the garden" as in their opinion it was "the most cost effective way" to achieve this goal. It had the added benefits of "being quick and hassle free compared with other ways of increasing property value".

Now that's an economic argument for planting trees, and it's a valid one, but there is one last, important, and – I feel – overlooked argument in favour of planting more trees: just the simple joy of them.



Trees are beautiful. Whether it's the deep tones of evergreens, delicate flowers in spring attracting bees and birds into our gardens or the glorious burst of colour in autumn, like a tableau of a fireworks display we get to enjoy for weeks... trees are beautiful. In my own garden I planted a Golden Norway Maple and one afternoon, when it had come into leaf in late spring, I noticed my then five year old son, stuck at home in lockdown, stood a few yards in front of it, quiet and content, just gazing up at the sunlight making the golden leaves glow brightly against the background of a clear blue sky. After a while I asked if he liked that particular tree and he told me "I'm going to call this 'my imagination tree'", when I smiled in response and asked him why, he simply told me "because it makes my imagination go"

The trees I have planted in my own garden have enriched my family's lives.

Plant a tree for yourself. Plant a tree for a loved one. Plant a tree for your children or grandchildren. I very much doubt you'll ever regret it.

Plant a tree, the benefits are personal, and the benefits are all of ours.



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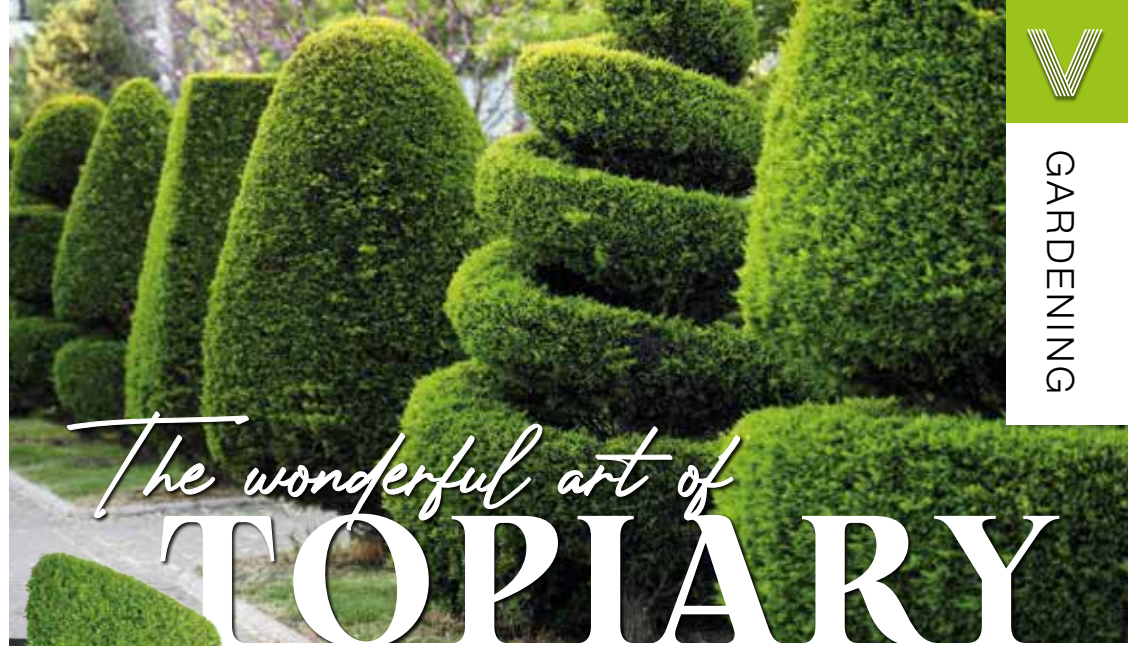
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GARDENING



The wonderful art of TOPIARY

If you're looking for a hobby that's not only calming and enjoyable, but also helps make your home look instantly more stylish, then welcome to the world of topiary.

Topiary is the art of pruning hedges and trees to create different shapes, resulting in a look that is sculpted and interesting. In Japan, it's known as Niwaki, which means 'cloud pruning'. It's a great way to add some character to your home and garden and can be a really fun hobby. Here are some beginner's tips to help you get started.

CHOOSE THE RIGHT TYPE OF PLANT: The perfect type of plant for topiary is a perennial, such as box and yew plants. These evergreens grow slowly, which means they're easier to maintain once trimmed into shape.

DECIDE ON YOUR STYLE: There are a lot of great topiary styles you can choose from. For beginners, you might want to start off simple with a square or a sphere shape, but other fantastic topiary styles for you to choose from include:

Cube | Ball | Spiral tree | Square/round pyramid | Double sphere

If you want to get even more adventurous, you could try creating some animal shapes, like a deer or a dog.

GET THE RIGHT TOOLS: You'll need to make sure you have the right tools for the job. Long-handled lopping sheers are ideal for trimming off the excess, while hand pruners will help you make precise cuts. You can also buy wire or wooden frames to act as guides to help you get the desired shape.

MAINTAIN YOUR PLANTS WITH CARE: After trimming your trees and hedges into shape, you'll need to maintain them regularly to keep them looking their best. Regular trimming in the warmer months can help encourage growth, with pruning at the end of the summer helping to maintain the shape throughout the winter months. You'll also want to feed and water your plants to keep them looking lush and green.

With your new topiary expertise, you'll be able to create all kinds of beautiful shapes.

GARDENING BLOGGERS

Whether you are a green-fingered fanatic or are new to the wonderful world of growing your own, the below gardening blogs guarantee to deliver the latest news, tips, tricks, and inspiration for your next outdoor project.

Two Thirsty Gardeners

If you have always dreamt of brewing your own booze, then this is the gardening blog for you. The brainchild of two thirsty men, Rich and Nick, who started making their own cider in 2008, Two Thirsty Gardeners offers practical advice on everything from home brewing and collecting seeds to preserving surplus fruit and veg.

The Middle-Sized Garden

As the name suggests, this popular gardening blog is aimed at people with medium-sized gardens (i.e. bigger than a courtyard but smaller than an acre). Discover easy-care plants, the best trees for privacy, how to revamp your garden on a budget, and much more.

The Frustrated Gardener

Created by Dan Cooper, garden writer, amateur photographer and blogger, The Frustrated Gardener sees him share his passion for plants, as well as the joys of gardening in London and Kent. A great blog for both amateur and advanced gardeners.

Growing Family

For those who want to introduce the joy of gardening and growing your own produce to the whole family, this home and gardening blog is all about making the most of family life, both indoors and out, and overflows with tips on gardening, exploring nature, and family days out.

The Garden Ninja

The Garden Ninja is Lee Burkhill, an award-winning garden designer, blogger and vlogger whose life mission is to get more people into gardening. Featuring articles and YouTube videos on gardening basics and garden design guides, Garden Ninja is a fun and engaging blog that can help you get the garden of your dreams, whatever your current know-how.



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Google Maps has, in recent years, put the satnav market in the slow lane. With quick, convenient, versatile and up-to-the-minute responsive route planning and live traffic updates, the app has revolutionised travel, be that in a car, on a bike, on foot or even when using trusty old public transport.

Yet, as if the route finder wasn't already the perfect travel solution, Silicon Valley boffins are now going one step further, with an extension that offers drivers the most eco-friendly route to their destination.

It means fuel consumption, road incline and, of course, traffic congestion will all be factored in to give a driver the 'greenest' route.

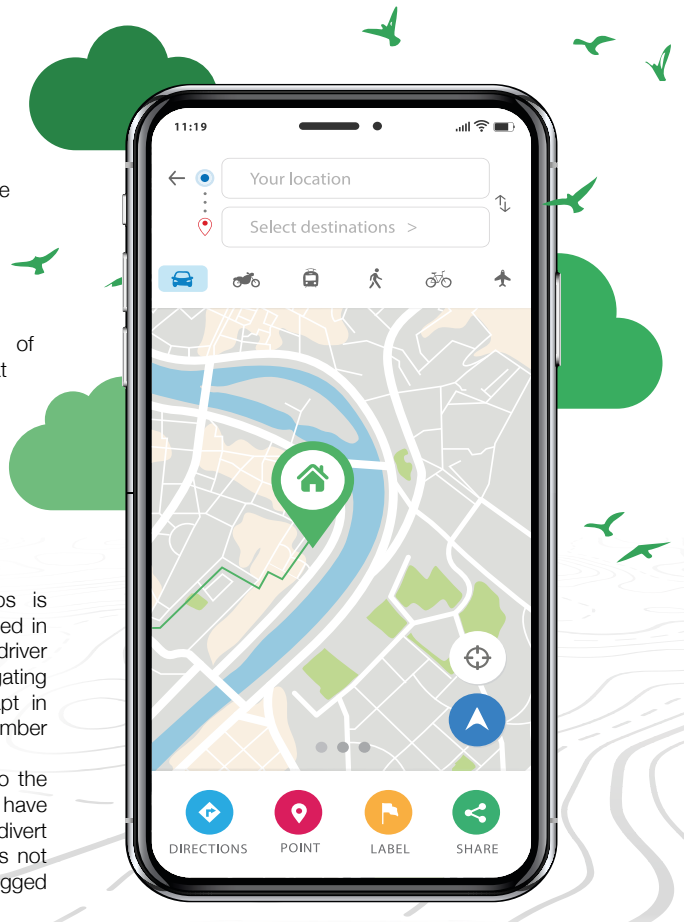
For the most part, these greener routes will only show when journey times are roughly comparable, and of course it may well be the case that the recommended route is also the quickest, in which case, off you go. Google believes up to 50 per cent of journeys we take may well have a greener option, meaning drivers will, for the first time, be given a very real choice between convenience or conscience.

The new version of Google Maps is available in the US and will be launched in Europe this year. It will also feature driver guidance for using or circumnavigating low emission zones, which have leapt in popularity and prominence across a number of major cities.

There have been some objections to the proposed changes. Driver groups have suggested that eco options could divert large amounts of traffic through routes not designed to carry it, and they also flagged

the danger of drivers being distracted by constant route adjustments.

For the most part, though, the proposals have been received positively, as Google looks to accelerate its pledge to be carbon free by the year 2030.



KEEP ON *cruising*

WHY EMBARKING ON A CRUISE IS THE ULTIMATE HOLIDAY

With people beginning to plan their summer holiday excursions, the idea of taking a cruise – be that across vast oceans or through a continental waterway – is likely to be one of the most popular go-to getaways in 2022. Here are six reasons why:

Value

There are getaway deals aplenty on offer. Operators are keen to catch up after two hugely disrupted years due to the COVID-19 pandemic, meaning they're pulling out all the stops to lay on huge fleets and get people back on board.

Variation

Rather than being stuck in one resort, a cruise enables travellers to see and experience multiple locations within one trip. Having been confined largely to the UK for the past two years, it's expected that holidaymakers will opt for multi-destination trips rather than staying in one place. This makes a cruise the ideal option.

Wastage

A cruise provides a holiday experience even when

travelling between destinations, so while stop-offs at cities or coastal towns may be a big attraction, when back on board, holidaymakers are treated to all manner of events, shows, attractions and facilities, meaning there's no wasted time.

Family environment

Unlike some land-based locations, cruise ships offer something for everyone, meaning a cruise is now commonly regarded as the ultimate family experience.

Comfort and luxury

Booking a cruise typically means choosing one of only a handful of operators, who run a tight ship – literally – in terms of how they present their brand and their facilities. This isn't something that's as easy to achieve when it comes to booking independent hotels or accommodation on land.

Sociable

Cruise ships offer a small environment in which people holiday in close proximity to each other. As the saying goes, a friend made at sea is a friend for life.

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