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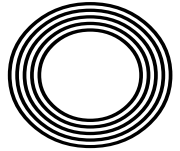
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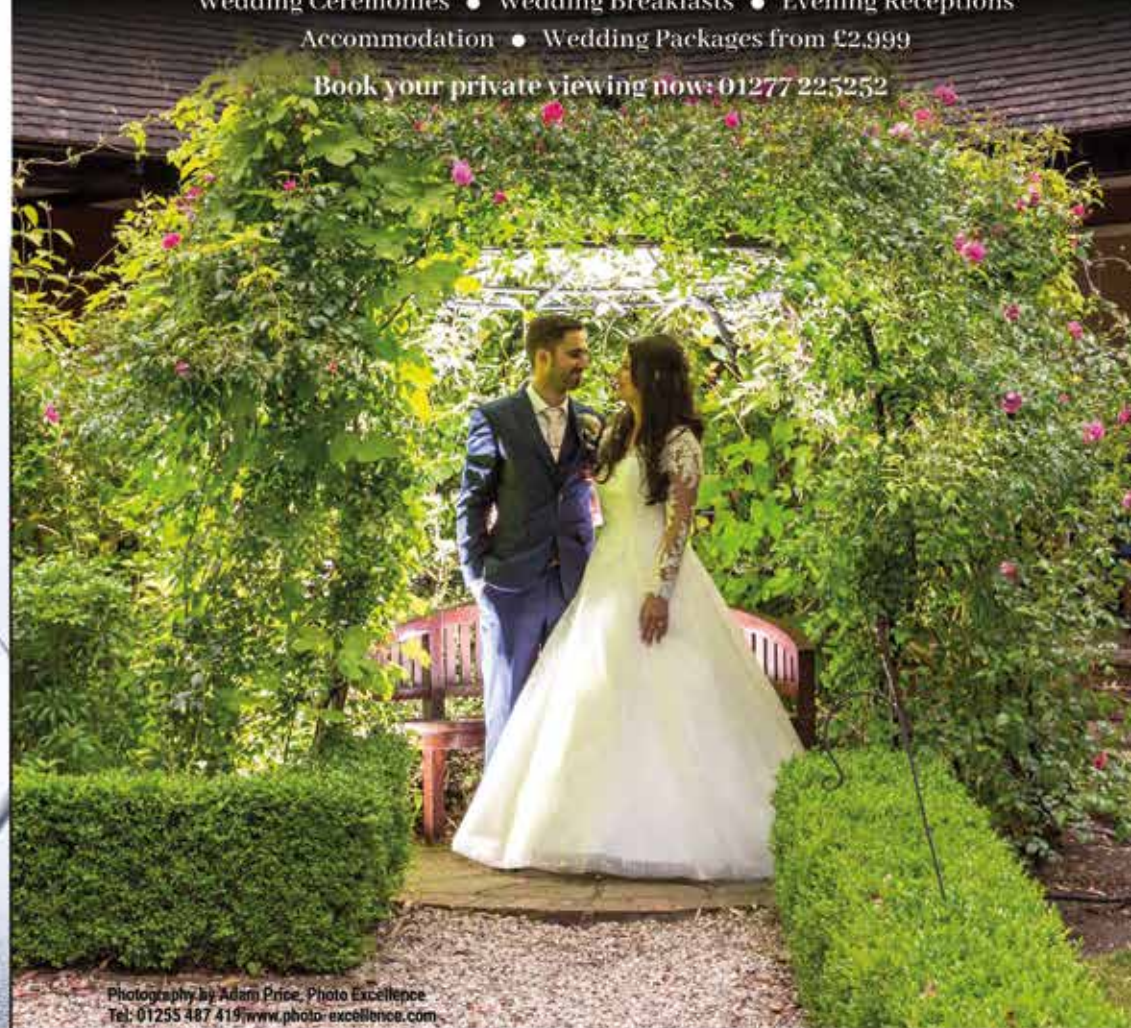


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Editor's notes...

APRIL 2022



Nik Allen, Editor

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

It's fair to say we've all been shocked and saddened by events in Ukraine, as Putin's military offensive tears apart the lives of millions of innocent people.

It's difficult to see any silver lining in skies filled with the rain of artillery shelling, yet there is perhaps one, and it is significant in protecting us from the catastrophe of a full-on world war.

The answer is the digital age. In the past, wars were fought with tanks and guns, whereas we now live in an age where disincentives for conflict can be laid by freezing of funds, removal of services and banning of oligarchs.

Russia's army pursued Ukraine through bloody warfare, yet back in Russia, the everyday trades, services and liberties that were afforded their citizens are being squeezed.

It gives me hope that wars these days are about more than who has the biggest weaponry. We are so interconnected by the digital age, that threatening to flick a switch might be the most dynamic deterrent.

I can only hope that Putin realises quickly that while punishing the people of Ukraine, he is doing the very same thing to his own.

Nik Allen

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SEWING THE SEEDS OF SUCCESS



Photo credit: BBC and Comic Relief



FROM NOSE CLIPS TO KNITTING NEEDLES, TOM DALEY OBE'S DIVE FOR DELIGHT GOES ON

There is a perennial youth about Tom Daley OBE that sets him apart from so many of our other stars of the pool.

Sure, he possesses all the boyish good looks and charm he had when first making waves – although, as a diver, preferably not too many – back in 2008 with his first of four Olympic appearances.

The shelf life for a competitive diver is usually preciously short, particularly when combined with constant invitations to engage in media duties, campaign work and promotional activity.

Yet Daley has maintained focus, kept an eye on the prize and, in what may well be regarded as the heyday of his career, is arguably more successful than ever, having scooped gold in the Tokyo Olympics last year on the 10m board.

"I love what I do, and while it's great to have a

career in the media, that's never what I set out to achieve," he says. "What I wanted, from day one, was to be successful, and I'm not going to give that up until my body tells me it's time to."

It has been a whirlwind 12 months for Daley, who was named Best Male Diver at the LEN Awards this year and came second in BBC Sports Personality of the Year. Yet it was in partnering Matty Lee on the 10m board at the 2020 Tokyo Games last year – the event being delayed by a year because of COVID-19 – that Daley recounts as his greatest Olympic performance of them all.

He says: "It was a case of eighth time lucky, you might say. It was one of those events where you start well, hold your momentum, then it suddenly comes into focus that you might have a real chance of doing something special.

"It validates everything I have put into the sport."

And while Daley is a public figure with a hugely marketable profile – "I don't really think of myself as anything other than a diver... fashion photoshoots always involve me wearing more clothes than I do for my day job" – much of his desire to keep achieving in the sport he loves has been at the expense of other professional opportunities, as well as a proper home life. He wed American screenwriter, director and producer Dustin Lance Black in 2017, and a year later the couple had a son together, named Robbie.

"There is a huge toll on your private life in a sport such as this, but I try my best to balance things," says the double world and six-time British champion.

Daley, who recently launched knitting website Made With Love, is a passionate philanthropist. Recently,

he completed a gruelling four-day challenge in which he rowed, cycled, ran and, of course, swam the distance between the Olympic Park in Stratford and his home town of Plymouth, to raise money for Comic Relief.

When Tom finally reached the finish line, he said: "If you can, please donate what you can to Red Nose Day because it would make a world of difference to so many families all across the country.

"To come home and see all my family here, as well as so many people, is pretty special, so thank you. I don't really know what else to say other than I just need to go and sleep for about six years. Thank you all so much and love you.

"It was one of my toughest challenges yet, but epitomises how I just want to keep pushing myself forward."



STORM CHAOS

STORM EUNICE MAY HAVE BLOWN ITSELF OUT, BUT THE AFTER-EFFECTS ARE LONGER LASTING

Storm Eunice came, saw and conquered. She may have taken the name of someone your grandmother used to bump into at the local jumble sales, but there was nothing charitable about this confrontational weather system that wreaked havoc over the course of a three-day period, causing damage estimated at more than £350million.

Eunice was one of the most powerful to hit the south coast of England since the Great Storm of 1987. A top wind speed of 122mph whipped round The Needles of the Isle of Wight, while inland trees were felled, roofs damaged – including that of The O2 arena – transport routes closed, and major incident warnings issued by the emergency services.

More than a million homes were left without power at various points across a 72-hour period, beginning on February 17.

Ultimately, Eunice blew herself out, and gradually things have got back to normal; although for the

families of the three fatalities of the UK storm, things will never be the same again.

The naming of storms has always provoked interest, although the practice is relatively new and only dates back to November 2015, when Abigail was the first to be named. The Met Office decided labelling them would do more to alert people to how dangerous they could be, as well as making the reporting and following of them an easier task. There is real science behind the theory too – the human brain attaches a stronger emotional tie to a name than it does to a concept.

What we shouldn't do is confuse a relatively gentle title for something that, at its worst, can be fatal. Dudley, Gladys and Ruby may sound sweet and unassuming, but they're anything but at 3am as tiles are ripped from your roof.

The best news is that the Met Office invites people to send in their own suggestions of names – email nameourstorms@metoffice.gov.uk with your own cute (or totally terrifying) choice.

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PAINT BY NUMBERS



HOME & DIY

HOW TO CALCULATE HOW MUCH PAINT YOU NEED WHEN DECORATING

Painting is one of the easiest DIY jobs you can do around the house. There's not much skill involved, materials are cheap, and it's easy to do once you get the time.

But one thing that frustrates DIY painters is not knowing how much paint is enough for their project. This leads to repeat visits to the decorating supplier, delays to your job, and frustration.

We're here to help you work out how much paint you need for your next project. Take a look at this simple guide for our top tips.

MEASURE YOUR SPACE: Knowing your figures will make the process of buying paint much simpler. Multiply the height and width of your walls to give you a square metre measurement to work with.

CONSIDER HOW MANY COATS YOU NEED: The number of coats you will need will depend on the type of paint you use. Some paints may only need one coat, but the majority will need two or three coats to achieve the desired look.

MAKE YOUR CALCULATION: Your paint tin should tell you how much coverage per square

metre it provides.

Divide the square metre number for your space by the suggested coverage amount on the tin, to work out how many tins you'll need.

For example: If you're painting a wall that's 10mx2m (20m²), and a 5-litre tin of paint covers 10m², you'll need two tins of paint. Et voilà, it's that simple.

SOME QUICK AND HANDY TIPS: These tips can provide you with a rough guide for calculating paint for different spaces:

- > 1 litre of paint will cover a feature wall (approx 2.5m²)
 - > 2.5 litres of paint will paint an entire small room (approx 2mx2m)
 - > 5 litres of paint will paint an entire medium room (approx 4mx4m)
- This is for two coats of paint, for a standard wall height of 2.4m.

Knowing how much paint you need will help you get started on your projects, help you save money, and avoid the frustration of having too little or too much paint.



BERBER BASICS



Are you looking to install some new carpet in your home? While some consider it to be outdated, Berber carpet is experiencing something of a revival owing to its durability and the development of new patterns and designs. Traditionally, Berber carpet is lightly coloured and features dark flecks that are either brown or grey. Essentially, Berber is a looped-style carpet that is designed for use in high-traffic areas of the home, such as the hallway and stairs.



REASONS TO CHOOSE BERBER CARPET

- > **Durability:** Berber carpet is one of the most durable types of carpet on the market and should not become torn, even when exposed to heavy footfall. In fact, if installed properly, a Berber carpet should easily last you a decade.
- > **Resistant to spills:** One of the main reasons why people choose not to lay carpet in their homes is because this type of flooring is known for absorbing water. However, Berber carpet is considered to be spill-resistant, making it a good option for those with young families.

- > **Affordable:** Another big plus point, Berber carpet comes in a variety of different types, with options to suit all budgets. If you don't have much to spend, opt for olefin or polyester Berber carpets, or, for those who don't mind splashing the cash, wool offers a touch of luxury.

REASONS TO AVOID BERBER CARPET

- > **Proned to snagging:** Although designed to last, Berber carpets are prone to snagging owing to their looped nature. Even if only one loop becomes snagged, you need to repair this immediately or risk the whole carpet coming apart.
- > **Not good for pets:** As Berber carpets are easily snagged, pets can cause havoc with this style of carpet. Cats, in particular, are attracted to the roughness of this carpet and may use it as their new scratching post.

Photo credit: Carpetright.co.uk, buycarpet.co.uk, dolphincarpet.com

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Cheap and versatile, soda crystals can be used for so much more than just softening water or cleaning your washing machine. A powerhouse of a product, soda crystals will fast become your go-to cleaner for many common household tasks.

1. TO UNBLOCK THE SINK – If your plugholes become clogged with food waste, debris and grease, you are likely to experience unpleasant odours and slow-draining water. Rectify this by pouring one cup of soda crystals directly down the plughole, followed by a kettle of boiled water.

2. TO CLEAN YOUR EXTRACTOR FILTER FAN – If your extractor fan is covered in grease, this can be easily remedied with soda crystals. Create a strong solution using one cup of soda crystals and one pint of water, pour into a bowl, and let your filter soak for 10-15 minutes. Scrub any leftover residue using a sponge and then rinse.

3. TO REMOVE ALGAE FROM PATIO OR DECKING – Over the winter, your outdoor patio or decking may have succumbed to algae and moss. To get it looking new again, create a regular solution of soda crystals using ½ cup of crystals and one pint of water and pour over the surface. Leave to sit for an hour, scrub with a firm bristle brush and rinse with a hose.

4. TO RESTORE CARPETS AND RUGS – Soda crystals are the perfect cleaning solution for dull and faded carpets or rugs. All you need to do is sprinkle an even layer of soda crystals over the area and leave for a few minutes. Then apply your normal carpet cleaner to finish.

5. TO SOFTEN TOWELS – Crunchy towels are the worst, but fortunately, this problem can be easily solved by soaking them in a regular solution of soda crystals – mix ½ cup of soda crystals and one pint of warm water. Leave for one hour then rinse.



HOME & DIY





HOME & DIY

NICK OF TIME



NICK KNOWLES CELEBRATES 30 YEARS ON OUR SCREENS

When Nick Knowles said an emotional farewell to his *DIY SOS* show at the end of 2021, it brought the curtain down on an impressive period of renovating, refreshing and reviving people's living spaces.

It's a shame the 59 year old's tenure ended in such acrimonious fashion – the presenter was unceremoniously binned after appearing in an advert for Shreddies. In mimicking his role in *DIY SOS*, he had broken a BBC contract rule, and the axe fell. Comedian Rhod Gilbert replaced Knowles, who has since not been short of offers for new work. So it appears that life – and home improvements – continue.

Knowles got his break in television back in the early 1990s as a reporter on nightly news show *Coast to Coast*, which aired on TVS, the precursor to ITV Meridian.

From 1994, he presented a motorcycle programme called *Ridge Riders* for eight years, before the BBC saw Knowles' potential and

matched him up with Lowri Turner for a new-launch DIY show that would ride on the coattails of the hugely successful *Changing Rooms*.

The format of *DIY SOS* was fast-paced and usually leant on solving property issues for those in need of help, rather than people simply wanting a change of decor.

The success of *DIY SOS* led Knowles into daytime shows such as *Real Rescues*, *Wildest Dreams* and *Last Choir Standing*. However, it was becoming a game show host, notably through the lottery programme, that shaped the charismatic Southall-born frontman. *Who Dares Wins*, *Secret Fortune*, *Perfection* and *Break the Safe* guided him to star presenter status, and the inevitable *I'm A Celebrity* invitation. He subsequently finished sixth in the 2018 show, which was won by Harry Redknapp.

As for what comes next, Knowles's *Heritage Rescue* show on Quest looks at historic buildings in need of restoration – proof that there's always another DIY project lurking just around the corner.

Photo credit: Jake Morley/BAPT/SHUTTERSTOCK

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HOME & DIY

3 REMOVAL REMEDIES FOR BLACK MOULD

Black mould is a common, yet nasty, household problem that no homeowner likes to face. However, there are remedies that promise to eradicate all signs of this troublesome tarnish.

BAKING SODA: If you want a natural remedy to remove black mould from your home, then a little baking soda is all you need. Used for generations to banish black mould, baking soda has a pH level of around 8-8.1, which is too high to allow mould to thrive.

HOW TO MAKE AND APPLY A BAKING SODA SOLUTION:
Add ¼ tsp of baking soda to 2 cups of water | Pour into a spray bottle | Liberally spray the affected area and scrub thoroughly with a brush | Rinse with cold water | Treat again to prevent the mould from returning.

VINEGAR: Another natural remedy, vinegar is acidic, with a pH of around 2.5, which means it can attack the structure of mould and actively break it down.

HOW TO APPLY VINEGAR:
Pour undiluted vinegar into a spray bottle | Spray directly onto the affected area | Leave for 15 minutes | Spray again and wait a further 15 minutes | Wipe clean with a damp rag.

BLEACH: Known for its ability to kill practically everything in its path, bleach is a powerful cleaner that can effectively get rid of black mould on non-porous surfaces such as tiles and sinks. The only problem with using bleach is that you need to be aware of the bleach fumes. Make sure you wear rubber gloves and a faceguard before you start cleaning.

HOW TO MAKE AND APPLY A BLEACH SOLUTION:
Mix one part bleach with four parts water | Pour onto the affected area and gently scrub with a damp cloth | Once finished, dry the area with a soft cloth.

OUR TOP TIPS FOR PREVENTING BLACK MOULD: Invest in a dehumidifier | Keep kitchens and bathrooms well ventilated | Tackle leaks as soon as they appear | Spread out towels and shower curtains to dry.




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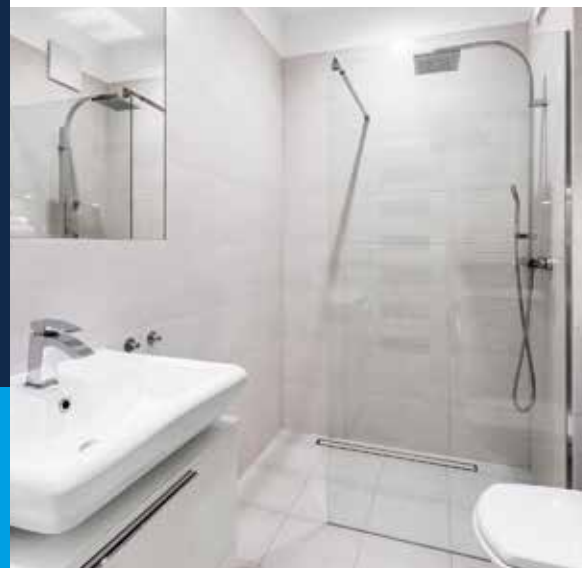
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WALK-IN SHOWER vs



WET ROOM



Walk-in showers and wet rooms have never been more popular, with families, professional couples and people with mobility issues all taking advantage of their stylish and practical designs.

However, what exactly is the difference between a walk-in shower and a wet room? And which one is right for your home?

WHAT IS A WALK-IN SHOWER?

Walk-in showers typically exist on a shower tray that has been installed directly onto the floor. They are not an extension of a bath and instead have their own cubicle. They are built as low to the main surface of the bathroom as possible so that you can enjoy a seamless transition from one space to the next.

WHAT IS A WET ROOM?

A wet room is a completely waterproof bathroom space that features a shower area that is flush with the rest of the floor. Water drains through a drain that is usually located in the shower section, and the room can include a shower screen to reduce spray in the bathroom.

WHAT ARE THE MAIN DIFFERENCES?

While a wet room is an open-plan space in which the floor has been altered to allow water to drain from it, a walk-in shower features a low-profile shower tray that has either one or two glass screens. Both options provide easy access and style. Often, homeowners opt for a walk-in shower if they do not have the budget for a wet room.

WHY CHOOSE A WALK-IN SHOWER?

- > Ideal for smaller bathrooms or en suites
- > Perfect for people with limited mobility due to the low shower tray
- > Offers a minimalist design
- > More affordable than a wet room
- > Low maintenance

WHY CHOOSE A WET ROOM?

- > Easy access for the elderly and disabled
- > Incredibly luxurious
- > Suitable for small and large bathrooms
- > Easy to clean
- > Can add value to your home.



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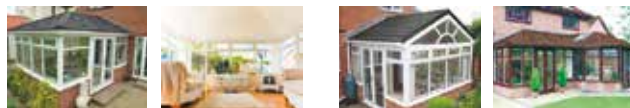
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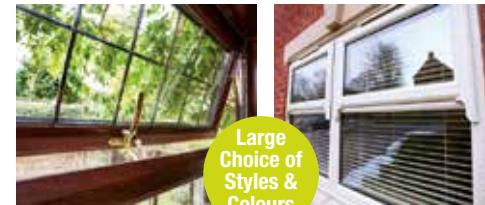
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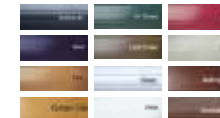
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LOCAL NEWS

from your neighbourhood

BRENTWOOD PROPERTY NEWS



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Photo credit: Brentwood Imperial Youth Band Facebook



Concert raises funds for Red Cross Ukraine Appeal

A one-off concert featuring the Brentwood Imperial Youth Band was held last month to raise funds for the people of Ukraine.

The concert, held at Everyone Active's The Brentwood Centre, raised money for the British Red Cross DEC Ukraine Appeal.

Speaking before the event, councillor Chris Hossack, Leader of Brentwood Borough Council (pictured bottom right), said: "Brentwood residents and businesses have once again shown over the last few weeks how quickly they can come together and support those in need. There has been an overwhelming response to the appeals for donations, with people wanting to do anything they can to help the people of Ukraine and

support Ukrainians living in the borough.

"This unprovoked invasion and devastating attack of Ukraine by Putin's Russian government has caused an appalling humanitarian crisis. People are suffering and they need immediate practical help.

"We know that people want to do all they can to show their solidarity and support for the people of Ukraine and we hope this concert is a way for people to be able to do that and donate much-needed funds for this unfolding humanitarian crisis."

Shaun Beagle, area contract manager at Everyone Active, added: "Right now, we recognise how important it is to raise vital funds for the people of Ukraine and this concert aims to do just that."

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.

Again last month the local market continued on from the disparity of number of properties available compared to potential buyers with the latter far outweighing the former.

The Bank of England recently decided to raise interest rates from 0.5% to 0.75% for the third time in four months, in a bid to try and calm the rise in the cost of living.

If you would like to find out how that may affect your mortgage moving forward or what it means with any potential new purchase, feel free to get in touch as we have an all of market mortgage broker in our team based in Brentwood and only to happy to help.

As a team we are delighted to be supporting the local Dinosaur Trail that runs from 26 March-22 April with a special prize for one lucky winner, as well as the Crown Street Easter Egg Hunt on Good Friday.

Best Wishes

Peter Garland-Collins

Local Property Statistics

Current number of homes for sale in CM14. **209**

Current average sold price per Sq.Ft. **£487**

Average sold price March 2022. **£415k**

5 Year Average Price Growth

Mar 2017 **£365,438**

Mar 2018 **£373,444**

Mar 2019 **£362,339**

Mar 2020 **£357,493**

Mar 2021 **£439,274**

Mar 2022 **£415,103**

-6% 1-year **15%** 3-year **14%** 5-year

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Photo credit: Dix Noonan Webb



Resident discovers gold shilling worth £18k

A Brentwood man was overwhelmed after a coin he found in a field while metal detecting (pictured above) sold for more than £18,000.

Mark Pallett (pictured), 55, a drainage engineer from Brentwood, discovered the coin in Haslingfield in South Cambridgeshire earlier this year.

Mark discovered the coin with his Minelab Equinox 800 Metal Detector. The shilling, dating from 650-70 AD, is one of only eight examples of its type to have been recorded on the Early Medieval Coins database at The Fitzwilliam Museum in Cambridge.

The coin had been expected to fetch up to £10,000, but was sold last month for £18,600 in an auction by Dix Noonan Webb.

Following the sale, father-of-three Mark, who has been metal detecting for almost 40 years, said: "I am truly overwhelmed by the price that the coin achieved and am pleased for myself and the farmer who will get half of the proceeds.

"I did think about buying a new detector with the money, but I don't think that there's anything wrong with my current one as it helped me find this coin."

Appeal for information following M25 collision

Police have confirmed that a man sadly died after a collision on the M25 between Junction 28 at Brentwood and Junction 27.

Officers were called to the incident shortly after 2.30pm on March 14. One vehicle was involved.

Police arrived and a road closure was put in place while emergency services worked at the scene on the anti-clockwise road.

The man, aged in his 50s, was taken to hospital and later died. His family has been informed.

No arrests have been made and police enquiries are ongoing.

Officers are continuing to appeal for anyone who witnessed the incident or has dashcam footage of it to get in touch.



Stock image

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.

You can also call 101 to speak to an operator. Please quote incident 640 of March 13.



LOCAL NEWS BRENTWOOD

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LOCAL NEWS BRENTWOOD



Equestrians enjoy win at national competition

Following on from Brentwood School's equestrian team's previous success, as reported in the January 2022 edition of **VISION**BrentwoodOngar, the team has triumphed again in a national competition.

The team's first event of 2022 was the National Schools Equestrian Association Eventer Challenge qualifiers, held at Brook Farm Equestrian Centre in Stapleford Abbots last month.

Ben Hogarth, Elizabeth Lewis, Emma Philpot and Sophie Philpot (all pictured above) came out on top in the 90/95cm class team event, with 4th and 6th placings individually for Emma and Sophie.

After the jumps were raised to 100/105cm, Ben

Hogarth, Emma Philpot, Sophie Philpot and Lily Tappin took first place for Brentwood, with the second team of Elizabeth Lewis, Sophie Philpot and Lily Tappin coming in second.

Individual placings included a win for Emma, second for Lily, third for Sophie and a further fourth for Lily.

The successful riders will go on to compete in the national championships in May.

Team manager and trainer, Mrs Annette Philpot, said: "A big thank you as always to our wonderfully supportive parents, Mrs McCleod for bringing our lucky mascot (daughter Sophie), and to our riders for their commitment and dedication."

Wine society invites new members to take part

The Brentwood Wine Society (BWS) is once again offering monthly tastings.

BWS is a social club where members can learn about and taste a huge variety of wines in a friendly and relaxed environment.

Its aim is to help members improve their experience, understanding and enjoyment of wine, with experts

being invited to present samples of wines from different countries and regions.

The tastings take place in Shenfield Parish Hall, Hutton Road, on the second Tuesday of the month from 8pm to 10pm.

If you are interested in joining, email enquiries@brentwoodwinesociety.co.uk

BURGHART for BRENTWOOD

Alex Burghart MP for Brentwood and Ongar



LOCAL NEWS BRENTWOOD

I am receiving hundreds of emails each week from local people who want to do something to help the people of Ukraine at this terrible time.

The brutal attacks on residential areas by Russian forces and the heartbreaking news stories of women, children, the elderly and the vulnerable having to flee their homes has made all of us look at our own lives and offer all we can to help those in need.

In the last couple of weeks, nappies, personal care items and medicines donated by local people have been packed up in shops and warehouses across Brentwood and sent by lorry to Poland. The Rotary Club of Brentwood held a street collection and in just two days raised just under £5,000 for the charities it supports, which will provide aid directly to those who need it.



by the Home Office to allow family members of British nationals, UK settled persons and certain others to come to the UK. Those joining the scheme will be granted leave for three years and will be able to work and access public funds.

If you would like to help, Essex County Council has put together information about all the volunteers and groups who are offering help of any kind. You can find more information at www.essex.gov.uk/news/essex-stands-with-ukraine-what-you-can-do-to-help

We all stand with Ukraine.

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Art society announces events

Brentwood Arts Society (BAS) has released details of its new programme of talks for 2022/23.

BAS brings people together through a shared curiosity for the arts, with the events providing opportunities to hear expert lecturers share their specialist knowledge, while BAS members work to preserve the local area's artistic heritage through volunteering and grants.

The programme of talks includes Glass: The Art of Light on April 20; Joseph Wright of Derby on May 18; Women Behind the Lens on June 15; the Art of the Japanese Garden on July 20; and the Topsy Turvy World of Misericords on September 21.

The talks are held at Ingatestone Community Hall, 7 High Street, Ingatestone, on the third Wednesday of the month, apart from August.

To find out more, email gjfisher4921@gmail.com or call 01277 35634.

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LOCAL NEWS

from your neighbourhood



Photo credit: National Crime Agency

Two men jailed after £6m worth of drugs seized

Two men – including one from Ongar – have been jailed for 30 years after being found guilty of supplying cocaine to crime groups across London and Essex.

Officers from the Organised Crime Partnership (OCP), a joint National Crime Agency and Metropolitan Police Service unit, recovered 76 kilos of cocaine while tracking Christopher Low (pictured left) and Michael Henson (pictured right) between May and September last year.

Low, 47, of Chipping Ongar, and Henson, 52, of Harlow in Essex, were charged with conspiracy to supply class A drugs, possessing criminal property and producing class B drugs. They admitted these charges at Chelmsford Crown Court on October 8, 2021, and were jailed for 16 years and 14 years respectively at the same court last month.

Low organised and arranged the collection of the drugs, with the assistance of Henson, who had access to large sums of cash to pay for the deals.

On July 29, 2021, OCP surveillance officers watched

as Low met another man in Grays, Essex, who was subsequently stopped and found with five kilos of cocaine.

On September 8, 2021, Low was seen driving a Mercedes between his home and Henson's home, where he collected a Jaguar XF. Low then continued to a road in Brentford, West London, where he picked up a suitcase from the driver of a Land Rover Discovery. This contained 40 kilos of high-purity cocaine with an estimated street value of £3.2million.

Low was arrested for conspiracy to supply class A drugs, to which he responded: "I'm just the driver."

Officers searched Low's home and found £44,420 in cash and a small amount of cocaine worth £5,600.

Officers arrested Henson outside his home on the same day for conspiring to supply class A drugs.

They seized two mobile phones and searched Henson's home, where they found 37 kilos of cocaine with a street value of £2.96million, a small amount of mephedrone worth £6,800, herbal cannabis worth £900, and £69,800 in cash.

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Council car parks win award for safety and cleanliness



Photo credit: Epping Forest District Council

Epping Forest District Council (EFDC) is pleased to announce that two Ongar car parks have received the prestigious Park Mark award.

The Safer Parking Scheme award recognises car parks with measures in place that actively deter crime and the fear of crime, with Park Marks awarded to facilities that pass a rigorous risk assessment.

The assessments include management and maintenance of the facility, ensuring that there are appropriate levels of surveillance, lighting, signage and cleanliness. These criteria are known to reduce the opportunities for crime and create a safer environment for motorists and their vehicles.

The car parks in Ongar awarded Park Marks are The Pleasance, in Banson's Lane, and Sainsbury's, Banson's Lane.

Councillor Sam Kane (pictured above), portfolio holder for customer and partnerships at EFDC, said: "EFDC is proud to support the Safer Parking Scheme for safer, brighter and cleaner car parks. Ensuring safety of people and their vehicles in our car parks is our priority and we are pleased to provide a safe and welcoming environment for all customers."

Tree planting plan to mark Queen's Platinum Jubilee

Ongar Town Council is considering planting seven trees on the nature reserve at the bottom of Ongar High Street to mark The Queen's Platinum Jubilee.

If the proposal goes ahead, the area will also be named to reflect the commemorations, with Elizabeth II Nature Reserve one of the names being considered.

A beacon lighting, remembrance garden and tree planting in Jubilee Park were also suggested to mark the special occasion as The Queen marks 70 years on the throne this year.

Two charged after theft at cyclist's home

Following on from the January 2022 edition of **VISION**BrentwoodOngar, in which we reported on a break-in at the Ongar home of Olympic cyclist, Mark Cavendish (pictured below), two more men have been charged with robbery.

Mr Cavendish was at home with his wife, Peta, and their children when a number of men forced their way into the property at about 2.35am on November 27, 2021.

The group assaulted Mr Cavendish, who was already suffering with significant injuries following a major crash while racing, and threatened his wife. The couple's children witnessed the events.

No one in the family sustained serious injuries, but they were left shaken by the incident.

A Louis Vuitton suitcase and two high-value watches were reported as stolen.

Oludewa Okorosobo, 27, of Flaxman Road, Camberwell, and Ali Badara Sesay, 27, of Holding Street, Rainham, were postal requisitioned to appear at Colchester Magistrates' Court on March 1 to be charged with robbery.

Romario Henry, 30, of Bell Green, Lewisham, has already been charged with robbery in connection with the incident.

Okorosobo and Sesay were next due to appear at Chelmsford Crown Court on March 29 and Henry was due to appear at the same court on March 25, as **VISION**BrentwoodOngar went to print.

In a statement released by Mr Cavendish at the time, he said: "This incident has left our family extremely distressed – not just myself and Peta, but our children as well, who feared for their lives. No one should have to experience the sort of violence and threats made against us, let alone this happening in a family home – a place where everyone should feel safe."



Photo credit: TOMAS GAUBYS/Shutterstock



OUR Queen

This year, Her Royal Highness, Queen Elizabeth II, will celebrate her Platinum Jubilee, marking 70 years of service on the throne and cementing her as Britain's longest-serving monarch.

After reigning for so long, the Queen has had a wonderful and interesting life. But how much do you know about the Queen? Here are some facts you may not have heard before.

THE QUEEN HAS TWO BIRTHDAYS

I'm sure we'd all love two birthdays, especially if only one adds another year to our age. The Queen has two birthdays: April 21 – the day she was born – and her 'official' birthday, which takes place on the second Saturday in June with a celebration known as Trooping the Colour. This is so that her birthday can be celebrated when the weather is better.

THE QUEEN SUPPORTS ARSENAL

Whoever knew Her Majesty is a Gunner?

THE QUEEN DOESN'T NEED A PASSPORT...

British passports might be issued in her name, but the Queen herself doesn't need a passport. She's never needed a passport to travel, but has visited more than 100 countries.

...OR A DRIVING LICENCE

The Queen is the only person in the UK who doesn't

need a licence to drive. She continues to drive at 95 years old.

THE QUEEN LIVES AT WINDSOR CASTLE

Windsor Castle is one of 26 royal residences and also has the title of being the largest castle in Britain.

THE QUEEN OWNS STRANGE PETS

The Queen is famous for owning corgis, but she also owns an elephant, two giant turtles, a jaguar and some sloths. They were all gifts from overseas and live at London Zoo.

THE QUEEN'S NICKNAME IS 'LILIBET'

Which is the name Prince Harry and Meghan Markle chose for their first daughter – Lilibet Diana Mountbatten-Windsor.

And there you have it. Now you know a bit more about Her Majesty ahead of her Platinum Jubilee.

Photo credit: Alesia Pliedromenico/Shutterstock.com



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Guide to the best hot springs in the world

While many of us enjoy a soak in a hot tub during a getaway, there's nothing better than the natural version – a hot spring. This is a naturally occurring phenomenon where water is heated from the Earth's crust. Some of the world's most popular travel destinations are home to some incredible hot springs, and are a must to experience during your visit. Check out our guide to the best hot springs in the world.

Blue Lagoon Geothermal Spa, Iceland: One of the most famous hot springs in the world, more than 4,000 people visit Blue Lagoon every day. The beautiful blue water, alongside the idyllic mountain scenery, provides the perfect spot for relaxation. With 38°C temperatures and an on-site spa, a visit to Iceland isn't complete without a visit to Blue Lagoon.

Pamukkale Thermal Pools, Turkey: Pamukkale Natural Park is a UNESCO World Heritage Site and home to a dozen thermal springs. It's a picture-perfect setting with beautiful blue water set against white limestone – ideal for relaxing in the Turkish sun. The Egyptian Queen Cleopatra is known to have visited the Pamukkale pools.

Banjär Hot Springs, Bali: The Banjar Hot Springs provide a stunning setting across two levels and offer complete relaxation. There is even a family pool, providing something for everyone in this wonderful part of Indonesia.

Kerosene Creek, New Zealand: New Zealand provides so many amazing experiences, and Kerosene Creek doesn't disappoint. Set deep within the Rotorua forest, spending time relaxing in this striking hot spring is an experience you won't forget.

Cascate del Mulino, Italy: One of Tuscany's most popular spots, the Cascade del Mulino is open 24 hours a day, allowing guests to experience its beauty at all times of the day and night. The limestone pools are magnificent, and it's a great place to unwind after a day exploring the sights of Tuscany.

With incredible hot springs located all over the world, will you visit one on your next adventure?



Photo credit: Unsplash under Creative Commons/efr-sheldon

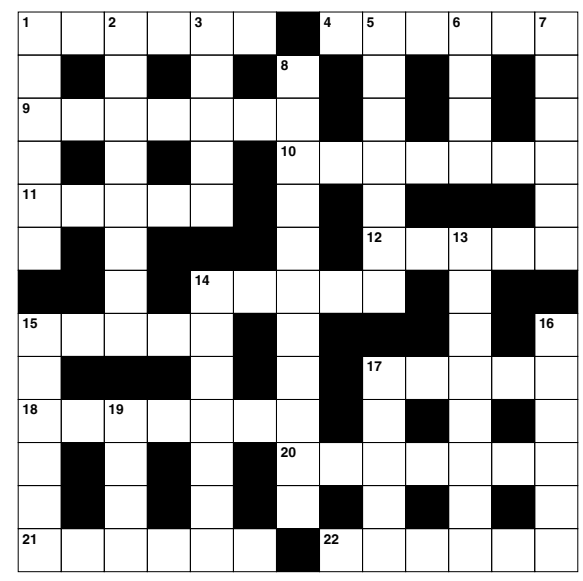
PUZZLES & TRIVIA

ACROSS

1. Creative act (6)
4. Pertaining to vinegar (6)
9. Nerve impulses (7)
10. Not solid or liquid (7)
11. Send money in payment (5)
12. Country in North East Africa (5)
14. Loathe (5)
15. Sense of seeing (5)
17. Wrong (5)
18. Light shoes (7)
20. Prior (7)
21. Enjoy greatly (6)
22. Large eel (6)

DOWN

1. Wish for (6)
2. Propelling the body through water (8)
3. Haggard (5)
5. Small mat (7)
6. A group of three (4)
7. Form-fitting garment (6)
8. Sea beacons (11)
13. Giving way under pressure (8)



14. Reaches (7)
15. Female sibling (6)
16. Listener (6)
17. Refrain from (5)
19. Invalid (4)

DID YOU KNOW?

- ▶ The heart of the average blue whale is approximately the size of a car
- ▶ The Chrysopelea snake can leap from trees and 'fly' distances of around 300 feet
- ▶ Dogs can sense human emotion, knowing when people are feeling sad, happy or something else
- ▶ The platypus is one of the few living mammals to produce venom
- ▶ Some spider species try to eat their partners after mating
- ▶ The unicorn is the national animal of Scotland
- ▶ Every tiger and zebra has a unique stripe pattern
- ▶ A flamingo's head has to be upside down when it eats

SUDOKU

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



Photo credit: Ken McKay/ITV/Shutterstock

OUT OF THE BROOM CUPBOARD... *and onto centre stage*

CELEBRATING THE CAREER OF PHILLIP SCHOFIELD

The title 'first in-vision continuity presenter for Children's BBC' perhaps isn't one he'll want as his epitaph, and yet the role that set Phillip Schofield on the path to becoming one of daytime and primetime TV's true modern icons is perhaps one of his most significant.

It's September 1985 and a 23-year-old Schofield has just returned to the UK after four years in New Zealand. Having already worked at the BBC as a bookings clerk and teaboy when he was a teenager, the charismatic, charming, chipper broadcaster was thrust into the not-so-glamorous surrounds of *The Broom Cupboard*, on Children's BBC.

Sitting at a cramped, squalid, cluttered desk, he was accompanied by Gordon the Gopher, and was a kids' TV first as the dull lead-in screens between programmes were replaced by a chatty, sociable presenter who offered personality and no small amount of humour.

The formula was an instant hit and set Schofield on the way to broadcasting brilliance. *Going Live!*, in which he appeared opposite Sarah Greene, came along two years later.

Adult programming followed – from four years hosting the *Smash Hits Poll Winners Party* to *Talking Telephone Numbers* and *Test the Nation*, Schofield's versatility bridged genres of entertainment as effortlessly as it did the range of demographics who would marvel at his calm and charisma.

No better has that been seen than when in full flow with sidekick Holly Willoughby on ITV's leading daytime show, *This Morning*. When the duo first worked together back in 2009, few would have expected such natural chemistry to emerge. From endless innuendos to heartfelt and touching interviews and reports on all manner of issues, the pair have been at the epicentre of *This Morning's* steely grip on the National Television Award for Best Daytime/Live Show, which it has won every year under their stewardship.

Of course, for someone who has been in front of the camera for so long, controversies will ultimately come along – from an ill-conceived set-up of then-Prime Minister David Cameron live on air, to a more light-hearted revelation from Schofield that he had been dyeing his hair since the age of 16 to ward off grey, something he now embraces.

Then, in February 2020, the personal revelation that the married father-of-two was coming out as gay proved a sensational storyline. In true *This Morning* style, the presenter and Willoughby conducted what amounted to an open counselling session – his heartfelt admission only serving to endear us to him further.

Away from the show, Schofield, who turns 60 this month, continues to pick the prime slots in ITV's entertainment programming, with quiz and challenge shows such as *Dancing on Ice*, *All Star Mr & Mrs*, *5 Gold Rings* and *The Cube*. There has also been a raft of factual programming, including coverage of royal events – The Queen's Diamond Jubilee, the weddings of Princes William and Harry, and a tribute to Prince Philip.

And in February, daytime doyenne Lorraine Kelly dedicated her show to Schofield's 40 years in the business.

In a rapidly changing television industry where personalities come and go, Phillip Schofield has proved himself a man for every occasion. He is someone who can put an arm round a guest one day and laugh at his own failings the next, as well as being arguably the greatest thing to ever emerge from a broom cupboard.

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TITANIC'S WATERY

Grave Remains

SOME 110 YEARS ON FROM THE SINKING OF THE MOST FAMOUS SHIP IN HISTORY, TITANIC'S WATERY REMAINS ARE STILL VIRTUALLY UNTOUCHED

April 15, 1912, will be a date forever etched in the annals of maritime disaster as, at 2.20am, the RMS Titanic sank into the icy depths on its maiden voyage from Southampton to New York. It is a ship made famous by its demise, and as another anniversary passes, the sinking of this 'unsinkable' vessel continues to fascinate, terrify and, dare we say it, even entertain the world in every bit the same way as it always has.

This year marks the 110th anniversary since the ship sank to the bottom of the North Atlantic, taking 1,517 poor souls with it.

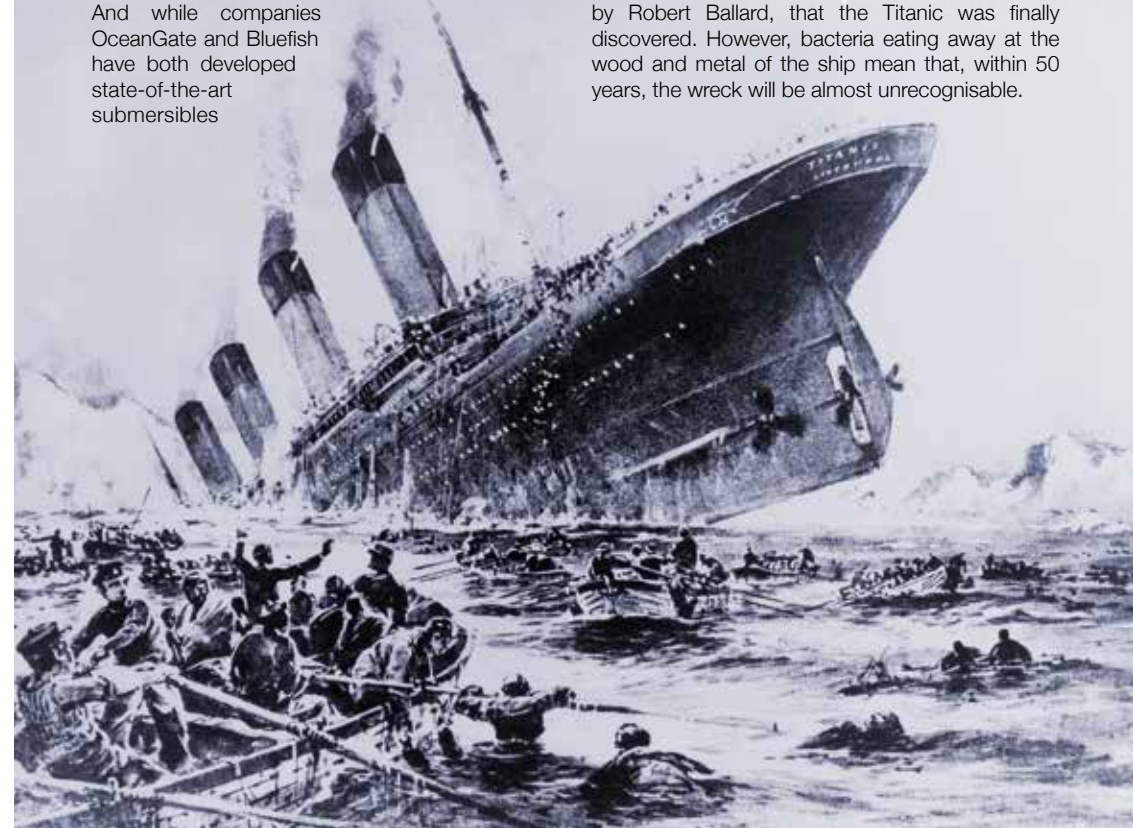
The ship remains 13,000ft beneath the surface, as any attempt to retrieve it would see it break up, while diving to the wreck can only be performed by registered scientists.

And while companies OceanGate and Bluefish have both developed state-of-the-art submersibles

that can take explorers on the 90-minute descent, the price tag of £100,000 per person means this is one disaster best viewed through the eyes of documentary-makers and film directors.

The Titanic sank when it struck an iceberg. Spotted at the last minute, First Officer William Murdoch attempted to turn the ship to avoid it – experts believe if it had hit the iceberg head on, it probably would have survived. Instead, while it could reportedly stay afloat with as many as four of its 16 compartments filled with water, five were breached, with the dipping of the bow causing water from the ruptured spaces to spill over into forward compartments.

It wasn't until 1985, during an expedition led by Robert Ballard, that the Titanic was finally discovered. However, bacteria eating away at the wood and metal of the ship mean that, within 50 years, the wreck will be almost unrecognisable.



HISTORY

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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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BRUCEKING

on why people buy



BUSINESS & PROPERTY



In his final column, sales mentor and personal growth coach, Bruce King, discusses why people buy and how to stop yourself buying things you don't need.

We all buy for emotional, not logical, reasons, although we'll create logical reasons to justify our decisions.

For example, did you buy or were you sold a new pair of shoes when you had plenty already and your favourite pair just needed a good polish? You bought a new pair because you love new shoes and they make you feel good, or the salesperson said you looked great in them.

Maybe you justified your decision with logic on the basis that if someone saw your expensive new shoes, you would create a better impression.

Ever bought a new car when there was nothing wrong with your current model, but the look, feel and smell of a new car makes you feel wonderful, and the salesperson said you looked so impressive in the driving seat?

Perhaps you justified your decision on the basis

that a new, more expensive car would impress your customers and make them more likely to do business with you.

Why do we do this? The answer lies in how the brain works – it has an emotional part and a logical part. All decisions we make start in the emotional part – that's how our brains work.

If the emotion is strong enough, we'll usually ignore the logical part. Love and want are both strong emotional reasons for buying something.

To stop ourselves being sold to, switch on the logical part by asking a question – something as simple as, 'Do I really need this new car or these new shoes?' your brain will probably respond with a resounding 'NO!' and save you a lot of money.

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

PROTECT YOUR RETIREMENT FROM THE RISK OF MENTAL DECLINE

Retirement – that magical time when we can finally live our lifelong dreams. Increased life expectancy means that many of us can now expect a longer retirement, but this comes at a cost: the increasing prevalence of age-related cognitive decline, which could leave us vulnerable to costly financial errors.

According to the Alzheimer's Society¹, there are almost 885,000 people living with dementia in the UK, and estimates suggest that between five per cent and 20 per cent of over-65s suffer from mild cognitive impairment (MCI), a condition in which someone has minor problems with cognition, such as memory or thought process.

PROTECTING YOUR FINANCES

Planning for the possibility of cognitive decline is an essential part of preparing for retirement. Although many people still have the capacity to live independently and make decisions for themselves, MCI has been linked in scientific studies to poorer financial capacity and an increased susceptibility to scams.

GETTING THE TIMING RIGHT

More than 80 per cent of investors surveyed² thought the ideal time to transfer financial control would be 'sometime after they had begun to experience some cognitive decline but before they became completely incapable'. Respondents thought there was a higher than one-in-

three chance of a mistimed transfer, partly attributable to a reluctance to relinquish control, which exemplifies the need to start planning sooner rather than later, so that any future transfer takes place on your terms.

OPENING UP CONVERSATIONS

Although it may feel awkward, preparing for the possibility of cognitive decline requires careful planning; not only having legal documents in place but also starting conversations with your family and those you trust about money and your goals for the future, in advance of its possible onset. This means that everything is out in the open and close connections are more likely to notice if you begin making decisions about your money that appear to contradict your objectives.

We can assist you with planning and in starting these conversations with your family well in advance and help you better plan for the future, giving you a greater sense of ownership and control over your plans.

At HCR, we take the time to understand our client's unique planning needs and circumstances, so that we can provide you with the most suitable solutions in the most cost-effective way. For a free review of your current financial situation, please contact Karyn Vogel on 01277 654153.

¹ Alzheimer's Society; 2019; ² Vanguard, 2021

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Reaching for REPTILES

THE REPTILES THAT MAKE GREAT PETS... AND THOSE THAT DON'T

The lure of sharing time and space with reptiles links us back to a rugged and prehistoric past – after all, these creatures date right the way back to when dinosaurs were roaming the planet.

An acquired taste, certainly, reptiles can be great pets, are largely self-sufficient, and act as a constant source of wonder for kids and adults alike.

Bearded dragons

A dragon by name, but in truth more of a lizard, this gentle creature isn't the most sociable of its kind, but enjoys being handled nonetheless. They have a varied diet, including vegetables, crickets and worms, and can live for more than a decade.

Leopard geckos

Leopard geckos can live twice as long as the bearded dragon and are nocturnal, so will stress if not allowed time to relax in dark spaces. You'll need to ensure they have cover in their terrarium, and keeping two males together is a strict no-no as they are known to fight.

Box turtles

Box turtles may look cute, but they are a lifelong commitment and can live for more than 40 years. This pet is not suitable for kids – despite their sluggish demeanour, the turtle has complex care requirements, can suffer from anxiety, and requires cleaning out each week.

Chameleons

We know chameleons are ever-changing, ever-evolving creatures, and that extends right the way through to liking different temperatures at different times of the day, so as maintenance goes, they require more than most.

Factor in a need for good ventilation and natural sunlight, and a preference for living in trees, and it all points to this being a tricky reptile to maintain unless you can ensure plenty of foliage and a clean, non-toxic surrounding.



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FOOD & DRINK

2022 FOOD festivals in the UK

Do you consider yourself a bit of a foodie? Or perhaps you just love to spend a lazy weekend milling around a market and sampling the local cuisine? Either way, you will be pleased to hear that the UK has some of the best food festivals in the world.

PUB IN THE PARK

All over the UK, May 12-September 18

Created by Tom Kerridge, Pub in the Park tours all over the UK and boasts a top line-up of chefs and music artists. Attracting more than 130,000 visitors in 2021, this popular festival celebrates everything there is to love about the British pub, including delicious food, great music and time spent with family and friends. More information can be found at pubintheparkuk.com

BIGFOOT

Buckinghamshire, June 17-19

A relatively new festival on the foodie scene, Bigfoot is the UK's first-ever craft beer music festival. Taking place in the stunning Claydon Estate, the headliners this year are Caribou and Happy Mondays. Tantalise your tastebuds with beers including Gypsy Hill,

Howling Hops and Signature Brew, and soak up all the booze with fabulous food from Patty & Bun and Club Mexicana. More information can be found at bigfootfestival.co.uk

THE BIG FESTIVAL

The Cotswolds, August 26-28

Taking place on Alex James' farm in the Cotswolds over the August bank holiday weekend, The Big Festival brings together some of the UK's biggest music artists and Michelin-starred chefs. Enjoy an exciting array of street food while rocking out to the likes of The Human League, Stereophonics and the Sugababes. More information can be found at thebigfestival.com

MEATOPIA

Tobacco Dock, London, September 2-4

One of the most popular and well-known London food festivals, Meatopia is a legendary event for fire-cooking enthusiasts. Offering a winning combination of amazing food, thirst-quenching beverages, roaring fire-pits and live music, Meatopia describes itself as the ultimate Bacchanalian party. More information can be found at meatopia.co.uk



HOW TO COOK PERFECT ROAST



Does your roast beef always end up dry and overcooked? If so, don't despair. Here's how to cook the perfect roast beef.

WHAT YOU NEED:

- > 1.5kg topside of beef
- > Selection of vegetables such as carrots, garlic cloves, onions, celery, etc
- > Olive oil

HOW TO MAKE:

- > Preheat the oven to 240°C/475°F/gas 9 and take your topside of beef out of the fridge and let it come to room temperature.
- > Chop your chosen vegetables and layer on the bottom of your roasting tray, drizzled in oil.
- > Oil and season the beef, before placing it on top of the vegetables.
- > Place the tray in the oven, then turn the heat down immediately to 200°C/400°F/gas 6 and cook for an hour for medium beef. If you prefer it medium-rare, take it out 5 to 10 minutes earlier. For well done, leave it in for another 10 to 15 minutes.
- > Baste the joint halfway through and add water to the veg as necessary.
- > When cooked, place your joint on a chopping board to rest for 15 minutes.
- > Use the juices and vegetables to make gravy.



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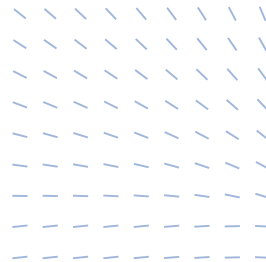
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TRADITIONAL DEADLIFTS

When it comes to strength exercises, the deadlift is one of the most versatile and effective. Deadlifts require core strength and stability, help to improve your range of motion, and target multiple muscle groups.

There are different types of deadlift, but two of the most popular are the traditional deadlift and the Romanian deadlift. But what's the difference, and which exercise is better?

The key difference between a traditional deadlift and a Romanian deadlift (also known as an RDL), is the starting position. The traditional deadlift starts from the bottom position to target the quads and mid-back area, while an RDL starts from a standing position to target the glutes and hamstrings. A traditional deadlift typically allows for a heavier lift than an RDL, which can also be performed using dumbbells.

THE TRADITIONAL DEADLIFT

1. Place your feet shoulder-width apart, with your barbell placed at your feet.
2. Hinge at your hips and keep your chest wide to allow you to bend and take the barbell.
3. Grip the floor with your feet while dropping your hips back.
4. Move your hips forward so that you arrive at a standing position.
5. Bring the bar to just below your hips, with your

knees, legs and back all remaining straight.

6. Push your hips back and bend your knees to squat down and return the bar to the floor. Complete 1-6 reps and repeat for 5 sets.

THE ROMANIAN DEADLIFT

1. Use an overhand grip to hold the bar at hip level. You can also use dumbbells in each hand instead of a bar.
2. Keeping your back straight, draw your shoulders back.
3. Send your hips back while lowering the bar towards your feet.
4. Complete the move by pressing your hips forward until you are back to standing. Complete 5-10 reps and repeat for 3-5 sets.

WHICH IS BETTER?

One type of deadlift isn't superior to the other; they both target different muscle groups and can form an effective part of your exercise routine. They can boost your strength, help to tone your muscles, and improve your posture.

It's important that any kind of deadlift is performed correctly to avoid injury, and you may want to ask someone to watch your form.



...VS ROMANIAN DEADLIFTS



Natural MENOPAUSE MANAGEMENT



A NATURAL APPROACH TO MANAGING THE MENOPAUSE

Whether you don't want to take hormone replacement therapy (HRT), you can't for medical reasons or you want to supplement this prescription treatment, there are natural ways that can help you to manage the menopause.

EAT A HEALTHY DIET

Women's bone density reduces during menopause so it is essential that you eat a diet rich in calcium to keep your bones healthy and strong. Reducing your sugar intake and eating low GI foods can help to reduce mood swings, while eating healthy fats can help increase the healthy bacteria in your gut which can diminish after menopause.

REDUCE ALCOHOL INTAKE

Some women find that alcohol exacerbates their symptoms, especially hot flushes. Alcohol can also increase your risk of developing osteoporosis, heart disease and some types of cancer. Plus, it is high in calories, which is not ideal if you are experiencing weight gain as a result of the menopause.

PARTAKE IN REGULAR EXERCISE

Important for both your cardiovascular and bone

health, as well as reducing feelings of stress and anxiety, it is more beneficial to exercise gently and regularly than it is to go all out once in a while. Both yoga and swimming are great options for women undergoing the menopause.

COGNITIVE BEHAVIOURAL THERAPY (CBT)

If you are suffering with low moods and/or anxiety as a result of the menopause, CBT can help you work through these emotions. There is also some evidence that suggests CBT can help to control hot flushes.

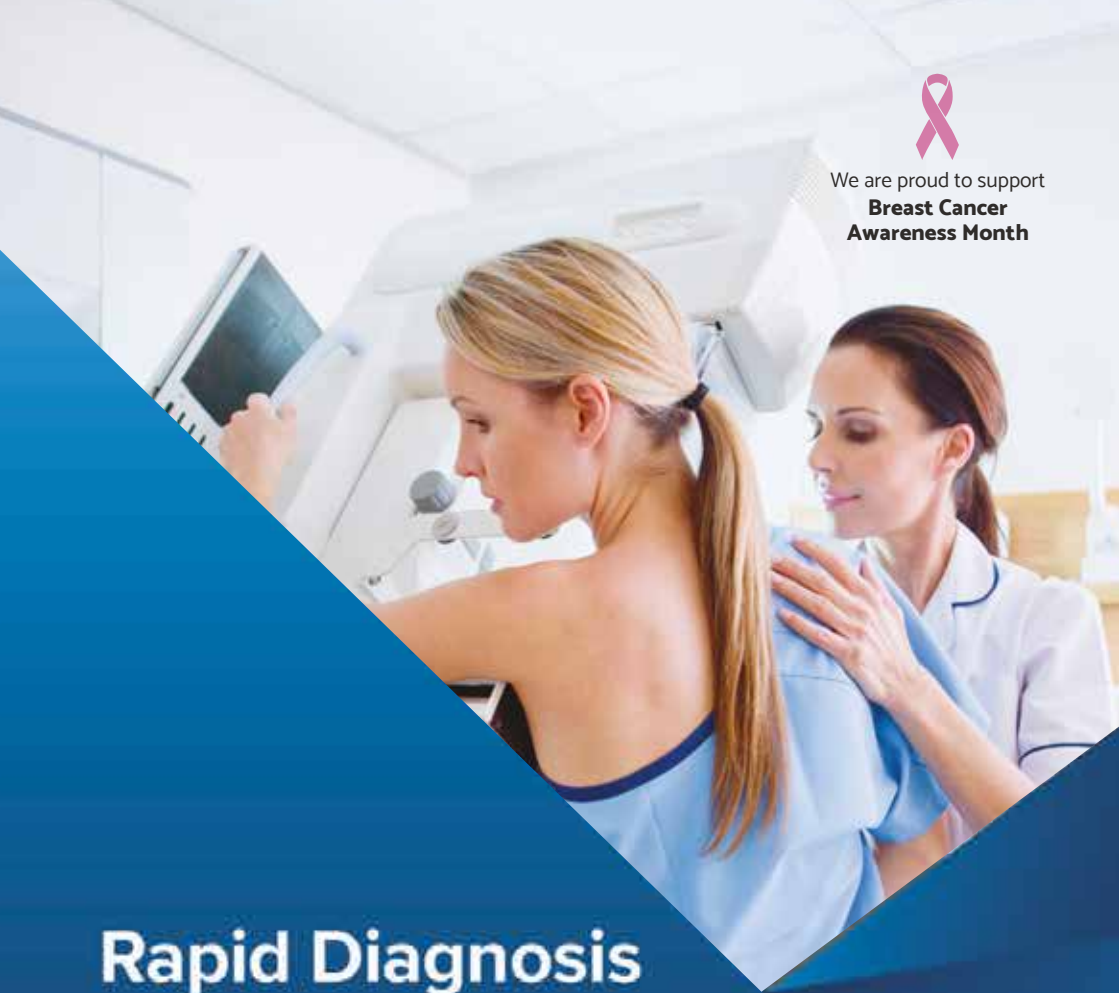
TRY HERBS AND SUPPLEMENTS

There are several herbs and supplements that are said to help manage menopause symptoms, including:

- > Black cohosh – to alleviate night sweats and hot flushes
- > Red clover – to slow down bone loss and alleviate hot flushes
- > Dong quai tea – to ease pelvic pain and regulate oestrogen levels
- > Valerian root – to treat joint pain, aid sleep and reduce hot flushes.



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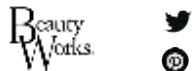
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TAME THE CURLS

Does your curly hair drive you to distraction? Does the mere hint of heat or humidity turn your luscious locks into a frizzy frenzy?

As one of the most precarious months of the year, April can bring sun, rain and wind, all of which can wreak havoc with your curly hair.

Find out how to manage your mane below.

Layer up products

If the forecast is rain, then you need to be prepared by applying the right products for your type of hair before you leave the house. For medium-textured curls, opt for a water-based mousse, or if your hair is fine, an alcohol-based one is better. Once dry, spray your hair liberally with an anti-humidity product.

Avoid hair-styling tools

Although you may be tempted to use your trusty straighteners, blow dryers and hot combs even more when the heat and humidity are ruining your usually sleek curls, this is the worst thing you can do. Instead, let your curly hair dry naturally or use a diffuser and invest in a good air-dry styling cream.

Deep condition frequently

When the weather can't make its mind up, now is the time to embrace conditioning treatments, as these will help your hair to stay in optimal condition. If you usually deep condition once a week, change this to every other day when the weather starts to heat up.

Try the pineapple trick

If the heat and humidity tend to attack your curls while you are sleeping, then the pineapple trick is just what you need. All you need to do is loosely gather your curls at the highest point of your head and secure them with a band. This will guard against frizz.



LEARN

how to say NO

STRUGGLING TO UTTER THAT TWO-LETTER WORD TO YOUR BELOVED YOUNGSTER? HERE'S HOW TO MASTER IT AND WHY YOU NEED TO TAKE BACK CONTROL

Constructive, confident and considered parenting means not always bending to your child's wants and desires. Sometimes the simple action of saying 'no' can seem obstructive and unkind, but when coaching our kids, the logic and reasoning behind our decision is vital.

Turning down some of our youngsters' requests is a key part of their development, but only if done in the right way.

ONE:
WHAT'S IN A WORD?

An obstructive 'no' is rarely going to garner a positive response. As well as being blunt, it leaves a child with little explanation as to the decision reached. Instead, parents are reminded of the benefits of using positive and negative wording. So instead of saying "Stop hitting", say "Keep your hands to yourself". Or replace "No, you can't have that" for "Why don't we look at these?".

TWO:
THE EXPLAIN GAME

No, if accompanied by an explanation that uses

emotion, empathy, consequences and alternatives will steer your child into a place where they not only go along with the response, but also agree with the sentiments behind it.

THREE:
WHAT WE HEAR

Furthermore, as humans listening to a sentence, we listen to some of the first part, all of the last part and very little of the middle. Consider this when outlining something to your child that they perhaps don't want to hear.

FOUR:
ACTION STATIONS

Accompanying rejection with a hug, or holding a hand, will soften the action and reduce the sense of loss a child may feel.

FIVE:
BALANCE

Finally, perhaps the true art of saying 'no' is to ensure you practise saying 'yes' as well. Children will be more understanding of the things they don't have if they know there are many other things that they have received, or will over time.

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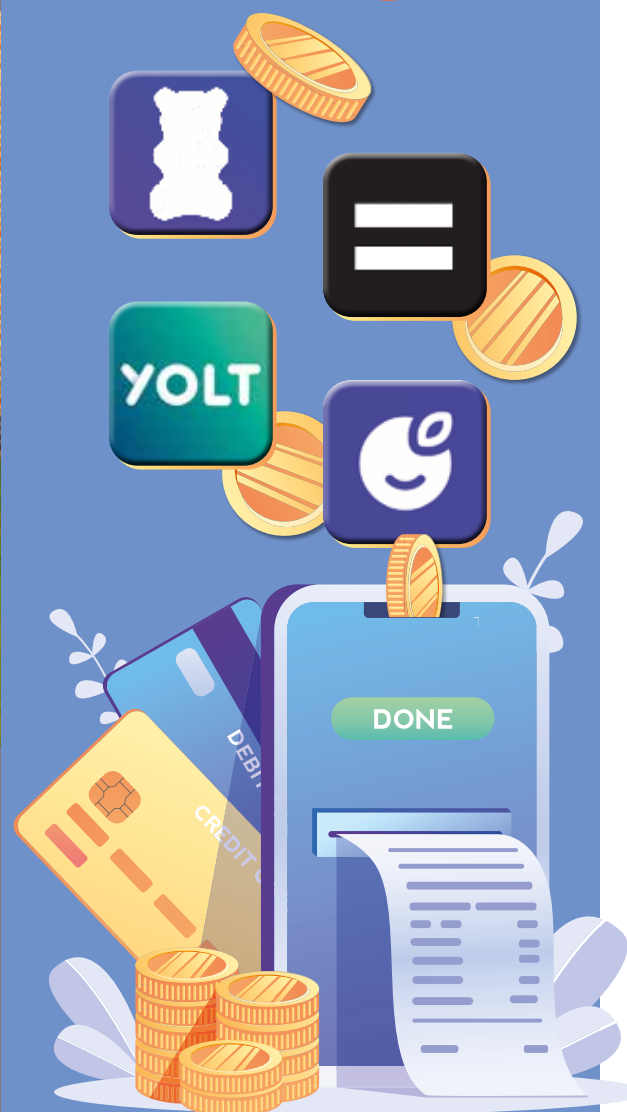
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CASH WISE



We're living in an uncertain era prompted by a pandemic, lockdowns and insecurity for the future. The result of all this is, more than ever before, a desire in people to take greater responsibility for their own actions – across health, employment and, of course, finances.

So while we can't be totally sure of what's to come, we can at least organise our money and budget according to what's laid out in front of us, and that has made cash management apps really popular. Here is a selection of some of the best on the market:

EMMA (free or £59.99 for enhanced annual subscription)

Emma assesses all spending, including loan and credit card repayments, and works out a full schedule of income and expenditure so that you can restrict or extend depending on where you are at certain points of the month.

Handily, it integrates with the likes of Boots, B&Q and Gousto to offer cashback initiatives. However, the constant pushing to upgrade to the paid product can become annoying.

MONEY DASHBOARD (free)

This app operates in much the same way as Emma, but plots graphical representations to take a deeper dive into personal finances.

YOLT (free)

This app comes with a prepaid debit card as well as a set of money management tools. This gives greater control and enables a 360-degree solution for consumer spending that is reported directly back into the app, meaning no money will mysteriously go missing.

PLUM (free or up to £3 per month for premium)

An app for savers, this tool is great for those who want to know, on a month-by-month basis, how much they can afford to put to one side.

Premium options even offer opportunities by which money can be invested directly from the app.



TECHNOLOGY



FASHION

GETTING *Shirty!*

THE HISTORY OF THE SLOGAN T-SHIRT

Since the first slogan t-shirts were worn in the 1950s, our desire to shout messages – without the use of a megaphone – has never relented.

Across political statements, pop culture (think Frankie Says Relax), Fila and Champion leisurewear, the slogan t-shirt has become a fashion icon that goes beyond visual appeal. It is used to express opinion, reference popular culture, and has accelerated campaigns, initiatives and product sales for its ability to unite people with similar perspectives.

The popularity of the casual t-shirt came to prominence some 70 years ago, prompted by a young Marlon Brando in the film *A Streetcar Named Desire*.

In the years that followed, innovations in print technology saw everyone from Disney to Andy Warhol decorate the fronts of our chests with a desire to make statements.

By the 1970s, and led by designer Katherine Hamnett, the slogan t-shirt was being adapted for more political purposes.

She said: "It seemed as if democracy was slipping through our fingers. The slogan t-shirt was something to give you a voice... something to believe in that you could wear on your chest that could be read from 200 yards away."

In recent years, the visual t-shirt has become as much a reference to being fashionable as it is an indicator towards a political or social movement. From Nike to Hugo Boss, French Connection to Fortnite, the signifier of a brand or product is a nod to our own preferences.

And yet, in these challenging social times, the expectation is of a return to stronger statements around gender, Brexit, diversity and general politics.

Whatever the message, the slogan t-shirt is here to stay.



Photo credit: ASOS.com



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CONTAIN YOURSELF

Five ways to master container gardening, for maximum effect

Container gardening is pretty much what it sounds like – the display of plants, flowers and herbs in containers.

Gardening this way offers variety, flexibility and a great deal more control than placing plants in flowerbeds or around borders. To get it right, you need to abide by a few simple rules.

ONE:
Location location location

The ability for your plants to flourish will almost certainly depend on location. Around six hours of sunlight a day and a south-facing position will offer them the best chance to make something of themselves.

TWO:
Choose your container wisely

While containers come in all shapes and sizes and cater for various budgets, the golden rule is to allow adequate room for your plants to grow, and to ensure there is adequate drainage in the bottom.

THREE:
Heavily soiled

You can pick up a bag of high-nutrient, moisture-retaining, airy soil at the garden centre for less than the price of a glass of wine, and it will be considerably better for your plants than standard garden soil.

FOUR:
Water lovely plant

Try to water plants every morning to allow them to flourish during the day. Watering in strong sunlight runs the risk of leaves being singed. Positioning containers next to a natural water source will help as well.

FIVE:
Feed greed

Adding nutrients, slow-release fertilisers and liquid feed to your watering can – or even directly to the container – will give your soil and your plant a perfect boost each day, as well as helping it to fend off any nasties.



Photo credit: idealhome.co.uk



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Create your own OUTDOOR KITCHEN

The COVID-19 pandemic meant that many of us turned our attention to our gardens to create the perfect outdoor living space. Great for entertaining, hosting in the garden has become the ideal way to entertain family and friends.

Creating an outdoor kitchen gives you a stylish space to cook outside so you can make the most of the warmer weather with your family and friends.

Learn how to create an outdoor kitchen on any budget, ready for summer entertaining.

MEASURE YOUR SPACE: You can design an outdoor kitchen to suit all kinds of spaces. Measure your designated area to establish what you have to work with. A basic kitchen will need space for an appliance, like a barbecue, and some workspace. The larger your space, the more you'll be able to add.

FIND THE RIGHT APPLIANCES: Find cooking appliances that will suit your budget. Pizza ovens are bang on trend and can be used for all cooking. However, if that doesn't take your fancy, barbecues and grills are available in different sizes according to your needs. Some people even add fridges and microwaves to their outdoor spaces.

GET YOUR CONNECTIONS IN PLACE: You may need to bring in professionals to provide electricity, lighting and plumbing to your space. Keep everything secured away for safety and to make sure the space looks neat and organised.

BUILD A SHELTER TO COVER ALL WEATHER: A shelter is a must if you're dealing with electrical equipment, but it will also help you make the most of your space. Having shelter will let you use your outdoor kitchen in any weather, for year-round entertainment.

MAKE SURE YOU'VE GOT ENOUGH STORAGE: Storage is a must for your outdoor kitchen. Shelving, trolleys and cupboards can keep your utensils, tableware and other supplies safe and clean, ready for when you need them.

An outdoor kitchen is a must if you like entertaining at home. Start now to get yours ready in time for summer.



GARDENING

Photo credit: Giflio via housebeautiful.com, Morsol andiform Consultants/keva via ideallhome.co.uk



PLANTS THAT STAVE OFF SLUGS AND SNAILS

Are you being driven to distraction by slugs and snails in your garden? If the answer is yes, then a few well-placed plants are just the solution you have been seeking.

FERNS: Ferns are low-maintenance, hardy, and make an attractive addition to any sized garden. Plus, they are way down on the list of the favourite foods of slugs and snails as their thick leaves are hard to chew. Plant in a moist, well-drained spot for optimum results.

HYDRANGEAS: Instantly recognisable by their pretty pink, blue and white flowers, hydrangeas may appear beautiful to us, but, fortunately, this is not the case for slugs and snails. With the ability to create the ultimate barrier against these slimy creatures, hydrangeas thrive in moist, well-drained spots with some shade.

LAVENDER: While this sweet-smelling herb does attract the attention of bees, its strong fragrance is off-putting for slugs and snails. Place lavender strategically around your garden to help protect your other plants from the destructive habits of gastropods.

GERANIUMS: Geraniums are not an attractive option for slugs and snails as travelling across their hairy stems and leaves is too uncomfortable. There are more than 300 species of geraniums, so you are guaranteed to find one that complements your garden.

FOXGLOVES: Foxgloves can be perennial or biennial and produce stunning bell-shaped flowers that sit on long, swaying stems. Toxic when eaten by slugs and snails, as well as humans, foxgloves look lovely in borders around your garden.

OTHER WAYS TO DISCOURAGE SLUGS AND SNAILS

- > Create barriers with crushed eggshells, pine needles or thorny cuttings
- > Remove slug shelters such as bricks and large logs
- > Lay down copper tape around your plants
- > Sprinkle a little salt on your most valuable plants.



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BRITAIN'S GREATEST SPORTING MOMENTS...

THE GREAT *Dame*

SPORT

Each month, we look at one of the most significant events in British sporting history. This month, it's Dame Kelly Holmes DBE and her double Olympic gold



It's possible to strive for so long for something that you imagine it may never arrive, and that's certainly true in the case of Dame Kelly Holmes DBE.

An athlete who turned professional in 1993, she initially enjoyed a number of successes, including winning the 1,500m title at the Commonwealth Games in 1994.

Injuries – notably stress fractures – marred the years that followed, and while interspersing her time on the sidelines with silver and bronze medals, Holmes believed she may never return to gold medal contention.

"It was always silvers and bronzes," she says. "I was proud to be picking up World Championship medals, and of course my first Olympic medal – the 800m bronze in Sydney in 2000 – was wonderful. But I was never close enough to think I could move myself up."

At the Athens Olympics in 2004, Holmes, by then 34, was in the heyday of her career. Her form

going into the 800m and 1,500m events had been good – she'd scored her first major gold in five years at the Commonwealth Games in 2002, with three silvers the following year.

And, sure enough, everything clicked in Athens. For once injury-free, she powered past rival Maria de Lurdes Mutola on the final bend in the 800m to take a gold medal in a victory celebrated up and down the country. She had only decided to enter the race five days previously.

Her specialist event, the 1,500m, proved another dream race. She ran from the back of the field, advanced, and this time held off World Champion Tatyana Tomashova of Russia on the home straight, setting a new British record in the process.

Holmes had become only the third woman in Olympic history to do 'the double', and, to prove it was no fluke, won gold at the IAAF World Athletics Final later in the year, before hanging up her spikes.

A true people's champion, Dame Kelly now undertakes fantastic work as an athletics and mental health ambassador.

Photo credit: sipa/Shutterstock

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