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Editor's notes...



Leigh Fry, Editor

Hello and welcome to this month's edition of **VISION**Chalfonts. Well finally spring has arrived and we now have the luxury of the nights getting lighter. I love the longer days. It's great to walk the dogs in the early evening.

I do hope you all get out and about around our beautiful villages. There are some lovely venues to sit and take in what's around us.

Driving through the villages recently, I stopped to admire the wonderful views, historical places of interest and quirky traditional shops.

My message to everyone this month is get out and about and enjoy what's right on your doorstep.

As always thank you for your emails and comments, we appreciate all your views and will always take on board what the local community is interested in and talking about.

In local news this month, residents were recognised at Chiltern's Community Awards, a charity is in need of volunteers in Little Chalfont and we reveal the winner of this month's reader's photo competition.

I will leave you with a quote from one of the true geniuses of our time who so sadly passed away recently. "Life would be tragic if it weren't funny." Stephen Hawking

So, go have fun and see you all next month.

Leigh

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 14. NATALIE, 16. CYCLES, 19. FARAD

She wears THE CROWN

Having portrayed Her Majesty for two seasons in Netflix series *The Crown*, Claire Foy has her sights set on some of the biggest roles in Hollywood in what's set to be her biggest year so far, but will she have pay equality on her side?

Every jobbing actor knows that it only takes a single role to dramatically transform your career. In the case of Claire Foy, that once-in-a-lifetime opportunity came when portraying one of the most iconic women of the last century, when the Buckinghamshire-raised beauty was asked to play Queen Elizabeth II in hit Netflix series *The Crown*. Overnight, she became one of the hottest stars on the planet, as everyone from Helen Mirren to Elton John rushed to heap praise on the 33-year-old.

But with recognition – and a Golden Globe award for Best Actress – comes inevitable tumult and change, and like the person she embodied with such impeccable steely grace, the actress has had to adjust to life in the spotlight, with 2018 already bringing a raft of perhaps unexpected challenges. In February it was announced that she and husband of four years, actor Stephen Campbell Moore, would be going their separate ways. “We have separated and have been for some time. We do however continue as great friends with the utmost respect for one another,” read the joint statement from the pair, who share their three-year-old daughter, Ivy Rose.

Then, weeks later, it transpired that Foy was paid less than Matt Smith, who played the Queen’s husband, the Duke of Edinburgh, in *The Crown*, landing the actress right in the middle of the current gender pay gap furore. In the end, the show’s producers Suzanne Mackie and Andy Harries claimed that Smith earned more per episode because he was a much bigger name when the series began. They had a point, given that Smith was *Doctor Who* for four years up to 2014, but noted that for the third series the deficit would be rectified, stating: “Going forward, no one gets paid more than the Queen.”

Not that Foy cares one jot about the third series, as she won’t be in it. Instead, *Broadchurch* star Olivia Colman will don the hefty jewels as the series jumps forward to the Seventies, seeing much of the cast replaced for older actors. But having catapulted her career into the stratosphere, *The Crown* has done enough for Foy to ensure she won’t be short of offers for the foreseeable future, as the focus turns to Hollywood, with two huge releases set for this year.

First up, she will portray the earth-bound wife of Ryan Gosling’s Neil Armstrong in Damien Chazelle’s *First Man*, followed by the highly coveted lead in *The Girl in the Spider’s Web* – the much-delayed reboot of the Stieg Larsson *Millennium* series. As the formidable Lisbeth Salander – last played by Rooney Mara in *The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo* – Foy will appear pierced, inked and in full leathers as she takes on Russian criminal organisation The Spider Society.

But first, the mercurial star will simply be enjoying some downtime as she shrugs off those royal robes for the very last time and focuses on being “a normal mum”. “It’s the role I cherish most,” she states, and surely no amount of money comes close to it.



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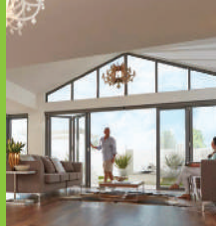
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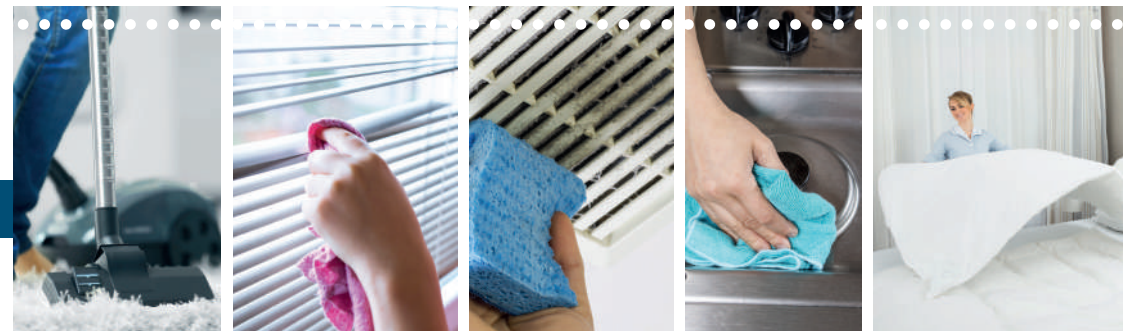
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YOUR GUIDE TO HOW OFTEN HOUSEHOLD CHORES OUGHT TO BE DONE

Once a day: It may seem like hard work to clean every day, but these are simple habits it's worth getting into in order to minimise germs that build up in crucial areas of your home.

- ▶ Wipe down kitchen and dining surfaces with antibacterial solution
- ▶ Sweep the kitchen floor
- ▶ Squeegee shower walls
- ▶ Sanitise kitchen and bathroom sinks

Once a week: These chores are ideal for a weekend spruce.

- ▶ Wash towels and bed sheets
- ▶ Clean out the fridge
- ▶ Vacuum carpets and furniture
- ▶ Dust down the furniture and clean the mirrors
- ▶ Scrub kitchen appliances, bathroom surfaces and the toilet
- ▶ Clean the microwave
- ▶ Sanitise sponges and cloths

Once a month: Make time to rid your house of all the invisible dirt and dust which has been building up.

- ▶ Deep clean the dishwasher and washing machine
- ▶ Dust blinds and light fittings

- ▶ Wipe down skirting boards
- ▶ Clean inside the vacuum

Every six months: Here we get down to the slightly grimy jobs which no one really wants to do, but will really help prolong the lifespan of the appliances and surfaces in your home.

- ▶ Deep clean inside the fridge
- ▶ Wash the shower curtain
- ▶ Vacuum behind the sofas
- ▶ Clean the oven and extractor hood
- ▶ Flip the mattress
- ▶ Clean out the freezer
- ▶ Wash duvets and pillows

Once a year: At this point your house ought to be looking and feeling pretty clean, meaning that there are only a few additional jobs you might want to consider.

- ▶ Deep clean carpets and upholstery
- ▶ Wash curtains
- ▶ Clear out the gutters
- ▶ Deep clean windows
- ▶ Clean fireplace and chimney
- ▶ Clear out dryer vents and washing machine filter



HOME & DIY



Crystal Vision

Can natural crystals placed strategically around your home really improve your zen?

Crystals are the hot new thing in feng shui. At least that's what's being said on the digital grapevine. They're certainly a simpler and probably cheaper method of boosting the positive energy in your home, as they require no renovations or rearranging of your furniture, and add natural beauty to any room.

However, there is nothing new about utilising the power of natural crystals, as they have been a valuable tool in healing, protection and energy restoration for centuries. And yet, there is no concrete scientific evidence to prove they actually work. Some say this is because the powerful vibrations they are said to omit are too tiny to be measured, and it is these which help us manifest and transform that energy into action.

So, for example, if you want to recover from a bad relationship, or nurture love and romance, you'll be needing the rose quartz. A master healer in matters

of the heart, place several tumbled rose quartz stones in a bowl on your nightstand, or two heart-shaped stones under you and your partner's pillow to help navigate a rocky patch in your relationship.

In contrast, the clear quartz is the last thing you want in your bedroom, as it can stimulate too much energy. Instead, these wonderfully diverse stones work well in a family room, as they clear out negative energy and amplify happiness.

A tourmaline by your front door will offer protection, and an amethyst will help bring calm and clarity to areas where you need to foster concentration and meditative thought, like an office, or for some, the downstairs loo.

The most important thing to bear in mind when using these natural beauties is that crystals help channel and amplify the energy you put out there, so if you've got no faith in crystals, they'll have no faith in you.



Rose Quartz for heartache



Clear Quartz for energy and happiness



Tourmaline for protection



Amethyst for calm and clarity

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Tired of crayoned walls and stained carpets? Here's how to choose kiddie proof decor.

Whether you've got a bundle of joy on the way, or already have a tearaway or two running amok in your home, you'll be fully aware of the need to consider the small people when decorating or furnishing your house. Children are a wonderful addition to any home, of course, but even the best-behaved ones will have the odd moment of absentmindedness, usually right in the middle of devouring a chocolate ice cream cone.

so choose gloss, eggshell and satin. If your child is a determined artist, it may be worth painting one wall or door with blackboard paint, so they have a space to create their magic/mess.

If you have the luxury of starting fresh with your décor, then be sure to choose hardwearing fabrics. Carpets, particularly light ones, won't serve you well, so go for lino or well-maintained wood floors. You can then buy rugs to add cosiness and sound proofing, preferably ones that can be easily washed and are patterned to disguise spillages.

In terms of furniture, leather is preferable as it's wipe-clean, and if you already have a fabric sofa it's worth buying a few easy-care throws and blankets for protection. Equally if you have a wooden kitchen table, you will definitely need an everyday table cloth you can whip off for special occasions. Cut-to-size PVC fabric is perfect as it often comes in bright stylish patterns and is practically indestructible.

And finally, obey the 2ft rule whereby anything valuable is placed at least two feet above your precious poppet's head. This ought to prevent any more tears before bedtime (for both parent AND child).

When it comes to walls, wipeable paint is your new best friend. Matte finishes tend to lock dirt in,

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HOME & DIY



SPRUCE UP

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Selling up? These DIY ideas will add value to your home.

Fix the front door

As the first port of call, you need your front door to make a big impression. So give it a fresh coat of paint, change the doorknob and add a shiny new letterbox.

Change the windows

PVCu windows will certainly add worth, but only if your home isn't a high-value period property, in which case it is vital to maintain the original frames.

Install central heating

If you don't already have it, you'll spend £1,000-£3,000 but central heating will add £5,000 to your property.

Spruce up the kitchen

For many families, the kitchen is the heart of the home and therefore needs to look welcoming and modern. Replace shabby cabinets and counter tops and consider installing a dishwasher if there isn't one already.

Put mirrors in the hall

A simple trick for a cramped hall space is to place a mirror on either side for instant spaciousness.

Pave the front garden

If parking is tricky in your area, paving over a barely-used front garden could add up to £50,000 to your home. Now that's easy money.

Declutter

The overall feeling in a home is important, so don't cost yourself money by leaving toys and junk all over the place. Keep it clear, clean and simple.

Boost your bathroom

Small details are important in the bathroom, and as taps and shower curtains can look grubby quickly, it's worth replacing them.

Convert the garage

It's relatively inexpensive to turn a garage into a living space, but to know if it's really worth it, multiply square footage gained by local price per square foot.

Add a final flourish

Buying a home is a huge commitment, and the first impression can really sway a buyer's mind. So, buy fresh flowers, make sure your home smells nice and ensure it's relatively clean to make potential buyers feel instantly at ease.



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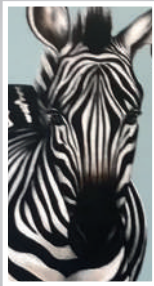
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LOCAL NEWS

from your neighbourhood

LOCAL NEWS



Photo credit: Chiltern Council

Residents awarded at ceremony

Residents of Chalfont St Peter were among the winners and finalists at Chiltern's Community Award 2018.

Marie Cavanagh was announced as the runner-up for the Business in the Community Award.

The award recognises a business which supports or makes a positive contribution to benefit and enhance community life in the Chiltern District.

The Group Award, which was presented by Dame Cheryl Gillan, was given to Chalfont St Peter

Community Library volunteers.

The library faced closure in 2011 but the community came together to save it and today 74 volunteers aged from 16 to 84 run the library.

The runner-up in the Young Volunteer Award category were the Chalfont St Peter Youth Club volunteers.

A spokesperson from Chiltern District Council said: "Congratulations to all our winners, runners-up and nominees."

Charity urgently looking for volunteers

Rennie Grove Hospice Care is looking for volunteers to spare some time by helping to run their shop in Little Chalfont.

You'll be joining a friendly team, selling quality second-hand clothes and other various items to raise the much-needed funds that keep Rennie Grove's services running.

By providing 24/7 responsive hospice-at-home care, Rennie Grove nurses can keep patients with

life-limiting illnesses at home with their loved ones at the end of life.

Helping to support this cause means you are significantly supporting your local community.

Rennie Grove Hospice Care welcomes shop volunteers of all ages and will work with the time that you have.

Visit renniegrove.org/volunteer for more information or pop into your local Rennie Grove shop.



County council herds cash to repair potholes



Photo credit: Chiltern Council

The Chalfonts could soon be benefitting from a £2.78million programme to repair the county's worst pothole 'farms'.

The county council has received £1.78million in repair grants, however, more money is set to be added for a 'plane and patch' scheme to resurface stretches of road with multiple defects.

Plane and patch teams will target the worst-hit roads, using local knowledge to repair up to nine miles of road.

While this programme is active, repair teams will continue with the county's £2million programme repairing individual potholes, and make more use of their Jet Patcher, which speeds repair rates.

Mark Shaw, deputy leader and cabinet member for transportation, said road defects had worsened in the first three months of the year as a consequence of the harsh winter weather.

The additional programme spend will need the agreement of the full council on April 26.

Woman left shaken following assault

Thames Valley Police are appealing for information following a racially aggravated assault in Chalfont St Peter.

A woman was pushing her young child in a buggy along a narrow path in Chiltern Hill at about 3.30pm on Sunday, March 4 when she became aware of a man walking behind her.

She turned slightly to let the person walk by, but the man then pushed his right elbow into her back,

causing her to fall to the ground.

The offender then made racially abusive comments to the woman and threatened her.

The victim, a 38-year-old woman, sustained pains in her left leg but did not require treatment. She was left very shaken.

The offender is described as a man aged between 30 and 40 years old, about 6ft tall, with a large build.

He was wearing a black woolly winter hat which had a sign or writing on the front and was folded over at the sides and front.

He was wearing grey skinny jeans and a tight dark grey jacket with a worn fluffy hood and the zip done up.

The offender was carrying a shopping carrier bag with a small number of items in it.

Investigating officer PC Sarah Lansley said: "We have now launched an investigation and I would urge anyone with information to contact us.

"Please call the Thames Valley Police non-emergency number 101, quoting reference 43180067639."

Four charged with burglary offence

Four men have been charged in connection with an investigation into an aggravated burglary in Chalfont St Peter.

This follows a joint investigation by Thames Valley Police and the Metropolitan Police's Flying Squad into an incident at the Co-operative in Market Place, Chalfont St Peter at around 11.50pm on February 5.

Patrick McInerney, 36, of Lower Road, Higher Denham, and Ben Watson, 38, of Long Lane, Staines-upon-Thames, have each been charged with one count of conspiracy to commit aggravated non-dwelling burglary.

Kirk McInerney, 28, of no fixed abode, and Liam Keenan, 39, of The Nightingales, Stanwell, have each been charged with one count of conspiracy to commit aggravated non-dwelling burglary.

They were all due to appear at Isleworth Crown Court on April 5.



Photo credit: George Eykyn

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Little Chalfont Parish Council

Many projects in hand for the village

Watch out for a number of projects that the parish council has initiated in Little Chalfont, which should be completed shortly.

Last month, we reported on the new path to improve access onto the village green and to the new notice board area. Just nearby, a new set of bollards has been installed that matches the bollards installed in Burtons Lane and Nightingales Corner.

The parish council is grateful to Bucks County Council Local Area Forum, which provided half the funds for this project. Funding was also received from the LAF for a new moveable vehicle activation sign (MVAS), which is currently installed in Amersham Road. We will report results as soon as they are available.

We are also pleased to announce that new flowering cherry trees are due to be planted along Amersham Road to replace those that died, providing a colourful welcome to people driving into the village.

Other matched funding has been received from the LAF for a number of new projects including a warning sign to be installed in the approach road to Challoner's school to improve safety for visitors to the nature park. A 20mph advisory sign will be placed near to the entrance of the Chalfont Valley

E-Act Academy following concerns raised about the speed of vehicles travelling near the school.

Additional bollards will be placed at the entrance to the new footway on Stony Lane, again to improve the safety of pedestrians on the path.

And lastly a feasibility study will be undertaken on the junction of Cokes Lane and Nightingales Lane to assess ways to improve the safety of drivers and pedestrians on this difficult bend (see photo below).

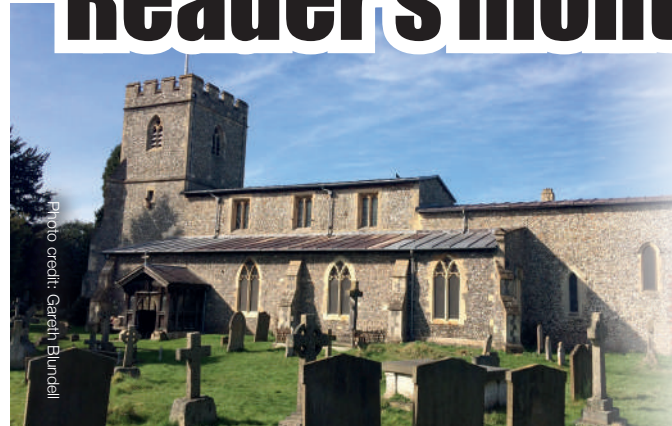
Watch out for these projects over the next year.



A date for your diary

The annual parish meeting will be held at Little Chalfont village hall on Wednesday, May 16 at 7.30pm.

Reader's monthly photo



Well done to this month's winner of the monthly photo competition – Gareth Blundell. This image was taken of St Giles Church in Chalfont St Giles recently.

There will be no theme next month, so get sending in your images.

The winner will be shown in the local news section in next month's edition.

Please submit entries by Friday, May 4. You can email them to chalfonts@visionmag.co.uk with 'Reader's monthly photo' in the subject line.

As always, good luck and happy snapping.



Youth club needs funding to keep services

LOCAL NEWS



A youth club is raising money to be able to continue to run one of its much-loved activities. Chalfont St Giles Youth Club, The Zone, is hoping to raise £2,500 in order to continue its community dance class.

The club has been an integral part of the community since 1948, with the additional extension of The Zone in 2016.

It is a 100 per cent voluntary unit, so the club is continuously look for funding, and trying to find new and exciting ways for the young people to help keep the street dance running.

A spokesperson from the club said: "We are struggling to find the money to continue the community dance lessons.

"These dance lessons are not segregated, allowing young people with a variety of special needs and backgrounds to come and express themselves and be part of something much bigger.

"We celebrate being one big family and by donating you will help our family to stay together and grow."

To donate, visit www.justgiving.com

'Super council' backed by Secretary of State

Residents in The Chalfonts could soon be impacted by the government's desire to close the five main councils across Buckinghamshire.

The debate to close the current county and district councils, including Chiltern District Council, and replace it with one 'super council' has been ongoing for some time.

Following the announcement, Chiltern District Council released a statement saying: "The Secretary of State, Sajid Javid, has announced in parliament that he is 'minded' to implement Buckinghamshire County Council's proposal to replace the existing five councils in Bucks with a

single county-wide unitary.

"While we are extremely disappointed, the 'minded to' decision is not set in stone, and as the process allows, we will be making the strongest possible representations to the Secretary of State that this decision is not the right one.

"We don't believe that this decision is in the best interest of our local residents, businesses, community groups, parish councils and various other stakeholders across the county and, based on our own engagement, we don't believe it has strong local support."

There is now a period until May 25 where representations can be made.

The final decision will be subject to parliamentary approval. For more information, visit chiltern.gov.uk

Biannual Literary Festival returns to the village

The eighth Chalfont St Giles and Jordans Literary Festival gets under way in a matter of weeks, with a house of distinguished guest speakers.

This year's list of guest speakers includes Dan Cruickshank, Carolyne Larrington, Graham Twemlow, Katie Hickman, John Carey and Sue Smithson.

The festival starts on Tuesday, May 8 at 7.15pm in the Memorial Hall in Chalfont St Giles, with the closing chapter and prize-giving to winners of the writing competition on Sunday, May 20 in the parish church at 5pm.

Festival brochures are available from the Chalfont St Giles Community Library and other local libraries in the surrounding area. They contain full programme details and a booking form.

Tickets are available either online or by post.

For more information on the festival, visit www.chalfontstgilesliteraryfestival.org.uk



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Best in BLOOM

If you're thinking about adding some much-needed colour to your garden but want to plant something a little different this year, then ditch the daffs and try these fresh floral ideas for spring.

Like the ebullient animal which shares the same name, *Fawn Lilies* are a joyous signaller of spring. Also known as white beauties, these creamy white flowers have a slightly 'out of this world' quality, as their star-shaped petals defy gravity to reveal delicate yellow tendrils.

All poppies add glorious colour, but there is something about the giant crepe paper petals of the *Oriental Poppy* which makes it a stunning addition to any garden in bloom. Whether you desire the bright pink regality of the Raspberry Queen (which can grow to up to 3ft), the salmon-pink of the Mrs Perry, or the rich jamminess of Patty's Plum, there is a poppy for you.

Originally from mountainous regions of Asia, *Foxtail Lilies* add a dramatic flourish to the landscape. Bursting out of the ground in an orange spike composed of tiny blooms, this is one plant which appears exactly as its name would suggest.

According to legend, the *Pasque Flower* springs from the blood of viking warriors and grows upon their graves. Sadly, these wondrous wildflowers may go the same way as those warring invaders, as the lack of suitable land (Britain has lost 97 per cent of its wildflower meadows since the 1930s) makes it ever harder for them to grow. So, add the magnificence of purple and gold to your garden by investing in this rare wildflower.

The pretty *Polyanthus* may be a commoner compared to its rarer counterparts, but this hardy and bold blossom is a superb way to cheaply and efficiently fill your beds with life. Some gardeners find their hues bright to the point of garish, but if you can't create a natural carpet of cherry, crimson and stonewash blue, what's the point of nurturing a garden at all?



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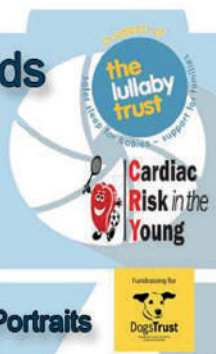


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TRAVEL

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CAMP WITH THE ANIMALS

If your kids are animal lovers, they'll relish the opportunity to sleep in close proximity to lions and giraffes. Having realised that patrons simply can't get enough of the mighty beasts, several zoos in the UK now offer overnight packages, which generally include access to attractions outside opening hours and plenty of opportunities to get up close and personal with the park's residents. Locations include Port Lympne Wild Animal Park in Kent, Chessington Zoo in Surrey and Camp Baboon in Bristol.

LEARN BUSHCRAFT

What if you could send your little ones on a holiday that could teach as well as entertain? Well that's exactly what a bushcraft course can offer. Camp Wilderness is one such company that offers summer camps all over the UK where your tiny tearaway can master everything from fire lighting and wilderness camping to archery.

PUSH THEIR LIMITS

For miniature thrillseekers, it has to be an adventure holiday. Offering any number of outdoor activities, including rock climbing, abseiling, canoeing and circus skills, these experiences boost confidence and offer a unique bonding experience where your child can make friends for life. Go to PGL.co.uk for a comprehensive list of adventures.

GET ON YOUR BIKES

For a family holiday that will leave you considerably fitter while seeing some extraordinary places, consider a cycling trip. Saddle Skedaddle have a wealth of wonderful options which accommodate both the inexperienced and the Tour de France wannabes, along with guided and self-guided tours. They also cover Europe as well as the UK, so you can explore new horizons while pushing the pedals.



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Sir Elton John CBE

Goodbye yellow brick road

Sir Elton John CBE is facing an important crossroads in his life. After 50 years at the top of the charts, wowing fans around the world with his legendary catalogue and such generational classics as *Sacrifice*, *Daniel*, *I'm Still Standing* and *Candle in the Wind*, the icon is hanging up his sparkly shades after one final tour... albeit a very long one spanning three years that will kick off this September.

But this is far from a sad departure for the singer. In fact, the father of two – to Zachary, seven, and Elijah, five, with husband David

Furnish – couldn't be happier, revealing "nothing is more important than my boys", and therein lies the reason for calling it quits.

Elton (real name Reginald Dwight) is very clear - this is not retirement. Far from it, it appears as the star will simply be switching gears, remaining as busy as ever in the studio.

Speaking with characteristic honesty, the 71-year-old talks health scares and plans for the future, as well as delving deeper into the decision to keep the tour truck firmly off the yellow brick road.

The INTERVIEW

You've got your biggest and, sadly, last tour coming up - firstly what made you decide to give up touring?

ELTON: I've been mulling it over, giving it a lot of thought for a sizeable chunk of time. It's not an easy decision but it's the right decision. It's time. But I'm possibly the most excited I've ever been for a tour because I'm planning on visiting every country in the world that's welcomed me and given me tremendous support. This is my 'thank you' to each and every fan. So, it's not a sad goodbye, it's a triumphant thank you.

So this isn't retirement?

ELTON: I'll never retire; it sounds so boring to me. I'm simply stopping all the travel. My boys are at an age now where it's no longer practical with their schooling and schedules, and if we didn't have children, I would continue travelling.

But I'm still going to record albums, I'm still going to write music. I'm still going to produce movies, I'm still going to write musicals. It's going to free up time for me to focus on other projects.

And I have a family now - my husband, my boys. It's not about me, I can't be self-focused and I have to pull back. They come first before anything and anyone else.

Are you sad to say goodbye to the road?

ELTON: No, honestly no. Yes, I would still continue to tour because I enjoy it, but I've been doing it since I was 16. This is now a different, new chapter in my life and it's difficult for the two to marry - I'm happy to put that last chapter to bed and focus on what's to come with these vibrant, wonderful little people. I just want to be with them.

You did previously say you wanted to die on stage?

ELTON: Things change. Life happens and I'm so lucky it did.

It'll be beneficial for your health surely slowing things down, a little?

ELTON: Every year, I would do a couple hundred flights and as time has gone on and I've gotten older, it's starting to take it out of me. I'm happy for that to come to an end.

And yes, I had a health scare last year. It was quite serious and I'm not going to sugar coat it. I'm fine now and have a full clean bill of health, but it played into the decision. My body isn't invincible, I have to respect it and treat it kinder, and chopping out all those air miles can't hurt.

Are you more aware of your mortality after it?

ELTON: Yes, definitely. It was a wakeup call, it changed my perspective, and I'm glad it did.

But you'd already decided to quit before that happened?

ELTON: I had but this only reinforced it. I'd decided three years ago really, so this isn't a shock announcement - we thought long and hard about it.

What can fans expect?

ELTON: It's going to be very elaborate, very memorable, and the perfect send-off for the music that changed my life. It's going to be a huge celebration, exploding with colour and vibrancy. I want to go out to the biggest bang no one will forget.

And the boys will be there, even though this is the reason you want to stop?

ELTON: They will be with us for some of the way, most likely Australia and Asia, because I want them to experience those cultures. We will be taking them out of school and having a tutor with us, but those travel experiences in themselves are invaluable educational.

Are they fans of your music?

ELTON: They do like Daddy's music - certain tracks more than others.

What's their favourite?

ELTON: They love *I'm Still Standing*. They love coming to the shows and get very excited, but then once we get home it's all forgotten about. I'm no one special in my own home.

If I was a footballer, I would be God to them. What I do doesn't rank quite so highly.

As you look back on your career and your life, what lessons do you want to teach your boys?

ELTON: They already have a very different life to the one I was brought up with.

I think their upbringing is going to come with its own set of built-in difficulties. They come from a well-off background which will afford its own advantages, but mine was very working-class where I had to battle for everything I got, and I want to instill those same values in them. But it's harder growing up in this world and David and I are very mindful of that.

They're fantastic young boys, they have good hearts and compassionate, kind personalities. We just want to be there for them - to guide them as best we can. It's all you can do really as a parent.

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Meat-Free Mondays

If you're looking to eat less meat but don't know where to start, consider just having one day a week without it. And as these five delicious veggie meal ideas will prove, substituting meat doesn't necessarily mean missing out on flavour.

ROASTED VEGETABLE LASAGNE



This sumptuous lasagne doesn't even require a meat substitute, as red peppers and aubergines are roasted before being layered with tomato, béchamel sauce and pasta sheets, then topped with cherry tomatoes and mozzarella. Once baked in the oven, you wouldn't know the difference.

PUMPKIN GREEN CURRY WITH NOODLES



Make a green curry as you usually would, but swap the prawns or chicken for chunks of fresh pumpkin. Meanwhile, boil some noodles and sauté it with coconut oil and seasoning.

THREE-BEAN MEXICAN CHILLI



Both warming and filling, the combination of cannellini, pinto and red kidney beans with canned tomatoes, peppers, onion and spices make this a seriously hearty dish.

BAKED SQUASH



A fabulous dish for a dinner party, simply cut and deseed your squash, then score and brush the flesh with garlic, chilli and olive oil. Next, roast along with courgette, pepper, tomato and onion (in a separate dish). Then mix the roasted veg with breadcrumbs, parmesan, pine nuts and goats cheese, before spooning into your squash halves. Bake until golden and bubbling.

BLACK BEAN BURGERS



Packed with protein, these beauties are as good as the real thing. Tinned black beans, breadcrumbs, spring onions and chilli are mixed together before being moulded into burger-shaped patties. Chill your burgers in the fridge for 10 minutes to maintain shape, before frying. Serve in a bun with onions, tomatoes and whatever relish you fancy, and serve with a cold beer. Heaven.

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Vegan VIXEN

THE RISE OF ANIMAL-FREE MAKE-UP AND WHERE TO FIND IT

There are over half-a-million vegans in the UK and any one of them will tell you that veganism is not just a diet, it's a lifestyle. But while it's easy to eschew meat and dairy in your meals and choose synthetic clothing fabric, finding beauty and make-up options that contain zero animal products can be a lot more complicated.

One reason it's difficult to know what you're buying is because language used on ingredients lists can be vague and misleading, so it's important to know the lingo. For starters, 'cruelty-free' usually means the cosmetics haven't been tested on animals – and is entirely different from animal-free (contains no animal products whatsoever).

Other words to look out for:

- **CARMINE** (AKA cochineal, crimson lake, natural red 4) – a colour created from crushing insects (think your favourite red lipstick)
- **BEESWAX** – found in lip balms and mascara
- **LANOLIN** – a grease extracted from animal wool
- **GUANINE** – fish scales that are used to create shimmer and shine

Another difficulty can be finding products that are effective and affordable, but with veganism being the fastest-growing lifestyle movement in the country (there are three-and-a-half times more vegans than there were in 2006) it appears that beauty brands are finally listening.

Barry M, for example, is one of the best-value make-up lines on the high street and plenty of its products (not all) are vegan, while Superdrug's B line is entirely vegan.

Some high-end brands have upped their game too and companies like Kat Von D, Illamasqua and Charlotte Tilbury all have products that are both cruelty-free and vegan – meaning you can look like a fox without wearing anything that's ever harmed one.





Just FOR MEN

FELLAS, DON'T ENDURE RAZOR BURN AND BLOCKED PORES.

Here's our guide to protecting your complexion the macho way...

✔ **DO buy a decent cleanser**

If you've been washing your face with regular soap and water, you might be surprised by how much more refreshed your skin feels with a proper cleanser. It doesn't have to be expensive, just face specific.

✔ **DO use aftershave**

It smells good, makes you feel good, and closes pores after a shave, though go for one without alcohol as this is less dehydrating.

✔ **DO buy a moisturiser**

If your skin is oily pick a water-based lotion, or if normal/dry, try an oil-based one. But whatever you do, DON'T skip this step.

✔ **DO stay hydrated**

Help your pores from the inside by drinking plenty of water.

✘ **DON'T over-exfoliate**

If your skin feels flaky and irritated the worst thing you can do is scrub it as this will damage its natural barrier, thus exacerbating the problem. Instead, choose a cleanser that contains glycolic acid and never exfoliate more than once or twice a week.

✘ **DON'T buy cheap razors**

Cheap razors are very bad, and surprisingly, expensive ones with numerous blades aren't great either as they will leave you more vulnerable to ingrown hairs and razor burn. Instead invest in a decent safety razor, the blades for which are very affordable.

✘ **DON'T be put off by anti-ageing labels**

Dream of being a silver fox one day? Then it's never too early to protect your skin. Using a product with retinol – which boosts collagen and cell growth – as early as your twenties will prevent fine lines later.

✘ **DON'T bake in the sun**

Getting a daily dose of vitamin D is one thing; leaving your skin unprotected for hours, day after day in the scorching sun is quite another. Buy a moisturiser with SPF and you won't end up looking like old leather.

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HEALTH & FITNESS

Why obeying your circadian rhythm can drastically improve your overall health

If you're feeling constantly fatigued and under the weather, it may be time to start listening to your circadian rhythm. It's not some new style of dance music, or trendy workout style, but your internal body clock, otherwise known as your sleep/wake cycle.

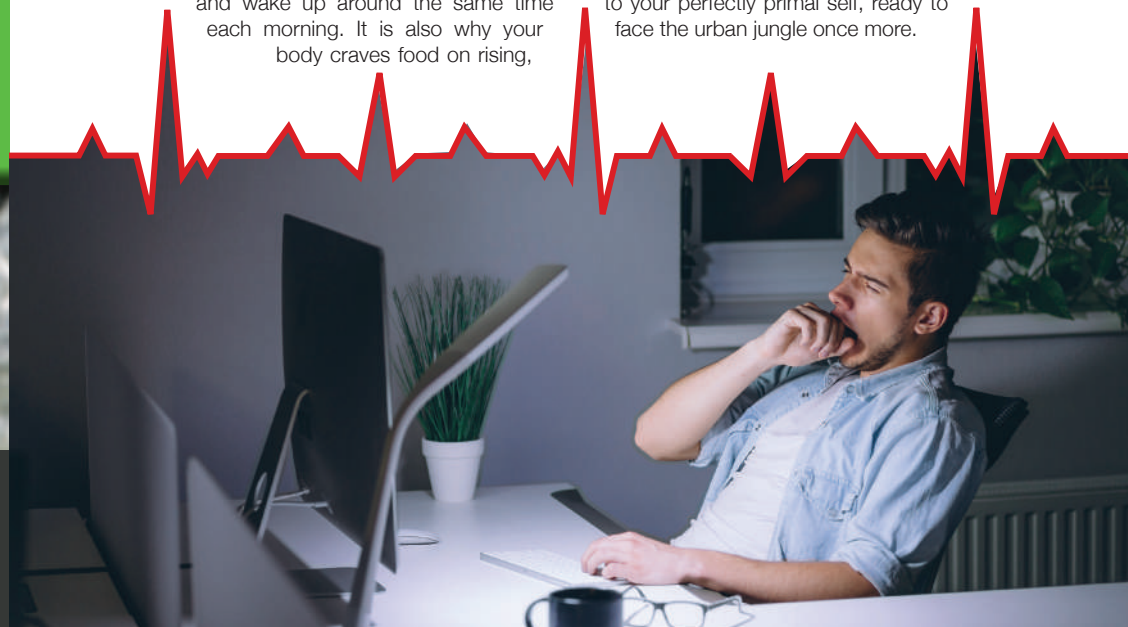
The problem is us humans are so used to dictating and controlling every area of our busy lives, we sometimes refuse to acknowledge that some things really are out of our grasp. A bit like that inability to resist delicious food which combines fat with sugar, or when mild stress triggers the full fight or flight response, our circadian rhythm is a primal and fundamental part of who we are, and ignoring it can lead to serious health problems.

It tells our bodies when to sleep, rise and eat. It is the reason you feel tired at the same time each night and wake up around the same time each morning. It is also why your body craves food on rising,

and also why you have that energy slump most afternoons after lunch. When we obey this clock we feel rested, content and tend not to overeat, but when we have too many late nights or disrupt the clock with artificial light (from mobile phones) it can spark a myriad of health issues from insomnia, diabetes, depression and even cardiovascular events.

So how do you reset a disrupted clock? Firstly, set yourself a bed and a wakeup time, don't sleep in, and don't nap during the day. Make sure your bedroom is dark in the evening and try to avoid phones and TVs before sleep. In winter months invest in a SAD alarm clock which emulates sunrise, plus limit your caffeine and alcohol intake as this can interrupt sleep patterns.

Within a few weeks you ought to be feeling back to your perfectly primal self, ready to face the urban jungle once more.





HEALTH & FITNESS

Spring IN YOUR STEP



If you've been feeling sluggish over the dark winter months, then now is the perfect time to get outside and rediscover your fitness, with the spring season promising to restore both body and mind.

TAKE A HIKE

Spring is a wonderful time to be surrounded by nature as life, both animal and plant, is born anew. If you're lucky enough to have access to woodlands or fields, hiking is a wonderful way to gently reinstate your fitness with little risk of injury, and equally, a brisk walk round your local park is just as beneficial to your body so long as you maintain a steady pace.

UPCYCLE

While the 'Beast from the East' was stalking the streets of Britain, the bus or train was arguably the safest and comfiest commute to work. But with the warmer weather blowing back in, the chance to hop on a bike is surely too good to refuse? Try it – it's invigorating, life-affirming and without the discomfort of other commuters' dubious personal hygiene.

SUPER CIRCUIT

If you're looking to get beach body ready, you'll be wanting to find a high-impact workout that will help you burn fat and build muscle, fast. Outdoor bootcamps are a fantastic way to maintain motivation, meet new friends and get results. Plus, they're usually far cheaper than a gym membership.

JOG ON

For those with a little more vigour to spare, try starting your day with a gentle jog. With less risk of slipping on ice or falling into gutters thanks to the early morning light, this a great opportunity to slowly rediscover your pace ahead of the summer.

JUST BREATHE

You don't have to break out in a sweat to do something really positive for your body, and if all you're looking for is a little peace and quiet, then meditating in nature is about as healing as it gets. All you need is a park bench or garden, and perhaps some chirping birds to provide the soundtrack.



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Roger Bannister... THE GOLDEN MILE

Following the death of Sir Roger Bannister at the age of 88, we remember a man who was not just a record breaker, but a remarkable human being, both on and off the track.

It was a momentous moment and occurred at Iffley Road sports ground in Oxford on May 6, 1954. Watched by 3,000 spectators, a young runner named Roger Bannister became the first man to run a mile in under four minutes. His time of 3mins 59secs was considered superhuman – and yet, as a record it stood for just 46 days. Regardless, following his death in March, it is undeniable that Britain has lost one of its greatest sporting icons.

London-born Bannister began running when he was 17, but only ever trained part-time, seeing it as a great way to unwind away from the demands of his medical studies at Oxford University. Despite that, he almost made it to the 1948 London Olympics, and did represent his nation in the 1952 games in Helsinki, where he set a new British record

in the 1,500m final.

In the same year he broke that four-minute barrier, Bannister retired from athletics to pursue a long and distinguished medical career as a neurologist, and between 1971 and 1974 was the chairman of the Sports Council where he developed the first test for anabolic steroids; and it was for this service that he was knighted in 1975.

In 2011, he was diagnosed with Parkinson's disease, saying that he saw a "gentle irony" in his contracting of the illness given his years treating neurological disorders in others.

Following his death, Lord Coe, president of the International Association of Athletics Federations (IAAF), paid tribute to the record breaker. "His achievement transcended sport, let alone athletics. It was a moment in history that lifted the heart of a nation and boosted morale in a world that was still at a low ebb after the war. We have all lost a giant," he concluded. And we have.

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FINALLY MAKES IT TO A BRITISH ROYAL COURT

Meghan Markle is the third American to attempt to join the Royal Family.

But she looks certain to succeed where the two others failed.

It is not that long ago that such a union between the fifth in line to the throne and a commoner, an actress and divorcee with African American heritage would have been unthinkable.

However in the last few decades, immigration has softened racist attitudes about the unsuitability of people from the fringes of the empire for marrying blue bloods.

Also in 2002 the Anglican Church ended restrictions on divorcees remarrying in the church.

But Americans Wallis Simpson and Koo Stark did not have the more enlightened days to help them in their quest to find love in the Royal Family.

Wallis, like Meghan, was a divorcee, and her marriage in 1937 to Edward VIII caused him to abdicate and brought the Royal Family to one of the biggest crises in its history.

It also paved the way for the reign of our present Queen through her father Albert – George VI-, Edward's brother.

Koo, like Meghan, was an actress and for two years she dated Harry's uncle Prince Andrew in the early '80s. Their friendship floundered after the revelation of a naked shower scene in a 1976 art house film *Emily*.

This, coupled with pressure on Andrew and Koo by press, paparazzi and the Palace, contributed to the split.

In 1988 Koo said: "The amount of attention and pressure on me became unbearable. It was a nightmare."

Their romance ended in 1983. Stark went on to marry Tim Jeffries in 1984, and Andrew married Sarah Ferguson in 1986. Neither marriage lasted.

In contrast Meghan has been warmly welcomed into the Royal Family.

Social media has been super excited that #blackgirlmagic is coming to the Royal Family.

But the biracial American actress is actually pretty magical in other ways, too.

The 36-year-old seems to be more than fulfilling what fans want from a novice royal in a fairytale royal romance. It also helps that she is smart, beautiful and passionate about humanitarian efforts around the world.

Photo credit: www.vogue.co.uk

Queen George Duke
Princess HRH

THE ROYAL NAME Swapping game

It is a complicated business when it comes to names – especially if you are royal.

And it is something that new bride to be Meghan Markle will have to understand.

Like Prince William's wife Catherine, Meghan, 36, will not be a real princess, as women who are not of royal birth can hold that title.

Her official title will be Princess Henry of Wales, just as Catherine is Princess William of Wales.

Catherine was listed as "princess of the United Kingdom" in the occupation box of Prince's George's birth certificate because of her official title.

The Queen is expected to make Harry and Meghan the Duke and Duchess of Sussex as a wedding present, so she will then become Meghan, Duchess of Sussex, as well.

On the point of princesses, Princess Diana was also not a princess although she was commonly known as one.

On her marriage she became simply The Princess of Wales, as there can only ever be one Prince of Wales. On her divorce when she lost her HRH status she was just Diana, Princess of Wales. The very important word THE, with a capital T had also been removed.

Though most monarchs of the United Kingdom have used their first baptismal name as their reign name, on three occasions monarchs have chosen a different name.

First, Queen Victoria had been christened Alexandrina Victoria, but took the throne under the name Victoria.

When Victoria's son, Prince Albert Edward, became king in 1901, he took the reign name Edward VII, as Victoria had made it known that she never wanted any king to rule as Albert so as not to eclipse her Albert. Edward therefore chose to use one of his other names.

In 1936, after the abdication crisis, Prince Albert, Duke of York, assumed the throne as King George VI rather than "King Albert" for the same reason.

Prince Charles may elect not to be known as "Charles III" out of concern about comparisons with Charles II of England (who was known as a playboy), Charles I of England (who was executed after the English Civil War) and the Jacobite memory of the "Young Pretender" Charles Edward Stuart (who claimed the title "Charles III").

He may instead choose George VII in honour of his grandfather.

Prince Victoria Edward
Duchess



Free EDUCATION FOR ALL?

Jeremy Corbyn's Labour Party is the latest to float the idea of scrapping university fees in England. But is free education a viable economic option, or just a perennial political pipe dream?

It's an issue that often makes or breaks politicians - whether or not the idea of free university education is economically possible. Since the tuition fees of £9,000 a year appeared in 2012, the debate over free education has intensified. With some universities now charging £9,250 across 12 months, with a 6 per cent interest rate on loans also applicable, more and more students are emerging from university with crippling debts that they may never shake.

This is one of the many reasons why Jeremy Corbyn's Labour has made the announcement to scrap tuition fees if they get into power - but is it really that simple? The idea of free education undoubtedly carries an almost universal appeal among younger voters especially, but the abolition of university fees would realistically lead to there being a need for money coming in from elsewhere to make up that gap.

The benefits of more people going to university, most argue, lie in the fact more graduates create a better skilled workforce and higher education would be available and affordable to everyone regardless of economic or social background. But figures show that the introduction of £9,000 fees didn't have a negative effect on poorer school-leavers attending university.

Some countries in Europe already offer students a free education. Scottish students, for example, get free university tuition if they study in the country. It is also available to all students in Norway regardless of study level or nationality, international students in France and students in Austria.

Essentially, whilst free education is a political masterstroke in terms of its appeal, the recent history of the Liberal Democrats should act as a warning for any party willing to stake its reputation on this policy. Viable alternatives, such as a scrapping of interest owed, or the better promotion of vocational training, may, in the long run, ease the financial burden on graduates and still keep skilled workers available.



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KIDS



The Sleep Treat

How to maximise your children's (and, subsequently, your own) sleep time, no matter what their age.

We know all too well the benefits of a good night's sleep, yet when parenthood comes along there is an acceptance that it's one of the first things to fall by the wayside... followed closely by the sports car and the social life. Yet maximising sleep as a parent of any age isn't just good for mums and dads – it's brilliant for kids too. And having a household where there's not a single family member clawing for the coffee or at the lid of the sweet jar is something we can all achieve by following a few key steps.

1. Regular as clockwork

Scientists have proven that kids love regularity and repetition – it's really good for them. And sleep should be the very first exemplar of that, with set bed times only altered by the occasional treat (perhaps an evening out or a movie night). Getting your kids into a routine means not disturbing your own.

2. You are what you eat

Consider what you feed your kids in the lead-up to bed time. Anything with sugar in should be avoided,

while fizzy drinks are a similar recipe for instant insomnia.

3. Little screen, big trouble

TVs, tablets, phones and games, just like sweet treats, are brain stimulators, so expecting your child to switch off after a bout of LCD exposure is optimistic to say the least.

4. (Don't) let there be light

Dim lights, draw curtains and soften the mood in the lead-up to the bed time hour, creating a sleepy environment for all.

5. Ignorance is bliss

While ignoring kids who won't settle feels cruel, if you're constantly on call to cries from the cot or bedroom then they'll know they've got your number. The chances are a moaning child who claims they can't sleep will only complain for a short while before drifting off into a perfect slumber, allowing you to follow suit.



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MOTORING



PARKING MAD

HOW TO CHALLENGE PARKING TICKETS... AND WIN.

We've all been there. You've popped out for a loaf of bread and returned to your vehicle a few minutes later only to find a parking ticket slapped on the windscreen. That's a £50 sourdough you're not going to get back.

to buy a ticket - that means a working machine in easy reach or alternative payment service, such as the 'Pay by Phone' facility. No way to pay? No ticket.

Or are you?

These days, council parking is regulated to the hilt, and wardens must abide by strict criteria if they are to make your parking ticket stick... literally. So before you begrudgingly pull out that debit card, take a look at this quick guide to see if you've got grounds to challenge the fine:

3 LINEAGE AND SIGNAGE

Road markings must be solid with no breaks in the paint, and signs must be clearly displayed, clean and within readable distance of the vehicle. Even in these days of administrative red tape, most tickets are cancelled because councils constantly fail to adhere to their own regulations.

1 THE FIVE-MINUTE WINDOW

Unless you're on double yellows, attendants must observe your vehicle (standing next to it) for five minutes, and in some situations as many as 10, before issuing a ticket. Check they have done this by referring to the times on the ticket. If they haven't, it's invalid.

4 CONTRAVENTION CODES

Parking wardens must list a specific contravention code in relation to the parking infringement and this can be found on the ticket. Wrong code? You're off the hook.

2 'FAIR OPPORTUNITY'

The council must have given you a fair opportunity

In the UK last year around a quarter of tickets were disputed, and 40 per cent of those challenged were overturned. And while private car parking rules and regulations differ, visiting Citizens' Advice online is an excellent first stop for further information and guidance.



MIND THE GAP

Recent studies suggest that the pay gap between men and women is smaller than it's ever been. But is this an example of real, effective change, or do the seemingly positive statistics hide a need for further progression?

Last year, figures from the Office for National Statistics showed that the UK's gender wage gap had narrowed to a record low, with women earning 9.4 per cent less than men. Compared to figures in the seventies – where the pay gap stood at around the 45 per cent mark – this new number shows an improvement in the discrepancies between men and women's pay in the workplace. But is this enough?

Eyebrows were raised in July last year when the BBC published a list of its top-earning employees. Only one third of BBC employees earning over £150,000 a year were women, and the top seven places on the list were held exclusively by men. The highest-earning female, Claudia Winkleman, was paid between £450,000 and £499,000 a year – but that figure pales in comparison to top-earning employee (and man) Chris Evans' £2.2million-plus pay cheque.

GAP

Another problem with the latest ONS figures is the rate at which the gap has closed over the last five years. In 1997 the number stood at 17.4 per cent, but in 2012 it was down to 9.5 per cent, signalling just a measly 0.1 per cent decrease in the last half-decade.

In April last year, employers with more than 250 staff were required by law to collect data so they can publish their gender pay gap, gender bonus gap and the proportion of men and women in each of four pay segments.

The results must be published within 12 months on the employer's website and a government site. There are no rules about what bosses should do once they uncover pay gaps, but the new measures may mean employees have grounds to ask for a raise.

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JOB TITLE: Cleaner Wanted
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JOB DESCRIPTION:

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JOB TITLE:
LOCATION:
SALARY:

JOB DESCRIPTION:

JOB TITLE:

JOB TITLE: Trainee Mechanic
LOCATION: Chalfonts St Giles
SALARY: £8/hour to rise after training

JOB DESCRIPTION:

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COMING SOON

PUZZLES & TRIVIA

Answers can be found on the Contents Page 4

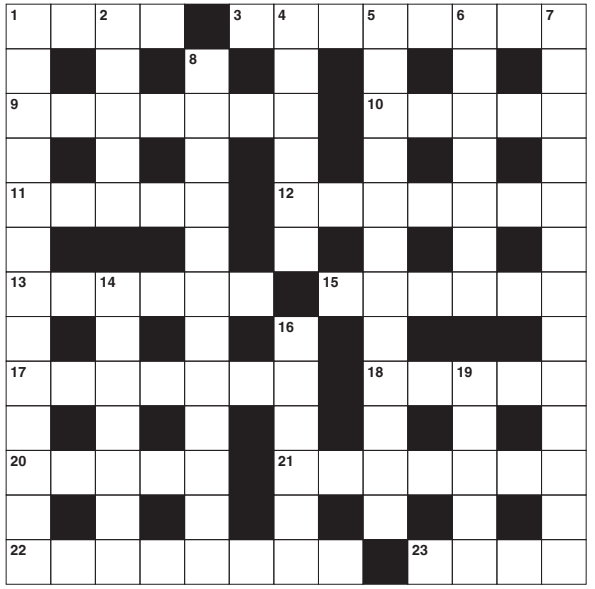
PUZZLES

ACROSS

1. Hang loosely (4)
3. Arguments (8)
9. Pertaining to marriage (7)
10. Condescend (5)
11. Church council (5)
12. Japanese dish of raw fish (7)
13. Regalia (6)
15. Fish with thick lips (6)
17. Funnel-shaped river mouth (7)
18. Suit (5)
20. Small arm of the sea (5)
21. Letter-for-letter; verbatim (7)
22. Dullness of colour (8)
23. Anxious; nervous (4)

DOWN

1. Having patience in spite of problems (4-9)
2. Attractive flower (5)
4. Except when (6)
5. Reallocate (12)
6. Draws forth (7)
7. Mawkishly (13)
8. School for young children (12)
16. Rides a bike (6)



14. ___ Portman: actress (7)
19. Unit of capacitance (5)

DID YOU KNOW

- ▶ A hard-boiled egg can spin – uncooked or soft boiled ones don't.
- ▶ Unless food is mixed with saliva you can't taste it.
- ▶ Honey is the only natural food that doesn't spoil.
- ▶ Flamingos can only eat when their heads are upside down.
- ▶ It takes between seven and 21 days to make a single jelly bean.
- ▶ It takes around 12 hours for your food to entirely digest.
- ▶ Cabbage is made up of 91 per cent water and cucumbers are 96 per cent
- ▶ Eggs contain all the vitamins except vitamin C and most of the vitamin C in fruits is found in its skin.
- ▶ Fresh apples float because they contain 25 per cent air.

SUDOKU

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	6						1	
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