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BEFORE



AFTER



AFTER



BEFORE



AFTER





Editor's notes...

MAY 2021



Nik Allen, Editor

Hello and welcome to this month's edition of **VISION** ChelmsfordBeaulieu. On April 9 we lost a true gentleman of this country. To me, the Duke of Edinburgh was a king in everything but name - a strong, brave, honest man who would shoot from the hip, press on with dignity and show character and personality in every one of his pursuits. No matter what you think of the royals, you have to respect that.

In the days that followed I was saddened by the barrage of complaints directed towards our media outlets - more than a hundred thousand complained to the BBC about its blanket coverage which

saw the usual schedule abandoned. You will never convince me that we don't have the ability to reach for the remote if there is something we don't want to watch, with the choice available to us nowadays. Did the Beeb go over the top? Possibly... it's become good at that recently. Did the Twitterati try to gatecrash Prince Philip's death by dragging out a crude selection of faux pas? Yes, sadly.

Does any of it matter? No. What counts for me is the fact that someone who devoted himself to this nation has gone. And more than that, the fact is we've lost another old-school warrior in a world increasingly overrun by woke. We need someone to step into Prince Philip's shoes... and quickly.

Nik Allen

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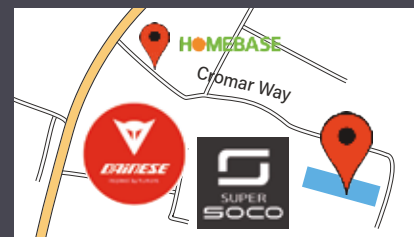
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WILLIAM & KATE:

Ten years on

Looking back to celebrate William and Kate as they reach the milestone of their 10th wedding anniversary.

When asked, Prince William and Kate Middleton, the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge, would doubtless suggest their first decade together as husband and wife has been wonderfully happy, uplifting and rewarding... albeit not without its challenges.

To most couples in the early throes of wedded bliss, the faint cry of babies and the bringing on of previously untapped levels of tiredness is a challenge enough. Yet it is to the couple's unending credit that they have never swayed away from their other royal duties, while having the ambition to pursue new challenges and initiatives. They are every bit the exemplars of people wanting the best for themselves, their family and those around them.

In isolation, those challenges of early parenthood – when we saw the arrival of Prince George in 2013, Princess Charlotte two years later and, most recently, Prince Louis in 2018 – are considerable, yet in recent years family events have compounded further the complications of life. The Prince Harry and Meghan Markle spat, notably, has left a devastating scar across how we perceive the Royal Family; then there's been the controversy of Prince Andrew and his links to Jeffrey Epstein; while the recent passing of William's grandfather, Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh, has further shrouded the institution at a time when the rest of the nation is finally managing to pull away from the darkness.

Regardless, the April 29, 2021, anniversary reaffirms the couple as a modern inspiration. The ceremony, 10 years ago, was a typically lavish affair, albeit laced with the style and individuality that William and Kate have wanted to imprint in the way they go about their duties.

Former Archbishop of Canterbury Rowan Williams conducted the ceremony, as 26 million UK viewers watched it live. The Royal Family and the Middletons picked up the bill for almost 2,000 guests, with 300 special invitees going on to an evening dinner hosted by Prince Charles.

Naturally, the day went off without issue, and their work as a couple was only just beginning. Few would disagree now that, during an era when criticism of the royals has been fervent, William and Kate uphold the value and purpose of the Royal Family, even if others in the clan are less proactive.

Over the past decade, the prince has committed huge amounts of time to mental health issues, as well as opening up to a more mainstream audience with his love of sport; while the Duchess of Cambridge's elegant embracing of the mum role model is notable for the familiarity it has with Princess Diana and her boys.

More than anything else, William and Kate speak to the world with the shutters up. Rarely have a royal couple been so close to the people, with honesty, humility and even the ability to laugh at themselves.

It gives all of us hope that not only will the Windsors overcome this recent spate of negative events but, more than that, with William and Kate excellent exemplars, the institution of marriage – itself in decline – once again has those to uphold its values.

"We have always loved being married," says William. "I think we are more in love now than before, and we both truly feel we have found a soulmate who will be there forever."

BETTER THAN *Just O-kay*

Vernon Kay and 25 years on camera

There's something unmistakable about people from Bolton – think Peter Kay, Paddy McGuinness, Amir Khan. Perhaps it's the accent, perhaps the exuding of confidence, or maybe it's just an ability to look on life with uplifted energy.

Whatever the mechanics are, Vernon Kay, like so many of his Greater Manchester contemporaries, has them in abundance.

The husband of Tess Daly, Kay has just celebrated 25 years on screen – no mean feat for someone once described in the Nineties by Mark Lamarr as “a lanky indie kid with bad taste in clothes”.

That's ironic, given that Kay was actually first spotted at Clothes Show Live when he agreed to strut some clothes in return for free drinks. He went on to model for several years before using the catwalk as a platform to launch a TV career.

One of the many to emerge through the T4 stable, he has gone on to present *All Star Family Fortunes*, *Beat the Star* and *Splash!*, among others. Yet it was his appearance in *I'm a Celebrity... Get Me Out of Here* last year that truly reacquainted the watching public with someone who has also spread his talent across radio DJing (notably on Radio 1) and even movie cameos (in *Shaun of the Dead* and *Keith Lemon: The Film*).

A father of two, Kay famously talks down his talents, but has become one of terrestrial TV's go-to faces. Most recently, his *Game of Talents* show has allowed him to rediscover some of the spontaneity so associated with those T4 days.

“A lot of entertainment is very sanitised these days and I want to bring energy and unpredictability back to it,” says Kay, who said recently he blames the sterility of autocue for ruining so much live programming.

“Having fun is difficult when you're reading words off a script, so I'd love us to get back to really immersive TV that throws off the shackles.”

The shackles are off, Vernon.

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HOME & DIY

HOW TO CLEAN YOUR Curtains

Did you know that you should be cleaning your curtains at least once a year and preferably once every three to six months? Although this may not sound like a lot, can you honestly remember the last time you gave yours a good wash? If not, don't worry. Discover below how to clean your curtains in five simple steps.

STEP ONE: Remove all the hooks and curtain weights and loosen the heading tape. If you are worried about the fabric shrinking, you may want to let down the hem. Take outside and shake well to remove any dust.

STEP TWO: Check the washing label of your curtains to see if they are machine washable. If they are made using a lightweight fabric such as cotton, they probably are. However, if they are large and heavy you may want to have them dry cleaned or wash them by hand. This is also the case for curtains made from velvet, wool, silk or chenille.

STEP THREE: If machine washable, place your curtains in your washing machine and add your usual detergent. Set the machine to either a "delicates" cycle or a cool wash with a slow spin to avoid damage.

STEP FOUR: If you want to iron your curtains, you should do this while they are still damp. Work lengthways, on the wrong side, stretching the fabric gently to prevent seams from puckering. If not, simply hang to dry either outside if the weather permits or inside until they are at least 95 per cent dry. Do not rub or wring out your curtains.

STEP FIVE: Thoroughly dust and clean your curtain tracks, windows and sills before hanging your clean curtains back up. You should also try to incorporate a weekly curtain vacuum into your cleaning schedule to keep them in tip-top condition for longer.

NEXT MONTH WE'LL TELL YOU HOW TO CLEAN YOUR BLINDS



5 alternative uses for nail polish remover

Did you know that nail polish remover is not just for nails? Oh no, it can be used for a whole myriad of other purposes around the home.

1. To shine your shoes

Although you may be wary about using acetone on your prized shoe collection, as long as you only use it on patent shoes, you are completely safe. Simply dip a piece of kitchen towel in nail polish remover and gently buff to remove unsightly scuff marks.

2. To clean your china

If you are an avid tea drinker, your china may be prone to the odd mark or two. Remedy this by scrubbing these stubborn stains with a cotton bud soaked in nail polish remover. Wash as normal before using.

3. To remove paint from your windows

Painting your windows can inject a new lease of life into the interior and exterior of your home. However, flicks of paint on your glass are a hazard of the job. Remove any wayward paint by applying acetone, letting it settle for five minutes and then rubbing away with a damp cloth.

4. To dissolve superglue

Got a bit overenthusiastic with the superglue? Don't stress. Nail polish remover will quickly and easily unglue your hands or unclog the cap of your glue. Just apply to the affected area for instant results.

5. To get rid of ink stains

Whether you have spilt ink on your fabric sofa or your child has come home from school with their shirt covered in pen marks, acetone will save the day. Mix one part nail polish remover with two parts water and dab at the stain with a soft cloth.

Other uses:

- > To sanitise your beauty tools.
- > To clean blades – dip a cotton bud in the remover, apply and rinse with soap and water.
- > To smooth minor watch scratches – drop a tiny amount onto a cloth and gently buff affected area.

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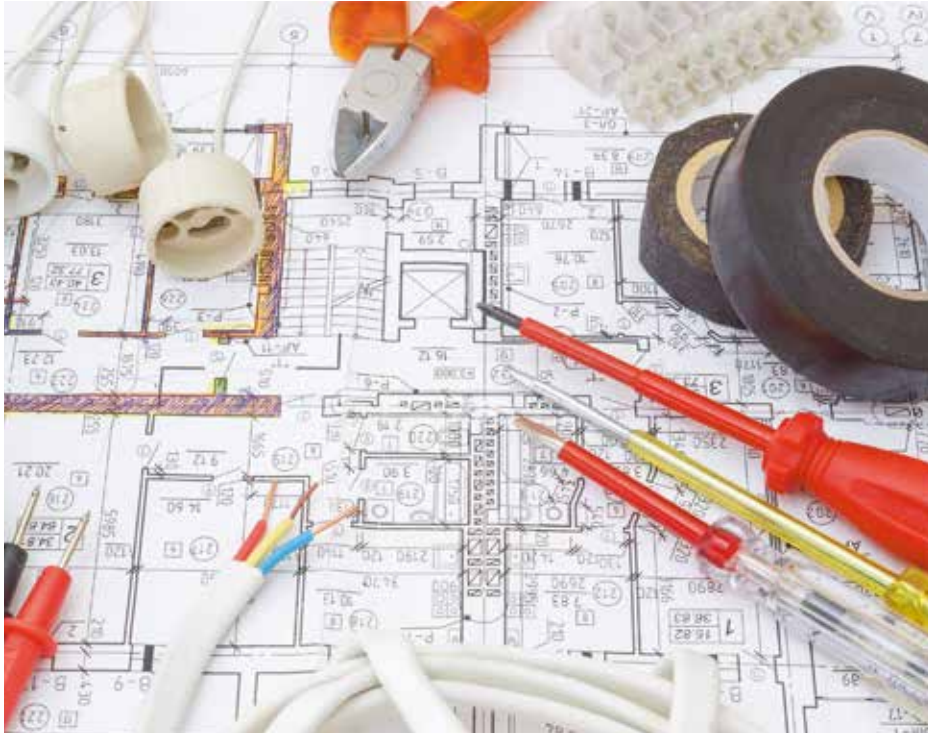
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WHY BUY A beanbag?



HOME & DIY

If you are wanting to update the furniture in your home without breaking the bank, you may want to consider investing in bean bag furniture. Synonymous with comfort and cosiness, the benefits of bean bags are numerous.

1. LOOKS STYLISH

Furniture for your home needs to look the part as well as feel it. Luckily, bean bags come in a wide variety of colours and designs, meaning you are guaranteed to be able to find one that complements your home's interior. Plus, you can accessorise your bag with cushions and throws in the same way you would a sofa.

2. OFFERS PORTABILITY

If you have a small home or limited space in your living room, a bean bag is a great option as it can be moved from one room to another with ease, owing to its lightweight nature. It can also be stored away when not in use.

3. EASY TO MAINTAIN

Bean bags come in a wide variety of different fabrics, meaning you can pick the perfect one for

your needs. Choose from faux leather that is super-easy to clean, cotton that is long-lasting, and even waterproof and UV resistant material for outdoor use.

4. SAVES YOU MONEY

Even with the seemingly never-ending furniture shop sales, it is still expensive to buy a new three-piece suite for your home, with prices potentially running into the thousands. Fortunately, bean bag furniture is extremely cost efficient and you can choose from single chairs, loungers, three-seaters and more.

5. IMPROVES YOUR HEALTH

If you suffer with either muscle or joint pain, then bean bag chairs can help you by moulding to your individual shape and offering optimal support. They can also help to relieve tension headaches and correct poor posture.



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INVINCIBLE houseplants



HOME & DIY

If you are looking for a hassle-free houseplant, either for yourself or as a gift for a friend, we have got you covered. Discover the below five houseplants that are virtually indestructible, even for those with a history of plant abuse.

1

1. DEVIL'S IVY

Incredibly popular, this hardy houseplant is stunning to look at with its unmistakable marbled leaves, and it has the added advantage of not needing much water or light. A great choice for popping on a bookshelf to brighten up your next Zoom meeting, but make sure you keep it away from children and pets as all parts are toxic.

2

2. SNAKE PLANT

Also known as mother-in-law's tongue, this houseplant is incredibly forgiving and therefore ideal for beginners. In the wild, snake plants can go a long time without seeing rain so they do not need frequent watering. Available in a range of different sizes, choose to place one on your home office desk or in a more impactful position in the hallway.

3

3. CAST IRON PLANT

This aptly named houseplant thrives on neglect and can even be grown in the dark, making it an excellent choice for rooms that do not provide much natural light. Recognisable by its deep-green glossy leaves, unfortunately, when grown indoors, you are unlikely to see its creamy purple flowers.

4

4. ZZ PLANT

The ZZ plant, or zamioculcas, is used to putting up with long periods of drought and can therefore survive if given to a frequent forgetful waterer. A graceful and elegant plant, place in a white-walled room for maximum impact.

5

5. CORN PLANT

If you are after a commanding but undemanding houseplant, then look no further. The corn plant, aka dracaena fragrans, grows tall and strong, even without your help, and may even deliver small, white flowers.





TECHNOLOGY

SMART savings

As well as offering convenience, did you know that smart technology can actively help you to save money?

Check out the best budget-busting smart gadgets for your home below.

BLINK – The Mortgage Magnet

Launched this spring, Blink is a free fridge magnet that flashes to let you know about better mortgage deals. Simply sign up to Dashly, a mortgage comparison site with a difference, and your new magnet will alert you when a better deal becomes available.

Possible savings: £2,620 per year

LEAKBOT – The Leak Detector

Did you know that one in three households experiences a leak each year? Avoid this costly occurrence by investing in a LeakBot, a handy device that clips to your mains water supply pipe and detects leaks. If you have insurance with Neos, Aviva or Legal & General, you can get a LeakBot for free. Retail price of £149.

Potential savings: £633 per detected leak

HYDRAO – The Water-Saving Shower Head

If you love a long shower but don't like the high water bills that come with one, the Hydrao shower head is the smart gadget for you. Using water more economically than a standard shower head and with a light that changes from green to red when you've used 50 litres of water, this device costs £62.

Potential savings: £135 per person per year

DRY:SOON – The Heated Aired

For those who rely heavily on their tumble dryer, this money-saving smart device is exactly what you need. Costing just 6p per hour to run, compared to 36p per hour for a tumble dryer, the Dry:Soon heated ainer has the ability to slash your drying costs. Retail price of £149.99.

Potential savings: £51 per year based on twice weekly usage

TAPO – The Smart Plug

Only £8.99 to buy, the Tapo plug allows you to remotely turn on and off appliances such as fans, electric heaters and dehumidifiers, saving you money and helping the environment.

Potential savings: £128 per year



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LOCAL NEWS

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LOCAL NEWS



Man sentenced for manslaughter of 47-year-old

A Chelmsford man has been sentenced to two years in prison after pleading guilty to manslaughter.

Callum Manning (pictured left), aged 30, of Berkley Drive, was sentenced at Chelmsford Crown Court this month.

In March, Manning admitted his role in the death of 47-year-old George Donald (pictured right) in Galleywood in 2019. He admitted pushing George, causing him to fall to the pavement, outside the Galleywood Social Club on November 3, 2019.

The men, who were known to each other, had been enjoying separate nights out prior to the assault.

When emergency services arrived at the scene, George had lost consciousness. He suffered a life-threatening head injury when he hit the pavement and died in hospital on February 23, 2020.

At the time of his death, George was described as a "funny, caring and decent" man by his loved ones.

Detective Inspector Greg Wood, Senior Investigating Officer, said: "I'd like this to be a stark warning for everyone: getting drunk, or being under the influence of other substances, is not an excuse for violence. No matter how small the action, it can change or end a life, and leave families broken forever."

Tree planted to honour Captain Sir Tom Moore



Staff at Broomfield Hospital in Chelmsford planted a cherry tree last month to remember Captain Sir Tom Moore on what would have been his 101st birthday.

Clare Panniker, the trust's chief executive, who was on tree-planting duties at Broomfield Hospital, said: "The planting of these trees at our main Broomfield, Southend and Basildon hospital sites is a lasting legacy to an incredible man."

The tree at Broomfield was planted in the newly opened garden of remembrance, which was created using monies from the Captain Sir Tom Moore fund, and provides a dedicated quiet space for staff to take a moment for themselves.



Residents donate blood plasma to help patients

People in Chelmsford began donating blood plasma for medicines for the first time in more than 20 years last month to help patients with rare immune diseases.

Plasma donated at the Chelmsford Plasma Donor Centre in Victoria House, Duke Street, will be used to make antibody-based medicines. These are used to treat people with weak immune systems and a variety of other disorders. The Chelmsford centre, along with 13 others across the country, will open for an initial period of three months.

A restriction on using plasma from UK donors was introduced in 1998 as a precautionary measure against Variant Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease, a type

of brain disease. This restriction was finally lifted in February 2021.

It is thought that more than 375 people donated plasma during the first two weeks at the Chelmsford centre. At the time of going to press, around 200 more people were already booked in.

Robert Garmey, Chelmsford Plasma Donor Centre manager, said: "Like blood donation, plasma donation will be altruistic and for the benefit of the NHS. We're asking people to please donate plasma for medicines. You will save and transform lives."

Donations will come from people on the NHS Blood and Transplant blood donor base, although open recruitment will be introduced at a later date.

Support for small businesses after lockdown

Chelmsford District Council has partnered with the Federation of Small Businesses (FSB) to help small businesses get back on their feet after a challenging year.

They are subsidising business memberships, meaning businesses could benefit from a year's FSB membership for free.

The scheme, which was announced last month, proved very popular, with the initial allocation of free memberships quickly snapped up.

As a result, Chelmsford City Council made the decision to provide an additional support boost, enabling more small businesses to access vital

support and advice.

Free memberships are available on a first come, first served basis and are available for Chelmsford businesses with fewer than 10 employees.

Nick Eveleigh, chief executive at Chelmsford City Council, said: "We have been overwhelmed by the positive response to the free membership scheme with the FSB.

"We are pleased to be in a position to extend this initiative to ensure that even more businesses can benefit from much-needed specialist advice and guidance."

To find out more, visit www.fsb.org.uk/join-us.html

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Fire crews tackle blaze at recycling building

LOCAL NEWS



Photo credit: Essex Fire

Firefighters were called to a fire in a metal recycling building on Robjohns Road in Chelmsford on the morning of Tuesday, May 11.

The fire service's control team took more than 15 calls about the incident, as the smoke could be seen from nearby main roads.

The building, which measures approximately 20m by 20m, contained over 10 tonnes of waste metal.

Local businesses were asked to ensure they kept their doors and windows closed as a result of smoke from the fire.

Fire crews tackled the fire using a number of hoses and the service's aerial ladder platform which is used to pour water on the fire from above.

The cause of the fire will be investigated.

At the time of the incident, a spokesperson for Essex Fire said: "Firefighters at the incident are asking all local businesses to keep their windows and doors shut as the fire is producing a lot of smoke."

"They are also urging people to avoid the area as Robjohns Road has been closed temporarily, which is causing a build-up of traffic in the area. Crews are expecting to be at the incident for most of the morning."

New luxury art gallery opens as COVID-19 restrictions ease

A new luxury art gallery owned by DeMontfort Fine Art, the UK's leading luxury art dealership, launched on Bond Street in Chelmsford last month.

The Clarendon Fine Art gallery sits alongside the existing prestigious Whitewall Galleries, which has been providing premium artwork to Essex's community for the past four years.

The new gallery in Essex aims to meet the demands of the high-end community and support the local retail landscape.

Vicky Ford, MP for Chelmsford, said: "The gallery brings elegance and creativity to our doorstep,

proving you don't need to travel into London to discover phenomenal artists and artwork. It's been a challenging time for all businesses this last year. With retail restrictions beginning to lift, it's hugely encouraging to see this gallery launch. It is an indication that Chelmsford is going to build back even better for business."

Helen Swaby, CEO at DeMontfort Fine Art, said: "We're delighted to be opening a sister gallery in the city centre of Essex which will provide a new and exciting portfolio of modern and contemporary masters of the 20th and 21st centuries, including street and pop art, together with more classically inspired works."

The Bond Street gallery is open to the public seven days a week, 9.30am-5.30pm Monday to Saturday and 10am-4pm on Sunday.

Police warn against drink driving after two crashes

Police in Chelmsford are urging people not to drink and drive after officers were called to two crashes in one day last month.

Officers attended a crash involving multiple vehicles on Broomfield Road on Saturday, April 24. Emergency services safely removed the drivers from the vehicles and treated them for their injuries.

No one was seriously injured and the road was closed for several hours.

One driver was arrested at the scene for drink/drug offences.

On the same day, police were called to an incident where a vehicle had ended up in a river. Empty beer bottles were discovered on the vehicle's back seats.

Following the crashes, police issued a warning about drink driving.

It read: "We all enjoy socialising and maybe having a drink, especially as we start returning to normality. But please do not drink and drive. The consequences far outweigh the benefits."



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VICKY FORD MP

Member of Parliament for Chelmsford

LOCAL NEWS

It has been good to be out and about talking to Chelmsford residents all across the city. Moods are lifting as we move along the roadmap to recovery. The vaccination programme is a momentous national achievement and a crucial part of returning to normality. We have almost become used to the enormous vaccination figures – more than 50 million vaccinations have now been given in the UK. Thank you to all those who are working so hard on the vaccine roll-out.

A new term of Parliament has started with the Queen's Speech. A huge amount was accomplished in the last term, some of which gets reported in the press, but other things often don't. There are new trade deals worth around £900billion and new laws that introduce longer sentences for terrorists and for

abuse of animals. There are new protections for our soldiers, further action being taken to tackle money laundering and stronger powers to restrict potentially hostile foreign direct investment. We also passed the landmark Domestic Abuse Bill, which will make such a difference to victims and their children. Backbench bills also passed with government support, including one to reduce the cost of school uniforms and another to protect children from getting inappropriate cosmetic procedures, such as Botox.

It has been good to see some new businesses arrive in Chelmsford, and the cafes, bars and restaurants have clearly put huge work into COVID-secure preparations. Please do support our high street and local businesses at this time.

Charity plans move to new building

A charity supporting homeless and vulnerable people is moving to a new building.

Sanctus has been operating since 2012 and supports an evolving client base of 250 people by providing free food, drink and essential items to those in need. After the pandemic stretched its services, the charity will move to a new building three times the size of its current premises.

A spokesman said the move will allow the charity to provide in-house services to help those suffering from social isolation, mental health issues and domestic abuse.

He added: "This is a massive challenge for us, but only by taking on the pandemic head on can we be part of the solutions that are so desperately needed. Thanks to supporters, we have secured the lease and the refurbishment is under way. We are aiming to open to the public in early summer 2021, but there is still a lot to do to get us ready for this move.

"The new building allows us to be more creative with the services we offer. More recently we have had families come to our door and ask for food for their children. No one is turned away from Sanctus. In response to this new need, the move allows us to begin exploring how we can feed and support other vulnerable groups."

A crowdfunding campaign has been launched to support the refurbishment. To donate, go to www.justgiving.com/campaign/ANewHomeForSanctus



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Could you join cathedral's cycle relay challenge?



Chelmsford Cathedral is one of 42 cathedrals across the country looking for cyclists to take part in a unique challenge.

The Relay Challenge will see cyclists carry an Olympic-style baton between 42 cathedrals in 42 days. The event starts at England's most northerly cathedral, Newcastle, on May 30, with the leg from Chelmsford Cathedral to St Albans Cathedral taking place on Sunday, June 13.

Chelmsford Cathedral is looking for cyclists to carry or accompany the baton for all or part of the 48-mile journey to St Albans. The route follows existing cycle trails or minor roads for much of the way.

This year, because of COVID-19 restrictions, participants are being asked to register in advance for the relay.

To register interest in taking part, contact Caroline at Chelmsford Cathedral at treasurer@chelmsfordcathedral.org.uk

Drug dealer jailed for almost four years after crackdown

A drug dealer from Chelmsford has been jailed for nearly four years after a crackdown on the sale of class A drugs across the city.

Asadollah Zare, aged 44, of no fixed address, was arrested on November 30 last year as part of an investigation targeting the sale of crack cocaine and heroin in north Essex.

Zare was arrested in New Street. He was found to be in possession of 50 wraps of cocaine and 17 wraps of heroin.

Officers also discovered a mobile phone on which they found messages indicating that Zare was selling drugs.

He was charged at Chelmsford Crown Court on March 26 with being concerned in the supply of

class A drugs. He pleaded guilty and was jailed for three years and nine months.

Detective Inspector Neal Miller, from the Serious Violence Unit, said: "Drugs ruin lives and cause misery. We know that violent crime goes hand in hand with the sale of drugs and it is the most vulnerable people who are preyed upon."

"Asadollah Zare was involved in selling crack cocaine and heroin, benefiting from poisoning our communities. Such was the evidence against him, he had no option but to admit his guilt and he now faces the foreseeable future behind bars."

Police issue warning after large car-cruising event

One person has been arrested and 22 people were given tickets following a large car meet in Chelmsford.

Police became aware of a group of up to 450 cars congregating in the Sainsbury's car park in Chelmsford on April 4, before moving to The Manorway in Thurrock.

Officers attended each location to split up the group. The cars left Essex at around 11.50pm.

When they tried to return in the early hours of the next morning to another site in Chelmsford, officers dispersed them.

In total, one person was arrested and 22 were given tickets for offences such as speeding and careless driving.

A number of other people received formal warnings.

Chief Inspector Richard Melton, District Commander for Thurrock, said: "These events do pose a danger to the public as there is often anti-social and dangerous driving."

"The sheer number of vehicles involved posed a challenge to our officers, but we had additional resources available to deal with it and were able to do so without anyone being injured."





LOCAL NEWS

Drink driving pair arrested after accident



Photo credit: Essex Police

Two suspected drink drivers were arrested near Chelmsford last month after a Porsche ended up submerged in a pond, while a Mercedes was found in a ditch less than a mile away.

The accidents took place on Littley Green Road, Howe Street, just before 11pm on April 12.

Arriving at the scene, police arrested the driver of the submerged Porsche on suspicion of drink driving. The driver of the Mercedes found in a ditch was also arrested on suspicion of drink driving.

Posting about the incident on social media, police said it appeared the two men knew each other and had been driving together before the accidents.

Essex Police confirmed two 22-year-old men had been arrested and released under investigation.

Broken cigarette lighter causes house fire

The fire service has issued smoking safety advice after a broken cigarette lighter caused a bedroom fire in Chelmsford last month.

Crews attended a fire on Bodmin Road at around 2.40pm on April 8, after residents heard smoke alarms going off and quickly exited the property.

When crews arrived, they found a smoke-logged bedroom. They worked quickly and extinguished the fire by 3.21pm.

The fire was caused by a broken cigarette lighter setting fire to the bedding.

Paul Mayes, from Chelmsford Fire Station, said: "If you are a smoker or you know someone who smokes, we would advise you not to smoke in the bedroom. Ensure your lighters are in a good condition and do not leave them unattended after use.

"We'd also like to highlight the importance of having working smoke alarms. The smoke alarms alerted the residents very quickly to this fire, which meant they called us quickly and we could put it out before it spread."

Pair sentenced over illegal £12,000 treasure find

A couple who found nearly 1,000 Iron Age gold coins near Chelmsford and failed to declare their discovery have appeared in court.

Shane Wood, 62, of West Hanningfield Road, Chelmsford, and his partner, Kim Holman, 61, of Chadwell Heath, appeared at Chelmsford Magistrates' Court last month.

Wood found the 2,000-year-old coins while out for a walk in Great Baddow in September last year. He recovered the hoard over several days through illegal metal-detecting.

Wood handed the coins over to the landowner on September 30, who, in turn, gave them to the correct authorities.

Officers became aware that Wood had kept some of the coins for himself when he gave an account of his discovery in a magazine. The missing 23 coins were found at Wood's home and were deemed to be worth up to £12,350.

A coin kept by Holman was valued at £300.

The pair both pleaded guilty to finding an object believed to be treasure and failing to notify the coroner. Wood also pleaded guilty to theft by finding.

Wood was sentenced to an 18-month community order with 200 hours of unpaid work and was fined £200. The court also ordered his metal detector to be destroyed.

Holman was fined £299 for her part in the crime.

Police Constable Andrew Long, Essex Police's Rural and Heritage Crime Officer, said: "This type of offence steals not only from the landowner, but also from the nation by stealing our history."





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

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

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

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A PRINCE *among men*

CELEBRATING THE LIFE OF HRH PRINCE PHILIP, DUKE OF EDINBURGH

Meticulous, measured, majestic and more than a little eccentric... and that was just the funeral procession – HRH Prince Philip departed these strange shores just two months short of his 100th birthday, leaving behind a partner so hopelessly and publicly bereaved, and a nation of admirers wondering who could live up to the Duke of Edinburgh's lofty lovability.

Rarely is someone's passing met with almost universal solemnity and respect. It appears we all admired Prince Philip for different reasons – his faithful devotion to Queen Elizabeth II; his stolid determination to affect positive change; his humorous tendency to stray over the boundary of political correctness; or perhaps simply because he embodied so wholly that 'grandad' figure. Whatever it is, whatever it was, he had it, and in the stuffy silliness of modern media, he was exactly the antidote so many of us needed.

On Saturday, April 17, Prince Philip was laid to rest. In a ceremony he planned and choreographed himself, his coffin was lifted onto the back of a modified Land Rover Defender. Decorated in a stunning matt



Photo credit: Tim Rooke/Shutterstock

bottle green, the hearse was Philip's own creation, while various other touches clearly bore the mark of a man who wanted to slip away with energetic, original reflections of life, not the formal bleakness of most ceremonies.

There was the empty seat on the carriage, decorated with his blanket, flat cap, whip, brown gloves and pot containing a sugar cube for the ponies; then his military cap and sword on a coffin adorned with the most beautiful personal standard flag which referenced his overseas roots, family name and Edinburgh Castle. Meanwhile, various other marine references were present during the ceremony, each a nod to his cherished naval career, which came to an end in 1951.

In truth, there was so much of this special life to be celebrated. He was born on June 10, 1921 in Corfu, his family holding both Greek and Danish royal heritage. Banished from their homeland, he spent parts of his early life in France and Germany before settling in Britain.

It wasn't an easy childhood – his mother was admitted to a psychiatric institution, and he was separated from his family after landing in the UK. He studied at Cheam School before relocating to Scotland. He served in the British Navy during the Second World War, despite members of his family effectively fighting for the opposition as part of the Axis.

He denounced his Greek and Danish titles and adopted the surname Mountbatten – from his mother's side – so he could marry Princess Elizabeth in 1947 at Westminster Abbey, eight years after they had first met.

He was doted on by his four children – Prince Charles, Princess Anne, Prince Andrew and Prince Edward (Prince Edward will now take his title) – and never wavered from his role as the Queen's consort... in fact, the longest in royal history. A passionate supporter of everything she did, he also undertook his own projects, notably the Duke of Edinburgh's Award which, to this day, continues to promote youth achievement across many different disciplines.

He enjoyed polo, boat racing, piloting aeroplanes, painting and antiques, and while deteriorating health in recent years proved concerning, it was supposed he had recovered from a recent stay at St Bartholomew's Hospital; yet he slipped away peacefully on April 9, 2021 at Windsor Castle.

In total, almost 14 million of us watched the Duke of Edinburgh's funeral, and even the staunchest anti-royal must have pitted the senior Windsors being forced to display their grief in public. Such are the realities of a state funeral, and so it is conditioned that the only follow-on from a life played out in the public eye is a memorial on the same terms.

Prince Philip was born of a different time and a different generation of royalty, yet he fit so wonderfully into modern-day society and brought joy to many.

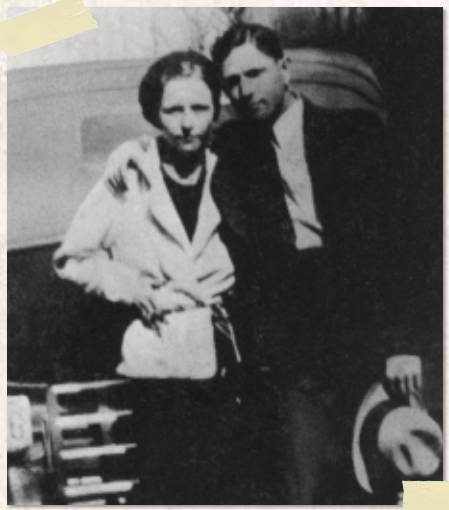
His unique, charismatic, eccentric take on the world is something we just don't see very often these days, with most public figures keeping their cards close to their chests for fear of repercussions.

His truly one-of-a-kind presence will be sorely missed by the Royal Family, the nation and the world.

★ THE STORY OF ★

BONNIE & CLYDE

Two destructive lives combine to fuel a potent love story



The glamorisation of Bonnie and Clyde in modern culture is certainly at odds with the murder and robbery spree that led to the FBI pursuing them and, ultimately, effecting their fatal end in 1934.

Having first met four years earlier, Bonnie Parker and Clyde Champion Barrow had both already been on the wrong side of the law, and the signs were there of the peril they could cause to the unsuspecting, not least when Bonnie helped Clyde smuggle a gun into prison in 1930, when he was locked up for a robbery charge. He escaped but was recaptured, yet remarkably was released just 18 months later.

Their crime spree began in earnest in 1932. Joined by three other criminals, they undertook a number of robberies, escaping capture by any means possible. Indeed, by the time their criminal lives were brought to a halt, it's said they had murdered at least 13 people.

As well as seeking financial gains, the couple sought to break convicts out of jail, notably cohort Raymond Hamilton from Eastham State Prison Farm at Waldo, Texas, who was serving sentences totalling in excess of 200 years.

By the middle of April 1934, the FBI had traced the pair to a remote part of Louisiana following the couple's theft of a motor vehicle. Posters were distributed to police staff throughout various states and the hunt was on.

Intelligence suggested they were due to return to the location of a party that was held near Sailles in Louisiana two days previously. On May 23, 1934, officers from the county and neighbouring Texas converged to create an ambush on the side of a highway, concealing themselves in bushes. Bonnie and Clyde appeared in a motor car and, unable to turn and flee, were killed instantly as more than 100 shots rained through the front windscreen of the vehicle.

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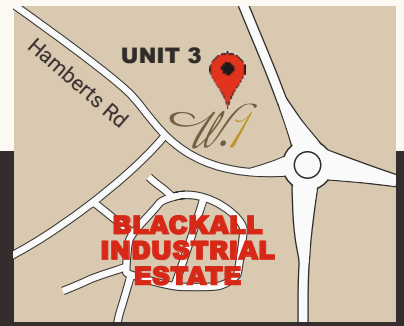
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GARDEN OF LIFE

MOISTURE *in the air*

In the final part of our series that shows how even the most urban garden can be a haven for the wonders of wildlife and the nurturing of nature, we look at the role of moisture in this wondrous ecosystem.

While we may bemoan the washing getting wet when we forget to bring it indoors, the cycle of moisture in our gardens is perhaps nature's greatest wonder of them all. Consider it – we've all gazed out across our lawns or poked around a plant on a window ledge and known that when nature either dries out or floods, the end is nigh.

On a local level, moisture in our plant soil is the difference between a flowering plant and a wilting one; or perhaps a ripe, juicy tomato and one that fails to develop.

On a national, mass-market scale then, getting the moisture content right means looking after the production of every variety of crop, for both human

and animal consumption.

And yet, controlling moisture goes far beyond even that, because the density of water in the soil is vital in regulating the exchange of water and heat energy between plants and the atmosphere, via evaporation. This leads to the production of weather patterns all across the world, and especially determines levels of precipitation.

Even on its way into the atmosphere, moisture is stabilising our climate, plus helping animal life that's dependent on perspiration to regulate internal body temperature – something that's key to survival.

It all adds up to the fact that the humble bit of soil around your petunias is, in the most minute of ways, contributing towards the maintenance and welfare of the flora and fauna and of people's lives in towns, villages and cities all across the world, whether their fear is flash floods, droughts or even potential starvation.



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MAY BIRTH FLOWER OF THE MONTH:

Lily



GARDENING

The May birth flower is the delicate and sweetly scented lily. Available in a wide range of vibrant colours, each shade conveys a different meaning. Planted as bulbs, lilies are perfect for containers and flower borders, making them a great choice for small and large gardens alike.

What does the lily symbolise?

As mentioned above, the lily holds many different meanings which are dependent upon its colour:

- > Pink lilies symbolise femininity and admiration
- > Red lilies represent love and passion
- > Orange lilies convey confidence and energy
- > Yellow lilies are used to say thank you
- > White lilies portray purity and rebirth

What does this birth flower say about you?

If your birth flower is the lily, you are said to be practical, with the ability to tackle even the most challenging situations. Contrary to the toxic lily flower, you are sweet, tender and with a huge capacity to love, meaning that others always feel safe in your company.

How to grow lilies

Lilies are planted as bulbs and are ideal for placing in containers or in sunny borders. There are two main types of lily that you can choose from: Oriental lilies and Asiatic lilies. The former give off an intense aroma and are large in stature, whereas the latter are available in a wide variety of vibrant colours but are sadly unscented. Lily bulbs thrive in moist, acid soils, so if placed in a container, be sure to add ericaceous compost.

Do lilies come back every year?

Lilies are perennial flowers which mean that they will return year after year. Requiring minimal care if planted correctly, make sure you do not overcrowd your bulbs and place in full sun where possible.





GUIDE TO GARDEN GAZEBOS



Thinking about putting up a gazebo in your garden? Before you rush to your nearest DIY store to buy one, there are several factors that you first need to consider.

1. SURFACE AREA

The surface area of a gazebo is determined by its length and width and needs to be calculated before you make a purchase. As well as working out how much space you have in your garden, you need to consider what equipment and furniture you intend to place under it. Typically, gazebos tend to be at least two metres wide, although you can find smaller ones for more compact gardens.

2. FRAME MATERIAL

There are several options to choose from for the main frame of your gazebo. These include:

- > Powder-coated steel. Fairly heavy and inexpensive.
- > Aluminium. Resistant to rust and lightweight.
- > Wrought iron. Strong and durable.
- > Resin. Very lightweight and good value for money.
- > Wood. Attractive and fairly long-lasting.

3. CANOPY MATERIAL

Gazebo canopies are typically made out of either polyethylene or polyester, with the former being the most commonly used material for budget gazebos. Polyester, on the other hand, is more expensive but offers superior quality and is less permeable. You may also wish to purchase gazebo curtains for even more protection against the elements, and these are available in the same materials as the canopy itself.

4. TYPES OF GAZEBO

There are several different types of gazebos that you can choose from, including:

- > Freestanding gazebo. These typically have a metal framework that is topped with a fabric canopy.
- > Lean-to gazebo. These require a wall to lean against for support and are popular on decking.
- > Pop-up gazebo. Ideal for temporary use, pop-ups tend to be more cost-effective and basic in their design.

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PUZZLES & TRIVIA

PUZZLES

Answers: see end of The Vision Listings

- ▶ QUACK
- ▶ QUALIFY
- ▶ QUALITY
- ▶ QUARREL
- ▶ QUARTER
- ▶ QUASH
- ▶ QUEEN
- ▶ QUEUE
- ▶ QUICHE
- ▶ QUICK
- ▶ QUIET
- ▶ QUINTUPLE
- ▶ QUIRK
- ▶ QUITE
- ▶ QUITTER
- ▶ QUIVER
- ▶ QUIZ
- ▶ QUORUM
- ▶ QUOTE
- ▶ QUOTIENT

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E	O	R	I	I	H	G	S	U	P	R	Q	Z	V	R
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U	A	I	Z	U	K	C	I	U	Q	Q	T	F	R	U
Q	L	U	P	Q	K	C	A	U	Q	K	A	E	R	A
R	I	Q	G	R	L	E	R	R	A	U	Q	I	R	P
P	F	K	Y	I	U	I	Y	T	I	L	A	U	Q	A
N	Y	I	W	F	S	S	P	S	O	Q	U	I	R	K
J	B	T	P	U	T	E	T	O	U	Q	C	J	W	S

DID YOU KNOW?

- ▶ Lots of plants are used as dyes. For example, teabags and stewed onion skins
- ▶ According to Guinness World Records, the tallest planted tree was a Eucalyptus regnans planted in Dunedin, New Zealand. It measured 82.25 metres on November 15, 2018
- ▶ Pollen from trees provides essential food for bees in the early spring
- ▶ Orange carrots were created by crossing various other colours of the vegetable
- ▶ Seeds can be dispersed in several ways. Some of the most common are the wind, water and animals
- ▶ The stem of a plant is used to transport water and nutrients to different areas
- ▶ Mushrooms have their own immune system

WORD LADDER

BACK
DOWN

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

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

DO NOT rearrange the order of the letters.

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

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TRAVEL



Brexit, travel and your

PASSPORT

ENSURING YOUR PASSPORT IS FIT FOR OVERSEAS TRAVEL IN 2021

We've become used to the uncertainty suffered from the drawn-out Brexit process and what our departure from the EU ultimately means for the UK; yet gradually the intricacies of us operating as an independent nation are becoming clear.

A hot topic has been the use of our passports when going abroad, although the intensity of this discussion has been held back by COVID-19 and a general inability to travel anywhere in the world.

In essence, there are two main points to take into consideration: from January 1, 2021, anyone leaving the UK needs to have six months left on their passport in order to be able to travel throughout Europe. Not only that, but your passport will need to be less than 10 years old.

The one exception here is when travelling to Ireland. Although this is still part of the EU, you

are able to use your passport any time up until its expiry date.

While these are the immediate changes when it comes to travelling to Europe, throughout 2021 we will continue to be issued with new blue passports. These are a throwback to the old-style British passports which were in use until 1988, before the burgundy EU passport came into play.

As far as visiting EU countries goes, no visas are required when travelling to mainland Europe, and stays are permitted for 90 days in any 180-day period. Again, there are some exceptions – when travelling to Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus and Romania, for instance – so it's best to check the finer details on the Foreign Office portal of the gov.uk website to ensure your deserved holiday doesn't come unstuck before you've even made it to the aircraft.

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I am delighted to share unbiased reviews from those who have travelled with Never A Wasted Journey for your reference and possible inspirations...

Richard Rawson - Singer/songwriter/producer (Formally known as Fazer from the multi award winning band N-Dubz) and partner Ashley Emma - Model/TV Presenter.

"WOW... this happened... I proposed to the woman of my dreams. We had an amazing night and thank you to Never A Wasted Journey for arranging all of our travel arrangements and helping me plan this. We went on a sunset cruise with Champagne and canapés, exclusively hired SubSix underwater restaurant with a six course dinner created by our own chef, had four deep sea divers to swim by with a sign that read 'Will you marry me?' and then our DJ played our favourite song. She said YES and it was the best night of my life!"

Wayne Lineker - Owner of Ocean Beach Club Ibiza and the world famous Linekers Bars



"Simply outstanding. Never A Wasted Journey is fantastic, combining imaginative, bespoke holidays with exceptional service. Dan is the most knowledgeable, patient and interesting travel agent you'll ever meet. He really cares as much about your holiday as you do and will spare no effort to create a perfect holiday. Deservedly award-winning"

Bridgid Nzekwu - ITV News anchor & Head of Media Training at the Press Association

"Dan's personalised service was second to none. The location he selected and hotel recommended were exactly what we had hoped for in our holiday and more. The price was by far better than many of his competitors and the additional extras he negotiated for us (which included a room upgrade, excursions and spa treatments at no additional cost) all added the wow factor to our holiday. We can highly recommend the service and after only being back from the Maldives for a few days are already looking to book to go back through Never A Wasted Journey!"

Richard Rawson - Singer/songwriter/producer (Formally known as Fazer from the multi award winning band N-Dubz) and partner Ashley Emma - Model/TV Presenter.

"Your service to date has been extremely swift and efficient – the fact that you found me a really good selection of hotels in Paris within a couple of hours of speaking to you on the day of my going on holiday is testament to the level of service you can deliver."

Bruno Barba - Senior Brand PR Manager at Selfridges.

"Dan was so accommodating, reliable and offered an extra friendly service. Not only helping us source our holiday to start with, but recommending fun unique things to do throughout our stay. Thanks for a great trip and I'll definitely be back"

Calum Best - TV personality and model

"Superb service from Dan at Never A Wasted Journey. He organised a last minute trip for me to Paris, with a personal hotel suggestion and VIP tickets to Le Moulin Rouge. Super easy and very professional!"

Tyrone Mings - English professional footballer who plays for Aston Villa and England



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f i t

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Mr Harun Thomas
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One of the first surgeons in the United Kingdom to successfully complete both the Masters in Oncoplastic Breast Surgery (Europe's highest qualification in Oncoplastic breast surgery -www.w.uea.ac.uk) and the prestigious UK National TIG Oncoplastic fellowship. Mr Thomas specialises exclusively in the investigation and management of breast symptoms and diseases covering all aspects of breast care including breast cancer, breast lump and pain, benign breast diseases, family history of breast cancer, risk reducing mastectomy, breast reconstruction and implant based breast surgery. His special interest is therapeutic mammoplasty (use of plastic surgical techniques to provide best outcomes after breast cancer surgery) and his research interest is on intraoperative ultrasound (use of ultrasound during surgery to improve patient experience and outcomes).

The professional team includes:

- A Consultant Breast Surgeon
- Mammography Specialist Radiographer (to take mammogram pictures)
- A Consultant Breast Radiologist (to read the result of mammogram, ultrasound scans and undertake biopsies)
- Breast Care Nurse (to offer information, support and counselling)

On the Spot Tests

A Consultant Breast Surgeon will lead your care. During your visit the surgeon will examine you and where needed refer you for a Mammogram and Breast Ultrasound.

If necessary a fine needle test and/or core biopsy to be carried out, to exclude any abnormalities within a lump that has been discovered.

Please be aware of the likelihood of some waiting time during your clinic visit to allow all tests to be performed.

Rapid Results

In most cases the result will be available on the day, but occasionally further tests are needed to give a conclusive result.

Support is provided by a Breast Care Specialist Nurse who offers emotional support and guide you through the treatment options, as well as providing ongoing care for patients who may require surgery.

Breast Care Advice

Breast changes to seek advice about:

It is important that you see your GP if you notice that anything about your breasts has changed from what is normal for you, especially if it's only in one breast.

Breast changes to look out for include:

- A change in the size, shape or feel of your breast
- Dimpling, puckering or redness of the skin
- Redness, a rash or crusting on your nipple or surrounding area
- A change in your nipple, such as in its shape or if it turns inwards to your breast (becomes inverted)
- A discharge from your nipple (unless you're breast feeding)
- Bleeding from your nipple area
- Pain in part of your breast or armpit
- Swelling, thickening or a lump in your breast or arm pit

These symptoms don't necessarily mean that you have breast cancer but if you have any of them, see your GP.



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Awareness Month**

Rapid Diagnosis Breast Clinic

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Jicama

The jicama, also known as a Mexican yam bean, is a starchy root vegetable that is recognisable by its thick, brown skin and turnip shape. Low in calories and sweet in taste, this veg makes a great alternative to the humble potato.

jicama plant is safe to eat, as the rest, including the beans and flowers, contain rotenone, a natural insecticide that can be toxic to humans in high doses. You should also remove the brown skin before consuming.

HOW TO USE JICAMA

- > Slice thinly and add raw to a vegetable salad or Mexican fruit salad for added crunch
- > Sauté with other veg such as broccoli and carrots
- > Use as a substitute for water chestnuts in a stir-fry
- > Bake in the oven or place in an air fryer for healthy chips

WHAT DOES JICAMA TASTE LIKE?

The jicama has been described as a cross between a potato and a pear owing to its distinctive flavour which is both nutty and sweet. Its flesh is juicy and crunchy and, because it has a fairly mild taste, it blends well with other flavours.

WHAT ARE THE HEALTH BENEFITS OF JICAMA?

The perfect vegetable for people with diabetes, the jicama is naturally low in sugar but still sweet to taste. It is also high in fibre, a great source of vitamin C and low in fat and calories.

HOW TO STORE JICAMA

The most important thing to remember when storing jicama is that you must keep it dry, as any moisture can cause rot and mould. Store unwrapped at room temperature if still whole or, once cut, wrap tightly in cling film and store in the fridge for up to one week. Alternatively, wrap a whole jicama in foil and freeze for up to one year.

IS JICAMA SAFE TO EAT?

It is worth noting that only the root vegetable of the



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KIDS



CHECKING IN

WHY PROTECTING THE YOUNG PEOPLE AROUND
YOU MEANS INSISTING ON THE RELEVANT CHECKS

In the past decade or so, Criminal Record Checks (CRCs) have become commonplace in situations where organisations need to safeguard the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults. And this can be the case in everything from 9-5 employers ensuring their staff have been honest in job applications, to volunteers working for charities, right through to local sports teams safeguarding the welfare of young players.

The checks are done by the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) and take the form of a simple and relatively cheap process that takes a couple of weeks. The application can be submitted by the individual or an employee (but only after an offer of employment has been made - in other words, for a successful applicant, not for an interview candidate).

The request goes to the DBS, where a criminal background check will be made. A certificate is subsequently issued that lists any convictions.

The process has become an essential part of

verifying people who are in positions of responsibility where young and vulnerable people are concerned, and replaces what was previously a somewhat more convoluted process between the Criminal Records Bureau and the Independent Safeguarding Authority. By merging these two organisations into one entity, the DBS, in 2012, the government was able to streamline welfare checks, which meant not only a safer and more comprehensive system, but also one where people could begin helping and assisting youngsters without having to go through swarms of red tape.

Of course, while a DBS check will list noted convictions, organisations can and do undertake additional protection, welfare and safeguarding training. And as ever, as parents, the most effective reference to those helping our children comes through our own communication with both our loved ones and the organisation - it always pays to be vigilant.

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RICE, RICE baby

BEAUTY

When you rinse rice before cooking, chances are you let the water simply run down the drain. However, you may think twice about wasting this leftover liquid when you discover its many beauty benefits below.

WHAT MAKES RICE WATER BENEFICIAL?
Rice water is packed with vitamins, minerals and amino acids which are all needed for maintaining healthy skin, hair and nails. It contains ferulic acid, an antioxidant that helps to nourish skin and nails, as well as allantoin that has healing properties. For your hair, rice water contains inositol, which strengthens your follicles and reduces surface friction.

BEAUTY USES FOR RICE WATER

Facial cleanser: Give your skin a boost of goodness by pouring rice water onto a cotton pad and massaging over your face, both in the morning and before bed.

Acne treatment: Apply to spots to help reduce redness to act as an astringent and to prevent future breakouts.

Age spot treatment: If you suffer with age spots or skin discolouration, mix 1 tsp of rice water with

two drops of fractionated coconut oil and massage into your face and neck.

Hair conditioner: For those with dry or brittle hair, apply rice water and a few drops of lavender essential oil after shampooing, leave for 10 minutes and rinse with cold water.

Nail treatment: To help your nails grow faster, soak them in a bowl of rice water for five minutes once a day. This can also help to reduce the signs of ageing on your hands.

HOW TO MAKE YOUR OWN RICE WATER

- > Rinse ½ cup of uncooked rice to remove any dirt or impurities
- > Place the rinsed rice in a bowl and cover it with two cups of water
- > Swirl and leave to soak for 30 minutes
- > Strain the rice and set aside the water
- > Store the rice water in an airtight container. It will keep for one week in the fridge.




BEAUTY



Hello hay, FAREWELL FEVER

As the weather gets warmer and the pollen count grows, hay fever sufferers across the nation lament. If you are already in the throes of a hay fever attack, you don't have to turn to over-the-counter medications. Instead, try one of the below natural remedies.

VITAMIN C

A natural antihistamine, vitamin C can be found in oranges, lemons and grapefruits, as well as red bell peppers. As vitamin C cannot be stored in the body, you need to offer consistent and low doses to support your nasal lining and minimise the effects of hay fever.

HONEY

If you know anyone who sells local honey, then this is the perfect hay fever remedy for you. With the ability to desensitise your body to other pollens, the bee pollen found in honey can help to significantly reduce the most common hay fever symptoms, including a runny nose and persistent sneezing.

GARLIC

Known for boosting your immune system, garlic can also act as a decongestant which can help to alleviate minor hay fever symptoms. This potent plant is also an anti-inflammatory and a good source of quercetin, a natural antihistamine.

PETROLEUM JELLY

Not just a lip saviour when the weather turns cold, petroleum jelly has been praised by hay fever sufferers for its ability to trap pollen before it enters the nose. Simply apply a thin layer inside your lower nostrils to prevent your symptoms from becoming any worse.

CHAMOMILE TEA

High in antioxidants, as well as being a natural antihistamine, chamomile tea can be drunk to act as an anti-inflammatory agent. Alternatively, choose to place cooled teabags on swollen, red eyes for an instant calming effect.

CHILLI PEPPERS

Chilli peppers contain capsaicin which, when eaten, opens up the nasal passages, helping to reduce congestion caused by hay fever.



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You'll also find that road tax can be covered, and you may even get the vehicle delivered to your door.

The appeal of what is, in effect, borrowing a vehicle is at odds with the way we view other things in life. Home ownership, for instance, is taken as preferable over renting, yet owning a car outright is fraught with perils.

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bills fall to you and you only.

That said, you won't have to subscribe to any mileage limitations, nor will you be dealing with broker fees. And while many pay for new cars through PCP (personal contract purchase) or HP (hire purchase) finance, you do have a potentially substantial asset ready to be cashed in when you decide you want to switch to another vehicle.

Buying over leasing very much comes down to personal circumstances – what's right for you will be wrong for someone else. As ever, do the maths and, more than anything else, drive safely!



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What good estate agents do

There's a common misconception that all estate agents do is take a few photos, plonk a property on the internet and wait for the phone to ring.



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monetary amount but also the circumstances of those making the offers. We regularly achieve over the asking price for properties we sell through a combination of intelligent marketing, accurate pricing, buyer referencing and negotiating nous.

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their financial situation is. We discover if they have a property already on the market and a mortgage offer in principle agreed. These factors matter because they all add up to increase the chances of a successful sale happening.

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Where we really earn our wages is when negotiations start happening. We always negotiate skilfully on our clients' behalf. We look at all offers, not just based on their



Perhaps the most overlooked and undervalued part of what a good estate agency does is helping sellers to go from an acceptable offer to a successful competition. The industry term for this is sales progression, and we have a member of our team who is dedicated to making this happen. We keep on top of everything around the sale and liaise regularly with all parties involved. By spotting any issues early and resolving them quickly, we ensure they do not become problems.



If you need advice on any aspect of buying and selling in Chelmsford, feel free to give me a call on 01245 330 503.



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QUIDS IN

How to make money back on your online purchases

While the three lockdowns we've endured since March 2020 may not have done much for our mental health, they have at least, as very small consolation, given new energy to consumerism. From shops and online retailers needing to find new ways to connect with a marketplace unable to act in the same way as before, to huge quantities of dormant pre-lockdown stock needing to be shifted, it's a good time to be on the lookout for deals.

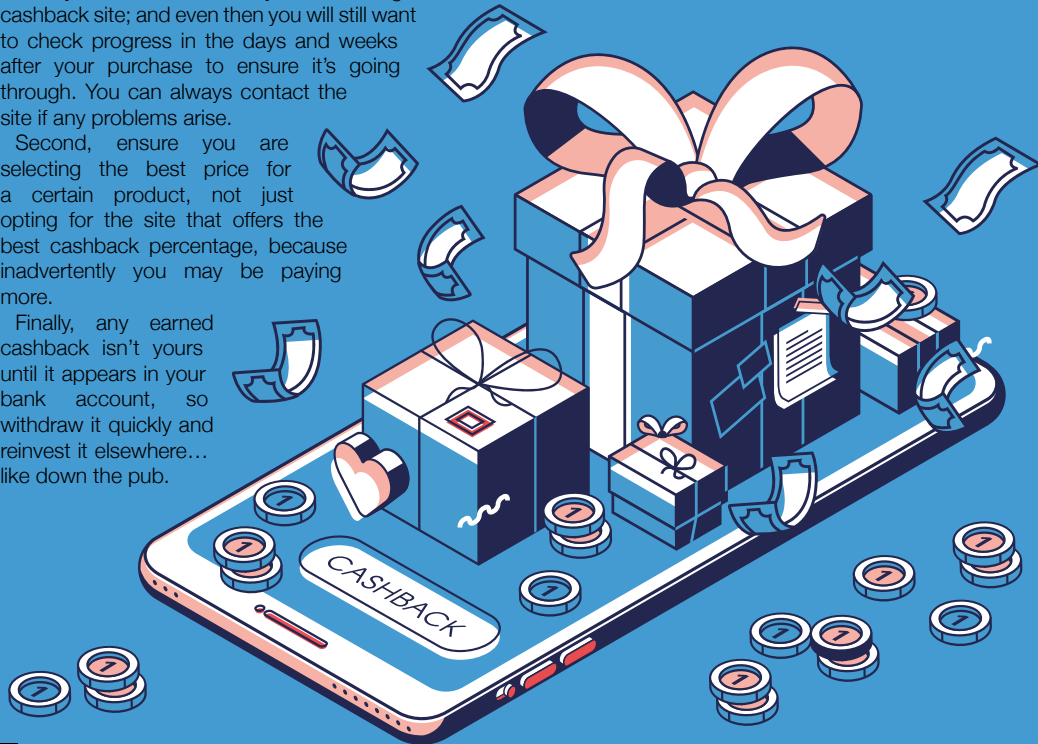
Sure enough, in a world that is more driven than ever towards consumerism, online tracking of purchases through cashback sites can provide an additional useful bonus to purchases – they might even determine which retailer you buy from in the first place.

Sites such as Quidco and TopCashBack advertise cashback offers from thousands of retailers. Simply follow the link to Nike, Next, New Look or whoever has a product you desire, and make a purchase, which will be tracked using cookies. You will have been given a percentage cashback level – usually between one and 10 per cent. A few weeks later, that cashback will appear on the platform, ready to be withdrawn into your bank account or converted into a gift card.

There are a couple of operational points worth noting. First, the tracking process isn't 100 per cent fail-safe – you must make sure you link through the cashback site; and even then you will still want to check progress in the days and weeks after your purchase to ensure it's going through. You can always contact the site if any problems arise.

Second, ensure you are selecting the best price for a certain product, not just opting for the site that offers the best cashback percentage, because inadvertently you may be paying more.

Finally, any earned cashback isn't yours until it appears in your bank account, so withdraw it quickly and reinvest it elsewhere... like down the pub.



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I'm based in Chelmsford and look forward to meeting you!

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COASTAL HOTSPOTS

for home buyers

With summer staycations being on the cards for many families this year, homes by the sea are attracting more interest than ever before.

But if you are thinking of making a more permanent move to a coastal location, check out the below hotspots that are proving to be popular with home buyers across the UK.

SWANAGE, DORSET – average asking price £394,762

Only six miles from Bournemouth, Swanage was recently named as one of the best places to live in the South West by *The Sunday Times*. Offering an old-fashioned seaside charm, this town is your best bet for affordable family homes with sea views.

Choose from Victorian terrace houses, bungalows and modern sea-view apartments.

ROTTINGDEAN, EAST SUSSEX – average asking price £596,699

Another highly popular spot for home buyers, Rottingdean combines a picturesque village with a beautiful beachfront and boasts a lively community. Explore a mix of Georgian town houses, Edwardian family homes and character cottages.

ST MAWES, CORNWALL – average asking price £963,398

For those with a larger budget, the small fishing village of St Mawes, near Falmouth, is the perfect coastal location. With more than five million searches on Rightmove in February, Cornwall has now overtaken London as the most searched for place for home buyers.

Popular for boating and yachting, if you want to do a bit of daydreaming, check out its selection of stunning sea-view mansions.

THORNHAM, NORFOLK – average asking price £223,898

A small coastal village situated in the Norfolk Coast Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, Thornham's attractive and traditionally styled properties make it a highly sought-after location for home buyers. Ideal for those looking for a more remote place to live; if you work from home, you won't find a more idyllic setting.

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