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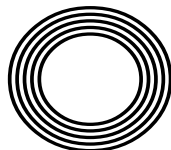
SPRING REFRESH
Tips for the season

Celebrating the life of
JOHN MOTSON OBE

COBALT BLUE
How to wear the on-trend colour

SUSANNA REID

Breakfast TV presenter celebrates 20 years on screen



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BEFORE



AFTER



AFTER



AFTER



BEFORE



AFTER





Editor's notes...

APRIL 2023



Nik Allen, Editor

Hello and welcome to this month's edition of **VISION** Chelmsford & Beaulieu.

As our communities continue to face the challenges imposed by the pandemic, it's more important than ever to support our local businesses.

On our local high streets, we are fortunate to have a wealth of independent shops and small businesses that offer a personal touch, excellent customer service and a range of unique products that you won't find in big chain stores. By choosing to shop with these businesses, you are investing in the community and supporting the growth of our local economy.

So, whether you're in need of groceries, gifts or home essentials, be sure to check out your nearest independent shop or local high street store. Not only will you be supporting the community, but you'll also benefit from the personalised service of small business owners.

It's also worth noting that many of the businesses featured in this magazine are independently owned and operated. When you call to make a purchase or enquiry, be sure to mention that you saw their advert in our publication. It's this kind of support and feedback that allows us to keep producing high-quality magazines that celebrate and promote our local businesses and communities.

In short, shopping local is crucial to ensuring the prosperity of our businesses and communities.

Nik Allen

This is your city's hyperlocal magazine, delivering to homes and businesses every month.

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THE VOICE OF FOOTBALL

JOHN MOTSON OBE

On occasion, sports commentators can be more famous than the very stars they report on. John Motson OBE ascended to such a level – larger than life in the best sense, instantly recognisable by sight or voice, and arguably the most iconic football reporter the country has ever produced. His death in February may have saddened the nation, but his legacy lives on.

“Oh, what a goal! What a goal! Radford the scorer. Ronnie Radford! And the crowd... the crowd are invading the pitch...”

These are the magical words that John Motson uttered as Hereford United legend Ronnie Radford – who himself passed away just three months before Motty – thundered an equaliser into the top corner, on a quagmire of a pitch, in an FA Cup third round reply against Newcastle United in February 1972.

The Salford-born Motson has since described this as the moment he put himself on the map at the BBC, as those in power quickly pushed a three-year contract his way and promoted him to their commentary team for high-profile matches.

Motty's contribution to English and international football folklore past that point is mesmerising. He covered 29 FA Cup finals, 10 FIFA World Cups, 10 UEFA European Championships, and more than 200 England national team matches.

Motson's first work with the BBC was as a sports presenter on Radio 2, in 1968. He stepped up for his first radio commentary game a year later, in December 1969, as World Cup winner Alan Ball scored the only goal in Everton's victory over Derby County at Goodison Park.

“It felt like the start of something big for me,” Motty said in a recent interview, “and really it was my absolute dream to be commentating on football.”

‘He covered 29 FA Cup finals, 10 FIFA World Cups, 10 UEFA European Championships, and over 200 England national team matches’

“Whether it was Wembley in front of 90,000 or a non-league game in front of a few hundred, the pleasure was in covering every shot, every run, every pass. I do believe I have been so, so lucky.”

While fans can reel off Motty's commentary to accompany special moments for their respective sides, there were darker moments in the broadcaster's career too. Indeed, on April 15, 1989, during an FA Cup semi-final between Liverpool and Nottingham Forest, Motson had to draw upon professionalism and humanitarianism, while keeping his emotions intact, as the horrific events of Hillsborough unfolded in front of him. He later appeared as a witness at the Hillsborough inquiry.

While his own club allegiances were kept secret for much of his professional career – which also branched out into radio commentary for BBC 5 Live and talkSPORT – Motty actually revealed in his book that he was a Chelsea fan.

“When I got to *Match of the Day* in 1971, Chelsea was my first commentary. Somehow, my Chelsea loyalties were pushed into the background, as I always wanted to be unbiased and neutral.

“I deliberately avoided answering honestly when someone enquired who I supported. ‘Barnet’ was my usual response!”

Motson, who was famous for his sheepskin coat, had an encyclopaedic knowledge of the game, and always carried with him his own self-penned book of statistics relating to the clubs he was covering.

He passed away peacefully on February 23, 2023, aged 77 years old, thus concluding more than half a decade of exemplary service.

The influence he had over the modern game has been immense, and will continue to be even after his passing.

MEET THE MIGHTY TITANOSAUR

Imagine coming face-to-face with a creature four times as long as a London bus and weighing as much as 15 African elephants.

Sadly, the colossal titanosaur that meets this description, probably the largest-ever land creature, died out about 66 million years ago. But from March 31, the Patagotitan mayorum will be displayed in Europe for the first time at London's Natural History Museum.

So what can you expect to see? For starters, you can walk beneath the spectacular titanosaur cast, moulded from the most complete fossil specimen ever discovered. But there's so much more to this interactive exhibition than that.

While you're gawping in awe at the Patagotitan, you can also check out the plants and animals that were around at the time by admiring the surrounding illustrations. And you can follow the life history of a titanosaur on film, from its birth from a football-sized egg to a fully grown adult.

You can also handle fossil specimens, stare into the creature's giant skull, measure yourself against its massive thigh bone, and even smell its poo.

The original Patagotitan fossil consists of bones from seven creatures, found in the same area just nine years ago. It all began when an Argentinian farmer spotted his lost sheep on an odd-looking rocky ledge. Dinosaur finds in the area aren't rare, so he called the scientists in to get their thoughts. The rocky ridge turned out to be a thigh bone of a new species – the biggest dinosaur ever.

Life as the Biggest Dinosaur is open from March 31, 2023, till January 7, 2024, at the Waterhouse Gallery, National History Museum, South Kensington. The exhibition is suitable for children aged five and over. Tickets cost £16 for adults and £9 for children. Concessions and family tickets are available.

For more information, visit www.nhm.ac.uk

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Shake your



Forget weird little pom-pom creatures with googly eyes; these fuzzy balls of fun have just got a whole lot cooler.

Pompoms have been decorating the tops of hats for centuries; even Vikings wore them. More recently, they've been spotted on the hats of soldiers, sailors, priests, and all manner of berets and beanies.

How to make:

Traditionally, pompoms are made using two cardboard circles.

- For a 6cm diameter pom-pom, draw and cut out two cardboard circles, each 5.5cm diameter.
 - Then draw and cut a section out of the circles and cut a 2cm hole in the centres.
 - Place the two circles together.
 - Using long lengths of yarn, feed your yarn through the centre hole and wrap all the way around the edges of the circles and back up. Continue till the hole is nearly full.
 - Break the yarn, then push your scissors between the two circles from the outside edge and cut through the yarn all the way around.
 - Tie a length of yarn very tightly around the middle then remove the circles.
 - To finish, just give your pom-pom a neat haircut.
- To speed things up, get hold of some pom-pom makers from your local craft shop or online; they only cost a few pounds.

Pom-pom ideas:

- Use your pompoms to create furry animal decorations – add googly eyes and even little ears and tails cut out of card
- Hang them on a key to make a keyring
- Make a pair of dangly earrings
- Thread them on a long piece of yarn to make a garland
- Sew a large pom-pom or three smaller ones onto the corners of a plain cushion
- Attach them around the top of a plain basket
- For some simple wall art, hang a few lengths of yarn from a piece of dowel and thread a few pompoms on each.



Photo credit: thehomesihavemade.com



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A **SPRING REBOOT** *for your home*

Spring cleaning is all very well. But sometimes you might feel the need to do something more. So why not bring in the new and throw out – or better still, recycle – some of the old? You'll feel energised and refreshed, all ready for the brighter days ahead.

wildflowers from the garden can look great when arranged in a big glass jar. Have a hunt for some unusual containers – galvanised watering cans, terracotta pots and woven baskets can all work well.

ADD A SPLASH OF COLOUR: The terracotta and dark greens we all loved in winter can look a bit dowdy in spring, so perk things up with something brighter. Yellow, bright green and pink can all liven up a home. You don't need to redecorate completely; painting a piece of furniture in a new colour can help to put a fresh spin on things. And if you don't want to go that far, add a few cushions, lightweight throws or an art print. Floral designs are perfect and look great with stripes or gingham.

LIGHT UP YOUR LIFE: You won't have to draw your curtains or blinds so early with the longer evenings. This is often enough to make your room look bigger and brighter, but don't forget to wash the windows. If you like, add some inexpensive sheer curtains. You could also choose some spring-scented candles – though remember to follow safety guidelines.

GET MOVING: Rearranging existing decorations costs nothing and can give a room a new lease of life. Try moving mirrors, lamps and furniture to see how it makes you feel.

BRING IN THE GREEN: Not the colour this time, but foliage. Think fresh flowers, potted plants and terrariums. If you want to be super-thrifty, a bunch of

Above all, have fun!



FROM YOUR AREA

Police officer is commended for service



A Chelmsford police officer who prevented a woman jumping from a bridge has received a commendation for his compassion and quick thinking.

PC Dave Endersby (pictured right), of the Chelmsford Local Policing Team, helped to pull the woman to safety.

He was deployed to the incident with a colleague on September 1, 2022. When they arrived, they found the woman standing on the wrong side of the railings on a bridge across a busy road.

PC Endersby said: "She was on the phone in floods of tears and I knew I had to get her talking. Then, she turned to me, handed me the phone and asked me to talk to the person on the other end.

"Instead of taking her phone, I took the opportunity to grab her and pull her back against the railings. She tried to jump but I lifted her up with the help of a member of the public who had approached, and pulled her back over the railings to safety.

"I feel very proud to receive a commendation. When police officers do things like this, it's part of the job. It's only later, when you start thinking about how you've had an impact on that person's life, that what you've done really hits home."

Drug dealers jailed after 10-month investigation

Two drug dealers operating in Chelmsford have been jailed.

A 10-month investigation into an organised crime group was launched in 2021. Two members, Mirel Zeneli, 33, of Hutton Road, Shenfield, and Ben

Chadwick, 23, of Stock Road, Billericay, were arrested after warrants led to Essex Police seizing cocaine estimated to have a street value of almost £110,000, several thousand pounds' worth of cannabis and around £10,000 in cash.

On March 31, Zeneli was jailed for six years for conspiracy to supply cocaine and Chadwick was jailed for three years for conspiracy to supply cocaine and cannabis.

A third man, Laurie Landman, 24, of The Foxgloves, Billericay, was handed a two-year sentence suspended for two years for conspiracy to supply cocaine and cannabis.

New exhibit celebrates community spirit

A new exhibition at Chelmsford Museum commemorates a festival that brought the local community together.

Chelmsford Council for Voluntary Service, in collaboration with international arts company Kinetika, launched Chelmsford 100 in 2022 with the aim of uniting a range of individuals and community groups. People were asked share a story about what living in Chelmsford means to them.

Each of the 100 stories was turned into its own hand-painted silk batik flag to create a mobile installation of 100 works of art. The flags were then carried by volunteers on 100 miles of local walking routes.

A museum spokesperson said: "This exhibition will showcase a selection of the flags alongside film footage and photographs of some of the 100 miles they have journeyed. The display will explain how the flags were made and visitors will be able to read each of the 100 stories that inspired them."

The exhibition is open until June 4.



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LOCAL NEWS



It was very exciting to spend a morning being shown the huge construction project underway at Beaulieu Park Station. Engineers from Network Rail and the contractors Murphy's told me how, on recent weekends, they have been starting work at 2am each Saturday and continuing non-stop until the early hours of Monday. Recently, they have been lifting the existing Great Eastern Main Line in 75-metre-long sections. This has enabled them to rebuild the subsurface under the track in readiness for the new platforms and shifting of the tracks, which will happen in later phases.

Many residents enjoy Chelmsford's vibrant night-time economy. I recently joined a Night of Action in Chelmsford on a busy Saturday night. The significant police presence and deployment of mobile metal

detectors targeted anyone with knives or other weapons. Many people, especially women and girls, told me how pleased they were to see the enhanced focus on safety and how reassured they were.

We were honoured that the Prime Minister (pictured below right) chose Chelmsford to launch a new Anti-Social Behaviour Action Plan. Chelmsford is by and large a calm and peaceful place, with crime rates dropping. But, when anti-social behaviour occurs, it can be devastating for those affected. The Action Plan will enable more hotspot policing, easier reporting for witnesses and enhanced police targeting of areas where anti-social behaviour occurs. A youth guarantee will mean every young person can access a regular club, activities or opportunities to volunteer.

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CHELMSFORD HIGH STREET MARKET

The High Street Market takes place in Chelmsford High Street every Tuesday, Friday and Saturday. The market has been running since 2005 and offers quality fresh produce, flowers and a variety of home cooked street foods.

There's fresh bread, cakes and pastries from Brown Bread. Freshly caught fish, lobster and jellied eels supplied by Young's Fish. Cheese & Pie, a family run business sells many varieties of cheese from brie to black bombers. Another family run business is our greengrocer offering fresh quality seasonal fruit & vegetables.

No high street market is complete without its street food, of which we have plenty!! You will find Caribbean dishes from Jerk Station, authentic German bratwurst sausages, burgers, authentic vegan and vegetarian falafels cooked before your eyes. We have fresh chimney cakes, churros, authentic Biryani dishes, oak smoked beef brisket, and homemade Romanian foods including rolled sausages and stroganoff. If you are feeling thirsty Coffee Stop sells over 50 different coffee flavours, and cool shakes in the summer.

Away from food, GSE Flowers boast unique flowers from Holland, which are hard to find in local supermarkets, ideal for a beautiful bouquet for that special occasion.



CHELMSFORD INDOOR MARKET

Chelmsford's Indoor market dates to the 11th century and takes place every Tuesday to Saturday. We have easy parking in High Chelmer car park situated right above the market and if you travel by bus, the bus interchange brings you conveniently right to the heart of the market.

The Indoor market has something for everyone, all under one roof. Many of our unique family run businesses have been handed down through generations and include haberdashery, wool, picture framing, watch batteries and repairs, card stalls, hardware's, bags, hats and luggage. If you are looking to re-cover an old chair, the foam stall will cut foam to size and if you need your bicycle repaired, this is the place to come. We have fresh foods, including a greengrocer, butcher and a stall selling one of the widest varieties of cheese in the area.

If you are looking to buy for children, then our baby and children's clothing stall offers a wide range of outfits for all seasons and occasions. We have a huge selection of action figures and toys to keep the children occupied for hours.

If you are looking for something special for the garden, we have Blue Lagoon Furniture that have a wide range of both indoor and outdoor furniture. We have two plant stalls and a stall selling garden ornaments, lights and accessories.

Thursday is our vintage market day. Traders here will be delighted to show you their collectable items for sale including war memorabilia, vintage jewellery, ornaments, books, china, glass, vinyl records and toys.

Once you have finished all your shopping, we have plenty of places to enjoy a cup of coffee, grab a burger or taste some fine street foods including Thai and Italian cuisine.

Historically Chelmsford has held a market Charter for over 800 years. Supporting our small, family run businesses help ensure that Chelmsford's market continues to thrive well into the 21st century.



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YOUR LOCAL EVENTS

CRAFT AND DESIGN SHOW

RHS Garden Hyde Hall, Creepedge Lane,
Chelmsford, CM3 8ET
Friday, April 28, to Monday, May 1, 10am – 5pm



Photo credit: rhs.org

This exciting event is run by Woodland Crafts, which runs a series of prestigious craft events around the country.

Millbrook Pottery will be for sale on all four days, the majority of which is hand thrown in the traditional method by well-known potter Peter Curtis.

Entry is free for RHS members. For non-members, admission is included in the entry fee for the gardens, which costs £13.85 for adults and £6.95 for children. Under-fives go free.

For more information, please visit www.rhs.org.uk/gardens/hyde-hall

THE SMURFS GREAT ESCAPE

The secret location will be revealed after securing a ticket

Saturday, May 6, 9am – 2pm

Save the Smurfs from the evil wizard Gargamel at this immersive new escape-room-style experience.

The streets of Chelmsford will be transformed into an outdoor scavenger hunt. Solve puzzles, complete challenges and join hundreds of other teams as you race against the clock to save the Smurfs.

Tickets cost £30 per team and are available from www.cluedupp.com/products/smurfs-chelmsford

CHELMSFORD VEGAN MARKET

Bond Street, Chelmsford, CM1 1GD
Saturday, May 6, 10.30am – 4pm

This event will bring together a huge variety of vegan street food vendors, artisan bakers, craft brewers, ethical jewellers, small-batch soapers, local artists, zero-waste champions and loads more. Entry is free.

DANBURY VILLAGE FETE

Danbury Leisure Centre, Dawson Field/
Main Road, Chelmsford, CM3 4NQ
Sunday, May 7, 1pm – 6pm

Join in the celebrations, bring a picnic blanket or chairs and enjoy browsing craft stalls, activities from local groups, a children's inflatable funfair, fun dog show, street food, cocktail vans, and live entertainment from traditional Morris dancers, parkour display teams and music groups. Entry is free.

For more information, please email parish.council@danbury-essex.gov.uk

PARLOUR X VODOO KELLER

Voodoo Keller Bar, 59 New Street, Chelmsford,
CM1 1NE

Sunday May 14, 1pm – 4pm

A collaboration tasting session between local brewery and bar Voodoo Keller/Chelmsford Brew Co & Parlour.

The session will consist of three parlour dishes of traditional Indian food with three beer pairings.

Tickets cost £27.80 and are available from bit.ly/3Ktg5Mg

NATIONAL FLOWER SHOW 2023

Hylands House, London Road, Writtle,
Chelmsford, CM2 8WQ

Friday, May 19, to Sunday, May 21, 9am – 5pm

Hylands House and Estate will be filled with inspiration, flowers, plants and everything you need for your home and garden.

This year's show includes the outdoor plant village, a new floral walk and the food and drinks pavilion, as well as a home and country pavilion filled with a selection of handmade giftware, jewellery and more.

Tickets cost £17 for adults and £4 for children. Visit www.nationalflowershow.co.uk to find out more.



Photo credit: Hyland Estate



WHAT'S ON

An ancient forest with sinister secrets

Epping Forest's history is as celebrated as it is sinister – a place of great natural and agricultural beauty, yet also a place renowned as a hiding spot for the county's gangster fraternity.

At first glance, Epping Forest's beauty is rather simple – an ancient woodland of some 6,000 acres that straddles the border between the counties of Essex and Greater London, and one that serves as a thriving oasis of natural beauty and biodiversity.

It rates as the largest public open space in the London area, providing a vital green lung for millions of people who seek solace in its verdant embrace.

The forest dates back thousands of years, when it was part of a vast, continuous woodland that stretched across England. In the 12th century, it became a designated royal hunting ground, and in 1878, Queen Victoria bestowed it upon the people for their enjoyment and recreation. Since then, the City of London Corporation has managed the forest, ensuring its preservation for future generations.

It contains more than 50,000 ancient trees – majestic beech, oak and hornbeam – many of which are more than 1,000 years old, with traditional and fiercely protected woodland management practices that reflect its ecological past.

Subsequently, Epping Forest provides a critical habitat for various wildlife species, including the rare and elusive fallow deer, as well as a host of other mammals, birds, insects, and a rich variety of fungi. It's also thought to be a hotspot for truffles.

The forest contains a vast network of footpaths, bridleways and cycling trails, inviting visitors to explore its enchanting beauty.

These routes have also, in the past, offered an elaborate map for local criminal entities to dispose of contraband, weaponry and bodies. In addition, the much-vaunted Epping Forest Country Club, a collection of three nightclubs, endured a controversial existence before final closure in 2002.

In 2023, Epping Forest has largely been returned to a place that captivates and inspires visitors with its breath-taking landscapes, vibrant ecosystems, and profound historical significance.



Photo credit: LucasRanger/Shutterstock.com



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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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WHAT ARE THE MOST COMMON CAUSES OF SKINCARE ISSUES IN DOGS?

Dogs are susceptible to many of the same skin problems as humans, and these are typically caused by the following: Poor nutrition | External allergies or bites | Parasite infections | Skin conditions such as seborrhoea | Food allergies | Bacterial infections

HOW TO BUILD A SKINCARE ROUTINE FOR YOUR DOG

Wash them regularly

On average, you should wash your dog once a week to preserve their skin and coat. However, this can vary depending on breed, with very active dogs requiring more frequent bathing. Always use two applications of shampoo: one to cleanse the coat and skin of dirt and old skin cells, and one that should be left on for 10-15 minutes, to penetrate the skin.

Protect them from pests

Flea control is a must if you want to keep your dog's skin in optimal condition. Use flea prevention treatments all year round and visit your vet regularly for check-ups.

Focus on good nutrition

The foundation of healthy skin is nutrition, so you need to make sure that your dog is getting a complete and well-balanced diet. You don't need to buy the most expensive dog food on the market; you only need to ensure that their diet fits their needs.

Apply sun cream

Dogs can suffer with sunburn in the same way you can, especially those with short hair or light skin. Therefore, it is vital that you apply sun cream that is specially formulated for dogs during the warmer months of the year. You can also buy animal clothing that offers UV protection.



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GOOD MORNING

from Susanna Reid

LOOKING BACK OVER A PRESENTING LEGACY THAT CONTINUES TO GROW FOR SUSANNA REID, ONE OF OUR FAVOURITE BROADCASTERS

Susanna Reid is synonymous with newscasting in the UK. The 52 year old is the sometimes friendly, sometimes fierce face of breakfast TV, and in 2023 celebrates two decades of waking up those in the UK to the news and views of the world.

The journalist has accomplished something many set out to do, yet few achieve – presenting the news with confidence, balance and no small amount of personality.

“I think they are skills which emerge over time, and you can only really learn on the job,” says Reid, who made a controversial switch from the BBC to ITV in 2014. “I think in my early days, I was certainly a lot more stunted in my delivery. In many ways, a presenter or interviewer puts too much pressure on themselves, when they should just let the interviewee, or the news item, do the work for them.

“And I don’t think I’m the finished article yet, either,” she continues. “The news and the technology evolve all the time, so the blueprint for what we do changes in similar ways.”

Reid built her name for exemplary broadcasting when she started work as a news producer for BBC Bristol back in 1994. She later joined BBC News 24, getting her big break one night when the 11pm presenter did not arrive on set. That stand-in role soon turned into a permanent position, and she later moved into rather more sociable work on BBC *Breakfast* (notwithstanding the 3am alarm calls), presenting alongside the late Bill Turnbull, as well as Charlie Stayt and Sian Williams.

Having also appeared on *The Andrew Marr Show* and as the host of the BBC’s Oscars coverage, in 2014 Reid scoffed at rumours she was going to defect to ITV, saying: “If you cut me open, I’d bleed BBC.”

Yet a month later, ITV announced their impressive scoop, with Reid signing a £1million-a-year contract to front *Good Morning Britain* alongside the likes of Ben Shephard and Piers Morgan.

Reid has interviewed an impossibly wide cross-section of people from the worlds of sport, entertainment and more. She is known to be particularly resilient when coming up against politicians, and has famously sparred with former Prime Ministers Boris Johnson and David Cameron, as well as Nigel Farage and Sir Keir Starmer.

In spite of Reid’s relentless schedule, she has cultivated a busy and rewarding homelife, and has three children with her journalist ex-husband Dominic Cotton.

In addition, she has proved herself to be unafraid of stepping above the parapet of the traditional broadcaster, appearing on *Strictly Come Dancing*, *Gogglebox* and *Tipping Point*, and is a fan of Premier League club Crystal Palace.

“I think if I spent my whole life reading and presenting news on everyone else that would be pretty dull,” she laughs. “I’m not one of those people who wants to put themselves in everyone’s faces, but if the opportunity arises to do something exciting, then I will take it.

“My main focus has been and will always be helping viewers get motivated for the day. That can sometimes be difficult when the news is negative, but we always do our best to put a positive shine on things and to get smiles on people’s faces.”



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FASHION

How to wear COBALT blue

Seen on catwalks in Paris, Milan, New York and London, cobalt blue is big news for spring 2023. A bold and beautiful colour that demands to be seen, here's how you can wear this stunning shade in five different ways.

COLOUR CLASH

Cobalt blue has the unique ability to work well with almost all colours, including black, navy, white, beige, red, orange and green. Try adding an element of cobalt blue to a grey suit for understated elegance or grab attention by teaming it with yellow.

TRY TONAL

If you love to layer, then rocking various shades of blue is the perfect look for you. Cobalt blue and pastel blue work wonderfully together, with the lighter shade softening your look and the cobalt blue acting as the highlight of your outfit.

MAKE IT MONOCHROME

Alternatively, for a bold vibe, wear head to toe cobalt blue in the form of a trouser suit, jumpsuit or dress with matching shoes. This is a very slimming look, and you could even add some cobalt blue accessories.

DENIM DELIGHT

Cobalt blue and denim are a match made in heaven, and there are so many stylish ways to mix these two trends together. Whether you pair a cobalt blue shirt with your favourite jeans or rock a denim skirt and cobalt blue boots, you can't go wrong with this perfect combination.

ACCENT WITH ACCESSORIES

If cobalt blue is a little too in-your-face for you, then why not opt for a more understated look with some cobalt accessories? Look for a cobalt blue clutch or a pair of cobalt blue earrings and matching bracelet to give a plain outfit just the lift it needs.



Happy HEDGEHOG

Hedgehog numbers are in decline in the UK, so it has never been more important for us to take care of our prickly pals. Here's how you can look after the hedgehogs in your garden and keep them happy throughout the year.

WHAT DO HEDGEHOGS EAT?

If you want to encourage hedgehogs to visit your garden, then you can supplement their natural diet of worms, beetles, earwigs and caterpillars by leaving out food and fresh water. Some foods that hedgehogs enjoy are:

- > Tinned cat or dog food
- > Crushed dog or cat biscuits
- > Meat-based hedgehog food

If you notice very young hedgehogs in your garden (roughly apple-sized), then you need to soak any biscuits in water before leaving them out.

WHAT SHOULD YOU NEVER FEED HEDGEHOGS?

You should never leave out milk or bread for hedgehogs as the former can cause diarrhoea and the latter is not very nutritious for these small mammals. Mealworms can also cause health problems when consumed in large quantities.

WHEN TO FEED HEDGEHOGS IN YOUR GARDEN

It is a good idea to put food and water out for hedgehogs all year round. In spring, this will give

them a boost after hibernation, while in summer and autumn, it will help them to build up fat reserves to survive the winter. During periods of hot and dry weather when natural resources are scarce, fresh water and food is even more important.

HOW TO FEED HEDGEHOGS SAFELY

- > Place food in a shallow dish and place this in a sheltered area of your garden
- > Remove any uneaten food each day and refill with fresh water and food
- > Clean the dishes daily using hot, soapy water and then rinse well to reduce the risk of spreading diseases between different hedgehogs.



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A guide to GARDEN OBELISKS

Looking for a simple way to add interest and style to your garden or patio area? Garden obelisks are one of the most versatile structures available and can be used effectively in any outdoor space, no matter how big or small.

WHAT ARE GARDEN OBELISKS USED FOR?

Garden obelisks are commonly used to support flowering plants and can act as a stunning focal point in your garden. They are usually made of wood or metal, and are perfect for defining the entrance to your garden, adding an extra dynamic to a seating area or even placing in a conservatory to bring a touch of the outdoors in.

TOP TIPS FOR ADDING OBELISKS TO YOUR GARDEN:

- > Make sure you place each one on a flat piece of ground
- > Bury the feet of the obelisk in the soil to prevent it from falling over
- > Opt for a larger size to accommodate growing plants
- > Hang bird feeders off an obelisk to attract birds
- > Place in a circular flowerbed to create a showstopping centrepiece

BEST PLANTS TO GROW UP YOUR GARDEN OBELISK:

Clematis | Wisteria | Sweet peas | Star jasmine | Common ivy
| Morning glory | Climbing roses

HOW TO CHOOSE A GARDEN OBELISK:

When choosing a garden obelisk, there are several factors you need to consider:

1. Is it weather resistant?
2. Does it come pre-built or is construction required?
3. Is it the right height for your chosen plants?
4. Do you want a garden obelisk that is designed to rust for a more authentic look?
5. What type of finial do you want? (This is the decorative feature that sits on the top of the obelisk)

WHERE TO BUY GARDEN OBELISKS:

While you can make your own garden obelisk, you will need a certain amount of DIY expertise and a number of tools to do so. Therefore, you may prefer to purchase one either online or in a store. Most garden centres offer a range of obelisks to choose from.



GARDENING

Photo credit: sarahavenroom

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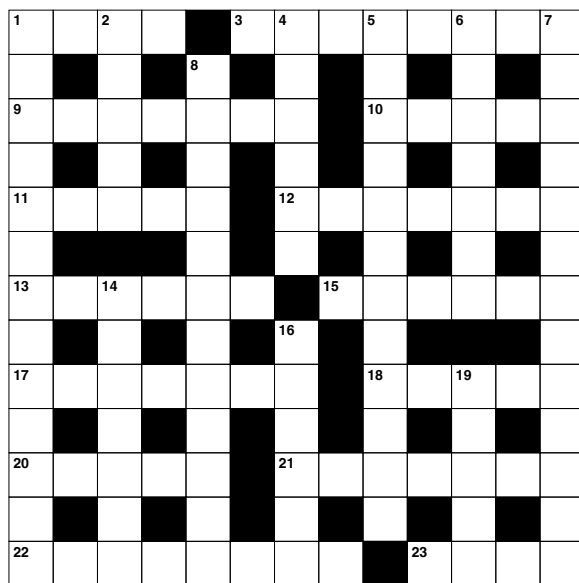
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1. Liability (4)
3. Heated exchange of views (8)
9. Free a ship from her moorings (4,3)
10. Opposite of below (5)
11. Device used to connect to the internet (5)
12. Pulls back from (7)
13. Bird with yellow and black plumage (6)
15. Seem (6)
17. In the place of (7)
18. Head monk of an abbey (5)
20. Embed; type of filling (5)
21. West Indian musical style (7)
22. Gibberish (8)
23. Verge (4)

DOWN

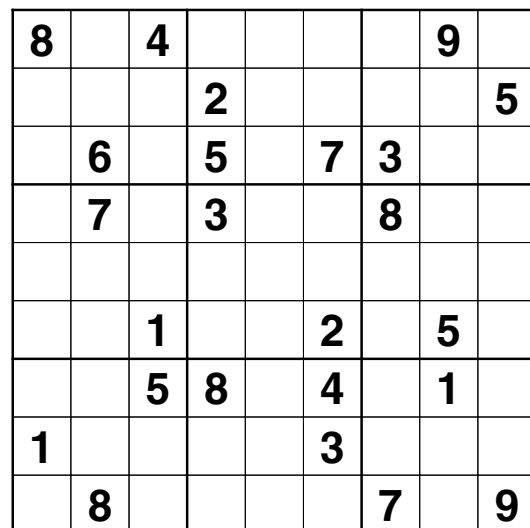
1. Decay (13)
2. Beads (anag) (5)
4. Implement change (6)
5. Intolerable (12)
6. Passionate (7)
7. Hidden store of valuables (8,5)
8. Preservative chemical (12)
14. Pancreatic hormone (7)
16. Official proclamations (6)
19. Animal that uses two legs for walking (5)



DID YOU KNOW?

- ▶ One million Earths could fit inside the Sun – and the Sun is considered an average-sized star.
- ▶ The sunset on Mars appears blue.
- ▶ Space is completely silent. There is no atmosphere in space, which means that sound has no medium or way to travel to be heard.
- ▶ There are more trees on earth than stars in the Milky Way. There are about three trillion trees on Earth, and between 100 to 400 billion stars, approximately, in the galaxy.
- ▶ Saturn is the only planet in our solar system that is less dense than water. It could float in a bathtub – if anybody could build a bathtub big enough.
- ▶ One day on Venus is longer than one year on Earth.

SUDOKU



Sitting on the south-facing slopes of the Crouch Vale near the village of Althorne in Essex, Clayhill Vineyard make their own still wines on site along with grape juices, apple juices and liqueurs.

The vines produce quality grapes used for still and sparkling wine production all over the UK, many of which have performed extremely well in competitions, as well as a small range of wines for local sale.

A number of varieties have now joined the original plantings, as the vineyard experiments to see which variety fares best in their mission to create delicious wines.

Being situated on a coastal peninsula between the Rivers Crouch and Blackwater gives Clayhill Vineyard the advantage of a mesoclimate. This brings mild winters and hot dry summers, which have proved to be ideal conditions to produce quality grapes for quality wines.

A new tea room opened at the vineyard in 2017, offering visitors the chance to enjoy a light lunch or coffee and cake in the cosy indoor space or on the glass balcony overlooking the vines and the river. There are also outdoor picnic tables, and dogs are welcome.



To find out more, search 'Clayhill Vineyard' on Facebook

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A SLICE OF HISTORY

Simnel Cake

There are some stories you wish were true – and the myth behind Simnel cake, the marzipan-covered fruitcake popular at Easter, is one of these.

Back in the mists of time, a certain Simon and Nelly apparently fell out while making a fruitcake. One said it should be boiled; the other wanted to bake it. After a squabble, they settled on using both cooking methods. The resulting cake was named after both of them.

Simnel cake dates back to the 17th century when live-in staff returned to their families around Lent, often bringing food with them. By the 19th century, Simnel cakes looked like the cakes we know today, complete with 11 balls of marzipan to represent Jesus' apostles – minus Judas, the traitor.

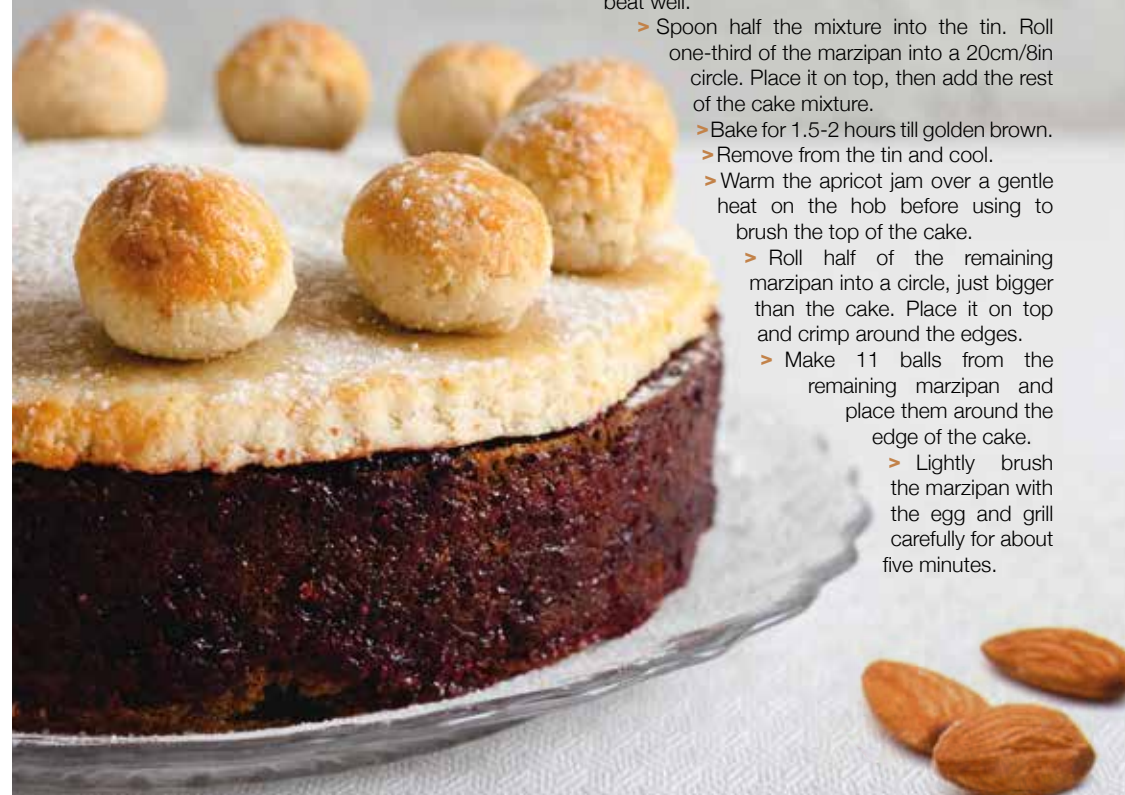
INGREDIENTS:

FOR THE CAKE: 175g light brown soft sugar | 175g soft butter (plus extra for greasing) | 175g self-raising flour | 3 large eggs | 50g ground almonds | 3 tbsp milk | 200g mixed dried fruit | 100g glacé cherries, quartered | 2 tsp mixed spice powder

FOR THE TOPPING: 450g golden marzipan | 3 tbsp apricot jam | 1 egg, beaten

HOW TO MAKE:

- > Preheat the oven to 160°C/Fan 140°C/Gas 3.
- > Grease a deep 20cm/8in cake tin and line it with baking paper.
- > Put all the cake ingredients into a large bowl and beat well.
- > Spoon half the mixture into the tin. Roll one-third of the marzipan into a 20cm/8in circle. Place it on top, then add the rest of the cake mixture.
- > Bake for 1.5-2 hours till golden brown.
- > Remove from the tin and cool.
- > Warm the apricot jam over a gentle heat on the hob before using to brush the top of the cake.
- > Roll half of the remaining marzipan into a circle, just bigger than the cake. Place it on top and crimp around the edges.
- > Make 11 balls from the remaining marzipan and place them around the edge of the cake.
- > Lightly brush the marzipan with the egg and grill carefully for about five minutes.





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Six Senses Zighy Bay, Oman

For a thrilling entrance that's hard to match, descend by paraglider into the resort. Also unmatched is Six Senses' commitment to sustainability. In addition to recycling and producing their own bottled water, the resort involves hosts, villagers and guests in activities such as tree planting, ocean and beach cleans.



Mahali Mzuri, Kenya

Twelve luxury tents nestled within the game-rich Mara conservancy allows for an experience quite like no other. Guests are able to visit one of the Massai villages in the area where they can learn about the local Massai Tribe who still practise their traditional pastoralist customs.

Borgo Pignano, Tuscany

You'll feel the positive impact the resort has on the environment and local people as you explore the estate by 4x4 with Pignano's Chief Farmer, Enzo. He'll take you behind-the-scenes discovering the vegetable and herb gardens, assisting with the collection of honey from the beehives and learning about the Tuscan countryside.



One&Only Nyungwe House, Rwanda

Rawandan drummers mark your arrival at this eco-retreat set in a thriving million-year-old rainforest, where conservation runs through the very core. Contribute to the monthly nationwide initiative 'Umundaga', helping local communities flourish through planting new trees, helping to build new schools, and tending to animals.



Bawah Reserve, Indonesia

Set in a marine conservation area between Malaysia and Borneo, this tiny cluster of islands is a haven for eco-conscious adventurers with a taste for indulgence. Sustainability is high on the agenda here; reap the benefits of their hard work and discover a world of tropical fish and coral on one of the island snorkel trails.



Dan Salmon,
Owner

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AIRPORT *Pro*

They say your holiday begins as soon as you arrive at the airport, which makes getting it right, pre-flight, all the more important.

Here's our list of departure lounge dos and don'ts.

DO relax

Finally, your break from work and from the stresses of everyday life can begin. It's important to take time to relax – you deserve it!

DON'T stress about time

While it's important to be on time at the airport, it's also worth remembering you have plenty of time. Most pre-flight stresses come about because people panic they will miss their flight, but keeping a clear head is important, even if the departure gate seems like it's in a different postcode!

DO refresh

Although it's easy to grab a snack once in the air, buying a sensible meal and drinks after you pass through security is a good idea before a long flight.

DON'T be excessive

Many people celebrate going on holiday by having a tipple or two before the flight. While it might seem like a good idea at the time, arriving at the airport early or filling time if your flight is delayed, means it's easy to drink too much. If that happens,

you run the risk of being turned away at the gate.

DO organise hand luggage

Keep a close check on luggage allowance, and remember that the items you carry on board need to be scrutinised. Liquids of no more than 100ml should be kept in a single, transparent, resealable plastic bag which holds no more than a litre and measures approximately 20cm by 20cm. This should be placed at the top of your hand luggage, together with any electrical items.

However, restrictions on liquids and electrical items are on their way out. Airports in the UK have until June 2024 to install new security technology, which will mean passengers can carry up to two litres of liquids and large electrical items in cabin luggage as they go through security. London City Airport has already put this new technology in place, thereby reducing hassle for passengers.

DON'T overdo the shopping

While it's tempting to pick up booze, fragrances and all manner of other discounted items in the departure lounge, it's much smarter to do this on your return journey. Anything you buy in the airport before your outbound flight will contribute to your baggage allowance on your return flight. Whereas if you save your airport shopping for before your inbound flight, anything you buy can go in your hand luggage.



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FIVE REASONS TO CHOOSE FITTED FURNITURE



Fitted furniture may not be the first option that springs to mind when you're thinking of updating your home, but for many, it's the best option to maximise space, increase storage and create a look that feels true to you.

Here are a few reasons why it might just be right for you, from Sliderobes – the fitted furniture experts.

1 Extra storage

Inside a fitted wardrobe, you can add however many shelves, drawers and rails you need to hold your belongings – whereas with standard wardrobes, you're limited to the one rail or shelf that it comes with. Sliderobes fitted solutions typically go from floor to ceiling, making the most of the height in your room, as well as the depth. Fitted options also don't have to have a back panel that creates a gap between the wardrobe and the wall, wasting space.



2 It's designed specifically for you, your taste and your lifestyle

People often don't realise just how bespoke their fitted furniture can be. Sliderobes has a collection of colours, materials and finishes to choose from. How the wardrobe looks is your decision, right down to the door handles. Sliderobes designers learn about your preferences and use their knowledge of trends and styles to help you make the right design choices.



3 Well made and is long lasting

With forty years of experience, Sliderobes knows a thing or two about quality to ensure your furniture stands the test of time and we're so confident in that, that we offer a 10 year guarantee. And, instead of you sitting down with an instruction manual and screwdriver, with Sliderobes, your piece will be installed by a professional fitter.

4 Suitable for every room in your home and any awkward spaces

Fitted furniture works in any room in the home, from built-in media units in the living room to integrated home office shelving. It can also be designed around features like slopes, alcoves, chimney breasts or beams in our homes that create pockets of wasted space.

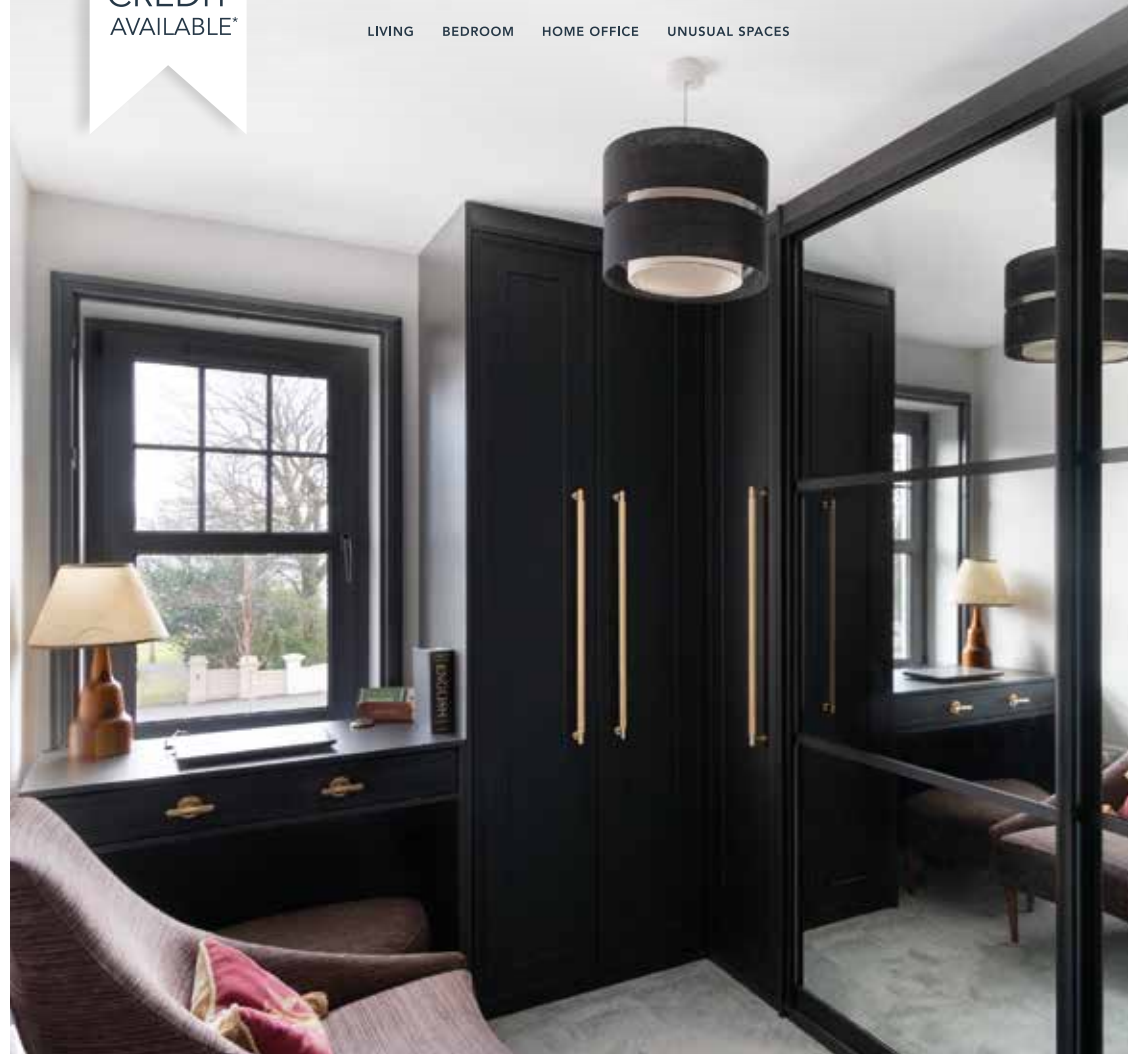
5 It's an investment that can add value to your home

Fitted furniture is an investment but one that is so worth it, as you won't have to replace it as frequently. And if you're planning to sell your property, your fitted furniture can be an attraction, as storage space is a premium that prospective homebuyers are willing to pay for.

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WHY *Spring Cleaning* IS GOOD FOR YOU

It sounds like a line to make us splash out on new dusters and mops, or perhaps a government message to promote hygienic homes. But according to psychologists, cleaning our homes in spring really can boost our mental health.

First of all, most of us feel our energy levels increase as the days become brighter and longer. We want to pack away our winter clothes, get outdoors, and clean and reorganise our homes.

Many people find that cleaning their home makes them feel good and gives them a sense of mastery over the world around them. While many of us profess to hate housework, regularly cleaning your home is known to have positive effects.

"A lot of people do find cleaning to be very satisfying, but also to be a very good way of managing stress or anxiety," explains Dr Dawn Potter, a clinical psychologist from Cleveland, USA.

When people are facing problems they can't solve or feel overwhelmed, she

continues, cleaning can help restore a sense of control and calm.

Whether wiping your kitchen counter or vacuuming your carpet, household chores are also easy-to-achieve acts of mindfulness. While you're doing them, you naturally concentrate on the task and your worries take a back seat, at least for a while.

There are also more obvious benefits to keeping your home clean and tidy. Who doesn't want to wake up somewhere clean and bright – and return home to it at the end of the day? If you work from home, this is even more important.

On the flip side, if your home environment is a mess, it can make you lose confidence and feel unorganised.

So now you have no excuses. Roll up your sleeves, grab your Marigolds and get stuck in this spring.



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Bananas about BANANAS

As well as being delicious, bananas are also one of the healthiest foods around. And what better time to celebrate them than National Banana Day on April 19?



LOOK AFTER YOUR HEART

Bananas are rich in potassium, which can help lower your blood pressure and prevent your arteries from becoming stiff.



TAKE CARE OF YOUR DIGESTIVE SYSTEM

The starch in bananas breaks down and becomes food for the beneficial bacteria in your gut. The pectin, meanwhile, can help keep you regular. Because bananas are relatively low in calories but also filling, they can also play a part in maintaining a healthy weight.



AVOID TYPE 2 DIABETES

The vitamin B6 and fibre in bananas may reduce your risk of type 2 diabetes. But if you already have this condition, ask your health professional before eating more bananas because they contain a lot of sugar.



IMPROVE YOUR WELLBEING

The vitamin B6 in bananas can help you sleep, while the magnesium can help your muscles relax. What's more, tryptophan, which converts into serotonin, together with the antioxidants also contained in this popular fruit, could help improve your mood.



BOOST YOUR ENERGY

The sugar and fibre in bananas will give you an instant energy boost. At the same time, potassium may reduce the risk of muscle cramps. This makes them a good snack both before and during exercise.

NOT JUST FOR EATING

Try these unusual uses for bananas:

- > Use banana skins as a garden fertiliser – chop them up and mix them in the soil around your plants
- > Tape a small piece of the inside of a banana skin to a wart or verruca to help remove it
- > Mash up a banana and use it as a face mask – it will hydrate your skin and help reduce blemishes
- > Use the inside of a banana skin to give dull houseplant leaves a shiny new finish.



RIVALRY

on the River



Photo credit: Nordin Čatić via Cambridge University Twitter, The Boat Race Twitter

Every year, on the last Sunday in March or the first Sunday in April, two of Britain's most prestigious universities battle it out in a gruelling 4.2-mile Boat Race along the Thames.

On March 26 this year, the eight Cambridge men plus a coxswain were first across the finishing line and now have 85 victories compared with Oxford's 81. Only once has there been a dead heat – back in 1877.

WHY ALL THE FUSS? The Boat Race is a symbol of fierce academic and sporting rivalry between the two universities. It's also a tough test of strength, endurance and strategy. Rowers spend months ensuring they're at peak mental and physical fitness on race day.

The Boat Race is also steeped in history and tradition. The first event was held in 1829 and has been held almost every year since, except during the First and Second World Wars and the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020.

Watching the race live makes an exciting and low-cost day out, and every year thousands of people line the riverbank and stand on the bridges to watch the event.

WHAT'S THE ROUTE? The race starts at Putney Bridge and the teams navigate several bridges, including Hammersmith Bridge and Barnes Bridge, before reaching the finish line at Chiswick Bridge.

One of the most challenging parts of the course is the stretch of the river known as the Tideway, near the Houses of Parliament and the London Eye. This part of the river is subject to strong currents and tidal changes, making rowing difficult.

IS IT JUST FOR MEN? Not anymore. The first women's race was held in 1964, and since 2015 the women's course has been identical to the men's. That said, the men's race is still the one that makes the headlines. This year saw the Cambridge women win the Boat Race, marking their sixth straight win.





Don't worry BE HAPPY

If you are feeling a little down, this may not be because of something happening (or not happening) in your life, but may be owing to where you live.

According to an annual survey carried out by property experts Rightmove, there are 10 places in the UK where residents feel the happiest.

- 1. St Ives, Cornwall:** Coming in at number one is St Ives in Cornwall, which scored highly for community spirit, safety and a sense of belonging.
- 2. Galashiels, Scotland:** One of the most affordable areas in the top 10, Galashiels scored highly for friendliness and politeness of the locals.
- 3. Woodbridge, Suffolk:** The market town of Woodbridge came in third overall and first in the East of England.
- 4. Hexham, Northumberland:** Well known for its stunning floral gardens and parks, the market town of Hexham came in fourth on the list.
- 5. Perth, Scotland:** The vibrant riverside city of Perth, which was once the capital of Scotland, came second in Scotland and fifth overall owing to its sense of belonging.
- 6. Harrogate, Yorkshire:** Harrogate is a designated Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and scored highly on access to nature and green spaces.
- 7. Anglesey, Wales:** Hitting the top spot in Wales, Anglesey gained the highest score for its local green spaces and abundance of nature.
- 8. Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk:** A historic market and cathedral town, Bury St Edmunds is surrounded by countryside and boasts a rich history.
- 9. Stirling, Scotland:** Coming in third out of all locations in Scotland and ninth overall, the historic city of Stirling is known for its friendly local community.
- 10. Cirencester, Gloucestershire:** Cirencester sadly could not beat St Ives in the South West but still made it into the top 10 owing to its beautiful countryside and picturesque Cotswold villages.



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Don't ignore servicing

Summer and winter servicing and pre holiday checks don't appear to be high on some car owners priorities these days.

Servicing can sometimes be thought of as an unnecessary evil, unlike the annual MOT which is a legal requirement.

Some owners feel that as their car has had an MOT they have carried out their obligation regarding their vehicle maintenance.

What has been carried out, has been some very basic checks which on the surface may appear sufficient, visually things could seem fine, but below the surface things may not be all they seem.

With disc brakes all round, they can be easier to check more visually than drum brakes, but if drum brakes are not examined thoroughly on a regular basis this could cause some serious safety problems.

Safety issues aside, neglecting your vehicle and not having it serviced more often can be a false economy, and it may cost you even more in the long term, reliability can be compromised and fuel consumption can be affected.

We know of some owners that hadn't even had their new vehicles serviced in the first three years because they were still under warranty.

Failing to change the oil and filter annually could be the start of other engine problems occurring, over a greater period of time the efficiency of both of the above can deteriorate and possibly lead to contamination, oil pressure problems, and maybe ultimately even engine failure.

It's not unknown for engine oil to thicken and also turn to a gel like substance which reduces the ability of the oil to lubricate, and can result in expensive repairs, or even a very costly engine replacement in the worse scenario.




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While most of us assume the classic car arena is reserved exclusively for those whose sense of nostalgia is matched with astoundingly deep pockets, think again.

There are a number of iconic motors that, with a bit of research and a customary forecourt or driveway haggle, can be yours for much less than you may imagine.

MGB GT/ROADSTER

Iconic in shape, and dating back to the 1960s, the Roadster comes in a hard- and soft-top. It was the motor that generations of future Ferraris were modelled on.

Incredibly, you can pick up a GT for a little more than £5,000.

LAND ROVER DEFENDER

When Land Rover ceased production of the Defender back in 2016, the price of those remaining was expected to rocket, but it hasn't happened.

Instead, you can pick up this classic rural runaround for well under £10,000. The only warning will be that many may have lived a life of being slung around country roads and farms, and the repair bills can be punchy.

FORD CAPRI

The Capri is a car whose shape was as cool and laidback as the person behind the wheel. Its influence was the Ford Mustang, and you can sense the muscle car behind this classic 1980s motor, which can be yours for a smidge over £10,000.

PORSCHE 924

A Porsche for under £5,000? It's possible. While the 924 hasn't gone down in the motor annals as one for the purists, this mid-80s master still looks incredible, and the pop-up headlamps are a thing of beauty.

SAAB 900 TURBO

They say you don't know a Saab until you've driven a Saab, and this classic model, the 900, can find its way onto your driveway for as little as £4,000.

Sleek, solid and Swedish – it's a classic motor from a classic era.




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