



2020
VISION

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FREE

SKY BROWN

*GB's youngest summer
Olympian in 50 years*

**QUIRKY
LEAP
YEAR
FACTS**

TEA FOR TWO

Try the Kombucha
craze at home

Making HISTORY

Dancing on Ice features UK's first same-sex couple

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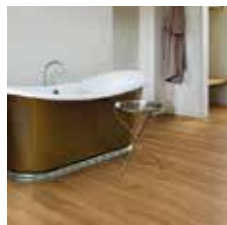
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February 2020

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Editor's notes...



Brett Shohet, Editor

Hello and welcome to this month's edition of **VISION**EppingTheydon. So, how are the New Year's resolutions going. Mine is still pretty good. I'm eating so much more healthily. I have so much more energy and sleep so much better.

Love is all around us this time of year, with Valentine's Day upon us. Yes, it's February already. Be sure to show your loved one how much they mean to you. Why not visit your local shops to buy that bouquet of flowers, card and gift? Remember to keep your £ local.

Dancing on Ice contestant Ian Watkins, better known as H from Steps, and his professional partner Matt Evers are our cover stars this month. They made history recently after becoming the first same-sex couple in the UK to compete.

In local news, St Clare Hospice crowns Epping's cutest canine, plans for a new restaurant in Epping have been submitted and police are asking for the public's help following a spate of burglaries.

We welcome any of your stories for our local news pages. So if you have a story to share, please send it to epping@visionmag.co.uk

VISION is your magazine for your town. I hope you all enjoy the February 2020 edition of **VISION**EppingTheydon.

Brett

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SKY IS THE LIMIT

Sky Brown, at 11 years of age, has been picked for the GB Skateboarding team, making her the youngest summer Olympian in 50 years. We look at what she has achieved thus far, and what this sensational youngster might accomplish going forward.

Sky was born in Japan – Miyazaki to be exact, on the south-eastern coast – to a British father and a Japanese mother. The pre-teen prodigy still officially resides in south-east Asia but spends the majority of her time in the United States.

Global sports giant Nike made her its youngest-ever acquisition in February 2019, and she has appeared regularly in ad campaigns with iconic female athletes, including fellow Briton Dina Asher-Smith, American artistic gymnast Simone Biles and South African middle-distance runner Caster Semenya.

At the age of eight, Sky became the youngest female to compete in the Vans US Open Pro Series. Although failing to place in the medals, she did finish higher than a number of competitors 20 years her senior.

This year, Sky clinched gold at Simple Session, a senior women's competition in Estonia's capital of Tallinn, and on a park course specifically designed for male competitors typically twice her size. It is this increased success in competition, matched with a squeaky clean image and the potential of youth, that has elevated her into superstar territory, and she is expected to become a multimillionaire long before she is even able to buy an alcoholic drink.

Dancing is another of Sky's talents and she was the winning celebrity on the US reality TV show *Dancing with the Stars: Juniors* in 2018.

While experts agree Sky's natural talent for skateboarding is without question, it was feared she may not be ready to compete at Olympic level owing to a lack of speed or power from her slight frame.

However, the decision by the British Olympic Association to invite her to compete for them – a significant 'win' given Japan's interest in her and the fact that the 2020 event is being held in Tokyo – has cemented the old adage, 'if you're good enough, you're old enough'.

And yet some commentators have queried the extent to which someone so young is able to cope with the pressure not just of high-level competition, but also of the media glare that will surely confront such a young talent. In Sky's defence, she is a youngster who exudes confidence. She practises surfing, does karate, jujitsu, dancing and singing, thrives on activity and equips herself as a modern, fearless youngster too young to have experienced the pressures that often only begin to surface in the teenage years.

"I just go about things in the way that feels natural," she says. "I am enjoying myself too much to feel the pressure and I'm keen to keep pushing forward with these opportunities that I have."

Those opportunities are probably somewhat wider than she herself appreciates. Competitive events she can handle, and media commitments are, it seems, a doddle. Yet stepping up as a cultural icon across social media, whose movements and actions are going to be lapped up by an adorning fan base spread all around the world... Sky Brown is going to have a busy few years ahead.



“I AM ENJOYING MYSELF
TOO MUCH TO
FEEL THE PRESSURE”



29
FEBRUARY

This year is a leap year, with 366 days instead of 365, the extra day falling on February 29.

The extra day is traditionally when women can turn the tables and propose marriage. It also means people born on February 29 can actually celebrate their birthday on the proper day.

Here are six facts about leap year:

1. The leap year's extra day is vital because a complete orbit around the sun takes slightly longer than 365 days – five hours, 48 minutes and 46 seconds longer, to be exact.

At one time, people observed a 355-day calendar with an extra 22-day month every two years. But in 45bc Julius Caesar ordered his astronomer, Sosigenes, to simplify things.

Sosigenes opted for the 365-day year with an extra day every four years to use up the extra hours. The extra day is added to February because it used to be the last month of the Roman calendar.

The system was then fine-tuned by Pope Gregory XIII. He coined the term leap year.

2. The tradition of women proposing on leap day is thought to date back to fifth-century Ireland when St Brigid complained to St Patrick that women had to wait too long for suitors to propose.

He then gave women a single day in a leap year to pop the question – the last day of the shortest month. Legend has it that Brigid dropped to a knee and proposed to Patrick that instant, but he refused, kissing her on the cheek and offering a silk gown to soften the blow.

3. Others believe the tradition originates from Scotland when Queen Margaret, then aged just five, declared in 1288 that a woman could propose to any man she liked on February 29.

She ruled that men who refused the proposal would need to pay a fine in the form of a kiss, a silk dress, a pair of gloves or one pound. To give suitors fair warning – and possibly a chance to escape – a woman was required to wear breeches or a scarlet petticoat on the day of the proposal.

4. In Denmark, a man refusing a woman's leap-day proposal must give her 12 pairs of gloves, while in Finland it's fabric for a skirt.

One in five engaged couples in Greece avoid getting married in a leap year because they believe it's bad luck.

In Italy, legend has it that women are erratic during a leap year, and several proverbs warn against planning important life events in a leap year. *Anno bisesto, anno funesto* means leap year, doom year.

5. Workers paid fixed annual or monthly salaries essentially work for free on February 29 because wages are not usually calculated to account for the extra day. And prisoners with one-year sentences must serve the extra day if the term crosses leap day.

6. People born on February 29 are called leaplings or leapers. The chance of being born on a leap day is one in 1,461. There are five million leaplings around the world.



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Timeless DENIM

*Trends will come and go...
...but denim is forever*

Here are just a few staple denim pieces that men and women should have in their wardrobes, safe in the knowledge that they will never go out of style...

THE DENIM JACKET

As practical as it is en vogue, the denim jacket will never fail you. Women, make a floral spring/summer dress edgier by teaming it with a light denim jacket. For a more casual aesthetic, go for distressed denim. For a rock chick vibe, stud detailing will be your best friend.

Men, relive the early noughties and brave the double denim like Justin Timberlake and Britney Spears at the 2001 AMAs. Alternatively, wear a dark-coloured denim jacket over a casual white shirt and chinos for a subtle nod to the trend.

SLIM AND SKINNY JEANS

Slim and skinny jeans aren't going anywhere.

Ladies, jeans and a blouse teamed with a chic

blazer and an oversized tote is a perfect smart/casual look that will take you from office to cocktail bar with ease. Mix things up by opting for white denim during the warmer months.

And gents, dark-coloured jeans with a shirt in a bold hue – the more daring, the better – complete with your favourite loafers, are great for standing out from the crowd. Team with a crisp white shirt and a sharp blazer for a smarter aesthetic.

BOYFRIEND JEANS

Slim fit jeans are in, but that doesn't mean their comfier and more voluminous cousins are out. Au contraire, boyfriend jeans are hotter than ever, and can be enjoyed by men and women alike. Sometimes, if you're lucky, the very same pair.

Girls, make like an off-duty supermodel and pair yours with simple tank tops, trainers and oversized sunglasses. Timberlands, flip-flops, wedges and even sky-scraping heels are all approved footwear choices.



Hair today GONE TOMORROW

HOW TO SLOW HAIR LOSS WITHOUT OVERLY EXPENSIVE TREATMENTS

Men beware, there is an enemy in our midst and, for many of us, its presence is already being felt. It resides not on the dark web, nor in damp alleyways – instead, it lives in the follicles of your hair... at least, that's if you've got any of the damn stuff left.

Since the dawn of time, hair loss in men has been an inevitable by-product of getting older. Hair leaves the scalp and instead migrates downwards to emerge out of ears and nostrils. Yet with follicle technology having never been better, and putting to one side the cheats' method of a full-on hair transplant, consider the following inexpensive treatments that, while not solving hair loss, can certainly slow it:

Shampoos

Shampooing can be harsh on hair follicles, yet using a specialised formula (such as Davines' energizing shampoo) can stimulate the scalp, while hims shampoo's DHT-reducing product reduces the rate at which hair falls out. Consider as well protein- and caffeine-heavy products for the shower.

Diet

A diet rich in oils, proteins and nutrients will send positive elements to the places your body needs them most. Consider too that smoking and alcohol consumption restricts the blood vessels, thereby reducing blood flow and circulation to the follicles.

Vitamin D

The *Journal of Dermatology* reported that people with alopecia are usually deficient in vitamin D, leading to the theory that the vitamin can help hair reset its growth phase.

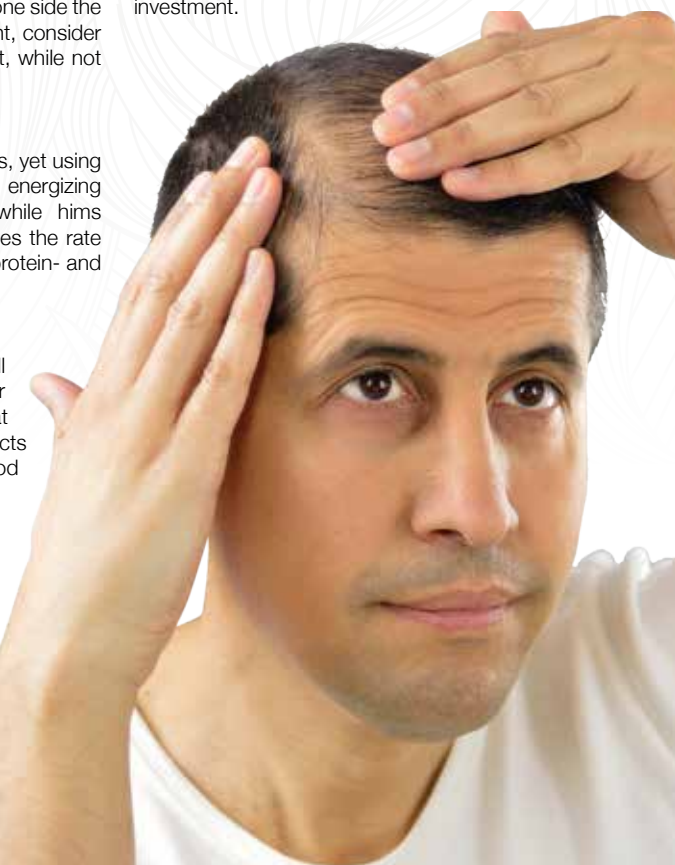
Stress

Stress is a known cause of hair loss, so cutting stress, boosting exercise and even practising meditation can improve not only

your hair retention but physical well-being in other parts of the body too.

Prescribed formulas

From over-the-counter formulas (the most common in the UK being Regaine) to platelet-rich plasma (PRP) treatment, which injects centrifuged blood back into the scalp at around £1,000 a go, speaking to a health professional about regrowth for follicles that are dormant, not dead, could be a worthwhile investment.





TEA FOR TWO?

Why not try Kombucha?

Fermented foods and drinks have been experiencing a surge in popularity in recent years, with many people singing the praise of this refreshing, if not slightly sour, tea that is known for being rich in antioxidants and probiotics.

How to make Kombucha at home (1L)

You will need;

1L water (dechlorinated) | 1 teabag (black tea is considered to be the best but other tea can be used) | 50-100g sugar (cane sugar is advised) | 1 small scoby (these can be bought online) | 100ml starter liquid (this will come with the scoby)

How to make;

Boil 250ml water | Add the teabag and sugar, stirring until dissolved | Brew for 10 minutes | Remove teabag | Add the rest of the cold water | Add the scoby and starter liquid | Ensure you leave a minimum of a 5cm gap at the top of your liquid to allow for fermentation | Cover the jar with a cloth and fasten with an elastic band | Leave to ferment for 6-9 days at room temperature | It's then ready for the 'secondary fermentation'

process | Remove the scoby and add additional flavour if desired | Store in an airtight bottle with at least a 3cm gap at the top | Leave at room temperature for between 5-14 days

What flavours can I add to my Kombucha?

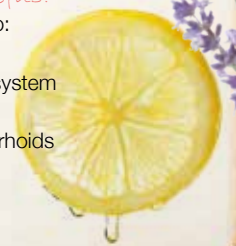
This is completely dependent on your taste preferences, but some of the recommended flavour ideas include;

- Berries or citrus fruits
- Dried fruits such as goji berries, figs or dates
- Frozen fruit
- Herbs such as lavender, mint or lemon balm
- Mild spices like turmeric, allspice or cardamom

What are the health benefits?

Kombucha has the ability to:

- Improve your digestion
- Strengthen your immune system
- Reduce blood pressure
- Alleviate gout and haemorrhoids
- Improve liver function
- Fight cancer



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DO THE RUMBA

How this spirit went from being the preferred bounty of pirates to a premium tipple...

When Christopher Columbus introduced the Americas to sugar cane, he couldn't have possibly realised his actions would one day lead to the creation of one of the finest drinks around: rum.

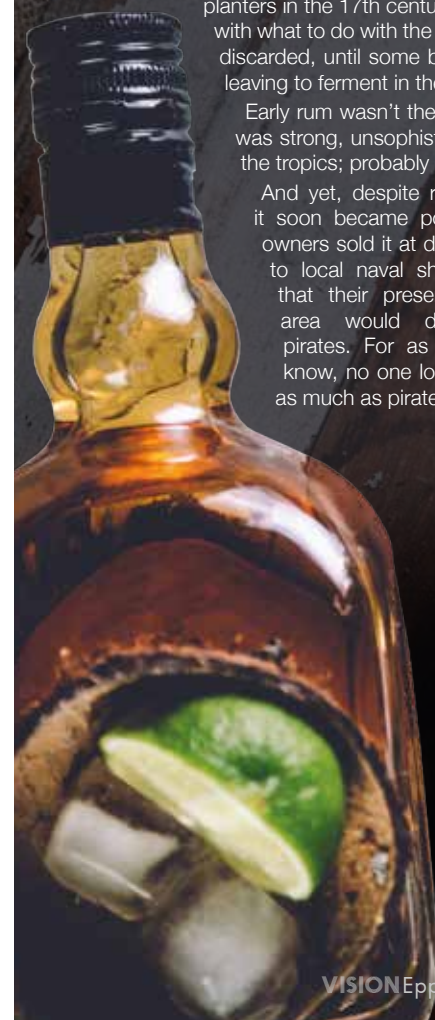
Like many revelations, the discovery of rum was a happy accident, which occurred when sugar planters in the 17th century grew frustrated at the waste product of sugar: molasses. At a loss with what to do with the thick, syrupy liquid, any molasses they couldn't give away was simply discarded, until some bright spark discovered that by mixing the molasses with water and leaving to ferment in the sun, they created a spirit – rum!

Early rum wasn't the smooth and delectable beverage we quaff these days, of course. It was strong, unsophisticated and a great cure-all for the many ills that befell those living in the tropics; probably why it was nicknamed rumbullion or kill-devil.

And yet, despite rum's more acerbic qualities, it soon became popular as plantation owners sold it at discounted prices to local naval ships, knowing that their presence in the area would discourage pirates. For as we well know, no one loves rum as much as pirates...

The glorious golden spirit continued to garner popularity, to the extent that the British Navy couldn't go without it, and in the 1730s they adopted a daily ration of half a pint of 160 proof rum, which remained (though to a diminished strength) until 1969.

These days, rum is a billion-pound industry, and there are many wonderful brands that you can happily sip neat with just an ice cube or two. So next time you're relaxing with a finger of the finest, remember to raise a toast to the sugar planters who finally figured out why you should never EVER throw molasses away. Cheers, me hearties.





Whether you want to save time in the kitchen, don't always have the necessary cooking appliances to create your favourite dishes or simply love a good hack, these four unusual tips will ensure you never look at cooking in the same way again.

Use dental floss to cut

Sometimes, cutting with a knife can be tricky, especially if the food you are attempting to chop up is either very soft or prone to crumbling. Dental floss is a great tool for cutting foods such as a cake or a very mature cheddar, providing more precision and less mess than a knife.

Use cling film pouches to poach eggs

Eggs are an easy and filling snack or meal; however, poaching the perfect egg can be a challenge. Avoid your eggs disintegrating by lining a cup with cling film, spraying with olive oil and cracking in an egg. Then tie it closed, drop it into simmering water and cook as normal.

Place an ice cube in your burgers

Do you often worry about serving dry burgers at your BBQs? A simple trick is to press a small ice cube into the middle of your burger patty before cooking, sealing the beef around it and then grilling or frying as usual. The result? A moist and juicy burger that no one will suspect has had an ice cube in it.

Cook chicken in glass jar

If you do not have a grill pan but have a craving for tender chicken kebabs, this hack is for you. Simply place your kebabs (on a wooden skewer) in a glass jar, cover with tin foil and cook in the oven until the chicken juices run clear.





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Tranquil Dawn

Dulux Colour of the Year



Interior designers and homeowners across the country have been waiting with bated breath to discover what shade Dulux has named as its Colour of the Year for 2020.

And it couldn't be more different from last year's strong Spiced Honey shade.

Why has Dulux chosen Tranquil Dawn as this year's Colour of the Year?

This cool-tone shade of green, which is extremely versatile, was picked to offer an antidote to an "increasingly disconnected" modern society.

What exactly does this mean?

Put simply, Dulux believes that modern technologies have left us feeling chaotic and lost, unable to identify with what makes us human. Therefore, this calming and natural shade is supposed to remind us of our real selves and the natural world around us.

How can you use Tranquil Dawn in your home?

What makes this colour different from other shades of green is its ability to subtly shift its tone depending on what other shades it is used with, allowing you to create many different vibes in your home.

Design a luxurious living room

Combine Tranquil Dawn with a soft, sandy shade to create a living room that is warm, inviting and promotes positive social interactions.

Create a calming bedroom

Jumping on the two-tone trend, paint the top half of your bedroom walls in Tranquil Dawn and the bottom in a soothing shade of bluey-grey. Not only will these make your bedroom appear more spacious, they will also bring the focus on to the bed, which should be the main feature in a room designed for restoration.

Update your woodwork

If you don't fancy steering away from your preferred wall colours, why not paint your woodwork in Tranquil Dawn? This versatile shade has been matched with 36 other colours by Dulux so there are literally thousands of combinations you could go with.





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HOME & DIY

5 uses for a PAPER BAG

If you think that paper bags can only be used for bringing your shopping home from the supermarket, then think again. These environmentally friendly carriers are ideal for a number of household tasks and DIY projects.

MAKE DIY WOVEN BASKETS

You can never have enough storage solutions in your home, and these DIY baskets are ideal for smaller items such as keys or sewing materials. Simply cut your paper bag into long strips and then, starting with the base, start weaving. Finish with a handle if desired.

CLEAN YOUR WINDOWS

If you have ever experienced problems in getting your windows to shine rather than streak, then a paper bag could be your saviour. Merely tear up your bag, scrunch it together and get scrubbing. You can also apply a light spray of white vinegar for increased sparkle.

WRAP PRESENTS

With the sudden surge in nature-inspired design and décor, why not jump on the bandwagon and create some sustainable wrapping paper? Just cut up your paper bag, lay it out flat and then wrap up your item. Add some simple twine and a sprig of your favourite herb to create a unique and gorgeous gift.

CREATE DIY LANTERNS

Whether you want to create an inviting atmosphere for your next party or just love to experiment with crafts and candles, this is the ideal project for you. Simply use silhouette stamps to create your chosen design and then pop an LED candle into your bag. Do not use a real lit tea light or candle for safety reasons as the bag is flammable.

IN THE KITCHEN TWO WAYS

1. Ripen fruit. Place your fruit in a paper bag, seal and leave at room temperature for a few days. The result? Perfectly sweet and juicy fruit.
2. Make popcorn. Simply pour ¼ cup of uncooked popcorn kernels into a plain paper bag, seal and cook in the microwave for 2½ minutes or until the popping stops.

Photo credit: denise carbonell/Flickr/CC BY 2.0, One Good Thing by Jillee, www.notonthehighstreet.com, www.amazon.co.uk, www.allrecipes.com



BACK TO THE FUTURE

FUTURISM, THE LATEST TREND IN HOME DÉCOR, TAKES ALL THE BEST ELEMENTS FROM THE PAST AND PLACES THEM FIRMLY IN THE MODERN WORLD

We may not be zooming around on spaceships just yet or wearing anti-gravity belts, but beloved 1960s cartoon *The Jetsons* certainly predicted some of the technology we now use daily. But beyond video calls and smartwatches, the futuristic family also had some very enviable décor in their Orbit City apartment, as style which is very much the basis of futurism.

Presenting a retro vision of the future, this trend incorporates many classic furniture pieces from the past – think the classic Eames lounge chair, the Thunderbird sofa and pendulum floor lamps – against a colour palate and textural backdrop that is extremely up to date.

Think stainless steel lighting fixtures and rich suede furnishings against a textural rose-gold wall, curvaceous fibreglass dining table and chairs with a huge overhanging light, and heavy granite coffee tables on textural rugs in ethereal hues.

A style that is utterly earthbound but also out of this world, it evokes all the best scenes from classic sci-fi... the *Star Trek* command deck if it had Laurence Llewelyn-Bowen at its helm, or a luxury condo on Magrathea.

So how do you incorporate a little stardust into your current home? Consider adding a little textural juxtaposition, such as natural stone sculptures or clay vases against embossed wallpaper. You can also invest in another current trend of the moment: cacti. These magnificent, verdant beauties stand out beautifully against a softer colour background and are reassuringly low maintenance as well.

In all, futurism isn't something to fear; it's to be embraced – oh, and by the way, it's here right now.



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As BOLD as ice

Dancing on Ice glides over new ground as Ian Watkins and Matt Evers are unveiled as the show's first same-sex duo

.....

It's both encouraging and demoralising that ITV's dance reality show *Dancing on Ice* should court so many headlines over the decision to showcase its first same-sex couple – encouraging in the sense that prime-time television is embracing a move regarded as an industry first; demoralising in the sense that such a simple reflection of everyday society finds itself worthy of headlines in the first place.

Equality campaigners will also point to how long it has taken the terrestrial networks to reach this point, although there is still no indication that BBC big brother *Strictly Come Dancing* will follow suit.

The dancers in question are Ian Watkins – former member of Steps and better known by his stage name of H – and professional dancer Matt Evers, whose debut performance in the first week of January wowed the live audience and provoked widespread approval across social media.

The pair, who are both openly gay, have captured the imagination and admiration of the watching audience during an era in which LGBT issues are at the forefront of hearts and minds.

ITV's decision to feature the pair will almost certainly prove a ratings winner; but more

than that, it is hoped the move will set a positive precedent across other prime-time shows, reflecting the progressive values of acceptance, tolerance and respect that our nation has always found itself a world leader in displaying.

Watkins said after the first dance, "It was emotional, because I have wanted this for so long and it means so much to so many people, and the world is ready for this."

The judges – including Jayne Torvill, Christopher Dean and Ashley Banjo – were ubiquitous in their acclaim of the dancers, while John Barrowman broke down in tears in admiration of the duo.

He said to the performers, "I am emotional; it makes me happy on a complete multitude of levels, just because of seeing two men who represent someone who is like me, and to skate as well as you did... you've done it now, the nerves are out of the way."

Watkins and Evers are second-favourites to take the crown, though they have tough competition in the 2020 edition of the show, which regularly attracts viewing figures in excess of six million. Also present in the 12th iteration of the reality series are, among others, model Caprice, Paralympic sprinter Libby Clegg, presenter Joe Swash and former footballer Kevin Kilbane, with Diversity dancer Perri Kiely tipped as early favourite to lift the *Dancing on Ice* crown.

As for Evers, who is a former world figure-skating competitor, he credits both Watkins and the show's producers for taking such a positive step. "I just have to say thank you to the network, thank you to ITV and thank you to everybody at home who is accepting of this, because this is normal... this is absolutely normal. "This is my 12th series of *Dancing on Ice* and this year is special. This journey is going to mean a lot to a lot of people in this country and around the world."

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LOCAL NEWS

from your neighbourhood

LOCAL NEWS EPPING

Photo credit: Vikki Lince,
Pawsome Pawprints



Luna the Cane Corso is declared Cutest Canine

A dog from Epping has officially been named the town's cutest canine.

Lovely Luna, a seven-and-a-half-month-old Cane Corso, will 'lead the pack' at St Clare Hospice's annual Winter Walkies 5k sponsored dog walk on Sunday, February 23 after being crowned winner of its Cutest Canine Competition.

Luna, owned by Bethany Commins from Epping, has been named the cutest canine after winning the charity's popular social media competition, whereby canine contestants compete for the most votes for a chance to win a bespoke hamper as well as the privilege of launching the Winter Walkies event.

From Pomeranians and Pekingeses to Irish doodles and Cane Corsos, a total of 11 handsome hounds and pretty pups entered the online photo competition, with

more than 652 votes cast in the five-day contest. The winning votes for Luna amounted to 147.

Luna's owner Bethany said: "We are so excited to be leading the walk. St Clare Hospice is very close to our hearts and we are so glad we can get everyone involved to support, even Luna."

If you and your dog would like to join Luna and Bethany at St Clare's Winter Walkies event at 11am on February 23, then register online at stclarehospice.org.uk/event/winterwalkies or call the fundraising team on 01279 773750.

Advanced registration costs £10 for adults and £5 for children, which includes free soup, a dog medal and certificates for children. The event is taking place at St Clare Hospice, Hastingwood Road, Hastingwood, Essex, CM17 9JX.



Eco-friendly residents donate their prizes to charity

People living in blocks of flats in Epping are among those to donate to charity after they came third on the Recycling Rewards leader board.

Residents living in 1,500 properties across selected blocks of purpose-built flats in Epping Forest compete against each other by taking part in activities such as the Food Waste Challenge, Recycling Quiz and 'Right Thing, Right Bin'.

Epping Forest Recycling Rewards is provided by Jump, in partnership with Epping Forest District Council, as the leading supplier of sustainability and well-being engagement programmes in the UK.

Each month, the residents who earn the most 'green points' win a voucher for reducing, reusing and recycling as much as they can. Over the year, individual points all contribute to a community total,

with the top-scoring community winning the largest share of £1,750 to donate to a local charity.

Recycling Rewards members voted for the charity they would like to support. Epping residents finished in third place and donated £550 to the Epping Forest Food Bank.

Councillor Nigel Avey, contract and technical services portfolio holder at Epping Forest District Council, presented the charities with their donations and said: "It's great to see how residents in the selected blocks of flats are doing their bit to recycle more, as well as improving the quality of recycling by putting the right stuff in the right bin.

"We've seen recycling rates increasing in Epping Forest, and it's a real win-win to be generating donations for local causes while increasing the amount of recycled materials."

MP signs Holocaust Book of Commitment

Dame Eleanor Laing, MP for Epping Forest, has signed the Holocaust Educational Trust's Book of Commitment.

In doing so, she has pledged her commitment to Holocaust Memorial Day and to honouring those who were murdered during the Holocaust as well as to paying tribute to the Holocaust survivors who work tirelessly to educate young people today.

This year marks 75 years since the liberation of the concentration camps of Europe and the end of the Second World War.

Thousands of commemorative events have been arranged by schools, faith groups and community organisations across the country.

After signing the Book of Commitment, Dame Eleanor MP said: "We must never forget – lest we allow it to happen again.

"Holocaust Memorial Day is an important opportunity for people from Epping Forest to reflect on the darkest times of European history.

"As the Holocaust moves from living history to history, it becomes ever more important that we take the time to remember the victims and pay tribute to the survivors."



Team of 12 to represent Hospice at London Marathon



A runner from Epping is set to join a team of 12 runners in the world's most famous marathon in April, where he will represent St Clare Hospice.

Nick Bowerbank, 34, was one of six people allocated a Golden Bond place by St Clare and has pledged to raise a total of £2,000 for the West Essex and East Herts Charity.

The money will go towards the hospice's essential care and support services for local people facing death, dying and loss.

The hospice is also encouraging more local London Marathon 2020 participants who have secured a place in the ballot to join Team St Clare.

Joining the charity's team will provide runners with opportunities to benefit from a series of meetings at the Hospice, where experienced runners will share tips and tricks.

Running vests will also be provided, and there is no minimum fundraising target to achieve.

If you have your own ballot place for the London Marathon and would like to run for Team St Clare, please contact challenges and events fundraiser, Emma Broadbent, on 01279 773754 or email emma.broadbent@stclarehospice.org.uk

Shock as couple return home to find it being robbed

Police are appealing for information after two people returned home to Epping last month to find their house being robbed.

The couple arrived in Bury Lane just before 6pm on January 24 to find a white Mitsubishi SUV-type vehicle parked across their driveway.

They told police they saw up to three men wearing face coverings leave the property. It's believed that the suspects spotted the victims in their car before they drove off in the direction of Epping High Road.

When the homeowners investigated, it was found that the intruders had smashed a door and stolen jewellery, handbags and watches.

Police want to hear from anyone who has information, CCTV or dashcam footage that could help with their enquiries.

Please call Loughton CID on 101, quoting crime reference 42/13110/20.

Alternatively, you can call Crimestoppers anonymously on 0800 555 111.

New restaurant could be coming to town

A new restaurant could soon be coming to Epping High Street after a planning application was submitted to Epping Forest District Council.

Alec Smith, who owns Smith's of Ongar and Alec's Restaurant in Brentwood, said the new restaurant would be run by him 'in the same manner and to the same exacting high standards'.

The planning application states that the new restaurant will be built on the ground floor of Revival Court, near the new mixed development of apartments and shops on the site of the former Half Moon Pub.

The letter says the new restaurant would employ 10 full-time and five part-time staff working a rota over seven days a week.

The application also reveals that the restaurant will have underfloor heating and comfort cooling to ensure customer comfort in the summer and winter months.



Photo credit: Google Maps



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from your neighbourhood



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Recognise this man?

Essex Police want to identify this man and the Owners of these items following burglaries in Theydon Bois and Epping.

Police received reports of burglaries in Graylands, Theydon Bois on January 16 and Sunnyside Road, Epping, on January 7. Another burglary is also believed to have taken place in North Weald.

Police arrested a man on January 16 before locating items that they believe to have been stolen from an address in Chingford.

One of the stolen watches has 'Dear Christian, Happy 21st love Lyn' engraved on the back.

A 23-year-old man from Chingford has been charged with three counts of burglary, and he is due to appear at Chelmsford Crown Court on Monday February 17.

If you recognise the man or have information about the items photographed, please call Loughton CID on

101, quoting crime reference 42/3544/20 (Epping), 42/8408/20 (North Weald) or 42/8414/20 (Theydon Bois).

Alternatively, you can call Crimestoppers anonymously on 0800 555 111.

Police are advising residents to consider protecting their property by marking items with visible or hidden marking. Hidden marking can be anything from UV pens to logging and photographing items you own. Visible marking can be anything from engraving an item to using a permanent pen to label goods with a postcode. Residents and business owners can also purchase intruder sprays. These sprays cover intruders with a forensically detectable liquid which shows up on suspects when they are arrested.

There are more hints and tips on marking your valuables on the Essex Police website. Go to www.essex.police.uk

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Community Cuppa event is as popular as ever



A successful event that brings community members of all ages together in Theydon Bois is proving as popular as ever.

Lisa Kenneally and Karen Meyer from Theydon set up the Community Cuppa group just over a year ago because they felt there was a gap in the community and lack of neighbourhood feel.

Founder Lisa said: "If you stop going to the school gates and mingling with mums, or if you don't walk a dog or go to church, you can end up getting quite isolated. We thought, let's just see what happens if we make a few cakes and put the kettle on, and the concept just took off. We had more than 50 guests at the last event and are still growing."

The Community Cuppa event takes place on the last Wednesday of every month at St Mary's Church Hall from 10am to noon.

Lisa explained: "It's a really simple formula that could be adopted by many other towns and villages. We make a few homemade cakes that we sell at 50p a slice, we put the kettle on and put some games on the tables and people can spend time doing what they like."

"The first time we ever ran the event we had two ladies who came in separately, both shaking with nerves. They are now good friends and regulars at every event, welcoming new members and doing different activities together."

Community Cuppa has a range of members, from young mothers to people in their 90s, and aims to break down barriers between age groups in a welcoming environment.

To find out more about Community Cuppa, visit the Facebook page: www.facebook.com/TBCOMMUNITYCUPPA

Village cyclist proves he is one to watch

A cyclist from Theydon is celebrating after an impressive performance at a recent event.

Max Bolton won the overall and the junior category at the Eastern Cyclo-Cross League on January 26, riding for the Tofauti Everyone Active team. He rode nine laps of the course in one hour and 23 seconds, finishing 12 seconds ahead of his nearest rival, James Madgwick.

The race is a mass start, multi-lap race featuring a range of different categories over short laps and featuring obstacles. Bolton emerged victorious from 56 competitors who started the race.

Take a trip to California with village drama society

People in Theydon Bois can take a trip to California next month.

That's because the Theydon Bois Drama Society is performing *California Suite* by Neil Simon in Theydon Bois Village Hall from March 19 to 21.

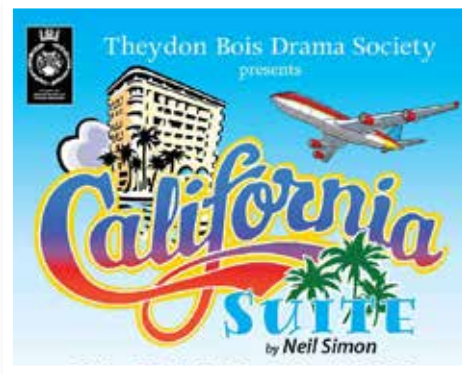
The play is divided into four parts. In "Visitor from New York", Hannah, a magazine writer, is joined by her ex-husband, the question being with whom should their daughter spend the next six months?

In "Visitor from Philadelphia" is a wife who arrives at the suite, catching her husband "in flagrante delicto" with a drunken stranger.

In "Visitors from London", Academy Award nominee Diana returns from the ceremony empty-handed to her husband, Sidney, while "The Visitors from Chicago" are two couples ending a disastrous vacation they should not have shared.

California Suite is described as Neil Simon at his most humane, compassionate best.

Tickets are £10 and can be purchased by calling 01992 919038.



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PLANT OF THE MONTH:

Lilies

Who doesn't love to be gifted a beautiful bunch of lilies? Among the most recognisable flowers in the UK, lilies are known for their stunning scent, their bold colours and their imposing size. And, thankfully, they are relatively easy to grow.

When should I plant lilies?

Lily bulbs can be planted as early as autumn or winter, but they are perfectly fine to plant in early spring as long as they are in by the end of March.

Where should I plant my lily bulbs?

Lilies will reappear year after year, so it is important that you bear this in mind when choosing where to plant them. As a rule, they like a sunny spot or an area with some light shade. However, brightly coloured lilies keep their colour better in areas with consistent shade.

How to plant lily bulbs

Soak your bulbs in warm water for 12 hours before planting – this will save you 2–3 weeks of growing time | Plant your lily bulbs in groups of 3–5 for a more effective display | Dig a 20cm -deep hole for each group of bulbs | Spread a 5cm layer of grit over the bottom for improved drainage | Plant the bulbs pointy end up | Cover with soil

How to protect your lilies

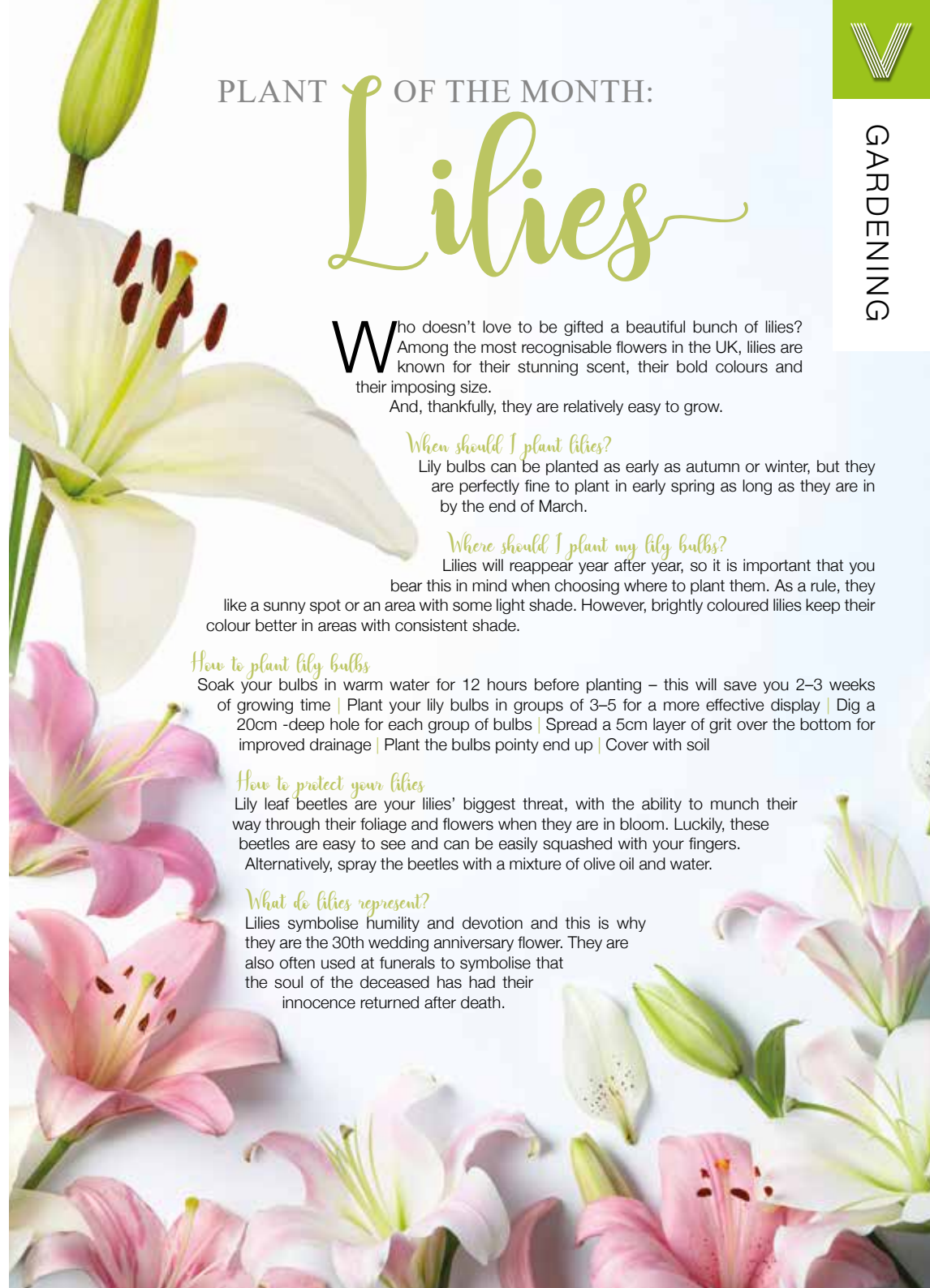
Lily leaf beetles are your lilies' biggest threat, with the ability to munch their way through their foliage and flowers when they are in bloom. Luckily, these beetles are easy to see and can be easily squashed with your fingers. Alternatively, spray the beetles with a mixture of olive oil and water.

What do lilies represent?

Lilies symbolise humility and devotion and this is why they are the 30th wedding anniversary flower. They are also often used at funerals to symbolise that the soul of the deceased has had their innocence returned after death.



GARDENING





PUZZLES & TRIVIA

PUZZLES

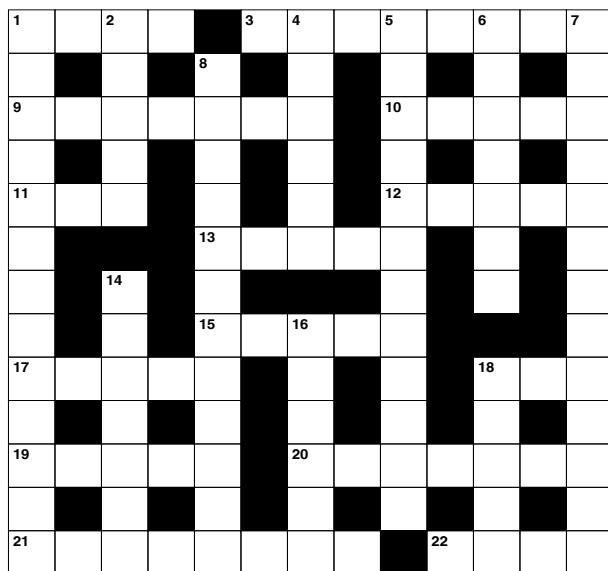
Answers can be found on the Contents Page 4

ACROSS

1. Creative disciplines (4)
3. Unyielding (8)
9. Shock with wonder (7)
10. Happening (5)
11. Cut of pork (3)
12. Public square (5)
13. At that place; not here (5)
15. Stem of an arrow (5)
17. Individual things (5)
18. Popular beverage (3)
19. Instruct; teach (5)
20. Mark the boundaries of (7)
21. Lenience (8)
22. In a tense state (4)

DOWN

1. Misplaced in time or date (13)
2. Motet (anag) (5)
4. Small parrot (informal) (6)
5. By chance (12)
6. Mediocre (7)
7. Wastefully; lavishly (13)
8. Most perfect example of a quality (12)
14. Get ready (7)



16. Sour to the taste (6)
18. Shy (5)

DID YOU KNOW?

- ▶ An octopus has three hearts. They need all of them to circulate blood through their bodies
- ▶ African penguins can swim underwater for up to two and a half minutes trying to catch small fish
- ▶ The cheetah is the world's fastest land mammal. It can accelerate from 0 to 60mph in three seconds
- ▶ Polar bears don't hibernate, but females enter into a dormant state while pregnant
- ▶ Dark patches around meerkats' eyes help them be effective lookouts by reducing the glare of the sun
- ▶ Unlike other cats, lions are social animals and live in prides. They can keep track of one another by roaring

SUDOKU

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Braeside Juniors (2½ to 11): Wed 4 March 9.15am
Braeside Seniors (11 to 16): Thurs 5 March 9.15am
Oaklands (2½ to 11): Thurs 5 March 9.15am
Normanhurst (2½ to 16): Fri 6 March 9.15am

MARCH 2020

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9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

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BANISH BEDTIME BLUES

If your little one's bedtime routine has become a living nightmare, consider sprucing up their bed so they'll never want to get out of it

Every parent knows the perils of bedtime. The repeated calls to get pyjamas on, the never-ending stories, followed by the midnight excursions into your room which usually result in no one getting a decent night's kip. The trouble is, kids never want the fun to end, which is why turning their regular bed into a themed one could be a great way to make bedtime the final exciting event to end every day.

Deciding on your design and theme is really down to space, money and your little one's personal taste. And really, there is no need to spend a fortune when children have such vibrant imaginations. One of the cheapest and most obvious alterations is to attach wheels and a toy steering wheel to a basic wooden frame. Add a lick of red paint and you've got a racing car bed – licence not required! You can also erect a tent over the bed – because what child wouldn't want to pretend they were camping every night? Or perhaps a sail to transform it into a pirate ship?

If your little one is lucky enough to have a midsleeper (higher than a regular bed with the space underneath usually housing storage or a desk) you can afford to get really creative. You could add a slide, or even build a playhouse or cardboard castle, converting a boring old bed into a veritable playground.

But remember that, with kids, you sometimes don't need to do very much to bring magic to a dull routine. Just adding some fairy lights, glow stars or some cool new bedding can be enough to get them leaping under the covers, every single night.

Photo credit: matrixkids.com, Victoria Pearson for goodhousekeeping.com



BRICKS & MORTAR

TO LET

FOR SALE

What is the difference between buy-to-let and residential mortgages?

The buy-to-let mortgage revolution was one that the housing market constructed with all the speed and eagerness of a stunning detached property. It was perfectly situated (in a marketplace where rental prices were going through the roof), and as for the views, well, buy-to-let landlords could sit back for years, do very little, and watch their profits roll in.

At their peak in 2007, buy-to-let mortgage approvals hit 183,000, but increased taxes brought in by George Osborne in 2015 – amid fears buy-to-let mortgages were pushing property prices through the roof – have cut that figure back to around the 75,000 mark.

So while the trend of buying to immediately let out to tenants has waned, it should be noted that it's still an industry worth almost £250 billion a year... or, put another way, 3,800 mortgages are approved every month.

The key difference between a buy-to-let mortgage

and a residential mortgage is that, with the latter, you will live in the property yourself, rather than simply using it as an investment whereby tenants arrive from day one. As a result, with a buy-to-let mortgage, interest rates and fees tend to be much higher, while purchasers have to stump up a deposit of around 25 per cent (and sometimes as high as 40 per cent).

In addition, buy-to-let mortgages are often interest only, meaning landlords no longer profit from the likely uplift in value of a property. Naturally, with a residential repayment mortgage, an owner can walk away with sizeable equity should the market improve.

With a number of other tax changes – such as increased stamp duty on buy-to-lets, removal of a 10 per cent income tax saving owing to 'wear and tear', and an ability to offset interest paid on their own mortgage from the rental income declared to the taxman removed – the market for buy-to-let deals has become much tougher, matched with residential mortgages enjoying a three-year high last year.

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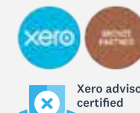
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ALL CHANGE

HOW BRITAIN CONVERTED TO DECIMAL CURRENCY

For those who lived through them, the 1970s are often regarded as a decade of struggle. Yet while the Three Day Week, bin strikes, economic decline and David Bowie's morphing into alter ego Ziggy Stardust proved troubling for some, Britain could at least thank the decade for decentralisation, a positive event that saw us take a needy grip on our currency... if only people had more of it in their pockets.

This new dawn began the morning after Valentine's Day 1971. And sure enough, the people were quick to embrace a love affair with multiples of 10 and 100, in the process bidding farewell to the sixpence, florin, crown and half crown – some of which had been a part of everyday life for centuries.

In truth, although the conversion may officially took effect on February 15, changes had been phased in over the course of months and even years. Indeed, it was 1966 when Parliament announced we were set for the country's greatest ever single currency change. Then, in 1968, some three years before D-Day (Decimal Day), new 5p and 10p coins were introduced. Simple replacements for the existing shilling and two-shilling coins, they were followed by a 50p coin in the shape of a heptagon. And then, finally, on D-Day, half-pennies, 1p and 2p coins were worked into circulation.

A huge public information campaign was fired up in the days and weeks leading up to the big day, meaning, for the most part, that British shopkeepers and their customers were ready... but were the banks? In short, no – the huge task of removing an entire currency from the system meant a massive physical operation in every city, high street and rural bank. As a result, our financial institutions closed for four days to prepare for the changeover.

When they reopened, the way we bought goods and services would never be the same again.

2 FARTHINGS = 1 HALFPENNY
2 HALFPENNY = 1 PENNY
3 PENCE = 1 THRUPPENCE
6 PENCE = 1 SIXPENCE - A 'TANNER'
12 PENCE = 1 SHILLING - A BOB
2 SHILLINGS = 1 FLORIN - A 'TWO BOB BIT'
2 SHILLINGS AND 6 PENCE = 1 HALF CROWN
5 SHILLINGS = 1 CROWN
20 SHILLINGS = 1 POUND



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TOKYO 2020 THE NEW SPORTS



SPORT

2. SOFTBALL

In the latest instalment showcasing sports set to debut or return at the 2020 Olympics in Tokyo later this year, we take a look at softball.

Five new pursuits have been added to the roster for Tokyo 2020, which kicks off on July 24. It will be the second time that the Far Eastern metropolis has hosted the Summer Olympiad... it would have been the third had the Second World War not intervened in 1940.

Softball, in essence, is a sport very much like baseball, and there will be six countries competing for the gold medal.

Last seen at the Olympics in Beijing 2008, the qualification process for Tokyo saw 2018 WBSC Softball World Champions United States, Europe/Africa winners Italy, Americas victors Mexico, and Australia as the Oceania representatives. Canada

qualified along with Mexico, while Japan is present as host.

Softball has seven innings, two fewer than

baseball, a bigger ball measuring two inches more in circumference, and a smaller bat. The pitch is also smaller than its compatriot and the pitching distance of softball is around 40ft from the plate, as opposed to 60ft in baseball. Also, whereas the ball is pitched overarm in baseball, an underhand technique is used in softball.

Returning after a hiatus of 12 years, following its removal for the 2012 Games in London, it was previously part of the programme between Atlanta 1996 and Beijing 2008.

The six countries will compete with a roster of 15 players each, with the 90 athletes helping to make up the estimated 11,091 who will compete in Tokyo.

Softball was invented in the late 19th century in Chicago as a game designed to move at a faster pace than baseball. Contrary to common knowledge, since the 1930s, the "soft" ball is actually hard... spectators beware.



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WHAT'S ON

in your area

Copped Hall Guided Tours
Copped Hall, Crown Hill, Epping,
CM16 5HS
February 16, tours start 10.15am



Photo credit: Tom Morton

Tours cover the whole of the gardens, a large part of the mansion, the cellars and the stables.

Individuals can explore the exhibitions on the first floor of the mansion after the tour.

Tea, coffee and homemade cakes will be available; shop open, seasonal fruit and vegetables for sale.

£10 entry per person. These days are for Guided Tours only. There is no free access.

Gates open at 10am (last entry 11am). Tours start at 10.15am and last up to three hours (with a break for refreshments).

There is no lift at Copped Hall, and therefore access to the first floor is not possible for people with mobility difficulties.

Half Term Tennis Camp
Theydon Bois Lawn Tennis Club, Sidney Road, Theydon Bois, Epping, CM16 7DT
February 20

A fun-packed day of tennis and games.

For children aged three to five, the session will run from 10am to 11am and costs £5.50 for members and £6.50 for non-members.

For children aged five and over, the session will run from 10am to 2pm and costs £20 for members and £25 for non-members.

Spaces are limited. For more information and to book, visit www.facebook.com/theydonboistc

Over 35s Party
Theydon Bois Golf Club, Theydon Road, Epping, CM16 4EH
February 21, 8.30pm – 1am

Parties are held in the Clubhouse, which has a huge permanent dance floor and great views of the golf course. There is also a terrace.

Admission is £8 online or £10 on the door.

The dress code is smart. Smart denim is allowed; however, no trainers, t-shirts, ripped jeans, etc.

This is a members-only club; however, non-members can join on arrival for £5 a year.

To book, visit www.dance-parties.co.uk/portfolio-item/essex-parties/#theydon

Coopersale Hall School Open Day
Coopersale Hall School, Flux's Lane, Epping,
CM16 7PE
March 3, 9.15am

A Coopersale Hall Open Morning takes place on a normal school day, providing an opportunity for new parents to gain a real sense of what we offer to their children.

Tours of the school are guided by our articulate and confident Year 6 children who will tell you what life at Coopersale Hall is like from a pupil's point of view. It is also an opportunity to meet the headmistress, members of staff and current parents informally over refreshments.

Contact the school directly to book a place at the Open Day. For more information, visit www.coopersalehallschool.co.uk

Paint and Wine Night
Eden Coffee Club, 88 High Street, Epping,
CM16 4AE
March 11, 6.30pm

Eden invites you to the second in a series of paint and wine nights for a chance to get creative, with no experience necessary.

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