



TOP 7
INTERIOR
TRENDS
FOR 2023

Relax and unwind
with adult colouring

SAVE MONEY
try no-spend January

Celebrate the creation
OF WINNIE-THE-POOH

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JANUARY 2023

Editor's notes...



Brett Shohet, Editor

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

This last month has been difficult as I said goodbye to my best friend David, who passed away aged just 46 after becoming ill at the start of last year. He leaves behind his family, three children, his beloved friends and lots of happy memories. As well as being a Southend United season ticket holder, he loved the Southend area. Recently, his family and friends gathered together to pay tribute to David, wearing scarves and t-shirts we had specially printed. It was a lovely way to celebrate his life.

I'm lucky, at my age, not to have lost many people close to me. It was especially difficult in the lead-up to Christmas. Suddenly, the gifts and the idea of all the festive treats on offer pale into insignificance when I think about how important it is to spend as much time as possible with our friends and family while we can.

I hope you enjoyed the Christmas break. The new year offers the chance for us all to make a fresh start. Whatever trials and tribulations it throws our way, we know we have survived the unprecedented challenges of the last few years, and we can take that strength and courage into 2023.

Brett Shohet

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SPARE?

AMID THE RELEASE OF HARRY AND MEGHAN'S TRIO OF PROJECTS, WE LOOK AT HOW THE 'SPARE' AND HIS WIFE HAVE BEGUN TO TELL THEIR TRUTH

Since their unexpected flight from both British shores and the working Royal Family in January 2020, Prince Harry and his wife Meghan have caused quite the stir, constructing a new narrative that neither they nor the Royal Family can be certain of recovering from.

First came a biography of the pair, *Finding Freedom*, written by close confidante Omid Scobie, which hinted at unease within the royal ranks. Then, in March 2021, their shock interview with TV talk show maven Oprah Winfrey aired to global comment on both sides of the Atlantic.

Since then, things have been reasonably quiet and calm as the Sussexes have settled into their Los Angeles lifestyle and adjusted to family life with their two children, Archie, aged three, and 18-month-old Lilibet. However, as several multimillion-dollar deals reach their point of fruition, our red-headed prince and his raven-maned wife are once again back in the spotlight.

Last month, their six-part Netflix documentary *Harry & Meghan* was released, which saw the Duke and Duchess of Sussex attempt to tell their side of the story. Capturing the couple from their earliest days together right up to the period after Prince Philip's death, the series has certainly split opinion. While some find it to be insightful and informative, others believe it to be shocking and villainous. Or in some cases, opinions have flipped completely, and those who might not have supported them before have now gone to the other side and have begun to empathise with the pair.

'I'VE HAD TO MAKE PEACE WITH THE FACT THAT WE'RE PROBABLY NEVER GOING TO GET GENUINE ACCOUNTABILITY OR A GENUINE APOLOGY'

To add to any nerves the Royal Family may have already been experiencing, Harry's book, *Spare*, is released this month. The title alone conveys the Duke's deep disconnection from his own family, one that doesn't appear as if it will be healed anytime soon.

All things come in threes, and Netflix has announced it is also behind the couple's other new project, entitled *Live to Lead*. It showcases inspirational figures – from climate change activist Greta Thunberg to New Zealand Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern, to South Africa rugby star Siya Kolisi, the first-ever black captain of the side. Harry was inspired by the efforts of Nelson Mandela, and true to the former president's lifelong aspirations, the series of interviews is positioned to offer hope, vision, perspective and understanding... arguably at a time when the world needs it most.

Hopefully Harry himself will find in 2023 ways to reconcile what has been a turbulent and heart-wrenching year for the royals. He and Meghan's latest moves won't have done much to repair relations, but his transparency and clarity over how he feels hard done by may indeed act as a line in the sand, from where a new vista may emerge for the outliers, even if he questions the possibility of that.

"I've had to make peace with the fact that we're probably never going to get genuine accountability or a genuine apology [from my family]," says Harry in the documentary. "My wife and I, we're moving on. We're focused on what's coming next."

Such sentiments have been uttered by many of us regarding our own families, and unequivocally this shows us that when it comes to matters of the heart, the Windsor family, for all their wealth, prestige and glory, really are just like the rest of us. But is this family's broken relationship past the point of repair?

Photo credit: Tim Pook/ Shutterstock



Winnie-the-Pooh

A bear of very little brain

Winnie-the-Pooh might not seem smart, and he certainly gets himself into some scrapes. But there's no doubt he's also friendly, kind and thoughtful – and comes up with some great ideas to get his friends out of trouble.

And did you know he has his own special day on January 18? All things Pooh Bear are celebrated then because it's when Pooh's creator A.A. Milne was born, back in 1882. To join in the fun, why not organise a teddy bears' picnic, watch a Pooh movie, or just eat a load of honey?

Pooh was named after the teddy owned by author A.A. Milne's son, Christopher Robin – who also stars in the Pooh books. But the original drawings were based on Growler, the teddy owned by the son of the book's illustrator, E.H. Shepard.

Milne's tubby creation made his first appearance in print in a 1924 edition of *Punch* magazine. And two years after that, the first collection of Pooh stories appeared in an eponymously titled book, *Winnie-the-Pooh*.

Piglet, Eeyore, Kanga, Roo and Tigger – as well as Pooh – were all based on toys owned by young Christopher Milne. But Owl and Rabbit were the author's own inventions.

The Hundred Acre Wood, where Pooh and his friends lived, is Milne's version of Ashdown Forest in East Sussex, where the family bought a house in 1925.

Perhaps Pooh's most outstanding achievement was inventing the game of Pooh sticks. Standing on a bridge over running water, each player drops a stick on the upstream side, and the winner is the one whose stick appears first on the downstream side.

Or perhaps his greatest achievement was being one of the highest-earning literary characters ever. The rights to Pooh were sold to Disney in 2001 for a staggering \$350million.

Not a bad achievement for a bear of supposedly very little brain.

Photo credit: winniepoohshow.co.uk; Disney; E. H. Shepard; Wikipedia



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MEN'S HAIR TRENDS

FOR WINTER 2023

TOP TIPS FROM AWARD-WINNING MEN'S HAIRDRESSER AND OWNER OF TONI&GUY BILLERICAY, JIM SHAW

There will be one stand-out hair colour trend for men this winter – bleached hair. Men will look to lighten their hair and have it toned for a clean, platinum hue or an icy white/grey tone that's fitting for the season.

We will also see cooler-toned brights becoming popular, such as dark greens, blues and purples for men who want to add a pop of colour to their look.

Disconnected cuts have been in and out of fashion over recent years, and this season they're back on trend. This means we'll see men requesting their hair to be super short on the sides with longer length on top.

The military-inspired regulation cut will also be popular. This is a very sharp and fresh style whereby the hair is trimmed down on the top but kept longer than the sides, which are tapered and gradually cut shorter before reaching the nape of the neck, where the hair can be shaved off completely to help reflect a true regulation cut.

For those looking for a haircut that's longer in length, mullets will be the textured haircut of the season. Hair should usually be cut shorter and choppier towards the front and sides and left longer at the back.

However, for 2023, we will see a more modern take on this trend, with men looking for the gradation of different lengths to be a lot softer.

In terms of styling for winter 2023, this all depends on the cut you have. If you have a shorter haircut, sleek styles will be very on trend.

Incorporate a pomade with a shine finish, gel or wax into your styling routine to give your hair a neater, more polished appearance.



Photo credit: Tony Le Britton



Put your NECK on the line

Do you always stick to the same style of jumper? Then maybe now is the time to explore other options.

Discover the most popular jumper necklines below and find the perfect fit for you, your shape and your style.

Shawl collar

A shawl collar is a cross-over style of neckline that is found on both men's and women's jumpers. Although stylish and sophisticated, this type of jumper neckline is predominantly used to provide warmth around the neck area.

Polo or turtle neck

A polo neck is a tight-fitting style of collar that you can turn or roll down if desired. It typically extends from the collarbone up to the lower jaw and is ideal if you have a pear-shaped figure as it can help to broaden the shoulders.

Cowl neck

A cowl neck jumper features a funnel neck that drapes down to show off your collarbone and neckline. It is similar in style to a polo neck jumper but the fabric falls more loosely or in a bundle. This shape flatters all body types.

Crew neck

A crew neck, sometimes referred to as a round neckline, is one of the most popular jumper neckline styles. Predominantly found on pullover-style jumpers, a crew neckline is versatile and works well on men and women alike.

Scoop neck

A scoop-shape neckline drops much lower than a usual neckline and is often used to showcase a little bit of cleavage. Although mostly found on women's clothing, you can also find men's jumpers that feature a scoop neck.

Banded collar

This type of jumper neckline features a small band or tab of fabric that delivers a smooth and smart appearance. You can find V-necks and round necks that have a banded collar.



Photo credit: markandspencer.com



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colour me calm

Are you looking for a new hobby? Sales of adult colouring books have surged since the pandemic as people look for ways to relax, de-stress and enjoy some much needed me-time. Not convinced that colouring should be your new pastime? Discover five benefits of picking up pens and pencils below.

Colouring relaxes your brain

Does your brain often feel frazzled by the end of the day? As colouring is a focused activity, it can help to relax your mind and keep worries at bay. It has also been shown to improve brain function as it activates the creative part of your mind.

Colouring improves your motor skills

Adult colouring books often feature complex designs which require you to hone your hand-eye coordination and motor skills. This can be particularly beneficial if you spend a lot of time looking at screens.

Colouring aids sleep

As many as one in three people suffer with insomnia, which is characterised as not being able to get to sleep or not staying asleep for a sufficient amount of time. Colouring before bed, rather than being exposed to blue light from your phone or tablet, can help to release melatonin and enable you to easily drift off to sleep.

Colouring reduces anxiety

Studies have shown that colouring can help to reduce anxiety in adults. Simply by colouring for 20 minutes a day, you can lower your heart rate and decrease feelings of stress or anxiety. Colouring can also help to improve your mood.

Colouring can be therapeutic

Similar to art therapy, colouring can be therapeutic as it helps to put your mind into a meditative state. This enables you to focus purely on the present and remove any negative thoughts from your mind.





BURN, baby, BURN

We know sport is great for reducing stress and boosting confidence, but let's be honest: for most of us, the biggest lure of exercise is to get fit and trim some fat.

With that in mind, here are the seven sports that burn the most calories per minute. Calorie expenditure is based on a healthy, able-bodied person of average build.

▲ RUNNING (UP TO 1,000 CALORIES/HOUR)

Running is great for burning calories, and even those hitting the pavements at a slow pace can burn around 700 calories per hour. And as logic dictates, the faster you run, the more calories you vanquish.

▲ SQUASH (UP TO 900 CALORIES/HOUR)

The best all-round sport of them all, squash combines energy bursts with stamina, power, competitive spirit and mental awareness, and is great for burning fat.

▲ CYCLING (UP TO 700 CALORIES/HOUR)

Despite the fact that cycling affords you the chance to step off the gas, it remains an excellent exercise for burning calories.

▲ BOXING (UP TO 700 CALORIES/HOUR)

It's quick bursts of energy that make boxing such a great exercise, with power, constant motion and the need to stay aware all combined in this fun, fast-paced workout.

▲ SWIMMING (UP TO 600 CALORIES/HOUR)

Not only is swimming excellent for putting every part of your body to use, but the continued resistance against water means additional calorie burn.

▲ ROWING (UP TO 600 CALORIES/HOUR)

While some may assume rowing is primarily a strength challenge for the arms, this exercise also requires leg flexibility and movement. The more muscles being used, the more calories you'll burn.

▲ AEROBIC DANCE (UP TO 550 CALORIES/HOUR)

Aerobic dance is not only a fun way to exercise, but is also effective at improving your fitness.

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We are delighted to announce the grand opening of The Jubilee Suite - our new luxury care suite situated within Abbot Care Home in Harlow, Essex.

Our new Jubilee Suite has been expertly designed with kindness, and dignity at its heart, providing person-centred nursing, residential and dementia care. With a variety of excellent facilities and spaces to enjoy, we welcome the people who live here to play an active part in everyday life - as we ensure activities, events and mealtimes are carefully tailored to the personal preferences of each individual.

Abbot Care Home is situated amongst peaceful open parkland and features beautiful, landscaped gardens. The people who live here enjoy a comfortable environment and benefit from the home-from-home atmosphere.

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We welcome you to visit us to meet with our friendly team who will be happy to work around your schedule.

To find out more about Abbot Care Home and book in to view our newly opened Jubilee Suite, please get in touch

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National Eye Care Month



January is National Eye Care Month, so what better time to learn how to take care of your pet's eyesight? Sight is an essential sense that enables your pet to navigate their environment, communicate with other animals and even express emotion, so find out how to look after your pet's vision below.

WHAT CAUSES EYE PROBLEMS IN PETS?

Sadly, eye problems are relatively common in pets and can be caused by many different things such as exposure to chlorinated water or saltwater, fungal infections from a change in climate or humidity, genetics, and ageing. Some breeds are also more susceptible to certain eye conditions than others.

HOW TO LOOK AFTER YOUR PET'S EYE HEALTH

1. Regular maintenance

One of the easiest and most effective ways to keep your pet's eyes in good condition is by preventing any issues before they occur. You can do this by periodically cleaning their eyes with a soft, damp cloth or a specially formulated rinse and regularly trimming the hair around their eyes. Also check for any debris or contaminants in and around the eyes.

2. Purchase eye vitamins

You can help to support your pet's eye health by giving them eye vitamins. A more long-term approach to eye health, these are packed with antioxidants that work hard to fight harmful free radicals. Research shows that these can help to prevent the onset of age-related and hereditary macular degeneration.

3. Use gentle grooming products

While it is important that you keep your pet clean and well groomed, some grooming products can irritate their eyes. Use chemical-free shampoos and soaps and avoid air fresheners in the home if your pet has sensitive eyes.

4. Be vigilant

Many eye problems cause watery or mucus discharge, so make sure that you look out for this as well as any swelling or redness. Sensitivity to light, rubbing at the eye and holding the eye closed are also signs of a potential infection or issue.

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KISS A Ginger

CELEBRATE KISS A GINGER DAY THIS MONTH

On January 12, it's Kiss A Ginger Day – the perfect time to show redheads some love. But you might need to take a good look around – because red hair is rare. Only two in every 100 people are natural redheads, making it the rarest hair colour in the world. And the rarest people of all are redheads with blue eyes.

The genes responsible for red hair are recessive. This means that to have a red-haired baby, both parents must carry a red-haired gene. If both parents carry the gene but don't have red hair themselves, they'll have around a one in four chance of having a red-haired baby. If one of the parents is a redhead and the other is a carrier of the gene but doesn't have red hair, the chances go up to around one in two. And if both parents have ginger locks, chances are that all their children will have red hair too.

Hundreds of years ago, redheads were thought

to be witches and were shunned by society.

These days, things have thankfully improved – although some people still think natural gingers are brash and hot-headed. That's not true, of course. But recent studies have shown that redheads require more anaesthetic than people with other hair colours. Their response to painkillers is also different – for the medication to work, they need more of some types of painkillers and less of others.

So how are you going to celebrate on January 12? If you've got a natural ginger among your family and friends, show them how much you appreciate their extraordinary tresses. And if you're not that lucky, listen to some music by redheads – Ed Sheeran or Florence and the Machine, anyone? Or how about a film starring Julianne Moore or Jessica Chastain? The choice is yours.





Yes please TO CHEESE

JANUARY 20, IS NATIONAL CHEESE LOVER'S DAY – HERE'S HOW TO CELEBRATE

Feeling a little cheesed off? Well don't despair, for Friday, January 20, is National Cheese Lover's Day, giving you carte blanche to celebrate and indulge in all your favourite dairy delights.

Not surprisingly, Britain is a nation of cheese lovers. Whether it's a humble cheddar sarnie, a saucy slice of Welsh rarebit or a fancy fondue dip, the average Brit eats 30g of cheese a day and there are more than 700 cheeses produced in the UK.

Around half of sales are cheddar – named after the famed Cheddar Gorge caves in Somerset where the cheese was once stored to ripen – but we're still partial to more exotic fromages such as mozzarella, parmesan and feta.

HOW TO CELEBRATE

With such a thriving cheese industry in this country, it couldn't be easier to indulge in this Wookey Hole-iest of days. Most major supermarkets now boast English-made gems such as Wensleydale Blue and Red Leicester, but it's also worth seeking out some lesser-known treats from your nearest speciality cheesemonger. Or, if you're really enthusiastic, you can head to your local dairy farm where they will likely have a shop selling their creations.

Not only is cheese incredibly tasty and diverse, it's also highly nutritious. A great source of protein, it contains vitamin B12 (which is vital for red blood formation), and a matchbox-sized slice provides one-third of an adult's daily calcium requirement.

So don't be sheepish – make like a mouse and treat yourself to a little of what you fancy. Whether red, yellow or blue, in moderation, cheese is very good for you.

BRITAIN'S TOP 10 CHEESES*

1. Cheddar
2. Red Leicester
3. Brie
4. Mozzarella
5. Parmesan
6. Stilton
7. Cream cheese
8. Wensleydale
9. Camembert
10. Feta

*According to a study by Branstetter Pickle in 2017.



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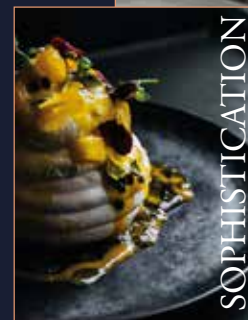
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FOOD & DRINK



**Shell
YEAH!**

If you're thinking about staying in this Valentine's Day, shellfish offers a decadent and delicious centrepiece for a romantic meal for two.

However, if you're unsure what to serve for that special someone come February 14, here are five of the most popular types of shellfish, as well as how to serve them.

OYSTERS

Oysters are the most nutrient-rich shellfish available and also the most expensive. With a reputation as an aphrodisiac, oysters have a gooey texture and a salty flavour. Most commonly served raw on ice, you can fill their shells with lemon, butter, hot sauce or a zingy mixture made from shallots and vinegar. Alternatively, they can be grilled, baked or fried.

MUSSELS

One of the easiest shellfish to prepare and cook, mussels are usually steamed in flavoured broth or sauce. Mussels need to be kept alive before they are cooked and can only be refrigerated for one or two days. Any mussels with broken shells or ones with open shells and that don't close when tapped should be discarded. Enjoy moules frites (steamed mussels and fries), served with a huge chunk of crusty bread.

CRAB

Crabs take a bit more effort to prepare and cook, but it's definitely worth it as you'll be rewarded with tender, delicious meat. You can boil, roast, steam or grill crab and this shellfish is commonly used in dips, pastas, seafood dishes and salads. White crab meat boasts a meaty texture and a more delicate flavour, whereas brown meat is softer with an almost pâté-like consistency.

SCALLOPS

Another highly tender and succulent type of shellfish, scallops make the perfect starter. Boasting a rich, buttery flavour, you can choose between small and sweet bay scallops or big and bold sea scallops. Pan-seared scallops with peas and mint are our go-to recipe at any time of year.

LOBSTER

Known for its melt-in-the-mouth texture, lobster is the epitome of elegance. Lobster can be cooked whole, and the most succulent meat is found in the tails, legs and claws. Try garlic herb butter lobster tail as a delicious starter or lobster risotto as a main course.



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Designer HOME TRENDS

THE SMALL DÉCOR CHANGES YOU CAN MAKE TO YOUR HOME FOR 2023

Outdoor indoor: With all the stresses of modern life, the natural hues of the great outdoors are a perfect way to de-stress. So bring the outside in with wood, lush plant life and a colour scheme rooted in nature.

Aqua calm: Similarly, anything reminiscent of the sea works to ground those of us who are in thrall to modern life. Turquoise, tranquil blue and anything suggestive of the azure depths will soothe and calm the busy mind.

Homely habitat: Another trend expected to be prevalent in 2023 is being sympathetic to your local community. So rugs shorn from local sheep, furniture crafted from upcycled wood and art, and sculptures from resident artists.

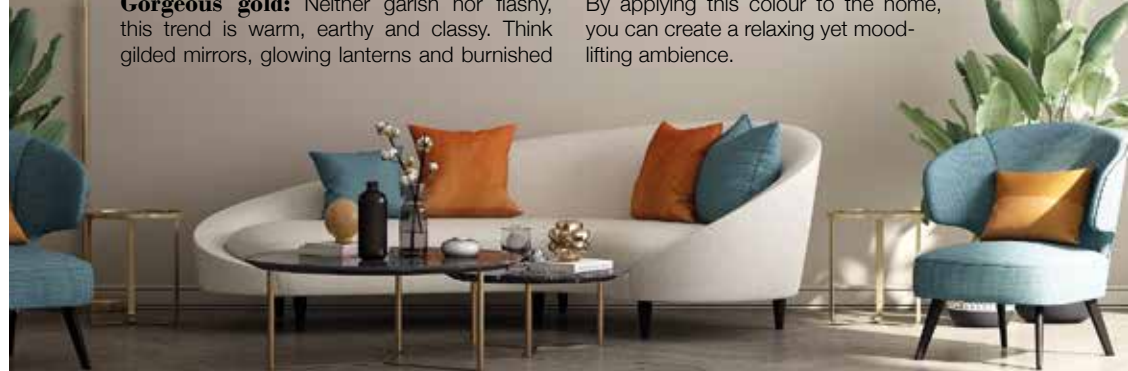
Gorgeous gold: Neither garish nor flashy, this trend is warm, earthy and classy. Think gilded mirrors, glowing lanterns and burnished

candlestick holders. Anything that exudes warmth will work.

Largesse lampshades: Does anything tie a room together quite like a lampshade? Looming over us in all their glory, larger lampshades are having a moment. Beautiful brass or the purest paper, some are even crafted from nothing but feathers, and yet the impression they leave endures.

Craving curves: Sensuous, soft and languid, straight lines are eschewed in 2023 and replaced by curves. Sofas, tables, chairs and mirrors – everything needs to have that gentle touch and slightly out-of-focus edge.

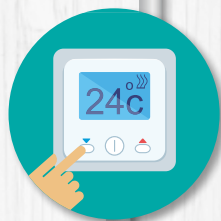
Lavender love: According to predictions, the Colour of the Year in 2023 is going to be Digital Lavender. This is a light shade of violet which expresses two sets of emotions: cheerfulness and calmness. By applying this colour to the home, you can create a relaxing yet mood-lifting ambience.





5 ENERGY SAVING

Top Tips!



Sure, you can save energy by investing in a new boiler, solar panels or roof insulation. If you've got the funds, they'll make a real difference. But these days, most of us don't have the money upfront. And what if you rent your home? Here's our round-up of the best ways to reduce your energy bills – without shivering like crazy or going broke.

CHECK YOUR HEATING

Turn your thermostat down a degree or two and see if the temperature's still okay. Turn down radiators in any room you don't use much. And don't have the heating on when you're out.

If it's not too chilly, put on some warm slippers and a jumper before reaching for the heating switch. If you're reading or watching TV, curl up under a cosy throw.



DON'T LEAVE APPLIANCES ON STANDBY

Don't keep your electrical appliances on standby mode. This goes for TVs, game consoles, laptops, printers, microwaves, electric cookers and phone chargers. And remember, devices with an LED panel, clock or light still use electricity even when they're switched off.



IN THE KITCHEN

Wait till you've got a full load to use your washing machine and run your programme at 30°C. Avoid using your tumble dryer whenever possible – it'll use a lot of electricity even in eco mode.

Only put on your dishwasher when it's full. And don't overfill the kettle – just boil the amount you need for your tea, coffee or cooking.



IN THE BATHROOM

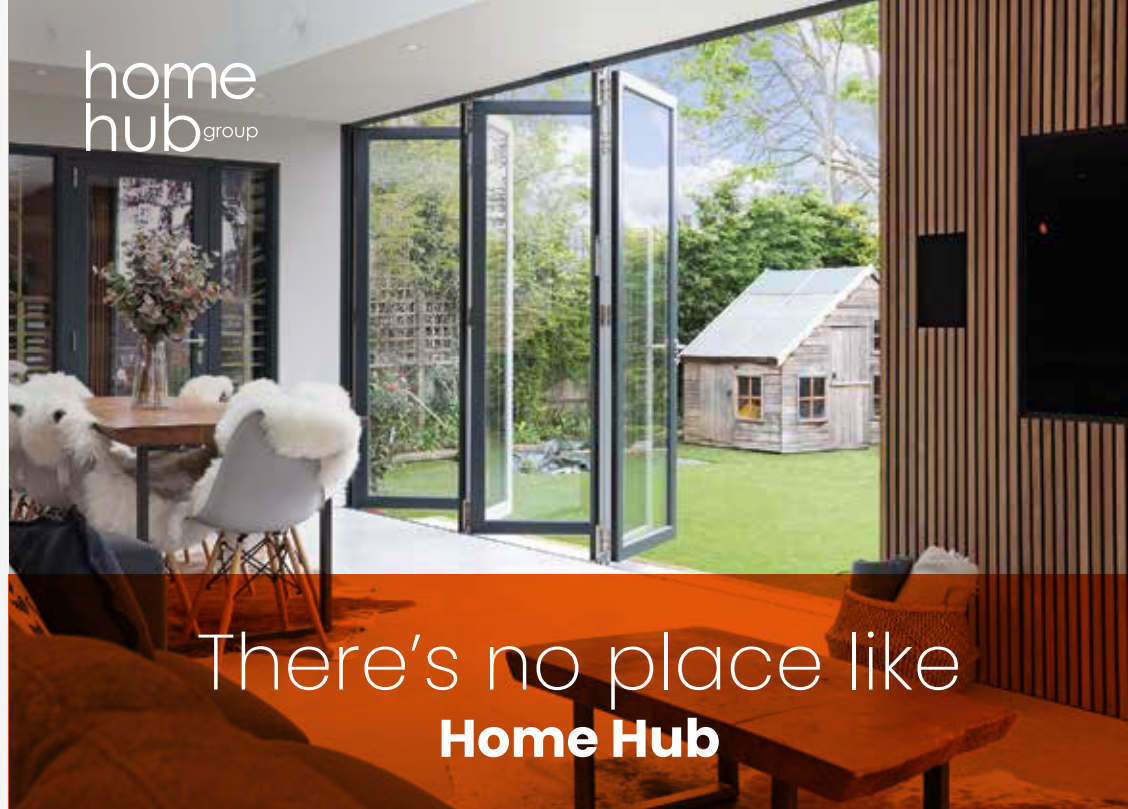
If you can, take showers rather than baths and limit them to four minutes. You'd be surprised how much less water you'll use. And don't leave taps running – that goes for the kitchen, too.



CHECK THE LIGHTS

Choose energy-efficient LED lightbulbs. They cost a bit more, but they save energy and money in the long run because they use 90 per cent less energy than conventional halogen bulbs. Oh... and don't leave lights switched on when you don't need them.

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Snugg as a BUG

In light of the huge rise in energy bills, households up and down the country are being more frugal with their central heating and looking for more creative ways to stay warm.

WHAT ARE THE DIFFERENT TYPES OF HEATED BLANKETS?

Unlike electric blankets, which operate much like mattress toppers and come with elasticated straps or as a fitted sheet, heated blankets are designed for you to curl up under. Much more versatile and visually appealing, heated blankets can be used on the sofa, on the bed or even at your desk.

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF HEATED BLANKETS?

There are many reasons why you may want to invest in a heated blanket, such as the fact that they are comfy, can be carried from room to room, and come in a variety of colours and designs. However, it is the cost-cutting aspect that is the most attractive element.

HOW MUCH MONEY CAN YOU SAVE?

Both heated blankets and electric blankets are highly cost-effective and cost only pennies to run. In fact, if you choose to invest in a heated blanket, it can cost you as little as 1p for around seven hours on the minimum heat setting. To put this into perspective, it costs on average of £2.76 per hour to run your central heating based on a 24kW boiler. Plus, you can control how much electric you use by adjusting the various heat and timer settings and the automatic shut-off function.

BEST HEATED BLANKETS ON THE MARKET

- > Best for wearing around the house: Lakeland Electric Heated Poncho
- > Best for energy efficiency: Dreamland Velvety Electric Throw
- > Best budget buy: Silentnight Luxury Heated Throw
- > Best for ease of use and convenience: Homefront Electric Heated Throw



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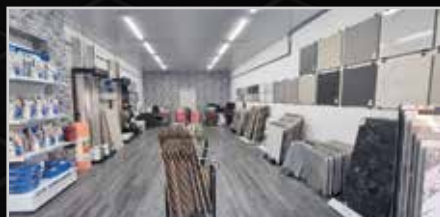
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anti-freeze

Most car owners have a can or two of anti-freeze in their boot, especially during the winter months, but did you know that there is more than one use for this must-have motoring product?

WHAT IS ANTI-FREEZE?

Anti-freeze is an additive that is used to decrease the freezing point and increase the boiling point of any water-based liquid. It is made by combining any of the following with water: methanol, glycerol, ethylene glycol or propylene glycol.

WHAT ARE THE MAIN USES FOR ANTI-FREEZE?

AS A CAR ENGINE COOLANT

The most common use for anti-freeze is to prevent an engine's cooling system from freezing or overheating. It stops the water in your car's engine from freezing during cold weather conditions and from becoming overheated when temperatures are high.

TO PROTECT HVAC SYSTEMS

Heating, ventilation and air-conditioning (HVAC) systems are an integral part of most residential homes and commercial properties. Anti-freeze can be used to help prevent the pipes within these systems from freezing, bursting and causing damage. It can also help to reduce the risk of scale build-up and corrosion.

TO MAINTAIN SOLAR ENERGY SYSTEMS

As more and more UK households embrace solar energy, it is important that you know how to properly take care of these types of energy systems. Anti-freeze can be used as a heat transfer fluid to provide protection from freezing in colder weather. Always hire a professional to do this for you as solar energy systems are pressurised.

HOW TO DISPOSE OF ANTI-FREEZE

Due to its toxic nature, you must make sure you dispose of anti-freeze in the right way. Never pour it down the drain as it can damage the environment and kill animals. Instead, contact your local recycling centre as they should be able to properly dispose of it for you.



HOME & DIY



A BRITISH suck-cess STORY



THE STORY BEHIND BRITAIN'S ICONIC VACUUM CLEANER

He's not the most aesthetically pleasing member of the household cleaning family, nor the most powerful, and as far as cutting-edge technology goes, he pre-dates even the era of the mobile phone and internet connectivity.

Yet despite all of that, our love affair with Henry lives on, more than 40 years since the compact and affordable vacuum cleaner was launched by Numatic International.

Its founder, Chris Duncan, first started toying with his vacuum cleaner concept back in 1969, when he dressed up one of his standard vacuum cleaners with a Union Jack, hat and smiley face during a particularly long night at a trade show.

The response from visitors was a revelation for the inventor, who discovered that taking an inanimate object and giving it a personality enchanted people who were looking for something different from the standard cleaning devices.

Of course, the cleaner plays its part where performance is concerned too, using large-capacity microfibre dust bags encased in a shell that is built for longevity and durability.

Since the machine was officially launched in 1981, sales continue to accelerate and now frequently exceed the one million mark each year. While Numatic has never advertised the machine, nor does it employ the services of a PR agency, an estimated 20 million have been sold in the UK to date.

Henry isn't the only named machine in the range. Previous versions have been called James, Charles, Nuvac, George, David, William, Edward, Basil, Wendy, Harry and Jack, while limited-edition models have been launched for B&Q, Screwfix and John Lewis.

It has also led to spin-off designs, notably the Henry and Hetty Spray Mops.

In 2023, it is the only mass-produced consumer vacuum cleaner still made in Britain, and has made its founder a millionaire many times over.



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DYER STRAITS

DANNY DYER'S EXIT FROM *EASTENDERS* MARKS ALMOST A DECADE OF THRILLING DRAMA IN THE SQUARE

That Danny Dyer evolved so admirably from regal cockney to Queen Vic landlord Mick Carter is one of the more celebrated evolutions of British celebrity culture.

The East London-born West Ham United superfan has waved goodbye after almost a decade on Albert Square – a solid commitment to E20 and the drinks industry that has seen the once-derided actor and presenter rise to the cream of the soap opera fraternity.

Dyer emerged as a spiky, punchy, salt-of-the-Earth type who passed up an interest in usual working-class opportunities to embark on acting classes. Bullied at school for his passion for drama, Dyer soon had the last laugh, appearing in *Prime Suspect 3* at the age of 16.

Terrestrial gigs in *Cadfael*, *A Touch of Frost*, *Loved Up*, *Highlander*, *Soldier Soldier* and *Skins* followed, before his big film break came in *Human Traffic*, an iconic coming-of-age clubbing movie that also saw the emergence of John Simm.

Soon after, he was asked to front Bravo documentary series *The Real Football Factories* (a real-life take on *The Football Factory* movie he had previously starred in), which proved to be a big hit in an era where terrace casuals were still prevalent in the Premier League and beyond (as the subsequent *The Real Football Factories International* proved).

This was followed by *Danny Dyer's Deadliest Men*, in which he interviewed Britain's most notorious gangsters.

He turned down the chance to join the cast in Walford in 2009, citing fears of being too exposed in the public eye, but having experimented with a number of low-budget film projects, was lured to *EastEnders* in 2013 as Queen Vic landlord Mick Carter.

Enjoying a bevy of controversial storylines, he has clinched three awards in the role, including Best Serial Drama Performance at the National Television Awards. Along the way, he has made the change from the rough and ready hard man of the Square to someone capable of carrying through a wealth of poignant and emotive storylines. Having spent years developing his skills, he now looks to take that forward with other projects.

"*EastEnders* has been amazing for me," says Dyer. "I'm grateful for the beautiful years I've had there. I'm going to miss the people massively."

Talking about what comes next, the 45 year old says: "I know the landscape has changed slightly, but I want to go out there and have another go, and the only way I can do that is if I decide to walk away from the job."

Dyer will next be seen in a four-part Channel 5 drama called *Heat*, for which filming is to begin shortly in Australia.

Ahead of his Albert Square exit, executives were tight-lipped on how the storyline would develop, but there was all the drama expected of an *EastEnders* Christmas special – including a car chase, a cliff-top brawl, and ultimately tragedy as Mick met his watery end.

Perhaps the true tragedy is that one of the true mainstays of the British landscape is gone... for now, but maybe not forever.

Photo credit: BBC/Jack Barnes/Kieron McCarron

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LOCAL NEWS

from your neighbourhood



Photo credit: Essex Police, South Beds News Agency



'Prolific offender' jailed following burglaries

A teenage burglar who targeted homes in Bedfordshire and Essex, including in Epping, has been jailed for two years and eight months.

Patrick Clark, 18 (pictured left), was sentenced at Luton Crown Court on December 7, having previously admitted to conspiracy to burgle 13 properties, conspiracy to steal four cars, aggravated vehicle-taking and theft of alcohol.

He had also asked for 21 other offences to be taken into consideration, including burgling a home in Epping to take car keys, 14 attempted burglaries in Harlow, stealing a Volkswagen Polo and more. All 34 offences were committed in February and March last year.

Clark was arrested on March 24. Police attempted

to stop an Audi S5 he was involved in stealing in St Albans, but the driver sped off and reached speeds of more than 150mph.

When police managed to stop the vehicle, they found face coverings, an axe, cannabis and gloves inside. These were later linked to two burglaries in Harlow and Biggleswade.

Subsequent inquiries by Essex and Bedfordshire detectives linked Clark to further offences in Epping, Harlow, Pottton and Sandy.

Investigating officer PC Adam Drane, of Harlow CID, said: "We are committed to getting justice for burglary victims. Clark is a prolific offender and caused fear and misery to many people through his acquisitive actions."



Man dies after car collides with tree



A man has died after a car hit a tree on The Plain, Epping, last month. Police are appealing for information about the incident, which happened shortly after 1pm on Saturday, December 3. The man is believed to have been taken ill at the wheel. No other vehicle was involved.

The road was closed following the incident, with ambulances and police vehicles remaining at the scene for several hours afterwards.

An Essex Police spokesperson said: "We were called to a single-vehicle collision shortly after 1pm on Saturday [December 3].

"We arrived and found a car had struck a tree. Sadly, a man was pronounced dead at the scene. There are no reports of any other casualties.

"We are investigating the circumstances around the incident. We need anyone with information on the incident to come forward."

Anyone with information can contact Essex Police at www.essex.police.uk or by calling 101, quoting incident 576 of Saturday, December 3.

Council discusses staff reduction over shortfall

Epping Forest District Council (EFDC) is talking with its employees about potential reductions in staffing next year, following the announcement of a projected £4.5million shortfall for 2023/24.

The budget for 2022/23 provided staff with a two per cent pay rise to match inflation, but with inflation rising to its highest rate for 41 years, EFDC agreed to a five per cent pay increase for all employees.

Strategic director Andrew Small said: "Unfortunately, we are not able to increase our income at the same rate and this creates a large funding gap. Taking more than £4million out of the budget has not been easy and the cabinet has to make some difficult choices."

Staff have been promised further details this year.

Leader of EFDC councillor Chris Whitbread said: "We care deeply about our employees. They are our

best asset. We value the hard work and dedication that our employees bring to work every day.

"But these are not ordinary times. The cost-of-living crisis sparked by the pandemic and aggravated by Putin's senseless war in Ukraine has far-reaching ramifications."

Tree planted as part of Queen's Green Canopy

A tree has been planted on the town green by Epping Town Council as part of the Queen's Green Canopy initiative to mark Her Late Majesty The Queen's Platinum Jubilee.

The tree was planted by the Deputy Lieutenant of Essex Hugh Pegrum (pictured below right), acting as the King's representative. He was joined by Ben Murphy (pictured below left), chairman of the City of London Corporation's Epping Forest and Commons Committee, and Epping Town Mayor councillor Barbara Scruton (pictured below centre).

The initiative was due to conclude in December, the end of the Platinum Jubilee year, but with the official tree planting season in the UK extending from October to March, King Charles III agreed to extend the scheme to give people the opportunity to plant more trees in HM The Queen's memory.

The aim of the Queen's Green Canopy is to create a living legacy for HM The Queen, with more than a million trees planted across the nation so far.

The Queen's Green Canopy previously selected Epping Forest as one of 70 ancient woodlands in the UK to be dedicated to Her Majesty in celebration of the Platinum Jubilee.

Epping Forest hosts up to one million mature trees, including ancient coppice stools – the largest population of ancient trees of any single site in the UK.

The map of trees that makes up the Queen's Green Canopy can be viewed at queensgreencanopy.org/map-education-hub/qgc-map



Photo credit: Everything Local News

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LOCAL NEWS

from your neighbourhood



LOCAL NEWS THEYDON



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Councillor hits out at 'highways emergency' plans

Councillor for Epping and Theydon Bois Holly Whitbread (pictured left) has hit out at the local Labour group over its proposal for Essex to declare a highways emergency.

This comes after it was revealed that Essex Highways is investing less than half the annual amount required to maintain current road quality.

At Essex County Council's (ECC) December Full Council meeting, a motion from the Labour group calling for the council to declare a highways emergency was rejected. It requested the leader of the council to write to the Secretary of State for Transport to request an urgent meeting to discuss the highways financial black hole.

Budgets for maintenance and trimming of verges on roads across Essex, including in Theydon, are set to be scrapped, with the Essex Highway Rangers having its funding halted and the responsibility put onto

district and borough councils. ECC admitted it was running a policy of "managed decline" on its roads.

Cllr Whitbread said: "The Labour group is living in a parallel universe with this motion.

"While we all acknowledge the vital function ECC has in keeping Essex roads moving, and as councillor Barber outlined the different challenges that we face at this difficult time, this out-of-touch motion fails to acknowledge or just ignores the wider economic challenges being faced by this council and the nation. "This motion is purely about political point scoring."

Labour councillor Aidan McGurran said: "If ever there was doubt about how out of touch some Conservative councillors are, I think they've provided proof of it.

"I don't know which residents you're talking to, but if the state of our roads and potholes doesn't come up, I would be absolutely staggered."

ECC has been contacted for comment.

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Repair café to help residents reduce waste



A monthly repair café will open in Theydon later this month, helping residents to reduce waste and save money.

The café will run at St Mary's Church Hall on the last Wednesday of each month, beginning on January 25.

It will offer the opportunity for residents to repair their broken items instead of throwing them away and having to replace them. The repair café will also allow people to socialise and share a warm drink with like-minded individuals.

Repair cafés have become popular in recent years, with the concept starting in the Netherlands in 2009 before spreading to Belgium, Germany, France, the UK and beyond.

In a poster announcing its first event, the Theydon repair café said: "We need volunteers with good DIY skills applicable to a variety of repair types, especially sewing skills."

To get in touch about volunteering, please join the All Things Theydon Bois group on Facebook.

Police report spate of overnight car thefts

The Essex Police Stolen Vehicle Intelligence Unit (SVIU) reported a series of car thefts in Theydon last month.

Three tweets from the unit on December 1 and 2 requested residents to keep an eye out for a black Hyundai Ioniq stolen from Woburn Avenue (registration SM19 YBE), a grey Land Rover Discovery stolen from Coppice Row, and a white BMW stolen from Orchard Drive. All three vehicles were stolen overnight between November 30 and December 1.

A spokesperson for the Essex Police SVIU said: "We were called to multiple locations in Theydon Bois on December 1 following reports of cars being stolen."

"These investigations have been temporarily filed owing to a lack of positive lines of enquiry. Should further information become available, this will be reviewed by our investigation team."

PC Paul Gerrish, of SVIU, said: "Every year, we are tracking down more stolen vehicles and building up a bigger intelligence picture."

"We are creating a hostile environment for car thieves and causing disruption for organised criminal gangs."

Anyone who has information can contact Essex Police online at www.essex.police.uk or by calling 101 citing incident 42/291557/22

Council launches bus service app for residents

A new travel app has been launched for Epping Forest District Council's (EFDC) minibus service, with the aim of making travel simpler and hassle-free for residents of Theydon and the wider district.

The Flexiroute Passenger App for the DaRT87 (Demand Responsive Transport) allows passengers to book vehicles and track their bookings. The service must be booked at least 24 hours in advance for one-off trips or block bookings.

Concessionary bus passes are accepted from 9.30am onwards, with a flat-rate fare of £2 a journey for up to seven miles and £5 thereafter.

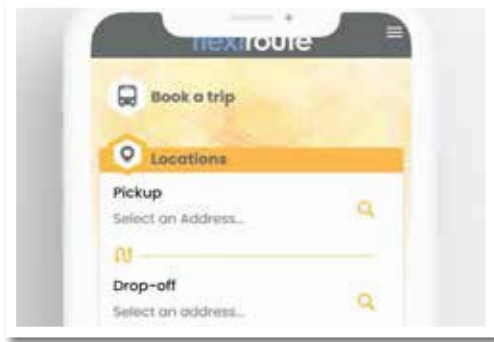
There is no fixed timetable, though journeys are shaped by demand. The route runs from Debden, through Loughton and Theydon Bois, into Epping, and to Princess Alexandra Hospital.

EFDC has funded the minibus service since January 2021, following the withdrawal of the Arriva 87 bus service by Essex County Council.

Councillor Nigel Bedford, deputy leader of EFDC and place portfolio holder, said: "The launch of the new Flexiroute Passenger App streamlines the registration and booking process for the DaRT87 and delivers an improved passenger experience."

"DaRT87 provides an important service to the local community, which is regularly reviewed to ensure it suits the customers' needs."

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WINTER Wonderland

HOW TO GET THE BEST OUT OF YOUR GARDEN IN THE COLD WINTER MONTHS

Some of us may regard winter as the season when our desire to venture out into the garden wanes completely. Yet whether we're negotiating a path across a frosty lawn, or simply viewing nature from the warmth and comfort of the indoors, making your garden into a winter wonderland is a rewarding task.

So while you may not have the summer sorcery of flower sprays, sun loungers and an abundance of fruit and produce, these tips will help keep your outside space special even in the depths of winter.

STRUCTURAL STATEMENTS

A winter garden is one that's lighter on detail, so create new space and interest with some cool man-made structures. From trellises to metalwork, benches to rockeries, winter provides a great opportunity for man-made materials to enter the fray.

CALL FOR COLOUR

The assumption that the colour drains out of our gardens in winter is, ultimately, wrong. There are many stem-like winter plants that are radiant and

beautiful – consider the pinky purple of dogwood, evergreen rhododendrons and the shining white trunks of a birch tree.

TAKE FORWARD TRADITION

Planting a number of hardy winter varieties will give your garden presence as well as helping to carry forward the legacy of a traditional English garden. Use hellebores and snowdrops to create a classic, elegant effect.

TREMENDOUS TREES

Stripped of their summer decoration, let skeletal trees stand out against a snowy backdrop. Mixed up with evergreens, you can create a brilliant contrast.

FANTASTIC FEASTS

Finally, don't assume your winter garden can't put produce on the table. Carrots and fava beans will still thrive throughout the winter, and you can extend the growing period of a number of other varieties of fruit and veg if you keep your greenhouse operational throughout the cold months.

PRUNED TO *perfection*

If you want to enjoy a good fruit cycle, you need to prune your apple and pear trees over the winter. For those who are new to fruit pruning, this step-by-step guide tells you all you need to know.

GET THE RIGHT TOOLS

You need to have clean, sharp tools that are designed for pruning, such as secateurs, loppers or a pruning saw if you have a larger pear or apple tree. Make sure you sharpen them before use.

CUT BACK SUCKERS AND LOWER BRANCHES

Use secateurs to cut back any suckers. These are unwanted shoots that grow near the base of the trunk. Also, cut back lower branches as these do not get sufficient light to bear good fruit.

REMOVE DEAD OR DISEASED WOOD

Remove all branches with discoloured or flaking bark towards the base of the branch by making a cut above an outward-facing bud (one that is on the opposite side of the stem to the main trunk). If there are no buds, remove the entire branch.

CREATE A VASE SHAPE FRAMEWORK

Ideally, you want four or five main branches that help

to create an open vase shape. If you have more than five, remove some at the base by cutting 6mm from the branch collar – this refers to the bulbous area that is attached to the trunk.

Avoid removing more than 25 per cent of the branches in one go as this can affect the tree's health and fruit production.

REMOVE CROSSING OR RUBBING BRANCHES

Remove any branches that are growing into the centre of the tree as this will allow for better air circulation. If two branches are crossing, keep the one that best retains the vase shape of the tree and remove the other one.

SHORTEN THE PREVIOUS YEAR'S GROWTH ON EACH BRANCH BY ONE-THIRD

Cut just above an outward-facing bud on each main branch so that new branches grow outwards. This will help the tree to develop into a healthy shape and prevent congestion.



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Chinese New Year LANTERNS

This year, Chinese New Year falls on January 22, marking the beginning of the Year of the Rabbit. Chinese communities throughout the world celebrate the New Year with family meals and outdoor events featuring firecrackers, fireworks and dragon puppets. And at the end of the festivities, there's a lantern festival to welcome the full moon.

To mark the occasion, why not create some beautiful paper lanterns? Plain ones can look gorgeous, but choose rabbit-printed paper or add some decorations for a bit of extra festive fun. You could even adorn your lanterns with homemade bunny features, such as ears, eyes and noses.

YOU WILL NEED:

- > Some sheets of paper (A4 paper makes a lantern about 20cm tall, and A5 paper makes a lantern about 14cm tall). You can use different coloured or patterned paper
- > A ruler, pencil and eraser
- > A glue stick
- > Scissors
- > Extra decorations such as stick-on shapes, sequins, braid or ribbon (optional)

HOW TO MAKE:

1. Fold your paper in half lengthways so you have a long, slim rectangle.
2. Draw a line parallel with the long edge, where the two sides of the paper meet. This line should be about 2.5cm away from the edge.
3. Starting about 2.5cm in from one of the short edges, draw a series of parallel lines across the rectangle, from the folded edge up to the long line you've just drawn. These lines should be about 2.5cm apart.
4. Cut along each of the short lines.
5. Erase any noticeable pencil marks, then unfold the paper.

6. Run your gluestick along one short side of the lantern. Form the paper into a tube shape, then glue the two short sides together.

7. If you like, decorate your lantern or add a ribbon or paper handle.

The lanterns look great strung along a piece of ribbon or string!





BRITISH BUSINESS *survivors*

FIVE AGE-OLD BRITISH COMPANIES STILL WITH US TODAY

Staggeringly, between 350,000 and 400,000 British businesses close their doors for good every year. But some companies have been up and running for centuries.

The oldest surviving British company is The Royal Mint. It opened in 1279 and, for several hundred years, was based at the Tower of London. In the early 1800s, it moved over the road. But by 1975, it had completed its move to its current home in Llantrisant, Wales. The Mint makes more than 3.3 billion coins and blanks yearly – for the UK and more than 30 other countries.

With the dwindling use of cash, the Mint has expanded into other areas, including precious metals investment, historic coins and luxury collectibles. And it's doing pretty well.

Cambridge University Press, the world's first publishing company, was founded in 1534 and publishes academic and educational texts.

Moving down the years, Royal Mail, as it's now known, was founded in 1586. For almost 500 years, it was owned by the state. But by 2015, it was fully privatised. At one stage in the early 20th century, the company had 22,000 pigeons. And someone's gone to the trouble of counting how many elastic bands it currently uses to bundle mail – apparently 342 million a year.

Barclays Bank was founded in London in 1690. The institution's long history is contained in an archive of photos, letters and curiosities housed in the Barclays Group Archives in Manchester.

In 1706, Thomas Twining bought a coffee shop in London's Strand and began to sell tea. Back then, tea was very costly. But Twining spotted a trend. And when he started selling loose tea leaves, as well as cups of the beverage itself, business boomed. By 1717, he'd bought additional space next door – and the shop's still open for business today.



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Did you overspend during the festive period? Is your bank balance looking a little bleak? Then no-spend January could be just what you need to get your finances back on track for 2023 and beyond.

WHAT IS NO-SPEND JANUARY?

No-spend January is a money-saving challenge that is designed to help people get their finances back in order after splurging over Christmas. It can also help you to reset your budget, reassess where your money is going and break bad spending habits. Although called no-spend January, you are allowed to cover the cost of essentials.

WHAT YOU CAN SPEND MONEY ON:

Mortgage/rent | Credit card repayments | Utilities such as gas, electricity and water | Urgent maintenance costs for your home or car | Food shopping | Pet supplies

WHAT YOU CANNOT SPEND MONEY ON:

Takeaways/eating out | Clothes shopping | Entertainment such as the cinema or bowling | Beauty expenses such as the nail salon or hairdressers

OUR TOP TIPS FOR NO-SPEND JANUARY:

1. Cut down on non-essential food and drink items such as alcohol and treats
2. Use up store cupboard and freezer food before going to the supermarket
3. Don't use your credit or debit card; instead, use cash only
4. Visit your local library for free books
5. Consider a car share to cut down on petrol costs
6. Declutter your home and see if there are any items you can sell
7. Ask family and friends to participate
8. Visit free local attractions such as museums and parks
9. Organise a clothes swap with friends

HOW TO MOVE ON FROM NO-SPEND JANUARY:

If you don't want to revert back to unhealthy spending once January is over, it can be a good idea to introduce a no-spend week or no-spend day once a month. Also, avoid rushing out to buy new things right away as this can undo all your hard work – wait until the sales instead.



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DO YOU HAVE THE PLANS IN PLACE TO ACHIEVE THEM?

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HOW TO CHOOSE THE PERFECT OFFICE

Whether you're on the hunt for your first office for a new start-up or you have an established enterprise needing to relocate or upsize, we can help you to find the perfect commercial property for your business.

TRANSPORT AND PARKING: Is the office located in an area that boasts good transport links? Is it convenient for you, your employees and your clients? Do you need office parking? If yes, how many spaces do you need? Is it included in the price or available at an additional cost?

VISIBILITY AND PASSING TRADE: Is the office easy to find? How much foot traffic does it get? Depending on the nature of your business, you may need an office space that offers both visibility and passing trade.

REPUTATION OF THE AREA: Although you may want to try to cut costs, if your chosen office space is in an area that is not considered to be attractive or safe, this could have a detrimental effect on your business.

LOCAL AMENITIES: It is unlikely that you want an office space that is in the middle of nowhere with no local amenities such as cafés, restaurants and shops – especially if you love to wine and dine your clients.

SQUARE FOOTAGE: Another crucial factor is the size of the office space. You need to think not only about how many employees you have but also whether or not you need to store supplies on site. Remember to consider the long-term as well as the immediate future.

OFFICE FACILITIES: Make sure you know what is included in your rental agreement. For example, will the space be fully furnished? Is there a reliable and fast internet connection? Are utility bills and business rates included?

CONTRACT LENGTH: Are you looking for a long-term lease or a more flexible, short-term contract? Long rentals often work out cheaper, but only if you are able to commit to the agreed length of time.



BUSINESS & PROPERTY

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Hama-rikyu Gardens



Hestercombe House



Flower Festival



Tresco Abbey Garden

GARDEN GETAWAYS

If you love gardening, then you are going to love our suggested destinations that are just perfect for green-fingered travellers.

Whether you want to explore gardens in the UK or go further afield, here's something for every gardening enthusiast.

Italy: Whether you choose to explore its formal gardens or simply enjoy the abundance of breath-taking blooms around the country, Italy is a great destination for garden enthusiasts. The gardens that overlook the Italian lakes are a must-see, with the botanical gardens of Villa Taranto overflowing with azaleas and rhododendrons.

Japan: This East Asian country is renowned for its pink cherry blossom and Zen gardens which have to be seen first-hand to be believed. Head to the Hama-rikyu Gardens in Tokyo in March, and don't forget to also schedule a trip to Japan's most popular Zen garden at the Ryōan-ji Temple.

Somerset: If you are looking for a gardening getaway that is closer to home, Somerset is the perfect choice. Visit country houses such as Hestercombe House, Kilver Court and Lytes Cary Manor and marvel at their impeccable grounds and stunning natural surroundings.

Madeira: Boasting a sub-tropical climate, Madeira is a haven for a whole host of rare species that guarantee to impress. From North American sequoia trees to pretty ponds filled with koi carp, there are many colourful sights for you to enjoy. Don't miss the Flower Festival in April 2023, where you can see some of Madeira's finest gardens and landscapes.

Isles of Scilly: The Isles are famous for their unspoilt natural beauty, with an abundance of beaches, rugged landscapes and wildlife. Head to Tresco Abbey Garden, where you can marvel at 20,000 plants from more than 80 different countries.

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THE CLAIM GAME

While no one expects to be involved in a car accident, these types of incidents can happen in the blink of an eye and, if you don't know what to do next, can cause you untold stress and expense.

Here's everything you need to know about making a claim following an accident.

WHAT INFORMATION DO I NEED TO MAKE A CLAIM?

If you are involved in a motoring incident with another person, you should do your best to obtain the below information on the scene:

- > Their full name
- > Their vehicle registration
- > A contact telephone number

It can also be a good idea to find out their address and details of their insurance provider. If there are any witnesses, try to get their details as well. When you phone your insurance company, they are likely to ask you for your policy number, so make sure you have this to hand.

WHEN DO I NEED TO MAKE A CLAIM?

Although it can vary from one insurance provider to the next, typically you have 24 to 48 hours to inform them if you are involved in a motoring

accident. This is regardless of whether the incident was your fault or caused by another party. Where possible, you should call them while still at the scene.

DO I HAVE TO MAKE A CLAIM AFTER AN ACCIDENT?

There is no rule that says you have to make a claim after a road accident, but you are required by law to tell your insurer about what has happened.

DO I NEED TO CALL THE POLICE AFTER A CAR ACCIDENT?

According to the Road Traffic Act, you must report a car accident to a local police station within 24 hours. You can do this using the non-emergency number 101. If there is an injury or the road is blocked, call 999 immediately.

WHAT HAPPENS IF I DON'T WANT TO MAKE A CLAIM?

You may choose not to make a claim. This will allow you to keep your no-claims discount intact, although you will have to pay for any necessary repairs to your vehicle yourself. It is worth knowing that, even if you do not make a claim, the other driver involved may still do so.

Home Storage Trends for 2023

The New Year is synonymous with fresh starts and, of course, the big January house declutter which gets us all thinking about how we can make changes to the way we organise our homes. If 2023 is the year you plan to give your home a stylish lift, here are some top home storage trends from Sliderobes, that are set to dominate the world of interiors in the months ahead.

Home office order

With the shift to home working, people have been looking at ways to create an organised home office that's free from distraction. The new trend for home offices is storage solutions that are built in and bespoke, when it comes to their shelving, drawers and desks. Not only does this give it a personal touch but also makes the area feel like a functional workspace, to promote productivity.

Sustainable storage

2023 will be the year for sustainable storage. Eco-friendly options aren't anything new but this trend is gaining momentum and it's likely that more people will be opting for natural materials and aesthetics such as rattan and bamboo, glass and wood for their storage, whether it's baskets, boxes, shelves or wardrobes.

Crittall doors

In terms of styles, Sliderobes have seen a huge increase in crittall style doors for their customers' wardrobes and this trend is here to stay. It's easy to see why, as it's chic and minimal but has a bit of a modern edge. It's also versatile enough to suit any room style; from mid century to Scandi.



Rich deep blues will look luxurious, whilst grey toned denim blues can create a sense of peace and calm.

Blue is back

Grey has long been the interiors shade of choice but colour is making a comeback. Last year saw the resurgence of green but this year blue will be the perfect pick. Depending on the shade, blue can suit any room and style.



Bespoke for you

The ultimate trend for storage in 2023 will be personalised design. Everyone wants their home to feel unique and reflect their character and this will be integrated into storage solutions too. After all, everyone has individual storage needs. Whether it's a bookworm who wants a library of shelving or a shoe lover who needs a built-in shoe-rack in their wardrobe to protect, show-off and store their collection, storage that's fit for your lifestyle and your belongings, makes it much easier to keep a space calm and organised, as everything will have its own place.

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ENGLAND'S FINEST?

BEN STOKES OBE HAS TRANSFORMED HIMSELF AND THE GAME OF CRICKET

It's only five years since Ben Stokes OBE found himself facing not just exclusion from the sport he loved, but also potentially a prison sentence, having been charged with affray outside a Bristol nightclub.

The incident – in which the brilliant all-rounder was defending a homosexual couple – cost Stokes his place in the 2017/18 Ashes team, and sent the Durham cricketer on a journey of self-discovery that, ultimately, has led him to the heights he finds himself at now.

Stokes roared back from the Bristol incident, inspiring England's 2019 World Cup win, batting sensationally at Headingley in that year's Ashes to win the third Test when all seemed lost, and being named Player of the Series in South Africa that winter.

Last year, Stokes was instrumental in bringing England T20 World Cup glory, yet it is his ascent as Test captain that is truly captivating a nation at the moment.

England clinched an away Test series in Pakistan – a country in which they had only ever won two matches in their entire history – yet it is the manner of the cricket being played that truly reflects a new dawn for the sport.

'Bazball', as it is referred to, is a driven, dynamic and outlandishly positive method of playing the game, the like of which five-day Test cricket has never seen. This cricket revolution epitomises not just Stokes' captaincy, but also his approach to life itself.

As inspirational English sportspeople go, there are few who can rival Stokes' efforts.

Further proof of this was offered when Stokes was named as runner-up in the 2022 BBC Sports Personality of the Year Award. Though he didn't win, his nomination is evidence enough of his incredible success.

Photo credit: Arjun Naveed APStuttesstock



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PUZZLES & TRIVIA

PUZZLES

Answers: see end of The VISION Listings

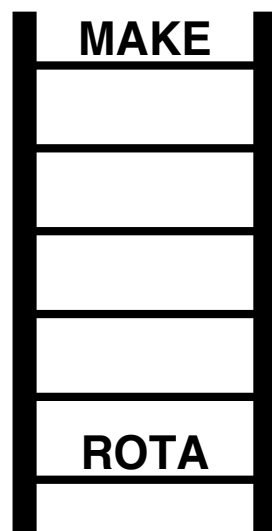
- ▶ AGATE
- ▶ AMETHYST
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- ▶ FELDSPAR
- ▶ JADE
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- ▶ LAPIS LAZULI
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- ▶ TURQUOISE

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

DID YOU KNOW?

- ▶ More than one million animal species have been identified on Earth.
- ▶ There is only one species of koala in the world.
- ▶ In the wild, red pandas are mainly active during the twilight period and until the early hours of the morning. Otherwise, they are usually found resting.
- ▶ Like domestic cats, giant panda bears have vertical slits for pupils.
- ▶ It's thought there are more tigers in captivity than are left in the wild.
- ▶ Lions can eat up to 40kg of meat in a single meal. That's around a quarter of their body weight.
- ▶ You can tell the species of an elephant by the shape of its ears.

WORD LADDER



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

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

DO NOT rearrange the order of the letters.

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

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