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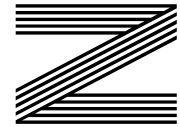
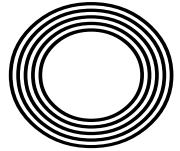
**FIVE  
TIPS FOR  
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*Remembering jockey*  
**LESTER PIGGOTT**

**NATURAL REMEDIES**  
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*Sue*  
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# Editor's notes...

JULY 2022



Emma Caulfield, Editor

Hello and welcome to this month's edition of **VISION**Halstead. Last month, we marked the Queen's Platinum Jubilee, and it was amazing to see people coming together to celebrate this momentous occasion. Events in Halstead included live music in the Public Gardens and the lighting of the Jubilee beacon at Halstead Fire Station.

After the difficult time we've gone through over the past couple of years, this was a chance to recognise how far we've come since we first went into lockdown. Though many things have changed since then, our love for a party certainly hasn't.

When I've been out and about recently, I couldn't help but notice that many of our local businesses have been quiet, so I'd like to once again appeal to our readers to support them. Your money not only has the potential to help one business, but it can also make a positive difference across the community.

Children will soon be breaking up from school, and for many families it will be their first chance to get away since 2019. I'm sure we'll all appreciate the relaxation that little bit more for it being so delayed.

This month marks my one-year anniversary since launching **VISION**Halstead. I have made many friends and acquaintances during that time, and it's been great getting to know the local businesses and being welcomed into the community. Thank you to everyone who has supported me.

*Emma Caulfield*

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

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CONTRIBUTORS | Tabatha Fabray, Tim Green

At the time of print all content in **VISION** was relevant and up to date according to COVID-19 government guidelines All pages are recyclable



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# A RACE *for the* TAPE

## CELEBRATING THE LIFE OF THE LEGENDARY JOCKEY, LESTER PIGGOTT

We are used to identifying icons in popular culture – stars who have committed decades to their pursuit, taken home countless honours and, in the process, inspired a generation to try to emulate their achievements.

As far as the sporting world goes, from Muhammad Ali to Serena Williams, Freddie Flintoff to David Beckham, we can reel off the names of defining stars with relative ease, though despite their intense and varied achievements, the question of whether they can rival those of the late Lester Piggott is an interesting one.

Certainly in terms of longevity of a professional career, none comes close. Piggott, who passed away in May, rode his first winner at the age of just 12, way back in 1948, at Haydock Park. And five decades later, he was still taking the plaudits – his last winner also came at the Merseyside track, at the age of 59.

In total, Piggott rode a colossal 4,493 winners – a sporting legacy fuelled by half a glass of champagne each day, a few coffees and a handful of cigars.

Nicknamed the Long Fellow, given that at 5ft 8in he was tall for a jockey, his pedigree in the saddle never faded, and to back up the admiration he gleaned as the UK's favourite jockey, he had a rogue-like edge that, while courting admiration from contemporaries – and the opposite sex – also landed him in hot water from time to time.

This was never more the case than when the champion jockey was arrested and found guilty of tax evasion in 1986. He was subsequently given a three-year prison sentence (later reduced to one year) and stripped of his OBE, as it transpired he hadn't declared £1.3million of income received from riding, plus a further £1million from bloodstock operations.

It seemed peculiar that a multimillionaire would feel the need to defraud the public purse, but Piggott was very much a man in his own creation, and abiding by the rulebook wasn't part of his plan.

"If I was to toe the line, I would never have got to where I was in my career; I would never have ridden my first horse when I was 12," he said in an interview with the BBC. "I always wanted to take things one step further, to push the narrative, to challenge boundaries.

"I think if you want to get somewhere and if you want to be someone, this is the route you need to take... even if sometimes it may not work out the way you planned."

In 2021, Piggott was one of the first two entrants in the British Champions Series Hall of Fame – alongside the horse Frankel.

Although a private man, in later years Piggott remained active in the horse racing world, and was a close friend of the Queen. He had two daughters and a son, and passed away in hospital in Geneva, Switzerland, on May 29, aged 86.





# Full of PRIDE

## CELEBRATING THE PROGRESS OF PRIDE IN THE UK AND ELSEWHERE

It's perhaps surprising to note that Pride, a collection of events that celebrate the progress and popularity of the LGBTQ+ movement, actually comes from a place of conflict.

Certainly, our modern interpretation of Pride and, by association, LGBTQ+ Pride Month, which took place in June, is one where people can express their sexuality in a way that brings it into mainstream conversation.

It wasn't always like this. Back in 1969, and under the moniker Stonewall, a series of riots around Manhattan provided a watershed moment. The name referenced the Stonewall Inn, a gay bar in Greenwich Village where transgender people rioted following a raid by police.

Looking now at the way Pride is encouraged in all its forms, it's clear we have come a long way since then.

In the UK, parades in London and Brighton are some of the most popular of any live events held to celebrate Pride. Across the pond, various US presidents have committed to referencing and promoting Pride Month, while corporations the world over throw their collective marketing might behind that familiar multicoloured flag.

What's more, last year the United Arab Emirates supported the LGBTQ+ community in a way they had never before by raising the rainbow flag to celebrate Pride Month; and with the World Cup due to be held in Qatar at the end of the year, the Middle East remains under significant pressure to uphold its renewed pledge for dignity and equality.

These days, Pride is more than a dress code, a parade or a festival. It is a 24/7 lifestyle that encompasses people of all different persuasions, in pursuit of respect, tolerance and understanding. And it's a battle that's being won.

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# FUELLING THE DIVIDE

A HISTORY OF PETROL AND DIESEL PRICES OVER THE YEARS, AND WHERE THEY MAY GO FROM HERE

The devastation caused by the conflict in Ukraine has affected no one more than those immediately impacted by the war; and while it feels churlish perhaps to complain about the price of fuel at the pumps, it's not unreasonable to highlight the extraordinary increase in the price of filling up, and the very real impact it's having on home shores.

The current cost-of-living crisis is about much more than fuel, but the extent to which we rely on the ability to transport both ourselves and our goods around the UK means that even small fluctuations in petrol and diesel can have an onward effect across all retail and service sectors.

It's not just the war either – there is a multitude of other global factors contributing to an increase in logistics and refining costs.

Going forward, the threat of a full EU ban on Russian energy imports could see the cost of fuel climb even higher above the record prices we've seen – around £1.91/litre for petrol and £1.98/litre for diesel.

Even as recently as 2017, filling up at the pump was more than 30 per cent cheaper, and back in 2005, the amount we spend today would have got us twice as far down the road.

PETROL PRICES OVER TIME		DIESEL PRICES OVER TIME	
15 years ago (Jun 2007)	96p/litre	15 years ago (Jun 2007)	97p/litre
10 years ago (Jun 2012)	£1.32/litre	10 years ago (Jun 2012)	£1.37/litre
5 years ago (Jun 2017)	£1.15/litre	5 years ago (Jun 2017)	£1.16/litre
3 years ago (Jun 2019)	£1.27/litre	3 years ago (Jun 2019)	£1.31/litre
1 year ago (Jun 2021)	£1.30/litre	1 year ago (Jun 2021)	£1.32/litre
7 months ago (Dec 2021)	£1.45/litre	7 months ago (Dec 2021)	£1.49/litre
4 months ago (Mar 2022)	£1.67/litre	4 months ago (Mar 2022)	£1.78/litre



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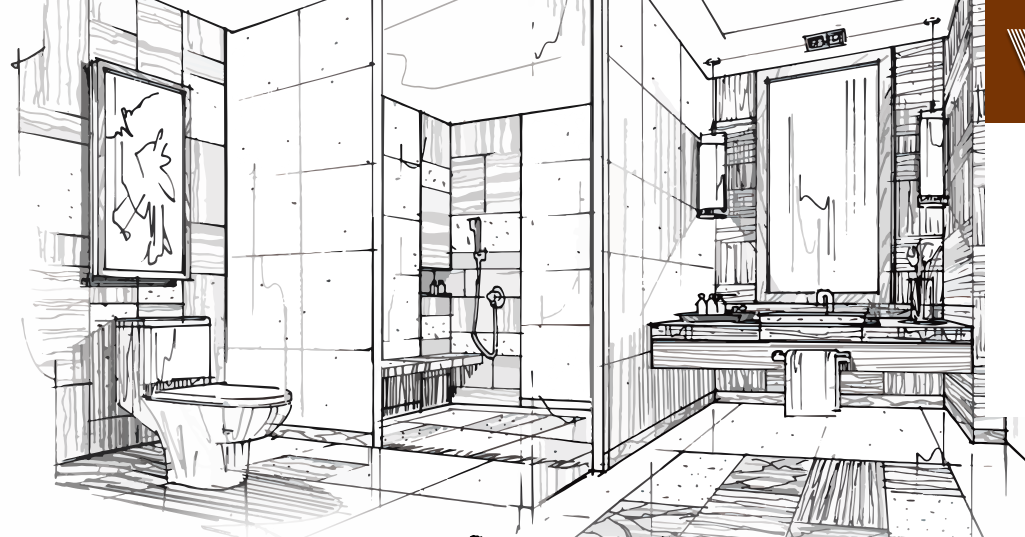
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## DESIGNING A small bathroom

Your bathroom is an essential room in your home – you'll use it multiple times a day. But many people think that a small bathroom has limited potential, making it difficult to create a modern and stylish space.

The good news is that even a modest bathroom can be beautiful with the right design. Take a look at our tips for creating a stylish, functional bathroom, even when you're working with a small space.

**CREATE ZONES:** You can make a space look larger by creating defined bathroom zones. Tiling or panelling your sink area, a block colour above the toilet and a contrasting floor can create the illusion of space. It will also make your bathroom look slick and modern.

**FREE UP YOUR FLOOR SPACE:** A freestanding bath, towel rail and wall-hung vanity units can leave you with more visible flooring, making your bathroom look much bigger. Get clever with shelving instead of opting for storage units. You can build shelving into your shower, or make the most of some wall space to store all of your essentials.

**LET THERE BE LIGHT:** Keep your space light to help it look bigger. Light shades on the walls, glass shower doors and a large mirror will help keep your room nice and bright.

**USE THE LITTLE TOUCHES TO ADD STYLE:** There are a lot of stylish touches you can add to a small bathroom to help it ooze style and class. Matte black or brushed gold hardware looks beautiful, while plants and wall art can also make your bathroom feel more inviting.

A small bathroom can still be mighty. Consider the options above to make the most of the space you have and ensure your bathroom is lovable and livable.

Photo credit: arazilovine.com/Pinterest, loverenovate.co.uk/Pinterest





HOME & DIY

# ISLAND HOPPING

## BY DESIGN

Greece's design aesthetics have typically been regarded in the sense of the ancients – the coming together of the Doric, Ionic and Corinthian orders in an appreciation of the classical architecture found in towering columns, stone temples and buildings.

While the template was set by others many thousands of years ago, the classic but cool elements of design from modern style contemporaries is leading a whole new generation of fans to flock to the Greek islands.

Take **Milos**, for instance – an island whose fishing heritage has led to the creation of a proliferation of single-storey lodges made of stone and decorated with local materials with, typically, a white or grey palette.

Then there is the **Athens Riviera**, a more populous and money-motivated area, where nearby forests have provoked a string of seaside spaces that rely more on timber and versatile fabrics, such as woven leather, particularly those with weather-resistant capabilities.

In **Syros**, the island vibe leads to artistic flair dressed in a veil of sustainability and self-

preservation. A two-hour ferry ride from Athens transports people to a neoclassical paradise that offers echoes of Capri, without the unnecessary excess.

And what about **Antiparos**? Although a stylish idyll first made popular by the English poet Lord Byron, there remains a rustic, simple charm to the architecture on show, with stone walls, wicker frames, rattan furnishings and a mass of driftwood.

In **Santorini**, this volcanic isle does everything at sharp angles. Like much of the Amalfi Coast, buildings overlap and overhang, yet the dazzling white brightness of apartments disguises very well their angular elements. Medieval hilltop towns feel a world away from the seaside cafés and restaurants, but there is a cleanness to both that makes the island so special.

Finally **Mykonos**, which has discovered a recent surge in popularity, enveloping everyone from entrepreneurs to indie bands. The vibe is totally relaxed, however, on an island inspired by cubic architecture, and with a mood that combines sharp lines with stylish poolside pads.

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## THE CHERISHED KITCHEN IMPLEMENTS OF THE COUNTRY'S BEST CHEFS

While a good workman doesn't blame his tools, for those who specialise in the wonder of food, the perfect kitchen implement can transport an everyday dish into a work of culinary completeness.

We have collated the must-have cooking utensils and items for a selection of the UK's leading chefs, and in some cases, the results were surprising.

**JAMIE OLIVER:** Globally famous chef and restaurateur. "An empty jam jar: super cheap and super useful, for anything from salad dressings and salsas to storing pulses and spices."

**YOTAM OTTOLENGHI:** Respected food columnist and chef. "For years I struggled with all sorts of mashers, then I found the Masterclass potato ricer. It fits in a drawer, it's easy to handle and clean, and creates a mega-smooth mash. I now use it for mashing all my root veg."

**CLARE SMYTH:** Michelin-decorated female chef and previous winner of the Chef of the Year award. "My Big Green Egg barbecue. You can put whatever you like on it, pull down the lid and leave it for hours without having to do anything at all. Good food made with ease and no stress."

**TOM KERRIDGE:** Owner of award-winning The Hand and Flowers pub. "My Homer Simpson bottle opener, a present from my personal assistant, Zabrina. Each time I open a bottle, it goes, 'Mmmmm, beer'."

**JAMES COCHRAN:** Winner of *Great British Menu* 2018. "It has to be my Braun J300 Juicer. I've been making amazing juices every morning to ensure I'm full of energy for the day."

**MARWA ALKHALAF:** Co-owner of Michelin restaurant, Nutshell. "Rubber spatulas of all shapes and sizes. They don't scratch and ensure that every last bit is scraped up. When you are working with precise recipes, especially with pastries, it's crucial every gram is accounted for."

Photo credit: amazon.co.uk, claresmyth.com, biggreenegg.com, actionfiguresitalia.it, @cochran\_ja @Twitter, greatbritishchefs.com



# LOCAL NEWS

*from your neighbourhood*



Photo credit: Ecolnes Refillery/Store/Facebook

## Community champion recognised in Honours List

A Halstead resident who set up a group to care for elderly and vulnerable people during the pandemic said she was “shocked” to receive a Member of the Order of the British Empire (MBE) in the Queen’s Birthday Honours.

Cherry McKean MBE (pictured left) formed the COVID-19 Community Action Response Group in Earls Colne in the first lockdown to make sure people who were living on their own were not completely isolated.

She said: “I needed to set up a group to make sure people living by themselves could get help and talk to their families and friends. Everybody really pulled together as a team. We had people volunteering to drop their phone numbers through the doors of all the houses on one road, and Earls Colne Parish Council also designed a leaflet which went to every household.

“It’s such an honour to receive the MBE but I was shocked when the email came through – I thought it was a scam. I’ve known about it since the end of April

and have had to keep the biggest news of my life a secret since then.”

Cherry praised the efforts of volunteers who gave up their time to help run the group.

She said: “It was an amazing, lovely atmosphere at such a dark time. People were shopping for strangers they had never met. We set up a vaccination hub and people were quick to offer to help.”

Cherry was also honoured for her efforts in championing environmental causes. In 2019, she established the Eco Colnes and Halstead Grass Roots Community Group for local people to share tips on how to be more sustainable.

She has also set up the Ecolnes Refillery in Earls Colne, a minimal waste store and sustainable living hub which aims to help its customers reduce the amount of plastic packaging they use.

Looking ahead, Cherry would also like to set up a community hub and a community fridge to share surplus food for free.



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Photo credit: Orchestra Land

# Plans for 73 homes to be considered by council

A housing developer has submitted plans for 73 new homes on land at Mount Hill in Halstead. In an application submitted to Braintree District Council, developers Orchestra Land have proposed to build much-needed housing for the area between Halstead Hall Care Home and Blamsters Farm. This follows discussions with Braintree District Council to reduce the number of homes from 130 to 73 after members of the public raised concerns over the impact the development would have on the environment and local infrastructure. Basil Aslam, director of Orchestra Land, said: "We have worked hard to improve our proposals in response to comments from council officers and other consultees, including a reduction from 130 to 73

homes. Almost half the site is now proposed for public open space, community orchard, providing a new play area and enabling biodiversity enhancements. "The proposals will meet policy requirements in all areas, including parking standards and drainage, and will deliver 30 per cent affordable housing as well as self-build housing plots. Financial contributions will also be made towards local healthcare and education services, and towards highway improvements such as improved crossing facilities on the A131." A spokesperson for Braintree District Council said: "The applicant has sought outline planning permission for this site under application 20/01493/OUT. "Our planning committee will consider the concerns raised when this application is put before them."

# New bench installed to honour Queen's Jubilee

Halstead will have a permanent reminder of the Queen's Platinum Jubilee after a new bench was installed in the Public Gardens. This is one of three benches installed by Braintree District Council to mark 70 years since the Queen's accession to the throne. Benches have also been installed in Weavers Park, Braintree, and Witham Town Park. A display of red, white and blue summer flowers has been created in Halstead Public Gardens, as well as Braintree and Bocking Public Gardens and Witham Memorial Gardens. Councillors Frankie Ricci (pictured left), Andrew Hensman (pictured centre) and Wendy Schmitt (pictured right) have praised the initiative. Cllr Ricci said: "The Platinum Jubilee is a momentous occasion for the nation and residents across our district. These commemorative benches will add a lasting touch to remember the Jubilee for years to come."



The **Empire Theatre** in **Halstead** has been around for many years, in fact, over 100 years. It has seen many developments and experienced many changes in its lifetime, but what it does still do is bring some great entertainment and provides the location for many groups and organisations who can use the theatre on a regular basis for a variety of events, including Bingo, Halstead Choir, Dementia Friendly Film and Choir projects, plus the recent relaunch of the Autism Friendly Film sessions.

The Theatre is used by local theatre groups, **Frederick Douglas, DOT Productions, Abigail's Performing Arts** and **Stane Street Players** for rehearsals as well as putting on their shows, there are plans to expand into other sessions to include young parents with very young children, plus we are looking to launch a regular "band night" where we will be looking to have young talent from our area use the Theatre to perform.

We have a variety of shows coming up in the next few months with some exciting streaming events, including the performance of **Jodie Comer** in **Prima Facie**, this show is completely sold out in London and is now only available to see in Theatre/Cinema, before the show moves to Broadway, so do not miss this opportunity.

In August we have the fabulous **WESTLIFE** performing live at Wembley Stadium, and this too will be streamed live into the Theatre. Westlife are the UK's biggest-selling album group of the 21st century, Westlife will be broadcasting their first ever show from

# Empire Theatre

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We also have the return of our popular Comedy Nights and on **30th September** we have a four man show headlined by **Paul Sinha**, best known from his appearances on "The Chase", Paul is a very well respected comedian, and we look forward to welcoming him and the rest of the line-up at the Theatre.

**For more information on all our shows, events, films, streaming and the Theatre itself, please go to our website to find out more... you can also buy your tickets online at [www.empire-theatre.co.uk](http://www.empire-theatre.co.uk)**

<p><b>Saturday 9th July</b> <b>AUTISM FRIENDLY CINEMA</b> Entry £3.00 2.30 for 3.00pm</p>	<p><b>Saturday 16th July</b> <b>MATILDA THE MUSICAL JR</b> All seats £11.00 FREDERICK DOUGLAS PERFORMING ARTS</p>	<p><b>Friday 30th Sept</b> <b>COMEDY NIGHT</b> All seats £16.50 <b>PAUL SINHA</b> headlines a great evening of comedy</p>
<p><b>Live Streaming - Thurs July 21st</b> <b>Jodie Comer</b> <b>Prima Facie</b></p>	<p><b>DOT Productions present</b> <b>The Jungle Book</b> <b>Saturday 27th August 2022</b> 2.30 for 3.00pm Tickets £8.00</p>	<p><b>Films for Kids</b> <b>Dementia Friendly</b> <b>Autism Friendly</b> <b>Comedy Nights</b> <b>Live Theatre</b></p>
<p><b>WESTLIFE</b> <b>The Wild Dreams Tour</b> ALL THE HITS</p> <p><b>Saturday 6th August</b> 8.30pm - £20.00 (12A) Irish heart-throbs Shane, Nicky, Mark and Kian invite fans everywhere to come together in their local cinema and share in this unforgettable live experience.</p> <p><b>Empire Theatre, Halstead · <a href="http://www.empire-theatre.co.uk">www.empire-theatre.co.uk</a></b></p>		





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LOCAL NEWS



# Appeal to support area's green-fingered group

Halstead residents are being asked to support a group of green-fingered volunteers who give up their time to clean up the local area and encourage pride in the environment by creating floral displays.

The call comes from Roman Skeats, who lives on Kings Road in the town and is appealing to local people to donate to Halstead in Bloom.

He has started a GoFundMe page and run a 10k race to raise awareness for the group.

Speaking to **VISION**Halstead about why he wanted to support the group, Roman explained: "I'm sure

hundreds, if not thousands, of people living in Halstead see and appreciate the hard work the volunteers at Halstead in Bloom do. They really do transform the place every year and never ask for anything in return. They always have a smile on their faces and put in all the effort on whatever they are planting and making sure it's all done nice and neatly. The town is transforming into a flower garden."

You can donate to Roman's fundraiser by visiting [www.bit.ly/3A6eelp](http://www.bit.ly/3A6eelp) or by searching 'independent fundraiser for Halstead in Bloom' on GoFundMe.com

## New addition to Second World War Memorial

Visitors to Halstead Public Gardens will notice a new addition to the Second World War Memorial.

There has been a plane made from wood, chicken wire and moss flying over the memorial since 2014 thanks to Joan Gibson, a florist and artist who designs floral displays for Halstead in Bloom.

After the weather damaged the display, it was decided to replace the structure with a permanent metal plane created by Graham Smith, which was installed in time for the Platinum Jubilee.

Julia, Graham's wife, said: "I bought an Airfix kit of a Spitfire for Graham for Christmas and it is based on that model. The silhouette was to shadow the model of a First World War soldier in the gardens."

Graham spent around 30 hours building the plane, and has also been busy elsewhere.

Julia added: "Graham has made a Tommy display at St Andrew's Church, and at Halstead Hospital there is a replica weaving loom to honour the Courtauld family. In Butler Road car park, there is a replica of a Portway Tortoise Stove he made."



Photo credit: Alan Howard



## Council to improve park thanks to £250,000 fund



Photo credit: Braintree District Council

LOCAL NEWS

**B**raintree District Council has secured funding to improve Ramsey Road Recreation Ground in Halstead.

After a recent inspection revealed that the surface of the half-pipe ramp in the skate park was severely damaged, a sum of £250,000 Section 106 funding – made up of contributions sought from developers towards the costs of providing community infrastructure – will be used to improve the park and create new facilities.

When the council assigned a metalwork company to carry out the maintenance works on the half-pipe ramp, it was advised that the metal had corroded to the extent that the item was unrepairable. As a result, it will be removed from the park.

In 2019, the council ran a public consultation to give everyone who uses the recreation ground or lives in the surrounding area the opportunity to share their thoughts on the park.

This feedback will help the council shape the design and layout of the new facilities at the park, with design concepts being prepared in the coming months.

Councillor Wendy Schmitt, cabinet member for climate change and the environment at Braintree District Council, said: "We appreciate that the half-pipe ramp at Ramsey Road SkatePark may be sorely missed. However, there are plans in the pipeline to improve the park and create new facilities that are modern, fun and safe to use, as well as providing an environment for those who use the park for other outdoor activities."

## Man taken to hospital after disturbance

**P**olice are appealing for witnesses after a man was injured during a late-night disturbance on Halstead High Street last month.

Officers found a man in his 20s with a facial injury after they were called to the town centre at 11.45pm

on Friday, June 10. The man was taken to hospital.

Colchester District Commander Rob Huddleston said: "We continue our enquiries to establish what happened. We need anyone who saw anything or has any dashcam footage to contact us. Anyone who has not already spoken to officers, but who may have information that can help our investigation, is asked to call us."

If you have any information, you can submit a report at [www.essex.police.uk](http://www.essex.police.uk) or call the non-emergency number 101.

Please quote incident 1449 of 10 June.

## Jubilee celebrations fit for a queen at care home

**R**esidents at a Halstead care home joined millions across the country last month in celebrating the Queen's Platinum Jubilee.

Family members joined relatives at Colne View Care Home on Dame Mary Walk for a garden party featuring music, dancing and a royal quiz. They also hosted their own Big Jubilee Lunch.

Staff made sure it was a day to remember, decking out the home with Union Jack flags and bunting, while residents shared memories of the Royal Family.

Mary, 77, a resident and former volunteer for Halstead in Bloom, planted a cherry tree and installed a commemorative plaque as part of the celebrations.

Christine, 90, told stories of attending parties in the gardens of the Bowes-Lyon estate with Princess Elizabeth and Princess Margaret.

Monica Boldeata, care home manager, said: "We loved welcoming relatives to enjoy the royal treatment after so long apart. The Platinum Jubilee offers the perfect opportunity to get together with loved ones and celebrate the Queen and the wonderful residents.

"Many residents have fond memories of celebrating the Silver, Golden and Diamond Jubilees and we were keen to ensure the Platinum Jubilee was no exception.

"It was amazing to have the full Colne View family back together again. Judging by the smiles on everyone's faces, it was a huge success."



Photo credit: Care UK

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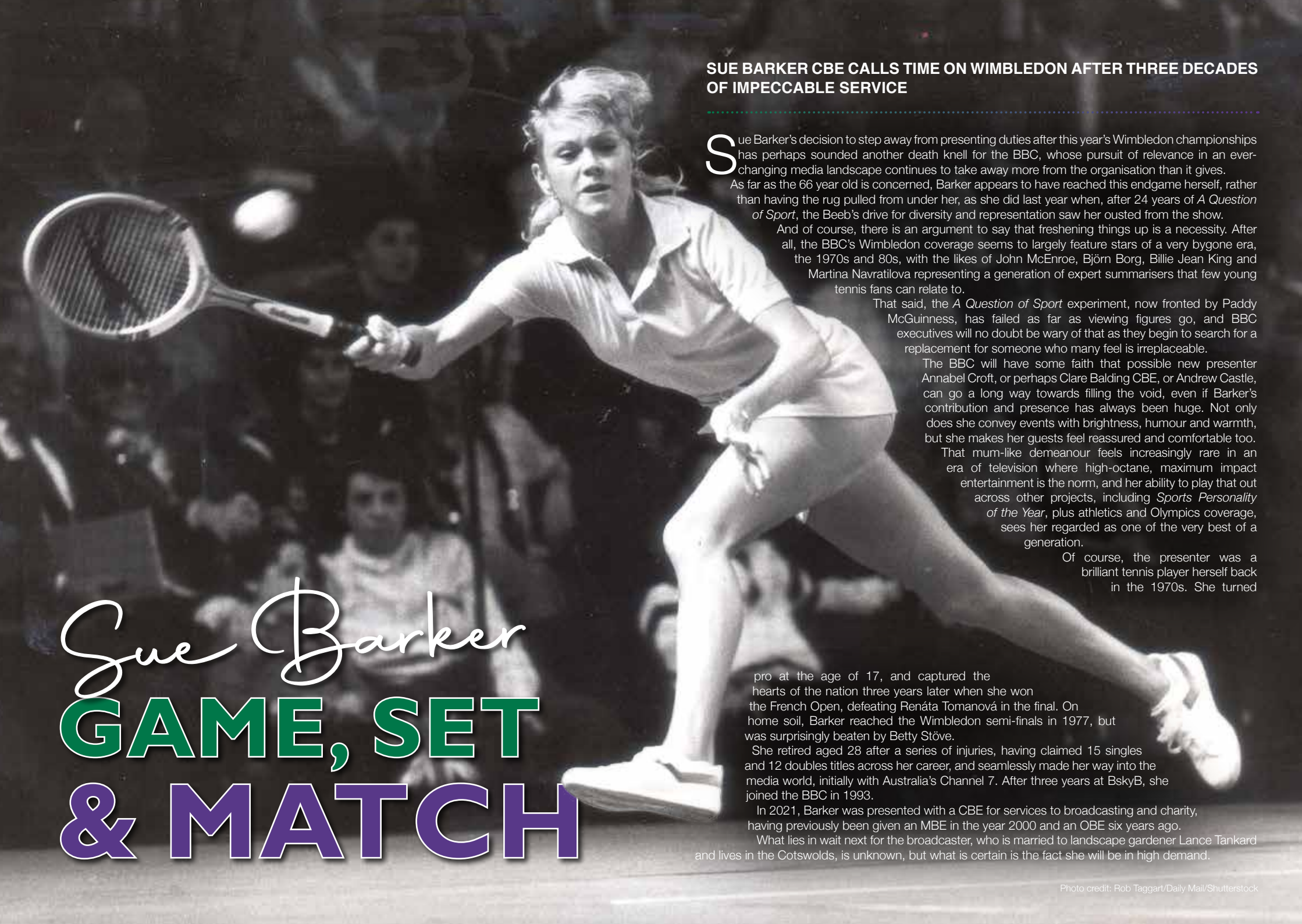
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## SUE BARKER CBE CALLS TIME ON WIMBLEDON AFTER THREE DECADES OF IMPECCABLE SERVICE

Sue Barker's decision to step away from presenting duties after this year's Wimbledon championships has perhaps sounded another death knell for the BBC, whose pursuit of relevance in an ever-changing media landscape continues to take away more from the organisation than it gives. As far as the 66 year old is concerned, Barker appears to have reached this endgame herself, rather than having the rug pulled from under her, as she did last year when, after 24 years of *A Question of Sport*, the Beeb's drive for diversity and representation saw her ousted from the show.

And of course, there is an argument to say that freshening things up is a necessity. After all, the BBC's Wimbledon coverage seems to largely feature stars of a very bygone era, the 1970s and 80s, with the likes of John McEnroe, Björn Borg, Billie Jean King and Martina Navratilova representing a generation of expert summarisers that few young tennis fans can relate to.

That said, the *A Question of Sport* experiment, now fronted by Paddy McGuinness, has failed as far as viewing figures go, and BBC executives will no doubt be wary of that as they begin to search for a replacement for someone who many feel is irreplaceable.

The BBC will have some faith that possible new presenter Annabel Croft, or perhaps Clare Balding CBE, or Andrew Castle, can go a long way towards filling the void, even if Barker's contribution and presence has always been huge. Not only does she convey events with brightness, humour and warmth, but she makes her guests feel reassured and comfortable too.

That mum-like demeanour feels increasingly rare in an era of television where high-octane, maximum impact entertainment is the norm, and her ability to play that out across other projects, including *Sports Personality of the Year*, plus athletics and Olympics coverage, sees her regarded as one of the very best of a generation.

Of course, the presenter was a brilliant tennis player herself back in the 1970s. She turned

pro at the age of 17, and captured the hearts of the nation three years later when she won the French Open, defeating Renáta Tomanová in the final. On home soil, Barker reached the Wimbledon semi-finals in 1977, but was surprisingly beaten by Betty Stöve.

She retired aged 28 after a series of injuries, having claimed 15 singles and 12 doubles titles across her career, and seamlessly made her way into the media world, initially with Australia's Channel 7. After three years at BskyB, she joined the BBC in 1993.

In 2021, Barker was presented with a CBE for services to broadcasting and charity, having previously been given an MBE in the year 2000 and an OBE six years ago.

What lies in wait next for the broadcaster, who is married to landscape gardener Lance Tankard and lives in the Cotswolds, is unknown, but what is certain is the fact she will be in high demand.

# Sue Barker GAME, SET & MATCH





# CRAZY COMPANIONS

**FROM GIANT SPIDERS TO PYGMY HEDGEHOGS, HERE ARE SOME OF THE THE CRAZY PETS KEPT IN BRITAIN**

### TARANTULA

The very notion of having a pet tarantula crawling about the place as you sit down for your evening meal seems totally perplexing, yet while many of us view these incredible arachnids as dangerous, many tarantulas offer a bite that's little worse than a bee sting.

Naturally, you'd rather avoid that if possible, but that shouldn't rule out having a Chilean Rose, Mexican Redleg or Costa Rican tarantula as a pet.

### SUGAR GLIDER

This possum offers affection (once it gets to know you), inquisitiveness, a tail that's as long as its body and an ability to glide through the air with almost Tarzan-like abandon.

One slight downside is it's strictly nocturnal, meaning if you really want to bond with one, you'll be staying up late.

### GIANT AFRICAN LAND SNAIL

Who would have thought owning a snail implied you were living on the edge? It is indeed the case, though, given that the giant African land snail is illegal in many parts of the US for the destruction it can cause to agriculture.

We're a bit more relaxed in the UK, though it is against the law to release them into the wild; and contrary to the marketing, they're not really so 'giant' after all, coming in at around 15cm long (which is still impressive as molluscs go).

### CHINCHILLA

A bit like a squirrel on steroids, the chinchilla is an adorable member of the rodent family and rarely puts a paw out of place, though does require a fair bit of maintenance.

### AFRICAN PYGMY HEDGEHOG

Anyone who has spotted a hedgehog going about its nightly duties will know that – horrific waistcoat of lethal-looking spikes aside – they are one of our cutest garden visitors. The pygmy (or four-toed) hedgehog is a smaller version more suited to life as a pet, and their popularity in the UK is soaring.



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# Bubble BONANZA

**B**ubble tea has been trending on social media for a while now, with this Insta-perfect colourful beverage being every bit as tasty as it looks.

consistency that is somewhere between jelly and chewing gum.

#### WHAT IS BUBBLE TEA?

Bubble tea is a Taiwanese recipe that is made by blending tea with milk, fruit and fruit juices and then adding tapioca pearls. While it is now all the rage in the UK, it has been enjoyed in countries such as China since the 1980s.

#### WHY IS IT CALLED BUBBLE TEA?

It is the tasty tapioca pearls that sit at the bottom of bubble tea and the floating bubbles that are created by vigorous shaking that give this increasingly popular drink its name.

Bubble tea can be served hot or cold, but always in a transparent cup and with a thick straw so that the pearls can be seen and sucked up with ease.

#### WHAT DOES BUBBLE TEA TASTE LIKE?

There are lots of different flavours of bubble tea that you can try, and you can even get various flavours of tapioca pearls. These pearls have a chewy

#### HOW TO MAKE BUBBLE TEA

##### You will need:

Tea | Milk | Tapioca pearls | Honey or agave

##### How to make:

- Bring 3 cups of water to the boil and add 1 cup of tapioca pearls.
- Simmer until the pearls float to the top.
- Brew your chosen tea and allow to steep for 5 minutes.
- Chill the tea in the fridge or pour over ice to cool.
- Place the cooked pearls in a tall glass.
- Add honey or agave to sweeten if desired.
- Pour your chilled tea two-thirds of the way up the glass.
- Add a splash of milk if you want a creamier drink.
- Stir and enjoy with a thick straw.

#### POPULAR BUBBLE TEA FLAVOURS

Taro milk tea | Matcha green tea | Mango tea | Brown sugar milk tea.





# How to deal with...

The average total debt for an adult in the UK is a whopping £32,053. If you are one of the many people struggling with debt, it can feel all-consuming. Fortunately, there is light at the end of the tunnel.

### Step 1: Make a list

If you have been burying your head in the sand about your debt, then now is the time to make a list of everything you owe. Although it can be scary to see this on paper, this is an essential task in becoming debt-free.

### Step 2: Prioritise your debts

The next step is to put your debts in order of importance; these are known as priority debts. These may include:

- Mortgage repayments
- Rent
- Secured loans
- Utility bills
- Taxes

- Court fines

These debts need to be paid back first as they could result in you losing your home or being disconnected from a service.

### Step 3: Work out a budget

A weekly or monthly budget helps you to see what your monthly income and expenses are and allows you to find out how much you can realistically pay your creditors. If you need help working out a budget, the MoneyHelper offers a free budget planner at [www.moneyhelper.org.uk/en](http://www.moneyhelper.org.uk/en)

### Step 4: Communicate with your creditors

Once you know what you can afford to pay back, you should contact your priority creditors to talk them through your situation. Make sure you are realistic about what you can afford to pay and don't assume you will be able to pay more in the future.

### Step 5: Get independent advice

You can get free advice on dealing with debt from charities such as Step Change. Visit their website at [www.stepchange.org](http://www.stepchange.org) to find out more.



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TRAVEL

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**INSURANCE INSANITY:** Car hire companies profit from every level of insurance they sell, and as with most policies, you'll not need it 99.9 per cent of the time. Beware convoluted offerings, including a super collision damage waiver which, despite the name, still won't save you having to pay your excess. Others can take the excess down to zero but will cost you more than arranging private insurance. Alternatively, see what's covered on your credit card benefits.

**THE POWER OF THE HOUR:** Beware returning your hire car after hours – bringing it back late may well cost you an extra day's hire. Alternatively, think about the free trick on car hire when it comes to having a car on a day when the rental

centre isn't open. You'll find the cost for hiring Friday to Sunday is the same as Friday to Monday – in other words, you're getting a free day.

**THE FUEL RULE:** It always pays to return the car with the same fuel level in the tank. Returning it having not refilled will incur additional fees.

**BOOK IN ADVANCE:** As is usually the case, booking in advance will save you money. And in the COVID-19 era, many rental centres are insisting on pre-uploading your driver's licence and other ID documents, meaning you can save time on collection.

**THE AIRPORT AGGRO:** As we get back into the mindset of holidaying abroad, try to avoid airport rentals. They are notorious for expensive add-ons at a time when people are in a tense state of mind. The better solution is to get a taxi to a nearby town to pick up a prearranged rental.





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change towards a more positive mind requires laying down neural pathways to form new habits through consistent daily practice. And that's what the Positive Intelligence® program design empowers you to do.

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You can call me on 07368 438261 or drop me an email at [helenpq@plumecoaching.com](mailto:helenpq@plumecoaching.com) and we'll book in a chat. Your mental fitness is as important as your physical fitness!

**Helen Reade is a certified Positive Psychology Practitioner and Coaching Psychologist**



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# NATURAL SUNBURN REMEDIES



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According to a poll by the British Association of Dermatologists, 35 per cent of Brits have been sunburnt in the last year. Although we all know the dangerous effects of the sun's powerful UV rays, we can all be guilty of being a bit lax when it comes to applying sunscreen, so here's what to do if you start feeling the burn.

### BAKING SODA AND OATMEAL

If your skin is feeling sore after too long in the sun, an oatmeal and baking soda bath is just what you need. Adding a few tablespoons of baking soda to a cool bath can help to minimise sun damage, and adding a cup of oats can soothe any irritation and help the skin to retain moisture.

### COCONUT OIL

Once your initial sunburn has calmed down, coconut oil can be applied to the skin to moisturise and hydrate it. Coconut oil is also good for dry or peeling skin, as it helps to lock in moisture and keep the skin soft.

### ALOE VERA

One of the most common ingredients in after-sun products, aloe vera is known for its cooling and soothing properties. If you have your own aloe vera plant, simply break off a chunk of the plant and apply the gel directly to the affected area. Alternatively, pick up some aloe vera gel at your nearest pharmacy or supermarket.

### CHAMOMILE TEA

Did you know chamomile tea can soothe not only your mind but also your skin? To use chamomile as a sunburn remedy, brew a cup of tea as you usually would and then allow to fully cool. Soak a clean cloth in the tea and apply to the skin. Do not use this treatment if you are allergic to pollen.

### WHAT NOT TO PUT ON SUNBURNT SKIN:

Petroleum jelly (Vaseline) | Ice or ice packs | Fragranced moisturisers.



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GARDENING

# SHADE seekers



Is your garden more shady than sunny? While it can be a struggle to create a blooming outdoor space with limited sunlight, it can be done. Discover below five pretty plants that thrive in the shade.

**STINKING IRIS:** Although this may not be the most pleasant-sounding plant, stinking iris can actually make a very beautiful addition to a shady garden, especially in autumn, when its large seedpods split open to reveal orange-red seeds. Plant in full shade for best results.

**WOOD SPURGE:** There are many different varieties of spurge, but our favourite has to be *Euphorbia amygdaloides* var. *robbiae*. From late spring, this pretty plant bears lime-green flowers above dark green leaves. Plant in dry, shady spots such as underneath trees or along woodland borders.

**SNOWDROPS:** Snowdrops appear at the end of winter and bloom beautifully for weeks until your spring bulbs start to flourish. Delicate and dainty, snowdrops thrive in full shade and particularly in heavy, moist soils.

**BELLFLOWER:** If you are looking for a plant that will attract bees and other pollinators to your garden, then bellflower is a great choice. Ideal for growing at the back of a border, this attractive plant displays clusters of purple-blue bell-shaped flowers from summer through until autumn.

**FOXGLOVE:** As a woodland plant, foxgloves thrive in dappled or partial shade, so they do require a little bit of sun. There are many different varieties to choose from, with colours including bright pink, purple and peach.

### OUR TOP TIPS FOR GROWING IN THE SHADE:

- > Improve the soil with lots of organic matter before planting
- > When planting under trees, remove any dry, impoverished soil between the large roots
- > Apply weathered wood ash from a bonfire or log burner to increase the potash in the soil
- > Mulch the whole area after planting with garden compost or composted bark chippings.



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KIDS

**WHY IT'S IMPORTANT TO UNDERSTAND OUR KIDS' PERCEPTION OF MONEY**

There's no parent who hasn't encountered the incessant pleading or hopeful yearning of a child who, while being commended for his or her persistence, has desperately failed to appreciate the value of something we all need perspective on – money.

While in the past the subject of finances was one largely kept clear of kids, experts now believe it's of real value to educate our youngsters as far as the daily cut and thrust of cash goes.

To do so, it is key to understand what our kids perceive as the value of money. It follows, then, that we can better manage expectations if we pinpoint their perspective. For instance, children under the age of seven will understand the concept of money and its function, but only later do they gather the sense of exchange, the idea of borrowing and the fact it comes in various forms.

Past the age of 10, kids glean how work interacts with money and the fact it can be preserved with good habits (or lost easily with bad ones). With that in mind, having a jar where kids can save money, see it accumulate and then spend it on a reward is one of the best introductions.

Parents or guardians should also use a scheme of rewarding tasks (or commissions) rather than the typical pocket money format where, effectively, a child is rewarded no matter what they do.

The importance of giving should also be emphasised, as well as opportunity cost – "If you buy this, you won't be able to buy that."

Early money management offers great practice for later life where, as we will all testify, temptations become much greater.







# AN A DAY

## THE CHILD PROTECTION SYSTEMS RELEASED BY APPLE

Apple's advancements designed to protect the welfare of children using its hardware are coming into play, although the tech giant has held off activating a third iCloud-based system until next year.

In the meantime, content on devices being used by children will be screened in two ways, should parents choose to turn on the notifications function.

If activated, when an attempt is made to load a page that contains an inappropriate image, a warning note will appear, asking the user if they wish to proceed and view the photo. The note will suggest they consult a responsible adult for advice. This set up effectively eliminates the risk of children accidentally viewing content they would rather not.

A similar message will also appear if the child is apparently attempting to intentionally search for and view a topic or image that it is imagined might cause offence to minors. The system will then direct the user to expert public services for help and advice. Both systems are currently in use in the US, and they are significant innovations, because they represent the fact that rather than employing a Big Brother approach, Apple recognises that most families would rather police themselves and their own actions, given the opportunity.

A further system, originally announced in 2021 and now put on hold until 2023 at least, involves the scanning of photos uploaded to iCloud, with the aim of finding 'known' child abuse photos.

While the corporation is keen to move forward with this third innovation, it has agreed to take further advice on the feature before proceeding.

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# Just JAKE

JAKE DANIELS BECOMES THE UK'S FIRST OPENLY GAY FOOTBALLER IN THREE DECADES

They say young footballers go about their craft with a sense of fearlessness, and that's certainly the case where Blackpool forward Jake Daniels is concerned.

The 17-year-old, who signed pro terms with the Championship club in 2022, is yet to make a league appearance for the Seasiders, though he has singlehandedly cultivated more column inches than any of his vastly more experienced teammates by coming out as the English Football League's only gay footballer.

For many years, conjecture over the possible treatment of gay footballers – in an environment where terrace banter very often crosses the line between acceptable and not – has clearly led to a huge number of gay footballers afraid to fly their true colours.

That's what makes Jake's revelation all the more brave – namely that someone right at the start of his football career has the confidence and honesty to nail his LGBT colours to the mast and declare, as would Gloria Gaynor, "I am what I am".

He said: "I can't really put a date on it, but I was probably five or six years old when I knew I was gay, so it's been a long time that I have been living with the lie."

"Now is the right time to speak. I feel like I am ready to tell people my story. I want people to know the real me."

"I have been thinking for a long time about how I want to do it, when I want to do it. I know now is the time. I am ready to be myself, be free and be confident with it all."

The UK's first openly gay footballer since Justin Fashanu way back in 1990, Jake is correct in his assertion that attitudes and values have changed. And while the late Fashanu was derided for his honesty and bravery, the fact Jake Daniels has been roundly praised shows just how far society has come since then.



Photo credit: Paul Dammis/TGS Photo/Shutterstock



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# PUZZLES & TRIVIA

PUZZLES

Answers: see end of The VISION Listings

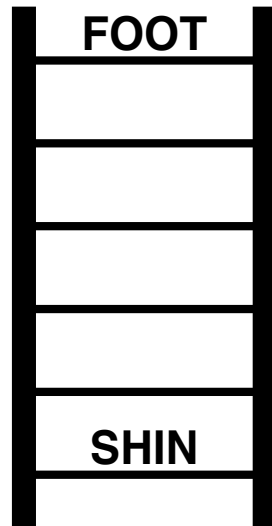
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## DID YOU KNOW?

- ▶ Every planet in the solar system could fit in the space between the Earth and the moon.
- ▶ On Venus, one day (one rotation) is equal to approximately 243 days on Earth, but its year (a trip around the sun) is approximately 224 days on Earth. This means one day on Venus is longer than one year.
- ▶ Lightning can occur in space. It's caused by black holes.
- ▶ As a gas giant, Saturn is less dense than water. It would be able to float on water.
- ▶ The sun rises and sets on the International Space Station around 15 times a day.
- ▶ In space, no one can hear you scream. Sound is vibration travelling through molecules in the air, but as space is a vacuum, there are no molecules to vibrate.

## 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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