

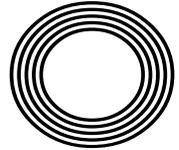
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this Star Trek Day

# IDRIS ELBA OBE

The actor's rise to the big screen as he turns 50



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Ashlong Grove, Halstead. **£875,000**

Enviably positioned on a splendid and tranquil plot of approximately 0.3 acres is this five bedroom detached chalet with a self-contained studio Annexe. Located on one of Halstead's most exclusive roads 'Ashlong Grove', the property is surrounded by field views and woodland, but is also within easy reach of Halstead's bustling High Street and the variety of amenities this historic town has to offer.

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Ratcliff Grove, Halstead. **£550,000**

A stylish, contemporary and spacious 4 bedroom detached residence, tucked away at the end of a no through road on this highly sought after development in the popular market town of Halstead. Built to the highest of standards by reputable builders Bloor Homes, this exceptional family property offers prospective purchasers an excellent opportunity to acquire a most beautiful and spacious 'turn key' home.



Mill Park Drive, Braintree. **£450,000**

This well presented three bedroom detached family home forms part of the frequently requested Heathlands development. This has fast become one of Braintree's most sought after areas, with its picturesque river walks, convenient footbridge directly into Braintree Village and Braintree Freeport Railway Station, which offers direct trains into London Liverpool Street.

To view, call our Braintree team on **01376 337400**



St. Peters In The Field, Braintree. **£575,000**

Occupying a fabulous un-overlooked plot within one of Braintree's most prestigious roads is this beautifully presented and deceptively spacious three bedroom semi detached house located on St Peters In The Field. Built in 1908, this impressive residence boasts a tasteful blend of old and new, along with both spacious and open-plan living accommodation, offering a 'turn key' purchase for variety prospective buyers.





# Editor's notes...

SEPTEMBER 2022



Emma Caulfield, Editor

Hello and welcome to this month's edition of **VISION** Halstead Braintree. Following on from the Lionesses' magnificent victory in the Euros Final, I think it's been great to see how many girls and women in our local area have been inspired to take up the sport. As the new Football season begins, now is the perfect time to consider joining your local club - after all, you never know how far it might take you!

Speaking of football, Halstead Town FC have now kicked off their season, with a number of exciting matches in the coming months. I'd encourage residents to visit Millbank Stadium and cheer on their local team.

This summer has been full of events that were previously cancelled owing to COVID-19 - from weddings to festivals, fairs to community get-togethers. And they are all the more special because they have reminded us how important it is to cherish time with family and friends.

I've been out visiting businesses in Halstead and Braintree recently. Our local businesses are the heart of our communities, and I'd encourage any local business owners to get in touch to see how **VISION** can help you.

I'd like to take this chance to thank our distributors for delivering our magazines come rain, shine or snow. They are an integral part in keeping **VISION** running, and they deserve to be recognised.

*Emma Caulfield*

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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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# STAR QUALITY

One of the most enduring television programmes in broadcast history has certainly lived up to its famous quote – “Live long and prosper”.

And if the legacy of the iconic sci-fi series wasn't reason enough to don the Starfleet uniform, the so-called Star Trek Day – September 8 to you and me – surely is.

Legendary actor Leonard Nimoy committed almost 50 years of his life to playing the Vulcan character Spock, dating right the way back to the first *Star Trek* pilot episode in 1964. And until his death in 2015, the actor presided over a franchise that never lost its edge or appeal.

In fact, it's because the series is as admired today as it was on its original run back in 1966 that director J.J. Abrams has been tempted back for a third reimagination, expected to air sometime in 2023.

Before then, Trekkies have a special date in the calendar upon which they can hang their USS Enterprise hat. That's thanks to the growing popularity of September 8 on the sci-fi calendar, a date affectionately known as Star Trek Day.

The date mirrors when Trekkies got their first glimpse of the crew in 1966 – the result of Gene Roddenberry's vision of a drama inspired by *Forbidden Planet*, *Horatio Hornblower*, and *Gulliver's Travels*.

To say that *Star Trek* has blown apart pop culture over the course of its existence is something of an understatement – with revenue approaching £10 billion, it's certainly one of the highest-grossing media productions on record.

The 2009 *Star Trek* reboot movie by Abrams saw a new alternate timeline so as to continue with the original characters, albeit portrayed by a new cast. Indeed, the franchise has so far managed to swerve some of the prequel/sequel criticism levelled at its distant sci-fi relation, *Star Wars*.

Perhaps the reason for that is because *Star Trek* has always succeeded in showing a strong regard for humanity because it's the universe – our own shared universe – they're all fighting for. Maybe that's why it has stood the test of time for seven decades. It's certainly what fans the world over will embrace on September 8, with thousands of meet-ups celebrating characters, friendships, memories and just a bit of old-fashioned sci-fi sorcery.

Strangely, it's possible Roddenberry, the show's creator, had the Second World War to thank for his vision of space warfare; he was a brave bomber pilot for the US Army Air Force, during the conflict, and was awarded the Air Medal and the Distinguished Flying Cross, before becoming a police officer in Los Angeles.

He got his big television break soon afterwards, and so too did the likes of James T. Kirk, Dr Leonard McCoy, Montgomery Scott and others.



# STAR TREK



Photo credit: Anthony Harvey/Shutterstock

# OLD SPICE?

IT'S 26 YEARS SINCE THE RELEASE OF THE SPICE GIRLS' DEBUT SINGLE, *WANNABE*, BUT MEL C IS STILL GOING STRONG

Melanie Chisholm has stuck close to her roots – following the phenomenal success of her stint as Sporty Spice with the Spice Girls, her solo career has sparked eight albums and produced three number-one singles, and will see embarking on a UK-wide book tour.

For those of us old enough to remember it, the summer of 1996 was a golden one. Britpop had given the country a unique swagger, the Euros were here, the sun was out and beer was cheap. And riding on the coat-tails was a new thing called 'girl power', pushed by a spectacular PR machine and fronted by the Spice Girls.

The legacy of the band that followed, both musically and in inspiring a generation of girls to stand tall and be heard, is well known; though perhaps the greatest accolade you can give to Simon Fuller's creation was that each member went on to achieve great things – and Mel C is no exception.

Visually, she's a world away from the tracksuit-clad kung-fu kicking star who pirouetted around stages and *Top of the Pops* studios – these days

the singer, at 48, is stylish and motherly; yet can still mix romantic anthems with dancefloor anthems.

"For me, music has always been about evolving with the things around you," she says. "You need to follow trends, while still keeping your own sense of originality and creativity over the music you make."

Away from the bright lights, Mel C has encountered her own fair share of challenges. She's battled depression, eating disorders, and admits that up until the birth of her only child, Scarlett, in 2009, she never fully had a sense of responsibility to herself.

2022 is an exciting year for the singer, as not only has she got a number of upcoming performances, but she is also publishing her first-ever autobiography, which promises to tell all about her time with the Spice Girls as well as the years that followed. It will take readers behind the scenes of her showbiz lifestyle, as well as revealing the darker side of fame, and finally gives Mel C the chance to tell her story in her own words.

*Who I Am: My Story* is available to purchase from September 15.



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MOTORING



# TOUR DE FORCE



Photo credit: Magic Car Pics/Shutterstock

A streamlined dream straight out of the future, the Ford Sierra was first unveiled in 1982, and the world sat up to take note.

When Ford revealed its Sierra model at the British International Motor Show at the NEC in Birmingham near the end of September 1982, it knew the reaction would be huge.

The company was in the throes of investing more than \$1.2 billion into the design, production and manufacture of this sleek, slick piece of automotive engineering, and the industry immediately knew it had something big on its hands.

For Ford, the reaction was just what the doctor ordered. The pressure had been on to find a successor to the Cortina, a stylish car that was, nonetheless, constructed around convenience and practicality.

Industry experts guessed that the manufacturer's next move would be to push those ideals further forward, but instead Ford went into overdrive with a design that rivalled the comfort of Audi, the

sleekness of Citroën and Porsche (indeed, the inspiration for Sierra's quarter glass came from the Porsche 928), and as for dashboard technology, the manufacturer had taken the very best elements from the likes of Saab and BMW.

Sure enough, after a slow initial take-up (mostly because of a punchy purchase price and an excess of Cortinas still sat on forecourts, now with much-reduced process), drivers gradually fell in love with the Sierra.

The Sapphire and, of course, sporty Cosworth models nicely tweaked the Sierra proposition, and it wasn't until the Mondeo arrived in 1993 that sales began to fall.

Looking at the Ford Sierra now, some may label it cumbersome and clumsy by today's aerodynamic standards, but in the 1980s, it was the very height of motor chic, and its legacy lives on today.



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# LIMESCALE elimination!

**NATURAL REMEDIES FOR LIMESCALE  
THAT YOU CAN FIND IN YOUR  
KITCHEN CUPBOARD**

Over the past year, one in three Brits claims that hard water in their home has worsened, with limescale becoming an increasingly common problem in many UK households.

If you are looking to eliminate limescale without the use of harsh chemicals, the below home remedies are just what you need.

### VINEGAR

Have you noticed a build-up of limescale on your taps and showerheads? If so then you need to act fast as this can cause dullness, chipping and peeling. One of the most effective methods for removing this is to fill a plastic bag with white vinegar and then attach it to the affected area. Leave for 15 minutes to soak, or overnight for stubborn limescale build-up.

### BAKING SODA

Limescale on the glass of your shower can be tricky to shift, especially if it has been allowed to build up. To remedy this, create a cleaning spray using 1 tsp baking powder, 1 tbsp white vinegar and ½ cup warm water. Spray onto the glass, leave for 3-4 minutes and then wipe with a clean cloth. You do not need to rinse the glass.

### LEMON JUICE

Lemon juice is one the most versatile natural cleaning remedies available, having the ability to dissolve dirt, remove grease, deodorise and tackle limescale. Simply pour pure lemon juice into a spray bottle, spritz on the affected area, leave for 30 minutes and then clean off with water and a soft cloth.

### CITRIC ACID

If you do not like the strong smell of vinegar, then citric acid is a good choice for descaling your kettle. Simply boil a half-full kettle, turn it off and unplug it. Next, add 2 tbsp of citric acid and leave for 20 minutes. Pour out the water and rinse twice before using.



HOME & DIY



# pretty pumpkin



Who says pumpkins are only for Halloween? And they're not just for eating, either. Find out how to make a pumpkin spice candle at home.

### MAKE A PUMPKIN SPICE CANDLE

#### YOU WILL NEED:

- > A wide-necked 370g jar with lid (a Mason jar or old jam jar is perfect)
- > 370g soy wax pellets
- > A candle wick (15cm)
- > A candle wick holder
- > Glue dot (heat resistant)
- > 1 tsp (5ml) pumpkin spice essential oil
- > Pumpkin spice (ground) plus a few whole spices, such as cinnamon, star anise, cardamom, clove or allspice, for decoration (optional)

#### HOW TO MAKE:

- > Thread the wick through the holder and apply the wick tab to the inside bottom of the jar.
- > Warm the jar in the oven at 30°C.
- > Gently melt the wax in a microwave or double boiler.
- > Cool for a few minutes then stir in the essential oil, mixing thoroughly.
- > Fill the jar to 1cm below the rim and make sure the wick is still in the centre.
- > When the wax gets cloudy, sprinkle a pinch of pumpkin spice on the top and scatter the whole spices.
- > Cool at room temperature then trim the wick.

Add a homemade label or check out Etsy for something really stylish. Remember to remove the whole spices before lighting your candle.



There are loads of other ways to decorate your home with pumpkins this autumn. Why not try one of the below ideas?

- > Arrange a group of pumpkins and decorate them by painting, drawing or spraying them in metallic colours – and add a few chunky faux candles. Remember, odd numbers of items work best.
- > Hollow out a pumpkin, fill with water and add seasonal flowers – or pop in a pot filled with small succulents.
- > Fill a hollowed-out pumpkin with a glass jar. Twist a small bendy branch with berries around the top and add a candle (a faux candle is safest).

Photo credit: countryhillcottage.com

Sanctuary Home Decor: thefantasandree.com

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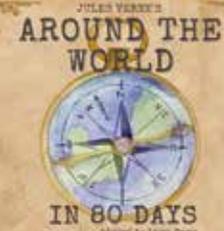
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**GET creative WITH WALLPAPER**

**ALTERNATIVE WAYS TO DECORATE WITH WALLPAPER**

Wallpaper is one of the easiest ways to decorate your home. It adds colour and style, helping to bring your spaces to life. But why should wallpaper stop at the wall? There are lots of home projects you can do with wallpaper to bring a unique twist to your interiors. Bring some colour to your next DIY project with these creative wallpaper ideas.

**ADD PATTERN TO A CHEST OF DRAWERS**  
 Wallpaper is an easy way to brighten up the plainest chest of drawers. It's an easy hack that is perfect for upcycling a dated piece of furniture. Why not invest in new decorative knobs or handles to complete the transformation?

**BRING COLOUR TO YOUR WALL PANNELLING**  
 Wall panelling has been a huge trend in recent years, but if you want to do something different with yours, wallpaper could be just the trick. Cut wallpaper to size and place it inside the panels to create a striking feature wall.

**FRESHEN UP KITCHEN CABINETS**  
 Wallpaper can transform your basic kitchen cabinets and give them a new lease of life. Add a simple pattern to create some interest that could make a nice contrast against the items on display.

**FRAME IT**  
 Art can be expensive, so why not turn your wallpaper into a work of art instead? Framing pieces of wallpaper can help you create feature walls and add decorative touches to coffee tables, sideboards and more. You can do this affordable DIY using wallpaper samples from stores, making it a quick and affordable way to update your decor.

Getting creative with your wallpaper is a great way to embrace the trend, without committing to covering your walls. Try using different colours and textures to create an impression in your home.



**HOME & DIY**





# LOCAL NEWS

*from your neighbourhood*



## No objections to new plans for service station

Town councillors raised no objections to proposals for a revamp of Halstead Service Station.

At a meeting on Monday, August 15, Halstead Town Council (HTC) accepted that the plans would likely be approved and offered no objection.

The proposals, submitted to Braintree District Council (BDC), would see the existing forecourt building demolished and a renovation of the furniture showroom on the site, which currently sits empty.

They would also see a new Greggs at the station, with parking and electric vehicle charging points.

Though no objections were made, councillors offered some suggestions, including that attention be paid to hazardous substances, to toilet facilities for the public, to a possible one-way system to ease traffic congestion, and to reducing signage clutter.

A spokesperson for the developers and owners of the service station, Motor Fuel Group (MFG) Ltd, said: "MFG is hoping to redevelop the site in 2023, in order to modernise the forecourt and install some electric vehicle charging capabilities, similar to those already being rolled out across MFG forecourts."

## Appeal launched following a serious collision

Police are appealing for witnesses after a man was killed in a collision in Halstead.

Officers were called to Sudbury Road in Halstead at around 7.45pm on August 11 following reports of a single-vehicle collision. The driver, a man in his 80s, was sadly pronounced dead at the scene.

Officers are appealing to anyone who may have

witnessed the collision or have any further information, CCTV, dashcam or other footage to get in contact with them at [www.essex.police.uk](http://www.essex.police.uk) or via the non-emergency number 101.

Please quote incident 1163 of August 11 when providing any information to make sure it gets to the right person as quickly as possible.

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## Outreach bus to support people across district



A new SOS Bus outreach project has launched to help vulnerable people in the Braintree district, including those in Halstead.

Braintree District Council (BDC) was recently successful in applying for funding from Essex County Council's Changing Futures programme to deliver an outreach bus to support vulnerable people and create positive change in local communities.

Changing Futures is a new outreach programme aimed at helping those who otherwise can't access the services they require.

The SOS Bus, managed by the charity Open Road, will offer help to people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness, are street drinkers or drug users, are in need of guidance and signposting for issues including housing, domestic abuse and mental health, or are in contact with the criminal justice system.

A variety of organisations are involved in delivering the project and have identified Halstead, Braintree, Witham and Silver End as priority locations for the bus to visit. The bus will visit on a twice-monthly basis over the next two years.

The aim is for the bus to be used as a base for agencies to attend and engage with clients and other identified individuals, allowing them to visit multiple agencies in one go.

Councillor Frankie Ricci, BDC's cabinet member for communities, said: "I'm very glad we secured funding from the Changing Futures programme to help support the most vulnerable people in our community in an accessible way and provide a safe space."

## Humbugs kick off new football season with home game win

With the new season now underway, Halstead Town FC are getting a feel for what life will be like in Step 5 Essex Senior League football.

At the time of writing, the Humbugs have played three games, winning an excellent first home game against a highly fancied Athletic Newham and losing

two closely fought away encounters.

Milbank Stadium is in good shape thanks to the band of committee members and helpers who give their time to ensure the club is a great place to watch local football.

September promises to be an exciting month on the pitch, with at least three home games scheduled.

For more details, including all the latest fixtures, please visit the website at [www.halsteadtownfc.com](http://www.halsteadtownfc.com)

## Care home celebrates 10th anniversary

A care home in Halstead has celebrated its tenth anniversary in style.

Staff and residents at Colne View, on Dame Mary Walk, pulled out all the stops for a special birthday bash, 10 years after it welcomed its very first residents.

Residents, relatives and friends of the home enjoyed music while sipping on cocktails. Adding some extra magic to the afternoon was a local magician.

The team also welcomed the Mayor of Halstead, councillor Jackie Pell (pictured below centre), to unveil a commemorative plaque.

During the celebration, 84-year-old resident Dorothy Nolan, who has lived at the home for eight years, said: "Colne View is such a lovely place to live. The carers go above and beyond and nothing is too much trouble. The party was enjoyed by everyone and it was so nice to see so many families come together."

Home manager Monica Boldeata (pictured below third from right) said: "It was wonderful to see residents outside singing and dancing to toast our special milestone, and to have the Mayor of Halstead join us to celebrate really was the cherry on the birthday cake."

"The whole team worked hard to organise the event, and I am delighted to say that their efforts were rewarded. I would like to say a big thank you to everyone who makes Colne View an amazing place to call home, and for helping to make the day special."



LOCAL NEWS HALSTEAD



# LOCAL NEWS

*from your neighbourhood*



Photo credit: Damien Demander

## Volunteers praised at annual awards ceremony

The Braintree District Volunteer Awards returned last month after a two-year hiatus owing to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The ceremony took place on Thursday, August 11, at the I-Construct Innovation Hub on Springwood Industrial Estate in Braintree. The annual awards, now in their sixth year and run by Braintree District Council (BDC) and Community360, recognise and reward the extraordinary individuals and groups who are making a positive difference in their community.

This year, there was an additional award to honour the volunteers who stepped up during the pandemic.

The Covid Response Award was given to Spike Townsend (pictured right), who set up the Operations Centre at the Five Bells Public House and coordinated 83 volunteers. Spike used his skills and expertise from his career in the Met Police to ensure that everyone was kept safe.

The Young Covid Response Award was awarded to

Amy Edwards (pictured second from right) who co-founded and has been volunteering for the Coggeshall Community Helpers organisation since March 2020 as well as a being a Guide and Scout leader.

Daniel Dedman was the winner of the Long Service Award, and Jonathan Taylor (pictured third from right, back row) was the young winner of the Long Service Award. Julie Adcock (pictured third from right, front row) won Inspirational Role Model, Ken Yap won the Going the Extra Mile award and Volunteer of the Year, Noah Baldwin was the young winner of the Going the Extra Mile award, and Acacia Hawkins (pictured centre) won Young Inspirational Role Model.

Councillor Frankie Ricci, BDC's cabinet member for communities, said: "I am honoured to have been part of the Volunteer Awards since their inception in 2017. It is special seeing the awards return after two years and hearing the amazing work that volunteers have done throughout the pandemic and beyond."

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**Work started on art installation at business park**



Work on the installation of five new pieces of art is underway at a new business park in Braintree.

Horizon 120 is the new business, innovation and logistics park currently under development just off of the A131 in Great Notley.

The art pieces include a pair of large pearlescent eggs, a digital screen with videos connecting to astronomy, and two vertical sculptures symbolic of the sun and a cloud.

The new pieces are by artists Yukako Shibata (pictured above centre), DCSK with Marman and Borins, and Turner Prize nominee Mark Titchner.

The artists worked with a local primary school and spoke to the neighbouring country park and local cultural organisations to develop their ideas.

Mark and Yukako ran four creative workshops over a two-week period with students from Notley Green Primary School. The children cast and painted their own eggs and experimented with printing techniques using natural objects.

Braintree District Council worked with curators Niamh White and Tim Shaw to commission the pieces.

Niamh said: "It has been wonderful to work with these artists over the past year and particularly memorable to work with the children at Notley Green Primary School. We hope people will have inspiring encounters with the art for a long time to come."

**Police appeal launched following assault**

Essex Police launched an appeal last month after two teenagers were attacked in Braintree.

It was reported that the victims, aged 14 and 17, were walking along the River Blackwater near Convent Lane at around 5pm on Tuesday, July 19.

They were approached by a group of 15 to 20 teenagers and it is reported that one of the victims was grabbed from behind and assaulted, including being struck with a glass bottle.

The victim's phone, wallet and trainers were thrown

into the river.

The other teenager was also assaulted.

One suspect has been described as white, slim, around 5ft 5ins tall, in his early teens, with short dark brown hair shaved at the sides, and wearing only black shorts.

Another suspect has been described as white, stocky, about 5ft 8ins tall, with brown hair shaved at the sides and longer on the top, with a tattoo of a face on the back of his left hand, and wearing a navy Adidas top, shorts and black Adidas sliders with white stripes.

If you have any information, CCTV, dashcam or other footage in relation to this incident, please get in contact with police at [www.essex.police.uk](http://www.essex.police.uk) or by calling the non-emergency number 101.

Please quote the crime reference number 42/190405/22.

**Partnership to continue despite end of funding**

Braintree Town Partnership (BTP) will continue to operate in its mission to push the town forward into the future – despite the fact that government funding has been withdrawn.

BTP aims to create a thriving town centre in Braintree, campaigning for such developments as pedestrianisation, car rallies, vintage or antique markets, musical performances, televised live sporting events, movie nights and beer festivals.

When asked by VISIONHalsteadBraintree about the status of BTP, director Gary Thomas said: "BTP is currently active.

"We recently had to let go two of our staff members owing to the end of government funding. Hence you may have been misinformed as to our current status.

"Future plans and activities of the BTP will be announced over the coming weeks via our website, newsletters and social media channels."

To find out more about BTP, visit its website at [www.braintreepartnership.org.uk](http://www.braintreepartnership.org.uk)



IDRIS ELBA

# OFF SCRIPT?

WHEN YOU'RE A DJ SUPERSTAR, A FASHION DESIGNER, MOVIE DIRECTOR, HOLLYWOOD A-LISTER, AND ALL-ROUND LOVEABLE MOGUL, ATTENTION TO DETAIL IS EVERYTHING – JUST ASK IDRIS ELBA OBE

“I’m probably a perfectionist,” admits Idris Elba OBE, who turns 50 this month. “With what I do, I need to be, whether it comes from film, music, whatever. You’re putting a piece of art out there, and you need to be confident with it because once it’s out there, it’s out.”

For a perfectionist, however, Elba is chilled and agreeable in conversation. He offers cool, considered responses with ease.

The man radiates so much energy and intensity that you can’t escape it, and that permeates through an increasingly diverse slew of roles, embodying the likes of DCI John Luther, Heimdall in the Marvel Cinematic Universe, *The Wire*’s Stringer Bell and Charlie Jaffey in *Molly’s Game*.

And yet those iconic characters only represent half of what the Londoner is all about.

His style, swagger, gruff exterior and devastating charm mean he is a man who can flit between so many different worlds; and yet he pulls off the look with respect and humility.

“I think a lot of that comes from the fact I had to struggle to get to this point,” he says. “For many years, I was a nobody who couldn’t catch a break and just blended into the crowd.”

“There were very few directors who wanted to take a chance on me, and as time went on, so too did I begin thinking that I should just focus on my music, or my art, or perhaps just get a real job.”

The relief is that Elba didn’t. In 2022, he has George Miller’s epic fantasy adventure *Three Thousand Years of Longing* opposite Tilda Swinton, and *Thor: Love and Thunder*, plus the film version of *Luther*, which will screen on Netflix.

“*Luther* returning as a film is a really big new thing, and I think for it to work it needed to be different.

“You are elongating what you have to play with, yet at the same time shortening the whole story into two hours, so the very fabric is altered.

“I think for that reason you can regard it as original and very exciting.”

Asked whether he actually affords himself the ability to stop and take stock, the father-of-two notes: “I don’t have much time to rest, and I don’t really like long sleeps. They don’t put me in a place of urgency and that’s where I want to be, certainly in terms of work and productivity and happiness. That’s not to say I don’t try to get as many hours of good sleep as I can – I’m just not very good at it,” he laughs.

“It’s a real balancing act and it’s safe to say I’m not there yet.”

Elba’s laid-back approach is a factor that will win him a bounty of script offers moving forward. He is someone who, in these troubled times of panic, indecision and hysteria, emits an effortless sense of cool. “I think it’s easy to confuse being laid-back with being laissez-faire about things,” he says. “I think you can be calm and charged at the same time.

“Your actions don’t always reflect your emotions – hey, I’m an actor, after all.”

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PETS

# 5 PET PARENTING mistakes

We are a nation of animal lovers, with 59 per cent of UK households owning a pet. However, that doesn't mean that we always get everything right with their care. Read our list of the most common pet parenting mistakes below to see if you're guilty.

## X NOT TRAINING YOUR PET

Did you forgo puppy training? If yes, then you are putting your pooch at a distinct disadvantage. When done correctly, training can help to provide guidance, support and structure, all of which your puppy needs in the early stages of their development.

## X OVERFEEDING YOUR PET

Overfeeding is an extremely common pet parenting mistake which can lead to a whole host of health problems. Whether you don't know the correct portion sizes or you are guilty of handing out too many treats, it is vital that you help your pet maintain a healthy weight.

## X AVOIDING THE VET

Vet bills can be extortionate, which can lead to pet parents avoiding essential check-ups. That being said, it is actually more cost-effective to take your pet to the vet regularly rather than wait until they require treatment. Remember, prevention is always better than cure.

## X FORGETTING DENTAL HEALTH

Oral health problems such as sore gums, tooth decay and bad breath can all affect pets in the same way that they do humans. Therefore, it is essential that you care for your dog's or cat's teeth. Daily brushing is the most effective way to prevent periodontal disease and only takes a few minutes of your day.

## X NOT GIVING ENOUGH ATTENTION

While you may have showered your new puppy or kitten with love, it can become all too easy to fall into the habit of not paying your pet enough attention. However, the more you observe your pet, the more likely you are to spot any behavioural changes or health issues.



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# SLOE & STEADY

*wins the race*



FOOD & DRINK

There's something magical about turning a humble hedgerow berry into something to tease the tastebuds, like sloe gin. And better still, it's really simple to make.

Sloes grow on blackthorn bushes, which are found all over the UK. The bushes blossom in early spring with clouds of pretty white flowers, and the deep purple berries start forming in August.

For sloe gin, people often recommend that you don't pick them until after the first frost. Apparently, this makes the berries sweeter and softer. The only problem is that birds love sloes, too, and they might get there before you do.

So the Woodland Trust recommends that you pick sloes from late September. After washing and drying them, just pop them in the freezer. This creates an artificial frost – and the berries will keep in the freezer for several months.

When you're out picking sloes, it's a good idea to wear gloves and a long-sleeved top as their branches are prickly and covered with thorns. And remember, sloes don't taste good raw. And while eating them in this state won't harm adults, never give them to children.

## How to make sloe gin

### Ingredients:

500g sloes (rinsed and dried) | 250g caster sugar | 1 litre gin

### Method:

- Prick the sloes with a cocktail stick and tip into a 2-litre glass jar.
- Add the sugar and gin, seal the jar and shake well.
- Once a day for a week, give the jar a good shake.
- Store the jar in a cool, dark place and leave for 2-3 months.
- Line a plastic sieve with a square of muslin, strain the liquid into a bowl and decant it into clean, dry bottles.
- Your sloe gin is now ready to drink.
- Drink it neat or top it up with prosecco for a sparkling aperitif.





TRAVEL

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**WISE:** Formerly known as TransferWise, Wise offers £200 worth of free cash withdrawals per month before you are charged. It also allows you to convert your cash into 40 different currencies and offers free international transfers, and you can use the app to find out real-time currency exchange information.

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# HOW TO HACK-PROOF YOUR PASSWORD

There is a hacker attack every 39 seconds, with 300,000 new malware created every day.

One of the easiest ways to protect your data is by using strong passwords.

**1. USE EIGHT CHARACTERS MINIMUM**

Each character you add to your password makes it harder to crack. Your passwords should contain a minimum of eight characters and up to 20 if you can remember them.

**2. AVOID WORDS IN THE DICTIONARY**

Using words that are correctly spelt from the dictionary is not a good idea as these are much easier to hack. This is particularly true if you use a word that is related to either your personal life or your business.

**3. DO NOT USE FAMILY NAMES**

This may seem obvious, but you will be surprised at how many people use the names of their children, spouse or pets in their passwords. This information

is easy to guess and can be readily found on your social media profiles.

**4. INCLUDE SPECIAL CHARACTERS**

A good trick is to replace certain letters in your passwords with special characters. For example, rather than using the password 'Edward1', you could use '3dw4rd!'. By replacing letters with characters that look similar, you are also less likely to forget your password.

**5. USE PASSPHRASES, NOT PASSWORDS**

A phrase such as the title of a book or a line in a film is much more difficult to crack than just a word. Plus, once you start replacing some of the letters with special characters, you are even closer to creating an unhackable password.

**6. TRY A PASSWORD GENERATOR**

There are many free apps that you can download which will generate passwords for you. These passwords are designed to be completely random, which does make them harder to remember, but means they are nearly impossible to hack.





# Know your NAILS

DISCOVER THE SIX MOST COMMON NAIL PROBLEMS AND HOW TO RECOGNISE THEM

Chances are you don't pay that much attention to the condition of your nails. However, did you know that a change in their appearance can indicate an underlying health condition?

**BEAU'S LINES:** Beau's lines are deep grooved lines that run from side to side on the fingernail or toenail. They often look like ridges or indentations on the nail plate. Beau's lines can indicate uncontrolled diabetes, a zinc deficiency or peripheral vascular disease.

**YELLOW NAIL SYNDROME:** If you have yellow nail syndrome, your nails will thicken and nail growth slows down. This results in a yellowish discolouration of the nails. Yellow nail syndrome is often a sign of respiratory disease or lymphedema.

**TERRY'S NAILS:** Terry's nails is a condition that makes the nails appear white apart from a narrow pink band at the tip. This nail condition can occur because of ageing, but it can also be a sign of a more serious health concern such as liver disease, kidney failure or diabetes.

**SPOON NAILS:** As the name suggests, spoon nails are soft nails that look as if they have been scooped out. Spoon nails are often a sign of an iron deficiency or a liver condition known as hemochromatosis. They are also associated with heart disease and hypothyroidism.

**NAIL CLUBBING:** Nail clubbing occurs when the tips of the fingernails become enlarged and the nail curves around the fingertips. Nail clubbing can be a sign of inflammatory bowel disease, cardiovascular disease or liver disease. It is also sometimes the result of low oxygen in the blood.

**NAIL PITTING:** Ice-pick-like depressions in the nail are known as nail pitting. This nail condition is common in people with psoriasis. Nail pitting can also be related to connective disorders such as Reiter's syndrome and alopecia areata.



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## Accentuate the positive



You can choose to focus on the positive even when you're surrounded by negativity.

Sometimes we start out with the best intentions to think and speak only positive thoughts, but the people around us throw us off course. Not everyone fully understands the power our thoughts and words have, or they may be stuck in old patterns of negativity. Much of our habitual communication takes the form of complaining and criticising, and it can be hard to find a way into certain conversations without lapsing into those old habits. However, we always have the option not to participate in negativity or to find a way to influence the situation in a positive direction. You may even be able to directly acknowledge the fact that things have taken a negative turn, thus freeing yourself and others from the negative pull.

Not everyone will respond to

your cues, and there's no need to become overly attached to the idea of changing other people, because people have to choose for themselves how they will be in the world. Many people choose negativity because it is familiar to them and feels safe. It is important to give people the space to find their own way, but you can always set an example, subtly representing the power of being positive. At times you may interject an affirmative statement into the conversation, and at others you may simply change the subject. You may also simply withdraw your energy and presence, which also makes a statement. If you feel comfortable enough with somebody that is always negative, perhaps you can have an honest conversation with them; after all, awareness is the first step to change.

A powerful way to free yourself from the negative pull is to enlist

others who are similarly minded. You and a friend, co-worker, or family member may agree to work together to continually shift the energy in a situation in a positive direction. The power of two people working to promote the positive is exponentially greater than one person working on their own. As you and others work together to lift the energy around you, it will amaze you to see how quickly the positive pull begins to draw people into its orbit, bringing one mind after another from negativity into positivity.

If you need help and support to know how to live a happier, more positive life (that isn't full of toxic positivity) get in touch with me on 07368 438261 and we'll have a chat. I'm a kind listener and you're in safe, qualified hands.

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



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# FITNESS FOR ALL

TO CELEBRATE NATIONAL FITNESS DAY, WHICH TAKES PLACE ON SEPTEMBER 21 THIS YEAR, WE HAVE ROUNDED UP A SELECTION OF WORKOUTS, WITH OPTIONS TO SUIT ALL AGES AND ABILITIES

## EXERCISES FOR ALL AGES AND ABILITIES

### 20s

Focus on incorporating cardio, weight training, balance work and stretching. Aim for 30-60 minutes of cardio two or three days a week, such as running, swimming or cycling, and one or two weight training sessions to challenge all muscle groups.

### 30s

It can take longer to recover from workouts in your 30s, so you should add 30 minutes of resistance training at least twice a week to your normal workout routine, incorporating exercises such as squats, push-ups and planks. This is especially important for women as it can help to offset issues such as osteoporosis and arthritis.

### 40s

With age, your bone density decreases, as does your strength and muscle mass. Counteract this by combining strength training exercises such as lifting weights or using resistance bands with moderate-

intensity cardio three times a week.

### 50s

Resistance training is vital in your 50s, especially for your hips and shoulders. Schedule 30 minutes of walking five days a week and two sessions of resistance training.

### 60s

During your 60s, fitness is more important than ever before, helping you to keep your independence for longer. Opt for low-impact exercises such as swimming, rowing or stationary core moves.

### Wheelchair users

Regular aerobic exercise and muscle-strengthening exercises are crucial for wheelchair users. Aim to get at least 150 minutes of the former per week and set aside two sessions for building strength. Arm raises, side twists and sitting bicycle crunches are all good choices, as are wheelchair sports such as basketball, badminton and netball.





# Happy hibernating



Most animals go into hibernation in autumn as it is the most efficient way to survive the cold winter months. Find out how to recognise hibernating wildlife in your garden and how to help them survive until spring.

## Signs of hibernating wildlife

**Leaf pile**  
A pile of leaves in a corner of the garden, in the compost bin or behind the shed can mean you have a hibernating hedgehog or two. Hedgehogs can also hibernate in bonfire piles, so be sure to check before you light.

**Movement in a pond**  
If you have a pond in your garden and you notice movement or shadows at the bottom, this could mean that frogs are hibernating there. These are typically male frogs as they favour hibernating in water rather than in mud or under leaves.

**Mounds of soil**  
Small mounds of soil can indicate that mining bees are nesting in your lawn or in your borders. If this is the case, it is likely that their offspring will be hibernating there until spring.

**Long grass**  
Although long grass is not a sign of hibernation, it is highly likely that wildlife will be seeking shelter there. In particular, caterpillars and moths hibernate in long grass, as well as beetles and other grubs.

**Leaves on a wall**  
If you notice leaves on a wall in your garden, these may not actually be leaves but clusters of butterflies who often hibernate in groups.

## How to protect hibernating wildlife

- \* Create leaf and log piles
- \* Have plants that offer winter nectar, such as mahonia and hellebores
- \* Move any bug houses to a sheltered spot
- \* Put up a nest box for birds
- \* Avoid late tidying of any potential hibernation spots
- \* Leave out a supply of nuts to support squirrels as they collect food.



# Beautiful BULBS



September is the perfect month for planting spring bulbs, and these can be placed directly into borders or in pots for patios and smaller gardens. Discover our top picks for a blooming beautiful spring garden below.

**Snowdrops:** Snowdrops are the first bulbs to flower, usually in February, and are often hailed as the first sign of spring. With the ability to flower whatever the weather, even in snow, these delicate flowers thrive in moist, well-drained soil and in partial shade. Grow in borders or pots.

**Iris:** Iris reticulata is ideal for small pots, window boxes and raised beds. Bringing some much-needed colour to your garden as early as February, irises like the sun and free-draining spots.

**Crocuses:** Crocuses provide a carpet of colour in the garden from late winter onwards and are very easy to grow. They are well suited to both borders

and pots; place them in a sunny spot for best results.

**Tulips:** Tulips come in almost every colour, from pastels to rich shades. They are perfect for adding vibrancy to spring borders in April and May but can also be grown in pots. Tulips favour full or afternoon sun and the soil must be well drained.

**Hyacinths:** Highly fragrant and available in a wide range of colours, hyacinths look amazing in borders in the front garden or in pots for a splash of colour. Hyacinths thrive in most soils as long as they are not too wet. Plant in full sun or partial shade.

**Daffodils:** Daffodils are synonymous with spring and there are many different varieties for you to choose from. Ranging in height from 10cm to 45cm, daffodils can be yellow, white, cream or lemon-coloured. They grow very well in pots but also make a great addition to borders.



# Wave goodbye to SUGAR

Are you struggling to find snacks for your kids that aren't loaded with sugar? Check out these sugar-free snacks that are easy to prepare, cost-effective to make and help to support healthy teeth and gums.

## Roasted chickpeas

Although chickpeas are most commonly associated with humous, they can also be roasted to create a healthy sugar-free snack. Simply place on a baking tray, drizzle with olive oil and then add whatever spices your children like.

## Vegetable pikelets

Perfect for little ones who are averse to eating vegetables when they can see them, vegetable pikelets are a great savoury after-school snack. Make a batter by mixing 2 cups wholemeal flour, 3 tsp baking powder, 2 eggs and 1.5 cups of milk. Add 2 cups of your chosen vegetables and 1 cup cheese. Mix and then fry like little pancakes.

## Peanut butter dip

Although some peanut butters contain sugar, you can get natural ones that are sugar-free at most supermarkets. To make a delicious kid-friendly dip, whip together equal parts cream cheese and peanut butter until light and creamy. Serve with apples or celery.

## Boiled eggs

Super-simple, filling and nutritious, boiled eggs are a great snack for kids who come home from school starving. You can hard boil eggs in advance, peel and store in the fridge. Serve just as they are, sprinkle with spices or make some devilled eggs.

## Guacamole

Avocado is full of healthy fats and makes a great snack for babies, toddlers and older children alike. To make a delicious guacamole, smash up or blend a ripe avocado and then squeeze in some lime juice. Stir in a little Greek yogurt until you get the desired consistency. Serve with veggie sticks or pitta.



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St. Margaret's is a happy and caring school where pupils aged 2 to 11 enjoy every aspect of school life. Inspectors found pupils to be highly engaged, enthusiastic and committed learners who make excellent progress across the curriculum, noting their exemplary attitude to learning and above national average results. They also recognised the high pastoral care provided by staff, focusing on the well-being of each individual to ensure that they all flourish.

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**"Inspectors found pupils to be highly engaged, enthusiastic and committed learners who make excellent progress across the curriculum"**

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# Holmes & Hills

## How we can help you avoid risks to your property transaction

### How likely is it that your property transaction will fall-through?

It is probably more likely than you think but your choice of conveyancer can make all the difference.

Give yourself the best chance of a successful completion on your home purchase or sale by working in partnership with Holmes & Hills' residential property team. Benefit from our 90 per cent successful completion rate for property transactions, which is 20 per cent higher than the national average.\*

### What number of property transactions fall-through?

Rightmove report that, on average across the country, approximately 25 per cent of property transactions fall-through\*\*. It is a much higher percentage than most buyers and sellers expect it to be. This means, subject to your choice of law firm, your transaction faces a one in four chance of falling-through.

### Reduce the risk of your transaction falling-through by benefiting from a 20 per cent higher rate of success

Those using Holmes & Hills' conveyancing services benefit from a materially higher successful completion rate compared to the national average. Your transaction has an increased chance of successfully completing when Holmes & Hills is advising and representing you in your property transaction.

### Why do property transactions fall-through?

Your transaction might fall-through for a number of reasons, most of them outside of your control.

These include: your buyer finding another property; being unable to secure their mortgage; or a change in their circumstances which means they can no longer proceed with the purchase.

### Benefit from fixed fee packages

As well as an increased chance of your transaction successfully completing, Holmes & Hills provides fixed-fee residential conveyancing quotes with no hidden charges. When you obtain conveyancing quotations from other law firms you may find charges for completing Stamp Duty Land Tax forms, dealing with lenders and leasehold fees. With Holmes & Hills, these items are included within our legal fee. We give you a simple, transparent, fixed-fee quotation.

### Solving problems through a proactive and pragmatic approach

Holmes & Hills has a large team of experienced property lawyers who are supported by Planning Law, property litigation, agricultural and commercial specialists, meaning we resolve problems when they arise and keep transactions on track, reducing the risk of a property transaction falling through and securing a successful completion.

### Partner with Holmes & Hills to secure your transaction

By working in partnership with our clients, local estate agents, mortgage brokers, and financial advisors, Holmes & Hills' residential property lawyers will ensure a smooth transaction, whilst protecting your legal interests. In the last 12 months, Holmes & Hills have helped over 3,600 people move home and we are ready to help you, call Holmes & Hills Solicitors on 01787 475312 and ask to speak to Paige Hornabrook or email [advice@holmes-hills.co.uk](mailto:advice@holmes-hills.co.uk).

\*Holmes & Hills' successful completion rate is calculated using sample data for 400 residential property transactions started between October 2021 to December 2021 and is compared to national average successful completion rate of 75 per cent (provided by Rightmove, 11/05/2022).

\*\*Rightmove data supplied on 11/05/2022.



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# PUZZLES & TRIVIA

PUZZLES

Answers: see end of The VISION Listings

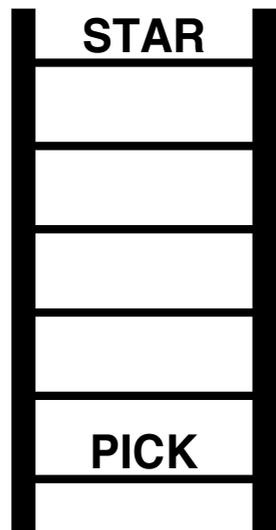
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- ▶ CHIHUAHUAN
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- ▶ GOBI
- ▶ GREAT BASIN
- ▶ GREAT SANDY
- ▶ GREAT VICTORIA
- ▶ KALAHARI
- ▶ KAVIR
- ▶ KYZYLKUM
- ▶ MOJAVE
- ▶ NAMIB
- ▶ ORDOS
- ▶ PATAGONIAN
- ▶ SAHARA
- ▶ SIMPSON
- ▶ SONORAN
- ▶ SYRIAN
- ▶ TAKLAMAKAN

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

## DID YOU KNOW?

- ▶ Trees contain quite a lot of water. When lightning strikes, most of the water reaches boiling point, turning it to steam and increasing pressure. This can cause the tree to explode.
- ▶ The average blue whale has a heart approximately the size of a car.
- ▶ Around 90 per cent of humans live in the Northern Hemisphere.
- ▶ Blue whales are able to hear each other from around 500 miles away.
- ▶ Platypuses can produce their own venom which is injected through barbs on the male's back legs.
- ▶ When threatened, ostriches run, although their powerful kick is capable of killing a human or even a lion.

## 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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