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LEWIS CAPALDI

On overcoming life's challenges on the road to fame

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Cinderella Lift

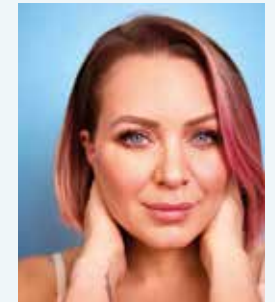
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Editor's notes...

MAY 2023



Nik Allen, Editor

Hello and welcome to this month's edition of **VISION** Halstead Braintree. This month, we witnessed a unique event in most of our lives: the royal ceremony in which a monarch is crowned.

The coronation of King Charles III, which took place on Saturday, May 6, was a momentous occasion that was celebrated with great pride and enthusiasm by all of us. It marked the first coronation since that of the late Queen in 1953, which was the first time the royal occasion had been televised. Millions of people tuned in to watch the ceremony, and the same was true this year. It was a time to come together as a nation and rejoice in the rich culture and history that make our country unique.

I had a significant event in my life take place at the end of April. I was lucky enough to be invited to 10 Downing Street to a Local Media Champions Reception with the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, RT Hon Lucy Frazer KC MP.

I felt honoured to attend and connect with other local media peers throughout the UK. With regional editors across the country invited to the event, it was good to see how far our publications have come to be in such esteemed company.

Nik Allen

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FROM LILY SAVAGE

The death of Paul O'Grady MBE at the end of March brought a premature end to the life of one of our most respected modern-day entertainers – someone whose own reinvention helped the gradual process of changing attitudes in British society.

Growing up on the sometimes rough, often competitive back streets of Liverpool in the Swinging Sixties required more than a little spark and swagger, so it's probably little surprise that one of its finest exports, Paul O'Grady, created a career built on the foundation of his larger-than-life personality.

"As the saying goes, if you can't beat them, join them – and if you can't join them, become a drag act," laughed Paul O'Grady in one of this final interviews.

He departed from us at 67, seemingly with another decade or two of wit, charm and pzazz still ready to be unleashed, and the tributes have been extensive and heartfelt.

O'Grady had a number of jobs growing up, including working as a clerk, a waiter and a barman. It was only when he moved to London that he managed to create a career out of his passion for entertainment and performance.

The star's main outlet was the dynamic and daring Lily Savage, a drag queen act who became hugely popular on the underground scene, and eventually gained mainstream appeal when Channel 4 took up the option to give him a stint on *The Big Breakfast* after Paula Yates' resignation. The likes of *The Lily Savage Show*, *Blankety Blank* (which the character fronted for five years) and *Lily Live!* followed, showcasing the full mainstream evolution of a character. It was a long way from O'Grady's first TV appearance on *The Bill* back in 1988 as a transvestite prostitute informant named Roxanne (credited to Paul Savage).

While Lily Savage was eventually retired, the legacy of such a dynamic figure lived on. The character had opened doors for a brand of leftfield entertainment, and helped carve a path for LGBTQ+ rights and promotion across mainstream entertainment.

"I had been in that world since the seventies when I began performing in pubs and clubs around London, so it was all very natural for me, and had been for decades," he said.

"That I lived in a country that embraced me and loved me for who I was, I found wonderful, and it compelled me to go on to do other things."

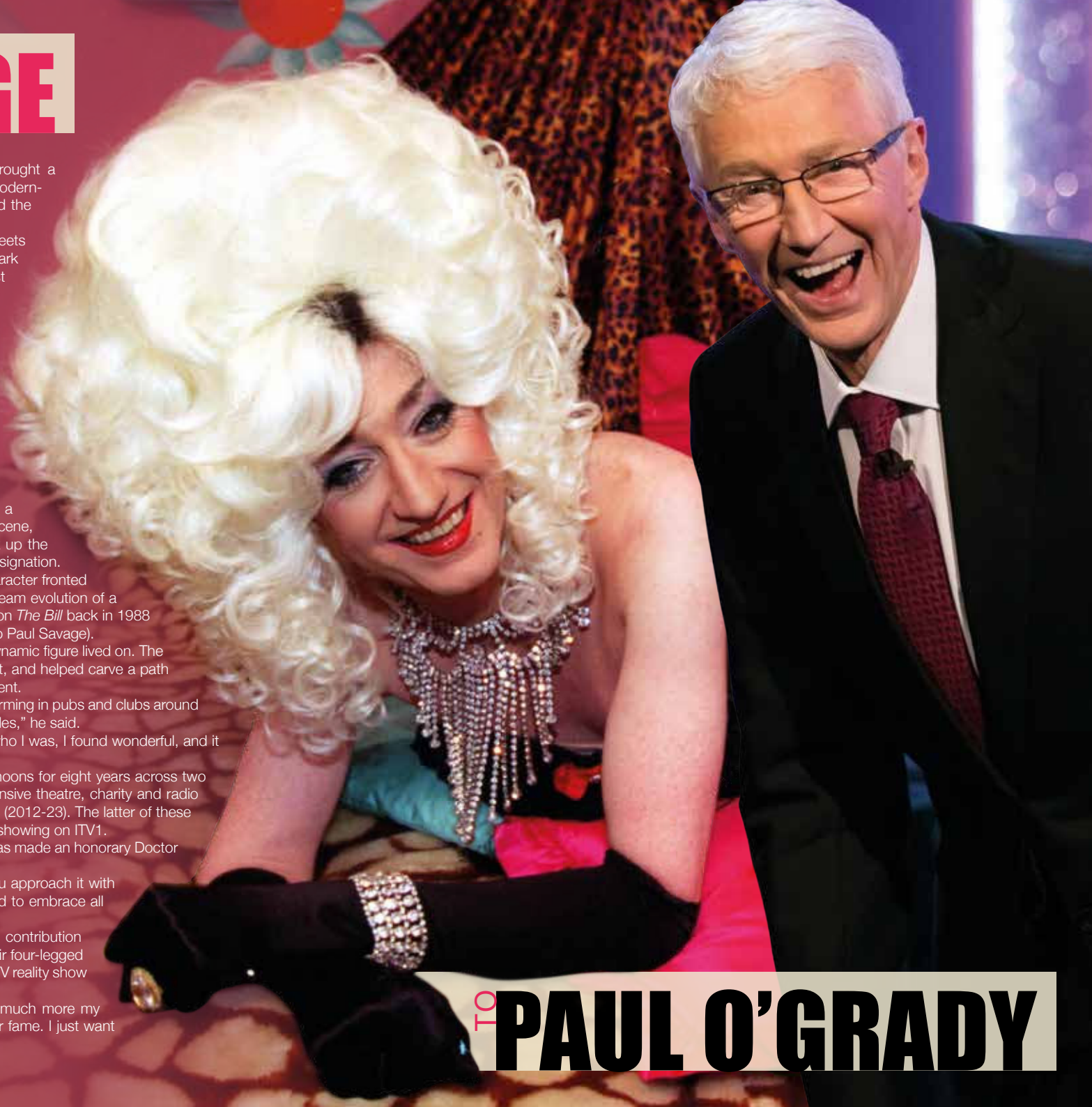
The successful *The Paul O'Grady Show* ran on weekday afternoons for eight years across two spells, and the entertainer also saw huge popularity across extensive theatre, charity and radio work, as well as the likes of *Blind Date* and *For the Love of Dogs* (2012-23). The latter of these popular TV programmes was filmed in late 2022 and is currently showing on ITV1.

In recognition of his contributions to TV, radio and theatre, he was made an honorary Doctor of Arts at De Montfort University Leicester in 2010.

"I always found you can talk about absolutely any subject if you approach it with interest, respect, humility and humour. That's the way I have tried to embrace all the challenges that have come my way," he said.

His funeral, which was held on April 20, featured a significant contribution from Battersea Dogs & Cats Home, who lined the streets with their four-legged residents in honour of the decade O'Grady spent presenting the ITV reality show at Battersea.

"I've always got on better with animals," he joked. "They are much more my type. As I've said before, I am not bothered about sex, money or fame. I just want a mongoose."



TO PAUL O'GRADY

A GUIDE TO THE MOON



Have you ever wondered why the moon appears to change shape each night? These are known as the moon's phases, and it isn't actually the shape of the moon that changes but our view of it.

Find out more about the different phases and names of the moon below.

WHAT ARE THE PHASES OF THE MOON?

- 1. New moon:** You cannot see the moon when it is a new moon.
- 2. Waxing crescent moon:** In the Northern Hemisphere, you see the waxing crescent moon as a thin crescent of light on the right.
- 3. First quarter moon:** The first quarter moon



appears as a half moon.

- 4. Waxing gibbous moon:** This phase is between a half moon and full moon. Waxing means it is getting bigger.
- 5. Full moon:** You can see the moon completely illuminated during full moons.
- 6. Waning gibbous moon:** This phase is between a half moon and full moon. Waning means it is getting smaller.
- 7. Last quarter moon:** This appears as a half moon but with the opposite half illuminated to the first quarter moon.
- 8. Waning crescent moon:** In the Northern Hemisphere, you see the waning crescent moon as a thin crescent of light on the left.

FULL MOON NAMES

Each monthly full moon has a special name, many of which originated from Native American culture:

- January:** Wolf Moon
- February:** Snow Moon
- March:** Worm Moon
- April:** Pink Moon
- May:** Flower Moon
- June:** Strawberry Moon
- July:** Buck Moon
- August:** Sturgeon Moon
- September:** Full Corn Moon
- October:** Hunter's Moon
- November:** Beaver Moon
- December:** Cold Moon

WHAT IS A BLUE MOON?

A blue moon is an additional full moon that appears every once in a while. Typically, a year contains 12 full moons – three in each season – but sometimes a 13th full moon appears, known as a blue moon. Blue moons usually occur once every two to three years but can occur twice in one year. This is next due to happen in 2037.

WHAT IS A HARVEST MOON?

The harvest moon is the full, bright moon that occurs closest to the start of autumn. The term comes from the days before electricity when farmers relied on the moonlight to harvest their crops at night.



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MOTORING

GUIDE TO BUYING A

USED SCOOTER

Whether you are a first-time buyer or are seasoned in the world of scooters, a used one can save you a pretty penny.

Below are four questions you need to ask before buying a used scooter.

1 DOES IT RUN?

While this may seem like a no-brainer, before you buy a used scooter, you need to make sure that it actually runs. Once you have established that it does, the next step is to listen to how it sounds. Four-stroke engines should have a smooth hum, whereas two-stroke engines should sound like a gentle chainsaw, so make sure you listen out when you do a test drive.

2 HOW LONG HAS IT BEEN SITTING?

If you are purchasing a used scooter online, take a close look at the pictures. Does the scooter look

dusty or rusted? If yes, then it may have been sitting unused for a while. Make sure you check the battery and the tyres as both of these are likely to need replacing.

3 CAN YOU STILL GET SPARE PARTS FOR THE SCOOTER?

While you can still get spare parts for most scooters that have come out in the last decade, it is always worth checking before you sign on the dotted line. Don't forget to also be vigilant of scooters that are missing several body panels, as this can be a sign of a crash or that the scooter has been stolen.

4 WHO IS THE SELLER?

You can choose to buy a used scooter from either a dealership or a private seller. While there are advantages and disadvantages for each option, a dealership is a safer bet as you can find out about their reputation online and they are more likely to provide detailed checks on their scooters.



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ADD A

fiddle-leaf fig

PLANT TO YOUR HOME

If you are looking for a new indoor plant for your home, then a fiddle-leaf fig is a great choice. With large, glossy leaves and an impressive trunk, this statuesque tree can act as the focal point in any room.

WHAT ARE THE DIFFERENT TYPES OF FIDDLE-LEAF FIGS?

The most common type of fiddle-leaf fig plant is the ficus lyrata, which grows to around 10 feet tall when kept inside.

Other varieties include:

- > **Ficus lyrata bambino** – a dwarf variety that grows to only a few feet tall
- > **Ficus lyrata compacta** – features smaller leaves and grows to around five feet tall
- > **Ficus lyrata variegata** – an uncommon variety with a mix of green and cream leaves

HOW TO CARE FOR A FIDDLE-LEAF FIG

A fiddle-leaf fig needs bright, filtered light to grow, as direct sunlight can burn its leaves. Any quality indoor plant potting mix is fine as long as the soil drains well. This plant needs a moderate amount of moisture to thrive; too much can cause root rot and too little can cause the leaves to wilt. During the growing season (spring to autumn), water when the top inch of the soil feels dry, and then slightly less over winter. Also add a fertiliser specially made for this plant during growing season and remember to regularly clean its leaves.

HOW TO PRUNE A FIDDLE-LEAF FIG

To keep your fiddle-leaf fig in optimal condition, cut back any damaged leaves, overgrowth or crossing branches. Make the cuts about an inch away from the trunk to avoid damage.

WHERE TO BUY A FIDDLE-LEAF FIG

You can buy fiddle-leaf fig trees either online or at some garden centres.





Your guide to SPONGES

A GUIDE TO CHOOSING THE RIGHT SPONGES AND HOW TO KEEP THEM CLEAN

While you may not have given much thought to sponges, if you hate doing the dishes or cleaning kitchen worktops, the right sponge can help to make tiresome tasks a breeze.

WHAT ARE THE MOST COMMON TYPES OF SPONGE?

NON-SCRATCH SPONGES

Sponges that are labelled as non-scratch are safe to use on non-stick pots and pans, as well as real wood surfaces. They also will not scratch the surfaces of ceramic bakeware. Non-scratch sponges are a good choice for cleaning glassware as they effectively remove dirt without causing any damage.

HEAVY-DUTY SPONGES

As the name suggests, heavy-duty sponges are highly abrasive so should be used to remove tough, stuck-on dirt and debris from kitchen items such as stainless steel pans. Heavy-duty sponges are not suitable for non-stick cookware, as they are likely to scratch their Teflon coating, nor for ceramic cookware or copper pans.

CELLULOSE SPONGES

Cellulose sponges are made from recycled plant fibres, making them a good option for those who want to reduce their carbon footprint and become more sustainable. The main benefits of cellulose sponges are that they are low-cost and very absorbent. However, they are also prone to collecting bits of food over time, so you need to make sure that you

sanitise your sponge weekly and throw it away when it shows signs of wear. Ideal for cleaning kitchens, windows, countertops and bathrooms.

HOW DO I CLEAN REUSABLE SPONGES?

The best way to kill bacteria harbouring in reusable sponges is to clean them in your microwave or dishwasher. If you choose the former, wet the sponge thoroughly and heat on high for one minute. Alternatively, place on the top rack of your dishwasher with the drying cycle on. Do this once a week for best results.



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HISTORY

The PEOPLE'S PALACE

Imagine living amid the smog, chaos and stench of Victorian London. Now imagine the bliss of fresh air and some live entertainment to take your mind off things. Alexandra Palace, which opened 150 years ago this month, was built to give Londoners that chance to escape the daily grind.

The palace opened on Queen Victoria's 54th birthday with a grand celebration. Tragically, fire destroyed the building just a fortnight after it opened. But two years later, it opened again – and this time it was bigger and better. There was a concert hall, theatre, circus, racetrack, boating lake, the Victorian equivalent of a food court, and even a Japanese-style garden.

Sadly, the privately owned palace and surrounding parkland struggled to make money. In 1900, the site was bought by the nation, and an Act of Parliament

decreed that it should remain “a place of public resort and recreation”.

During the First World War, the palace was home to refugees and later became an internment camp for ‘enemy aliens’. It became a refugee shelter again during the Second World War, and also a staging post for troops on their way back from Dunkirk.

But perhaps the palace is best known for its link to BBC television. The corporation launched the world's first television service from studios built in the palace's former dining rooms in 1936.

To this day, the palace continues to host leading events, including theatre performances, retail shows, gigs, fairs and festivals to honour its commitment to serve the public.

To find out what's on this summer, check out alexandrapalace.com/whats-on

Alexandra Palace was built as a north London version of Crystal Palace, which hosted The Great Exhibition in 1851. It was named after the Danish-born Princess Alexandra, who had just married Queen Victoria's eldest son – later to become Edward VII. It was called The People's Palace and soon became widely known as Ally Pally.



FROM YOUR AREA

LOCAL NEWS

Martial arts coach wins gold at championships



Photo credit: Marissa Jacobs Photography

A martial arts Kumite coach from Braintree recently won gold at the 2023 Karate England International Open Championships.

Shauna Carroll (pictured above, centre) competed in the event at Harlow Leisurezone on April 22 and 23, and won the Ladies Heavyweight and Senior Ladies Open Weight, as well as the Dave Phillips Memorial Cup.

She said: "I feel really proud. It's my first nationals back since I had my daughter. It was really hard getting back into it; it's hard to manage running a business, running a house and being a mum, but I like showing girls that they can do it all."

Sensei Ian Cuchbert said: "Shauna got two golds and a silver. It was good preparation for the world championships in Dundee in July. She's won world titles before, and Europeans. In the last few years, she's had a baby and worked really hard at getting back to where she was, so that is a big achievement."

Students awarded £100 for eco project

Students from Notley High School in Braintree competed in a *Dragons' Den*-style competition to win funding for their environmental project.

Eight pupils visited the I-Construct building on April 21 to present their idea to Braintree District Council.

They were awarded £100 for their 'gum drop' project, a bin for chewing gum which is collected and recycled into other products.

Teacher Hannah Wallace said: "We went and had a

talk about the I-Construct building and what they have been doing to make sure it is net-zero.

"The students came up with the idea after a few meetings, and practised their speeches and what they wanted to say. They researched the gum drop bin idea and put in a bid. We will have to do fundraising to make it viable but it's a start. The students felt really good and we will definitely do it again."

Man jailed for six years after stabbing victim's hand

A man from Halstead has been sentenced for aggravated burglary with intent and common assault.

Ashley Hazelwood, 35 (pictured below), of Elizabeth Way, appeared at Chelmsford Crown Court on Monday, April 17, where he was sentenced to six years and nine months' imprisonment.

On August 5, 2022, Hazelwood had been involved in an altercation in a pub. He made verbal threats towards the victim, attempted to punch him, and made further threats via text and phone call.

The victim reported that Hazelwood had attended his home on August 12, 2022, and stabbed him in the hand while shouting abuse.

The victim forced Hazelwood out of the property and sustained a cut to his hand, which did not require further hospital treatment.

When searched, Hazelwood was found to be carrying a screwdriver.

Detective Inspector Jamie Stirland said: "This was a terrifying incident for the victim, who was forced to fend off an attack on his own doorstep.

"We will deal robustly with all those found to have carried out burglaries, crimes which often have an impact reaching far past the loss of personal property."



Photo credit: Hertfordshire Police



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NEWS FROM HALSTEAD FC...

THE **HUMBUGS**



LOCAL NEWS



Our first season back at Step 5 has finally come to an end. Thanks to an amazing turn of form in the last few games of the season, the Humbugs finished in a respectable 15th position in the Essex Senior League with 40 points from 38 matches, winning 11, drawing seven and losing 20.

Incredibly, the last home game of the campaign saw a season's best crowd of 427, and the club would like to thank all of those supporters who came to this season's games – in fact, the home attendances this year have topped more than 4,000 in total and have only been beaten by Saffron Walden. The last home game was followed by a very well-attended players presentation and casino night, when players and management enjoyed a few drinks with supporters and sponsors, ending the season on a real high.

The First Team awards were a real triumph for defender Matt Travell (pictured right with chairman

Carl Pearse), who swept the board and collected the awards for Players' Player, Manager's Player and Supporters' Player.

The Reserves also had a very good campaign, finishing third in the league, and their awards went to Sam Norton for Manager's Player and Shaye Willats for Players' Player. The Under 18s went one better, finishing runners-up, and their awards went to George Lane for Manager's Player and Ryan Young for Players' Player. The Chairman's Award went to Ben Morris, who made an impressive step up from the Reserves to the First Team.

The club are hoping to make some further improvements to the Milbank Stadium ready for the start of pre-season friendlies around the middle of July.

For up-to-date information regarding results, fixtures and news at the club, please visit our website at www.halsteadtownfc.com

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YOUR LOCAL EVENTS

WHAT'S ON

THE SLEEPING BEAUTY

Halstead Empire Theatre, Butler Road,
Halstead, CO9 1LL
Wednesday, May 24, 6.45pm



Head to Halstead Empire Theatre to watch *The Sleeping Beauty* this month. The venue will be streaming The Royal Ballet's performance, with music by Tchaikovsky and designs by Oliver Messel.

Tickets cost £15.50 and can be bought from www.ents24.com/halstead-events/halstead-empire-theatre/the-sleeping-beauty/6672730

FESTIVAL IN THE GARDENS

Braintree and Bocking Public Gardens,
43 Bocking End, Braintree, CM7 9AE
Saturday, May 27, to Sunday, May 28,
11am – 11pm

Festival in the Gardens returns for a jam-packed day of fun. On Saturday, Miss Disco will be headlining, with other musical acts from Georgia Crandon and Quiver. On Sunday, Missing Andy will close the festival.

Tickets are free for under 16s and £10 for general admission. They can be purchased from www.festivalinthegardens.com/tickets

DAN FRASER LIVE

The Dog Inn, 37 Hedingham Road,
Halstead, CO9 2DB
Friday, June 9, 8.30pm

Acoustic entertainer Dan Fraser will be performing live at The Dog Inn in Halstead next month. Dan has been a hit at the venue, performing multiple times in the past. No booking is required; just turn up on the day.

EA FESTIVAL

Hedingham Castle, Bayley Street,
Castle Hedingham, CO9 3DJ
Saturday, June 10, to Sunday, June 11,
from 9am

A showcase for leading performers and exponents of their respective fields, including creative leaders in literature, media, art, and featuring both local luminaries and internationally recognised stars.

Tickets can be purchased from www.eafestival.com

BRAINTREE AND BOCKING CARNIVAL

Lakes Road, Braintree, CM7 3AN, to
Carnival Field, Braintree CM7 5UG
Saturday, June 10, 2.30PM

The popular family event returns this summer. You can expect food, drinks, stalls, entertainment and games on this free family fun day. The event will start at Lakes Road and make its way to Carnival Field, where there will be a fairground for all to enjoy.

BRAINTREE REAL ALE FESTIVAL (CAMRA)

Braintree Arts Theatre, 15 Bocking End,
Braintree, CM7 9AE
Wednesday, June 14, to Saturday, June 17

The Braintree Real Ale Festival is back with a bang this year. The event is run by the Lions Club of Braintree, and guests can try a range of real ales and ciders on offer.

No ticket is required and times will be announced nearer to the time at braintreebeerfestival.co.uk





LOCAL FEATURE

Enjoy the delights of the traditional British seaside

For those who crave a bit of nostalgia, and maybe worry that our ability to connect with iconic seaside locations of old is a thing of the past, a trip to Frinton-on-Sea is the perfect remedy.

There is little to rival the natural vibrancy of a sumptuous, sunny, sandy beach, as radiant sun beats down on the coolest, finest Essex sand.

And yet, where Frinton-on-Sea is concerned, serenity and nostalgia come as much from its vibrant rows of beach huts as they do from the wondrous natural environment.

Its architecturally precise promenade sees beach huts painted in a kaleidoscope of bright colours, and these have been an integral part of the town's heritage for more than 100 years. Simple in their form, they retail for upwards of £50,000 – yet if a 12ft square space is adequate for you to relax, change or store beach essentials in, then perhaps the investment is worthwhile? These picturesque huts have become a symbol of traditional British seaside culture and

continue to draw visitors from far and wide, yet Frinton is about so much more.

Its unspoiled sandy beaches are award-winning and stretch for miles along the coast, and the gentle slope of the shoreline creates a shallow, safe swimming area that is perfect for families and children. Meanwhile, the absence of amusement arcades, commercial outlets and 'kiss me quick' hats ensures that this part of the Tendring coastline retains a sense of simplicity and class that few other resorts around the UK can rival.

Even the aforementioned promenade, adorned with Victorian-style streetlamps and ornate railings, holds a sense of class about it; while further back, extensive parkland shows the town's custodians are just as adept with grass as they are with sand.

Frinton-on-Sea has a population of fewer than 5,000. Although several times that number swarm into the area on hot summer days, it rarely feels anything other than idyllic. The next time you're looking for an idyllic British seaside escape, Frinton should be top of the list.



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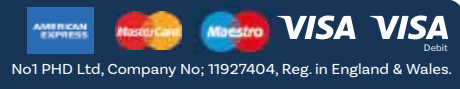
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LEWIS CAPALDI



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THE ENDEAVOURS, INSPIRATIONS AND INSECURITIES OF LEWIS CAPALDI

We live in a world where our leading male singer-songwriters no longer have to subscribe to the airbrushed, heavily manufactured, perfectly coiffured boyband façades of the stars of decades gone by.

This has helped to create careers and vast wealth for the likes of Ed Sheeran, James Arthur, Rag'n'Bone Man and, now, Lewis Capaldi.

For the vast majority of us, this is a relief. Not only does it lend hope that any of us can aspire to and reach the most ambitious of heights; more importantly, it dispels the faux perfection that emanates from TV screens, devices and digital radios.

"I grew up in that era where everyone looked like they had just stepped off a catwalk," begins Capaldi, the 26-year-old Scottish singer-songwriter who has captivated the hearts of many with his soulful voice and emotive lyrics.

"We don't have to play those games anymore and I think there is much more allowance for us to be ourselves. It's real progress."

The star, who rose to fame with his chart-topping single *Someone You Loved* in 2019 – a track currently ascending past a colossal three billion streams on Spotify – is reaping the rewards of two decades of soul-searching and hard work... a process that came to light via a recent Netflix documentary, *How I'm Feeling Now*.

The production shone a light on the perseverance that has patterned his rise to the top, as well as giving the artist the opportunity to open up about living with Tourette's syndrome.

The neurological disorder is characterised by involuntary movements and vocalisations, known as tics. "It's something that has always been with me and perhaps always will, but it's so important I use my platform to reassure other people that

Tourette's doesn't need to hold you back from what it is you want to do," he says.

"For years, I felt imprisoned by it, before realising I could use it as a stimulus, because sometimes you need something to rally against in your life, and Tourette's is that thing for me."

Perhaps we shouldn't be surprised at Capaldi's ability to counter life's challenges. A deep thinker, the Scot's emotional attentiveness frequently comes across in his music. From the breakthrough *Someone You Loved*, a poignant ballad, characterised by its raw lyrics and melancholic piano melody, that spent seven weeks at the top of the UK singles chart and reached number one in the US too, to the soulful vocals and introspective lyrics of *Bruises*.

In 2022, both *Forget Me* and *Pointless* made it to the top of the hit parade as well. The former track was Capaldi's first meaningful release in three years, and despite huge previous success, his candid uncertainty was on show in the promotion of the track, when he revealed, "It could be the beginning of a beautiful chapter in my life, or the very public downward spiral that, let's face it, I'm probably due."

Of course, the artist needn't have worried, and he is now embarking on a UK tour to accompany the release of his album, *Broken by Desire to Be Heavenly Sent*, on May 19.

Capaldi is a singer-songwriter of impeccable talent but, almost as important, devastating humility... and he's here to stay.

TO DIG OR **NOT** TO DIG?



Although it may seem strange, no-dig gardening is becoming increasingly popular owing to its ability to save time, banish weeds and ensure plants grow more healthily.

WHAT IS NO-DIG GARDENING?

No-dig gardening is a method of cultivation that aims for minimal disturbance of the soil. Made popular by Charles Dowding, an author and avid gardener, no-dig gardening requires less fertiliser and pesticide, is suitable for any size garden, and can be used to grow flowers, shrubs or vegetables.

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS?

No-dig gardening is beneficial to your soil, garden and the environment, and can significantly reduce the need to weed. Soil stores a lot of carbon, which means that the more you dig, the more is released into the atmosphere. There is also evidence to suggest that digging upsets the structure of the soil.

A GUIDE TO NO-DIG GARDENING

STEP 1: PREPARE THE AREA

Remove any large weeds and then cover the ground in a layer of light blocking material such as torn-up newspaper. If creating a no-dig area on grass, add a layer of manure and lime first.

STEP 2: ADD LAYERS

Add a layer of kitchen scraps, such as vegetable peelings or fruit waste, and a layer of compost made from leaves and grass cuttings. Then, add a layer of straw, another layer of compost, and finally another layer of straw.

STEP 3: MAKE WELLS FOR PLANTING

Create wells about 10cm deep in the top layer of straw and fill them with compost. Then, plant your seeds or seedlings into the wells. Water well and wait for your no-dig garden to grow.

Photo credit: charlesdowding.co.uk



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GOT SOME FRONT

Our front gardens are typically a bit more restrictive than the spaces behind our homes, but that doesn't mean we can't still make them look stunning.

They are the outdoor spaces that typically lack privacy, are exposed to dirtier air, and may even find themselves hosting a car or work vehicle. Therefore, for the added aggro our front gardens have to put up with, it's sensible to keep things simple, saving your energy for the private space at the back.

Beginning with plants and varieties of flowers, it's sensible to limit a front garden to perhaps just five or six variations. If you include too many different styles, it can create a hotchpotch of ideas that will only make your home look untidy.

Also try to prioritise privacy over prettiness. The front of our property is exposed to all and sundry, so carefully positioned hedges, shrubs and trees can keep unwanted eyes away. Just be sure not to

position larger living matter in front of windows to prevent blocking out the light.

When selecting plants, consider varieties that will last all year round, saving you a constant summer/winter change-up. Think summer roses that progress into gorgeous winter blossoms, and evergreens that will grace the changing seasons with constant class.

As far as a lawn goes, while artificial grass has never been better or looked more authentic, a small area of real grass, or perhaps one either side of a path, is low maintenance and can be taken care of with a simple mower. While it's tempting to bring a wild meadow into the equation, that look is always better achieved in a larger garden, where a rugged area is established in a well-tended garden.

Finally, if you're looking to pave or lay down slate or stone in a front garden, remember weeds will still work their way through, so keep an eye on things, particularly in the summer months.

keeping your front garden low maintenance



UNUSUAL SPORT:

Underwater Rugby

HEARING THE RALLYING CRY OF 'SWIM LOW, SWEET CHARIOT', IT CAN ONLY BE AN INVITATION TO PLAY UNDERWATER RUGBY

In 1961 in Cologne, Germany, a new variation on a hybrid sport containing elements of rugby and water polo was invented.

Named underwater rugby, for perhaps rather obvious reasons, the first championships took place some 17 years later, even though the sport's overseers were still unclear as to what the rules should be.

Ultimately, it was decided that there should be six players per side in the pool at any one time, with further substitutes from a total squad of 15 able to be made during the two 15-minute halves.

Most team formations comprise of two forwards, two backs and two goalkeepers or left-wingers, with the aim being to keep possession and score after outwitting the opposition through speed, skill and holding your breath.

The underwater rugby ball is plastic and filled with salt

water and the players have to score in steel goals which are located at the bottom of opposing ends of the pool. The pool dimensions have to be between 12m and 22m in length, 8m and 12m wide, and with a depth of 3.5-5m.

No kicking, hitting or strangling is allowed, but it's a contact sport so, within reason, anything else goes. Officials are present to judge possible offences, resulting in punishments such as warnings, free throws or two-minute penalties.

There were 18 countries involved at the last World Championships in 2019, where Colombia became the first non-Nordic nation to win a gold medal, beating two-time and defending champions Norway in the final in Graz, Austria.

Underwater rugby is said to be the only true 3D sport in the world in the way both the ball and the players can travel in three dimensions and in all directions – imagine, for instance, having a teammate 5m below you in a pool. For this reason, its popularity is exploding.



Photo credit: Ardan Ffiesmann/Shutterstock.com

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FASHION



She may only recently have become a recognised TV star, but Esme Young has had a career most budding fashionistas can only dream of.

On first impressions, fashion designers Esme Young and Patrick Grant make unlikely candidates for a sparkling television duo, but that is precisely what they have become as judges on *The Great British Sewing Bee*.

Both have decades of experience in the fashion industry, yet it is Young's effervescent wit and charm that has made her a media darling in her twilight years. She is a natural in front of the camera, but given the Bedfordshire native's illustrious life and career – as revealed in her memoir *Behind the Seams: My Life in Creativity, Friendship and Adventure* – this is hardly surprising.

After graduating from Central Saint Martins in the early 1970s, Young and three of her female friends launched the Camden-based fashion collective Swanky Modes, whose designs appeared in *Vogue*

and were snapped by the likes of David Bailey and Helmut Newton. During these carefree years, Young lived in a squat in Maida Vale, partied with the likes of David Bowie and the Sex Pistols, and saw Swanky Mode dresses worn by superstars of the era such as Grace Jones and Cher.

In the 1990s, Young moved into cinema. Her creations included Leonardo DiCaprio's shirt in *The Beach* and Renée Zellweger's iconic bunny outfit in *Bridget Jones's Diary*.

Alongside her judging role, Young teaches at Central Saint Martins, where she passes down her sartorial wisdom. Musing on how she was taught darning, mending and crocheting by nuns at the all-girl convent school she attended, the talented designer confesses that while seeking perfection in the seams and sleeves she judges, she also wants to be excited and surprised by contestants' creativity.

It seems that, even at 74, Esme Young's best days remain ahead of her.

Photo credit: BECC-Love Productions-James Slack



A guide to make-up

EXPIRATION DATES

Be honest, how often do you check the expiration date on your make-up? If the answer is hardly ever, then you're not alone. Unfortunately, out-of-date make-up can cause a whole host of problems, including skin irritations and eye infections.

FOUNDATION: Shelf life of six months to one year
You can keep your foundation germ-free for longer by keeping your fingers away from the neck of the bottle and gently dripping the formula onto the back of your hand before applying. If your foundation starts to separate, it definitely needs to be binned.

CONCEALER: Shelf life of six months to one year
Similar to foundation, concealer can last up to one year as long as you keep it out of direct sunlight and avoid touching the applicator with your fingers. Again, if it separates, throw it away.

LIPSTICK: Shelf life of one year
Typically, a lipstick should last for around 12 months. However, if you notice a change in texture, whether it has started to dry out or become gloopy, or if it starts to smell funny, it is no longer usable. Remember to store your lipstick in a cool, dry place.



EYE PENCIL: Shelf life of one year
Pencils tend to last longer than other eye products as they are sharpened regularly. Keep away from steam for enhanced longevity.

MASCARA: Shelf life of three months
If you don't want to get a nasty eye infection, you should be replacing your mascara once every three months or sooner if you notice that the formula has started to become clumpy or smell strange. Never share mascara.

EYESHADOW: Shelf life of three to six months
Although powder eyeshadow can potentially last for up to two years, because it is used around the eyes, you should replace it more often.



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Honey



NOT JUST FOR SPREADING

ON TOAST

On May 20, it's World Bee Day – a time to celebrate those buzzing bugs that make honey.

How do bees make honey?

Using their hollow tongues, bees suck up the nectar from flowers and store it in part of their stomach. Back in the hive, they regurgitate the mixture and spread it through the honeycomb cells. They then fan it with their wings to evaporate the moisture and turn it into honey. There are more than 300 different kinds of honey, depending on the flowers the nectar comes from.

Of course, honey is delicious spread on toast. But did you know it's also a great natural health and beauty aid because it contains micronutrients, including vitamins, minerals and antioxidants? It also has moisturising, antibacterial and anti-inflammatory properties. For maximum benefits, choose raw, organic honey.

Healthy scalp and hair

To treat your scalp, use a tablespoon or two of honey straight from the jar. Leave for a couple of hours before rinsing and shampooing. For a hair mask, mix a tablespoon of honey with the same quantity of olive oil. Leave on for 15 minutes before rinsing and shampooing.

Minor cuts, grazes and insect bites

If you're unlucky enough to suffer a cut or bite, simply dab on some honey to help with the healing process.

Sore throats

To relieve a sore throat, mix a tablespoon of honey with ¼ teaspoon turmeric in a mug of warm water or tea, and sip when you need it. You can also use the mixture as a gargle.

Healthy sleep

A tablespoon or two of honey before bed, eaten or in a drink, can help regulate your blood sugar and make you feel relaxed.

Remember...

Never give honey to children under one year as certain bacteria in honey can produce toxins in a baby's intestines. Also remember that honey is high in sugar and calories. The information here is for guidance only – it is not medical advice.



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KIWILICIOUS!



FOOD & DRINK

Although small, kiwis pack a punch when it comes to both health benefits and flavour. They're sweet, easy to eat and highly nutritious, so explore this extremely underrated and underused fruit in more detail below.

WHAT IS A KIWIFruit?

If you are unfamiliar with this fruit, then let us tell you a little more about it. Oval in shape and about the size of a large egg, kiwis boast brown skin, green flesh and tiny black seeds.

WHAT ARE THE HEALTH BENEFITS OF EATING KIWIS?

Excellent source of protective antioxidants | Support heart health | Contain both soluble and insoluble fibre for digestive health | Good source of vitamin C | Alleviate some of the symptoms of asthma | Support immune function | Low in calories | Count as one of your five-a-day

HOW TO ENJOY KIWIS:

KIWIFruit SMOOTHIE

You will need: 3 peeled kiwis | 1 peeled, stoned and chopped mango | 500ml pineapple juice | 1 sliced banana

Place all the ingredients into a blender and blitz until smooth. Serve over ice.

KIWIFruit AND AVOCADO SALSA

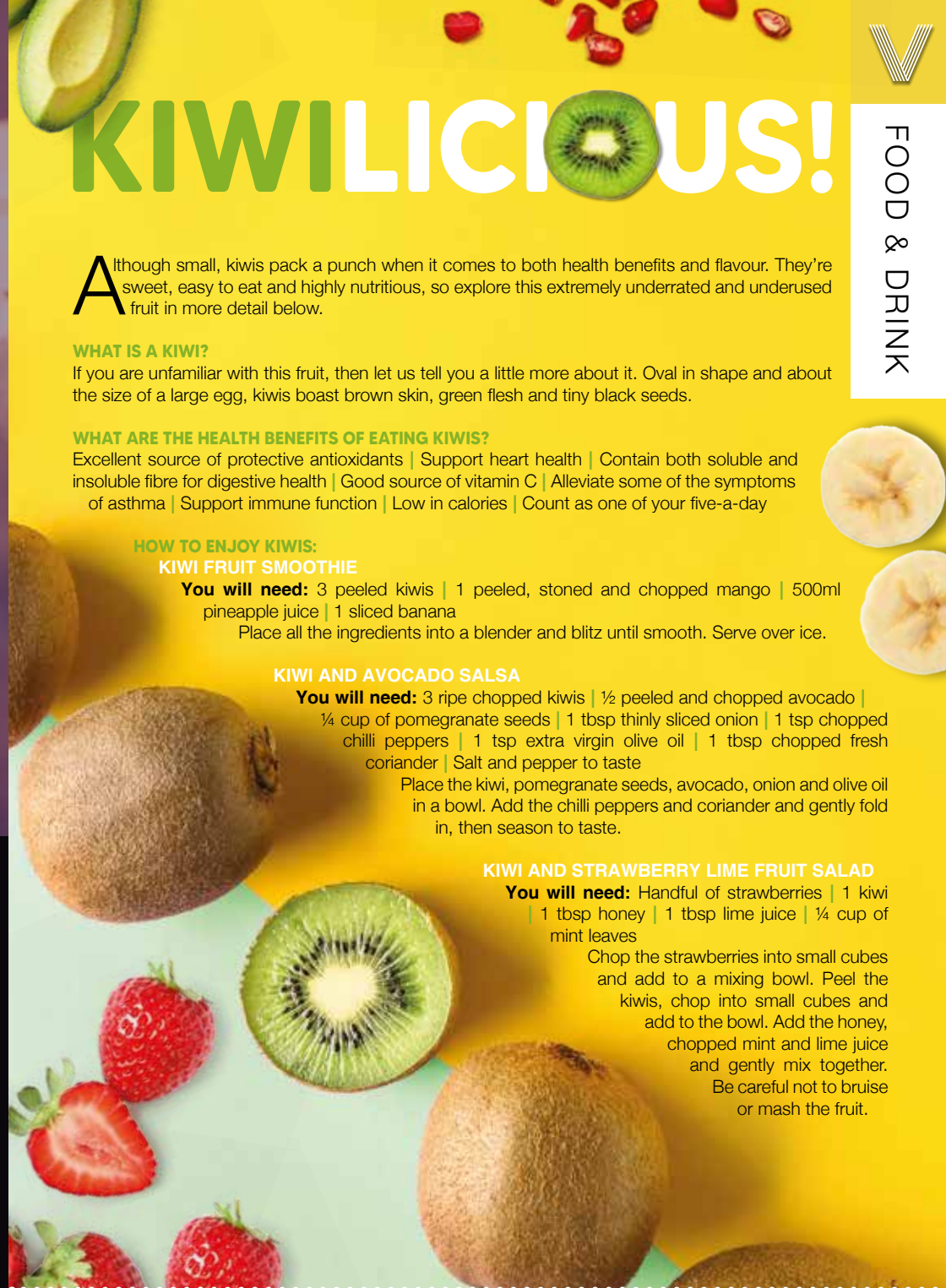
You will need: 3 ripe chopped kiwis | ½ peeled and chopped avocado | ¼ cup of pomegranate seeds | 1 tbsp thinly sliced onion | 1 tsp chopped chilli peppers | 1 tsp extra virgin olive oil | 1 tsp chopped fresh coriander | Salt and pepper to taste

Place the kiwi, pomegranate seeds, avocado, onion and olive oil in a bowl. Add the chilli peppers and coriander and gently fold in, then season to taste.

KIWIFruit AND STRAWBERRY LIME FRUIT SALAD

You will need: Handful of strawberries | 1 kiwi | 1 tbsp honey | 1 tbsp lime juice | ¼ cup of mint leaves

Chop the strawberries into small cubes and add to a mixing bowl. Peel the kiwis, chop into small cubes and add to the bowl. Add the honey, chopped mint and lime juice and gently mix together. Be careful not to bruise or mash the fruit.





RAVISHING Rhubarb

An unusual vegetable owing to its very sour yet slightly sweet taste, rhubarb is instantly recognisable by its deep pink hue. Super simple to grow, rhubarb is popular for both sweet and savoury dishes.

Serve as it is or strain the liquid through a muslin-lined sieve first.

2 RHUBARB CHUTNEY
YOU WILL NEED: 250ml cider vinegar | 100g golden caster sugar | 300g chopped rhubarb | 4 chopped medjool dates | 1 tsp grated ginger | 1 cardamon pod

HOW TO MAKE: In a pan, heat the cider vinegar and caster sugar until dissolved | Add the chopped rhubarb, ginger, dates and cardamon pod and cook for 15-20 minutes | Once you have a thick chutney consistency, season with salt to taste | Store in sterilised jars for up to two years (unopened).

- What are the healthy benefits of rhubarb?*
- Contains high levels of fibre, which is linked to lower cholesterol levels
 - A good source of vitamin K, which is beneficial for your bone and heart health
 - Full of antioxidants that protect the body from free radicals
 - May help with digestion and to treat digestive disorders

Rhubarb recipes

1 RHUBARB GIN
YOU WILL NEED: 1kg pink rhubarb stalks | 400g white caster sugar | 800ml gin

HOW TO MAKE: Wash the rhubarb, trim the stalks and discard the base and leaves | Cut the stalks into 3cm lengths and place in a sterilised jar with the sugar. (To sterilise jars, wash in soapy water, rinse and then dry in the oven for 20 minutes at a temperature of 140°C/120°C fan/gas mark 1) | Shake and leave overnight | After 24 hours, add the gin, seal and shake again | Leave for four weeks before drinking |



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Make a splash

Stuck for something to do with the kids on a typically rainy day in the UK? No need to fret; there will be smiles all round if you pay a visit to one of these top indoor waterparks.

Waterworld, Stoke-on-Trent
Frequently listed as one of the top indoor waterparks in the UK, Waterworld is a fantastic day out for all the family. Featuring 30 rides and activities for all ages, some of its most popular attractions include slides for toddlers, white-knuckle rapids and a wave pool.

Splashdown, Dorset
Splashdown offers 13 thrilling indoor and outdoor rides, as well as three splash zones for children under five. Our favourite ride by far is the Mississippi Drifter, where the whole family can ride on one inflatable tyre. The Infinity flume is also great fun, and you can even pick your own music!

Sandcastle Waterpark, Blackpool
The largest indoor waterpark in the UK, Sandcastle features an impressive 18 rides and attractions for you to enjoy. As well as the slides, wave pools and flumes, this waterpark has arcades, snack bars and cafés, so you can easily spend the whole day there.

Alton Towers Waterpark, Staffordshire
If you want to combine theme park rides with water slides, the Alton Towers Waterpark is the ideal choice for you and your family. With high-speed slides, waterfalls, tranquil lagoons and relaxing hot tubs, there's something for everyone at this popular waterpark.



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Europe's best SECOND CITIES

FIVE EUROPEAN COUNTRIES WHERE THE LESSER-KNOWN SECOND CITIES OFFER, ARGUABLY, MORE THAN THE CAPITAL

1. BERGEN, NORWAY

Many people visiting Scandinavia will instantly migrate towards Oslo for its green spaces, architecture and nightlife, yet for those looking to sample a more stylish, artistic side of Norwegian culture, Bergen is the choice. A seductive port decorated with colourful houses and romantic cobbled streets, it is the gateway to the fjords.

2. KRAKÓW, POLAND

Poland's elevation into a popular location to visit over the past 20 years has been impressive, and this is no better exemplified than in the way Kraków, its second city, welcomes visitors.

A former European Capital of Culture, it is a creative tourist's dream, with arts, crafts, collections and museums, plus a host of theatres for the performing arts.

3. PORTO, PORTUGAL

Located on the Iberian Peninsula, many parts of Porto were built with the aim of luring in foreign investment, so it makes sense that Lisbon's smaller sibling has an abundance of interest and charm.

From bridges to cathedrals, elegant gardens to wine tasting – the city is the birthplace of port wine – it's a smorgasbord of tastes and flavours.

4. CORK, IRELAND

The last port of call for the Titanic before it headed off across the Atlantic, Cork has a lot going for it, with a bustling market, friendly people, and a renowned food and drink scene.

Much more personal than Dublin, it introduces tourists to the rural delights of southern Ireland.

5. KOŠICE, SLOVAKIA

A modern city with an eco edge, Košice combines incredible architecture dating back centuries with a defined approach towards sustainability and the repurposing of old spaces for creative industry.

With a warm welcome and thriving arts scene, this is an inspirational place which transports visitors into a world that reflects the past while embracing the future.





If you want to start saving, then you may be wondering where to put your hard-earned cash. Two of the most popular options are ISAs and savings accounts, but which one is best for you?

WHAT IS AN ISA?

ISA stands for individual savings account and offers a tax-efficient way to save money. There are four types of ISAs:

- Cash ISAs
- Stocks and shares ISAs
- Innovative finance ISAs
- Lifetime ISAs

The government sets a limit for how much can be saved each financial year and does not charge any tax on the interest you earn.

WHAT IS A SAVINGS ACCOUNT?

A savings account offers a safe place to put aside your money and allows you to earn varying amounts of interest. Depending on your circumstances, you may have to pay tax on any interest earned.

There are several different types of savings accounts, including:

- Easy-access accounts
- Fixed-term accounts
- Regular savings accounts

ISA	Savings Account
Completely tax-free	Interest is taxed if you earn over £1,000 for basic tax earners and £500 for high tax earners per year
You can deposit up to £20,000 per year	No limits on deposits
Limited to opening one type of ISA per year	No limits on how many accounts you can open
Good for large amounts and long-term saving	Good for large amounts and long-term saving

SHOULD I OPEN AN ISA OR A SAVINGS ACCOUNT?

Before you decide whether to open an ISA or a savings account, you need to determine your needs and savings goals. Typically, you can earn more competitive interest rates on a savings account and, depending on the account, you may be able to both deposit and withdraw money. However, an ISA is a good choice if you want to protect yourself from paying tax on any interest earned.

...SAVINGS ACCOUNTS



Holmes & Hills

Moving home in 2023? What's the risk of your transaction falling-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 Solicitors. Benefit from our successful completion rate that is 22 per cent higher than the national average reported by Rightmove¹.

What number of property transactions fall-through?

Rightmove report that, on average across the country, approximately 30 per cent of property transactions fall-through². It is a much higher percentage than most buyers and sellers expect it to be.

Reduce the risk of your transaction falling-through

Those using Holmes & Hills Solicitors' conveyancing services benefit from a 22 per cent higher successful completion rate compared to the national average. This means 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, including your buyer finding another property; a surveyor identifying issues with the property; or a buyer's solicitor identifying issues surrounding matters such as rights of way, covenants, lease terms, easements, overage, options or boundary issues.

Why is Holmes & Hills' successful completion rate 22 per cent higher?

Holmes & Hills has a large team of 22 property lawyers dealing with second-hand, new-build and shared ownership property across the

country. The size of the team means there is unlikely to be an issue the team hasn't seen and resolved before.

Proactively identifying and resolving problems means we can keep your transaction on course, reducing the risk of your property transaction falling through and securing you a successful completion.

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.

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. Call Holmes & Hills Solicitors on 01787 425312 and ask to speak to the Client Enquiries Team or email advice@holmes-hills.co.uk.

¹Holmes & Hills' successful completion rate is calculated using sample data for 526 residential property transactions started between July 2022 to September 2022 and is compared to the national average successful completion rate of 70.3% (provided by Rightmove, 13/02/2023).

²Rightmove data supplied on 13/02/2023.

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PUZZLES

Answers: see end of The VISION Listings

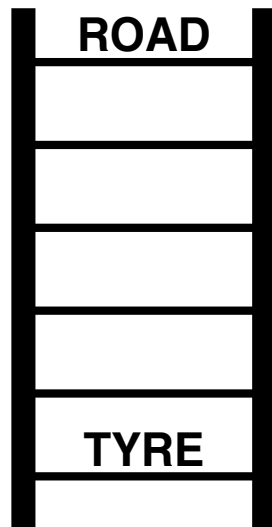
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DID YOU KNOW?

- ▶ Members of the Royal Family are not allowed to sign autographs. This is in case somebody tries to forge their signature.
- ▶ During her reign, Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II sent more than 300,000 congratulatory cards to people celebrating their 100th birthdays, and more than 900,000 messages to couples marking their diamond (60th) wedding anniversary.
- ▶ King Charles III, the former Prince of Wales, has been the heir apparent since he was three years old.
- ▶ In November 1965, while a student at Gordonstoun School, the then-Prince of Wales played the lead in Shakespeare's *Macbeth*.
- ▶ The former Prince of Wales has presented the weather forecast on the BBC.

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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