

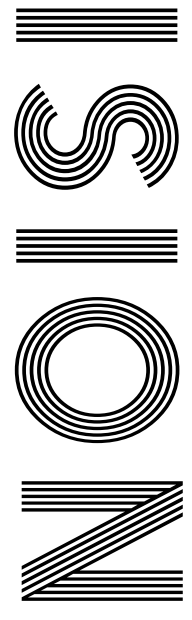


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Editor's notes...

JULY 2023



Nik Allen, Editor

Hello and welcome to this month's edition of **VISION** Halstead Braintree. As we enter the heart of summer, July brings forth a special milestone for many families in our community. Summer is a time of transition and excitement as our little ones embark on a new chapter in their educational journey - the leap from preschool to primary school.

As a father currently going through this, I marvel at how quickly the years have flown by and reflect on the wonderful memories created during this time.

In particular, I want to highlight the efforts of our local preschools and primary schools in ensuring a smooth and successful transition for our young learners.

It is heartening to see that our local educators understand the importance of building strong foundations for our children from the very beginning. They recognise that a supportive and nurturing environment during this critical transition phase can make a world of difference in shaping a child's educational journey.

Investing time and effort in ensuring our children settle in well and have the best possible start demonstrates the commitment of our educational institutions. Such collaborative efforts between nurseries and primary schools lay a solid foundation for our children's academic, social and emotional development.

I hope everyone enjoys their summer holidays before the new school term.

Nik Allen

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MARTIN TYLER'S fantastic finish

Celebrating both the career and the caressing tones of Martin Tyler, one of the most revered and celebrated football commentators of the modern era, who has left Sky Sports after 33 years of service.

"Manchester City are still alive here... Balotelli... AGUERROOOOO! I swear you'll never see anything like this again. So, watch it. Drink it in."

Martin Tyler's almost indelible words that accompanied Manchester City's first Premier League title in 2011/12 came more than two decades into his service as lead commentator for Sky Sports, the leading UK broadcaster of the English top-flight since its inception in 1992.

To link the Chester-born wordsmith with the pioneering, game-changing nature of Rupert Murdoch's pay TV revolution is an appropriate fit. Both supported each other in the growth of a football product that, rightfully, was to present our domestic league as the very best in the world.

That piece of iconic commentary came on a day when the blue half of Manchester scored two injury-time goals against QPR to wrestle the title away from their city rivals United. Many regard it as being right up there with the sport's other legendary narratives – from Kenneth Wolstenholme's "They think it's all over... it is now" in the 1966 World Cup Final, to Brian Moore's "It's up for grabs now" as Arsenal won the league title with virtually the last kick of the 1988/89 season at Anfield.

Indeed, that spine-tingling commentary is held so dear by the club's fans that many have it painted on walls, or inscribed on body parts – a goal and a string of words that kicked off a football revolution that now sees Manchester City as truly the dominant side in this country.

Tyler has always seen his vocal variations matched with awards – included in these are multiple gongs for Football Supporters' Federation Commentator of the Year Award, plus the much-cherished Premier League Commentator of the Decade.

Away from the satellite giant, he has voiced for Fox SBS (Australia), was the default commentator on the FIFA video game franchise between 2005 and 2022, and has also worked at the Euros and World Cup, having started out at ITV.

While the broadcaster is associated with the very top rung of the professional game, his inherent football passion comes much further down the ladder, given he is a supporter of National League side Woking.

Upon hanging up his microphone, Tyler said: "It's been a privilege to play a small part in the broadcasting history of the greatest league in the world.

"Working alongside wonderful professionals, I thank them for their support and expertise. It's been an honour as a member of a very gifted team."

Tyler, with his mannerisms, his turn of phrase and his presence that could fill the emptiest of front rooms on a Sunday afternoon, will be a hard act to follow, yet Sky Sports commentary is in good hands as Peter Drury takes the hot seat for the new season, starting in August 2023.



Photo credit: Mike Hewitt

Weird and Wonderful

festivals around the world

Summer is the time when crowds flock to music festivals, but did you know there are also a host of weird and wonderful festivals and events that take place throughout the year?

INTERNATIONAL HAIR FREEZING CONTEST: In the cold province of Yukon, Canada, the International Hair Freezing Contest takes place every February at the Takhini Hot Springs. With temperatures that reach below -30 degrees Celsius, participants dunk their heads in the hot water of the pools and then create frosty hairdos by shaping their locks as they freeze in the cold air.

BABY JUMPING FESTIVAL: Known to the locals as El Colacho, this unusual event takes place in Spain 60 days after Easter during the feast of Corpus Christi. It involves men dressing in traditional 'devilish' clothing to scare the crowd before running down the street and jumping over carefully placed babies.

WIFE CARRYING WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP: Fancy carrying your wife around a 253.5-metre track that is riddled with obstacles? Then you need to head to the two-day Wife Carrying World Championship in Finland. A hugely popular annual event that takes place in late June/early July, the winning team is awarded a prize of their wife's weight in beer.

LA TOMATINA: You may have heard of this popular Spanish festival that involves A LOT of tomatoes being thrown about the streets of Valencia. Essentially an hour-long tomato fight for the chosen 20,000 participants, this event is held on the last Wednesday in August each year.

MONKEY BUFFET FESTIVAL: The Monkey Buffet Festival in Lopburi, Thailand, is, as the name suggests, a buffet for monkeys that takes place annually among the ruins of a temple on the last Sunday of November. The local monkey population in Lopburi is around 2,000-3,000, and all are welcome to the annual feast of fruits, cakes, vegetables and candies.

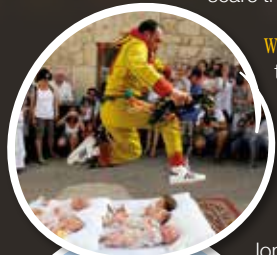


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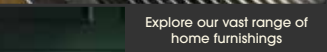
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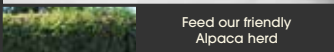
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BRITAIN'S GREATEST SPORTING MOMENTS...

BOTHAM'S ASHES



This month, we look back at one of the most significant events in British sporting history, when Lord Ian Botham OBE single-handedly derailed the Australian Ashes machine.

It's rare to find a sporting event named after one person, let alone a whole series, yet July sees the celebration of more than four decades of the term Botham's Ashes – a tribute to a one-man masterclass that turned a dramatic series of matches on its head.

Australia came to England in the summer of 1981 keen to win back the urn, and in a low-scoring first Test at Trent Bridge, they bowled the hosts out for 185 and 125 to seize the initiative.

The second Test was drawn, and the Aussies looked to be coasting to success in the third, at Headingley, as they clocked up 401/9, before skittling England out for just 174. Lord Botham's half-century appeared little more than a consolation, and while a follow-on total of 356 (with the talismanic former footballer 149 not out) had the hosts ahead, it

seemed inevitable that Australia would put away the chase target of 129 very easily.

Only once previously in Test history had a team won after following on, yet the Aussies reckoned without Bob Willis MBE's devastating eight wickets for just 43 runs with the ball, and collapsed to 111 all out, allowing England to level the series.

Past that point, it was a Lord Botham masterclass – he took five wickets in the second innings in the fourth Test at Edgbaston with the Aussies requiring just 150 to win; then bagged a century at Old Trafford as England went 2-1 up. It was his third successive Man of the Match performance.

And in a sixth Test at The Oval, another century from 'Beefy' wrapped up a 3-1 Ashes victory.

From a position of apparent hopelessness, Lord Botham's courage, bullishness, power and fortitude guided England to a sensational series win.



SPORT

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The acid in bird poo begins to corrode the shiny coat that sits atop your cherished four wheels within 48 hours. This acid kicks off a rusting process, which can be difficult and expensive to fix.

The fact that birds consume a large amount of gravel in their diet means that not only do you need to be quick in removing deposits, but careful as well, or you'll find that despite being prompt in ridding your paintwork of the mess, it's left behind a horror show of scratch marks too.

Preventing the deposit of bird poo on your car is a near-impossible task, though ensuring you don't park under trees or roofed overhangs will reduce the chance of your car resembling a painter and decorator's radio.

The best and easiest method to get rid of

the mess is simply to spray it with WD-40. This will serve to loosen the droppings. You should then use a sponge or microfibre cloth to pinch them up from the surface of the car.

Baking soda mixed with dish soap and dispensed from a spray bottle can be just as good, while pre-prepared over-the-counter formulas are expensive, but equally effective.

The real trick to ensuring no long-lasting marks on your vehicle where bird poo is concerned is rapid detection, so keep your eyes peeled and leap into action at the first sign of air attack.



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Interior designer Louise Bradley has impeccable taste, and it's no wonder she's sought after all over the world to create stunning designs in properties that range from country houses to overseas villas. Louise started her business in 1991, and is a self-confessed perfectionist with an eye for detail.

CLASSIC, CONTEMPORARY BEAUTY

While her styles are striking and timeless, Louise's spaces are designed to be functional too.

Her designs typically feature neutral colours enhanced with darker tones and blacks, with plush fabrics, statement lights and carefully chosen accessories completing the look. Louise's spaces represent a new modern classic style that works in different types of homes, including more traditional homes where the property's original features become elevated with Louise's designs.

RECREATING LOUISE BRADLEY'S LOOK

Some useful tips for recreating this look in your own home include:

- > Keep your layout simple, deciding carefully where furniture should go to help you make the most of the space you have.
- > Choose a muted colour palette that can be enhanced with darker shades to add depth.
- > Dress up the space with cushions and textiles in luxury fabrics. A rug can be a simple way to give a new look to an existing space.
- > Ornate mirrors and statement light fixtures add elegance, and can be an affordable way to dress up your interior if you're willing to shop around.

With looks that are simple yet timeless, Louise Bradley is the ultimate inspiration for contemporary décor that can work in any home.

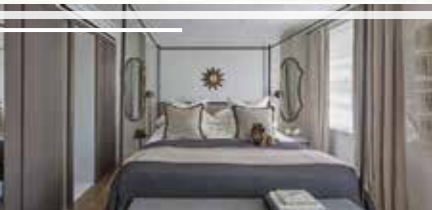


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Drenched IN COLOUR

YOUR GUIDE TO THE DRENCHING TREND

If you love a little colour, then you're going to love colour drenching. This latest interior craze is helping people utilise their favourite shades and transform spaces to give them a coordinated, striking finish. Check out our simple guide to colour drenching and how to nail the look in your home.

WHAT IS COLOUR DRENCHING?

Colour drenching means taking one colour and using it in various shades throughout a space. From your walls to ceilings and even your woodwork, using the same colour in a room can be super stylish. It's a bold look – one that can make a big impression.

HOW TO ACHIEVE THE LOOK

To achieve a colour-drenched look in your home, choose a colour that can be applied to your walls, ceiling, doors and window frames. You can then play around with accessories in the same or similar shades to help you fill out the space.

This is a fantastic way to make the most of any statement furniture items you have. A contrasting piece or artwork can really shine in a colour-drenched room, with the space creating the perfect backdrop.

WHICH ROOMS WORK BEST?

Colour drenching looks great in spaces like living rooms or dining areas. The less clutter you have, the more effective colour drenching can be. If you have a small space to work with, this can be a good way to create the illusion of a bigger room.

You can opt for light, dark or bold colours with colour drenching, helping to create a range of different effects within your home.

CHOOSING THE RIGHT COLOURS

When it comes to colour drenching, choosing the right colour is important – you're going to be seeing a lot of it, after all.

Some of the colours that work well for colour drenching include rich shades of navy and green, pink and burgundy. White and neutral shades can also work well, especially when paired with wooden details.

You may want to avoid using pastels like yellow, green and pale blue – the room may look too light without any contrasting features.

AN EXTRA TIP

Start with a feature wall in your chosen colour to see how it feels. If you like it and like the way the light hits the space, you can start adding to it until your room is sufficiently drenched.



HOME & DIY

Photo credit: Little Greene via homesandgardens.com, colourtrend.co.uk, sorbid.com



FROM YOUR AREA

LOCAL NEWS

Man admits series of burglaries



Photo credit: Essex Police

A serial burglar has admitted guilt to 13 offences in Braintree.

Shane Smith (pictured above), 31, was responsible for 11 burglaries, one attempted burglary and an associated fraud, which all took place in the Braintree district between August 2022 and March 2023.

Items such as bank cards, phones and televisions were stolen. In one of the burglaries, a West Highland Terrier was also taken, but was quickly recovered.

In one instance, Smith left behind a cap and a metal car jack. A crime scene investigator took DNA from the jack, which led to the identification of Smith.

He was arrested in March and subsequently charged. As the investigation progressed, detectives were able to link him to the 13 offences.

Theatre's £54,000 roof repair completed

The roof at the Empire Theatre in Halstead has been repaired thanks to £54,000 in funding from Halstead Town Council (HTC).

A spokesperson for HTC said: "The council is very pleased to announce that it has recently funded the total replacement of the slate roof at the Empire Theatre. The Empire is owned by HTC, and run by the Empire Theatre Trust (ETT) – a group of volunteers who put on a rich offering of films, shows and activities for members of the community. The trust has been renovating the heating/air-conditioning, while the council replaced the roof, thanks to the expertise of

Essex and Suffolk Roofing."

Mike George, of the ETT, said: "We would like to thank HTC for its continued support and its commitment to the theatre in funding the works."

ETT is continuing to fundraise for a new projector. All the proceeds from its upcoming live production of *Persuasion* on August 30 will go towards the fund.

Visit www.empire-theatre.co.uk/persuasion-by-dot-productions to find out more.

Council loses appeal against housing plan

Braintree District Council (BDC) has lost its appeal against government plans to house 1,700 male asylum seekers in the local area.

The Ministry of Defence Wethersfield site in Braintree is set to become the UK's largest asylum accommodation centre, and will house 1,700 people.

BDC has been steadfast in its opposition to the plans, stating that the site is unsuitable given the lack of capacity in local services, its isolated location, the size of the site, and the fact that the scale of the development could affect the local community.

The council sought an injunction to stop the plans, but the Court of Appeal dismissed the bid on June 23.

Councillor Graham Butland, Leader of BDC, said: "We are extremely disappointed with this outcome. We continue to stand behind the community on the fact that the site is unsuitable for these plans, and we are doing all we can through legal routes to prevent it from going ahead. This is all while we are continuing to work with our partners to mobilise should the plans progress, to support asylum seekers accommodated and ensure minimal impact on all those involved."

The Home Office has been contacted for comment.



Photo credit: Google Earth



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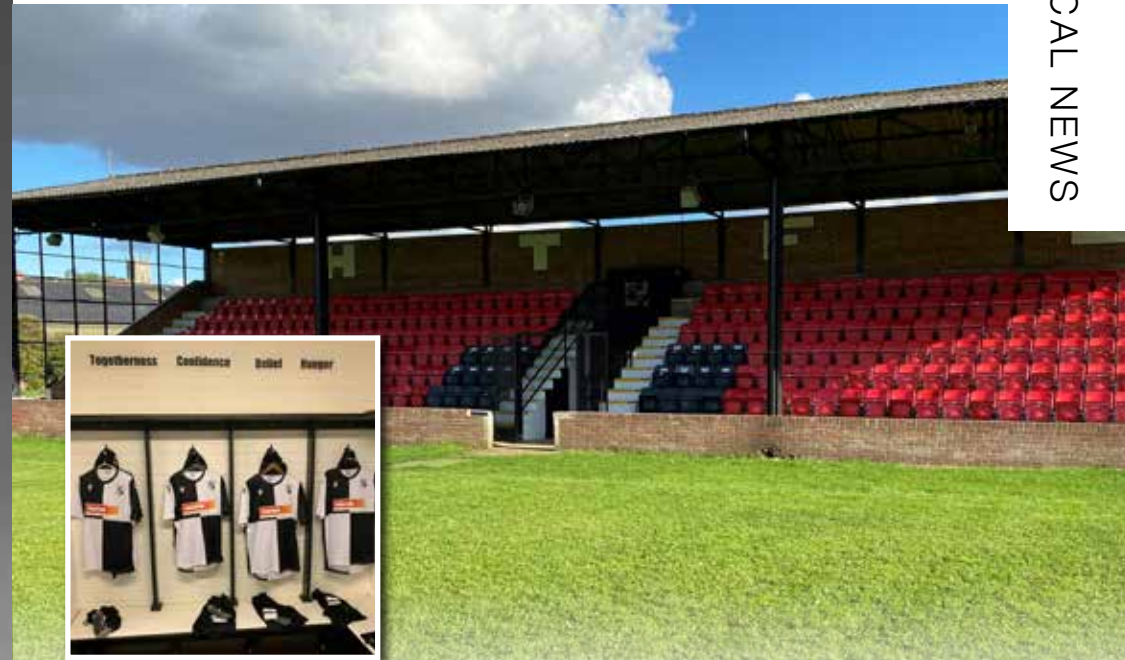
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NEWS FROM HALSTEAD FC...

THE **HUMBUGS**



LOCAL NEWS



'Close' season is a funny old time for any football club, as in reality there is no such thing – in fact, like many other clubs at this level, there are so many things going on that it is very much a case of 'open' season both on and off the pitch.

Our manager and his coaching staff are finalising arrangements for putting a squad together who are capable of holding their own, in what will no doubt be a very difficult Essex Senior League next season.

The chairman, his committee and the club volunteers are all working tirelessly to ensure the Milbank Stadium is in fine fettle for the start of the season. There is the pitch to prepare, endless amounts of grass cutting, weeding and painting to be done, as well as some more serious work to ensure the Milbank Stadium itself complies with Step 5 ground grading rules. The Supporters shop is being restocked with some new Humbugs merchandise, which will be available online

as well on matchdays. The changing rooms are being refreshed and then there is the bar and tea bar to be restocked – the list goes on and on.

Details of fixtures for the coming season are now available on the club's website. We kick off our league campaign away to Ilford on Saturday, July 29, before a home fixture against Romford in the first qualifying round of the FA Cup, on Saturday, August 5.

The club is once again offering some very competitive admission prices for the new season by way of memberships and season tickets.

We can confirm our first home league game of the season will be at 7.45pm on Tuesday, August 1, against Little Oakley. As always, we look forward to welcoming new and existing supporters.

For up-to-date information regarding pre-season friendlies, next season's fixtures and news at the club, please visit www.halsteadtownfc.com

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LOCAL FEATURES

Heavyweight promoter stays true to his roots



Photo credit: Gary Carr/INPHO/Shutterstock

The man who runs rings around the world's best boxers, Eddie Hearn is undoubtedly one of Brentwood's finest sporting exports, even if his activities, primarily across boxing, rarely see him break into a sweat.

Hearn, who attended the private Brentwood School before heading to Havering College in Hornchurch, is the son of Barry Hearn and therefore comes from solid boxing promoter stock. Yet over the past decade, Eddie has truly stepped out of his father's shadow.

Hearn's first foray into boxing promotion came in 2004, when he used Brentwood as the base for his first sporting event. The showcase featured a number of up-and-coming boxers, and enabled him to begin to build his reputation.

He has gone on to work with some of the biggest names in the sport, including Anthony Joshua OBE, Dillian Whyte and Kell Brook. He has also promoted numerous world champions, including Carl Froch MBE, Tony Bellew and Katie Taylor, as well as dabbling in management for poker, snooker and darts.

Hearn, who now lives in Billericay with his wife Chloe and their two daughters, is known for his flamboyant personality and an ability to promote fights in a way that generates excitement and interest from fans. He is a master of social media, using Twitter and Instagram to engage with fans and promote his fighters, both male and female.

Despite his success, Hearn is not without his critics. Some boxing fans accuse him of having too much control over the sport, and have questioned his decision to work with streaming service DAZN. This is despite the fact that the multi-million-pound deal disrupted the traditional pay-per-view model, making elite boxing more accessible to fans around the world.

The promoter's biggest fight was the heavyweight rematch between Anthony Joshua OBE and Andy Ruiz Jr, which was held in Saudi Arabia in 2019; yet more recently he brilliantly traded verbal punches with Simon Jordan on talkSPORT.

Hearn's success in boxing has given him an estimated worth of more than £100million, yet he remains fiercely loyal to his Essex roots.



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TIMT Theatre Company
Presents

ROBIN HOOD

Following TIMT's previous touring productions of *The Three Musketeers* ("A must-see for lovers of theatre!" - *Living Magazine*) and *Treasure Island* ("Non-stop entertainment!" - *We Are Weymouth*), we are delighted to be back this year with another Summer adventure. Our adaptation of the much-loved story - packed with song, suspense and, of course, sword fights - will be sure to warm hearts and spread cheer this Summer.

Based on the traditional tales of the outlaw of Sherwood Forest, with sword fights galore this exciting adaptation will have everyone on the edge of their seats this summer!

Join the legendary Robin Hood as he takes on the Sheriff of Nottingham, steals from the rich to give to the poor and finds love along the way!



All ages will love this contemporary telling of this much loved hero with live music, song and... Did we mention the sword fights?

Sarah Slator, director of TIMT said: "We are very much looking forward to our Spring/Summer tours this year. We have created this adaptation to be fun and vibrant to capture imaginations and engage audiences of all ages.

We are really excited to be continuing our Summer tradition of magical, family-friendly adventure stories in historic places and atmospheric spaces. Always a firm favourite with company members and audiences, this production of the

much-loved story will remain faithful to the original legend whilst also suited to the beautiful venues we are due to visit. This will offer our audiences a magical telling and bring to life these well-known characters for the stage.

BOOK YOUR TICKETS FOR ROBIN HOOD

Sun 3 September 2023

6:00 pm - 7:30 pm

at Hedingham Castle,
Bayley Street,
Castle Hedingham,
Halstead, CO9 3DJ

MORE INFO CAN BE FOUND AT
www.thisismytheatre.com/robin-hood
www.thisismytheatre.com
07732 253311



YOUR LOCAL EVENTS



WHAT'S ON

THE WIZARD OF OZ

Hedingham Castle, Bayley Street,
Halstead, CO9 3DJ
Wednesday, July 26, doors open at 5.30pm for a
6.30pm start



Photo credit: Immersion Theatre Company

With lashings of audience participation, dazzling costumes, an original script and plenty of laughter, this faithful retelling of the classic tale promises to have you shouting, clapping and singing along as Immersion Theatre presents a fantastic treat for all the family.

Purchase tickets from www.hedinghamcastle.co.uk/events/the-wizard-of-oz

DEVELOPMENTS IN ART DECO TEXTILE DESIGN

Warner Textile Archive, 3 Warners Mill,
Silks Way, Braintree, CM7 3GB
Friday, July 28, 12pm

The 1920s was an era of experimentation, with new bold textile designs in vivid colours emerging. At Warner & Sons, Art Deco styles were advertised alongside traditional woven fabrics, making for an eclectic mix of modern and long-established patterns.

This is a free, one-off event to explore behind-the-scenes work and one of the most striking areas of the collection. This work has been generously funded by the Art Fund.

A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM

Hedingham Castle, Bayley Street,
Halstead, CO9 3DJ
Wednesday, August 9, doors open at 5pm for a
6pm start

This classic Shakespeare play has been transformed into a musical extravaganza and adapted into modern

language, so this is a perfect show for the whole family to enjoy. Young and old alike will enjoy the hilarious comedy characters, mischievous fairies, magical moments and fantastic original songs.

To find out more and purchase tickets, please visit www.rb.gy/icxid

SKBR BUSHI JUTSU SEMINAR

Braintree Leisure Centre, Panfield Lane,
Braintree, CM7 1FF
Saturday, August 12, 10am - 3pm

This is an opportunity to come and refine your skills at a charity event of martial arts for all grades and organisations.

Instructors have been handpicked for their skills and teaching abilities and brought together under one roof to share their knowledge, with experts in karate, jujutsu, judo, aikido, kung fu, mixed martial arts and Kyūjutsu all expected.

All proceeds will go to cancer research. To find out more, visit www.allevents.in/braintree/skbr-bushi-jutsu-seminar-2023/200024342208645

GLADNESS (MADNESS TRIBUTE)

Halstead Empire Theatre, Butler Road,
Halstead, CO9 1LL
Saturday, August 19, doors open at 7pm

This outstanding and authentic seven-piece Madness tribute act are accomplished musicians and bring the nuttiest sound around. Party to the rock steady beat of *Baggy Trousers*, *House of Fun*, *It Must Be Love* and many more.

Purchase tickets from www.empire-theatre.co.uk/gladness



Photo credit: Gladness

COMER CHAMELEON



The changing mode of Jodie Comer, and why, in the face of her recent Tony Award win, the British actress's career will surely only continue to ascend.

In the pantheon of British acting royalty, Jodie Comer's journey has been gradual, yet dramatic. The 30-year-old actress has worked her way up through the slightly clichéd ranks, with the usual spread of appearances in TV staples such as *Holby City*, *Waterloo Road* and *Doctors*. Lead-character presence in *Thirteen* and *The White Princess* saw the Liverpoolian build on her early success, with widespread attention on both sides of the Atlantic finally arriving as a result of her portrayal of assassin Villanelle in the BBC drama *Killing Eve*.

Comer's appeal is obvious; she possesses distinctive flair and undeniable talent, with an ability to switch between comedy and drama, romantic segments and thriller sequences.

And nowhere better has that versatility been shown than in her recent triumph at the 2023 Tony Awards, where she garnered the Best Leading Actress accolade for her tour-de-force performance in the Broadway show *Prima Facie*.

"I've never been one to pin everything I do on the idea of winning awards," she begins, "as I believe there is so much good stuff that goes unnoticed. And really, the success or failure of a project is something that only really I can decide upon.

"That said, when recognition comes along, especially with something this big, and in an environment on stage that is a diversion from what I have been doing, it does mean so much to me and I am so grateful."

Comer wouldn't be able to achieve what she has without the eclectic blend of strength, charm and emotional vulnerability that she brings to every role. She is visually striking and phonetically exacting, and with these tools, she manages to engage an audience in a way that few actresses of her age can.

"Drama is about sharing an emotion," she says. "It's not a one-way street – the task is to envelop everyone around you in a character and a feeling."

Comer's journey to the top, while impressive, has been linear. That's what makes the Tony Award her biggest achievement yet – for the fact she stepped out, alone, looking to impress not just those at home, but the fiercely demanding New York Broadway crowd too.

The show, a one-woman play, tells the story of a lawyer who defends men in sexual assault cases, though finds the script flipped when she herself becomes the victim of a sexual assault. The play was also a hit in the West End, with a successful run at the Harold Pinter Theatre.

Beyond the stage, Comer's cinematic work is equally noteworthy. Her role in the upcoming survival film *The End We Start From*, co-starring Benedict Cumberbatch CBE, is eagerly anticipated.

"For me, it's about continuing to move forward – to try new things and to work with new people. I am flattered when I get cast alongside some real heavyweights of the industry, and it is a struggle to feel worthy, at times."

Perhaps that's what makes Comer so popular – a sense of humility and down-to-earth persona. Despite her fame, she remains a humble Liverpoolian who loves her craft and respects her audience.

Photo credit: Jon Sugg



What is a **RESIDENT** LANDLORD?

Have you ever thought about renting out a room in your home to bring in some extra income? Find out everything there is to know about becoming a resident landlord below.

WHAT IS A RESIDENT LANDLORD?

A resident landlord, sometimes referred to as a live-in landlord, is someone who rents out a room or a proportion of their accommodation in a property that they also live in. You are not a resident landlord if the property is split into purpose-built flats, with yourself in a separate flat, or if you are not considered by law to be a resident at the property.

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF BECOMING A RESIDENT LANDLORD?

The main reason that people choose to rent out a room in their home is to earn some extra money which can be used to help pay the mortgage, pay

off other debts, or be put aside for retirement.

ARE THERE ANY TAX BENEFITS TO RENTING OUT A ROOM IN YOUR HOME?

Yes, the government's Rent a Room Scheme allows you to earn up to £7,500 per year tax-free from letting out furnished accommodation in your home. If you earn less than £7,500, then your tax exemption will kick in immediately, otherwise you will need to complete a tax return or opt into the scheme.

CAN I RENT TO MORE THAN ONE LODGER?

Yes, you can. If you have more than one spare room in your home, then you can rent to more than one lodger. However, if you rent to three or more tenants who are not from the same family, this becomes a house in multiple occupation, which has very strict licensing rules.

DO I NEED TO TELL MY MORTGAGE LENDER?

Most mortgage agreements allow you to take in a lodger as long as you live in the property. However, it is worth checking with them first to make sure.



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Braintree & Halstead, located in the heart of Essex, offers a unique blend of urban amenities and natural beauty. Our team understands the local climate, soil conditions, and native plant species that thrive in this area. Whether you have a small

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PETAL PERFECTION



Are you planning to throw confetti at your wedding? Then you need to know about petal confetti, also known as biodegradable confetti, and how it can help make your big day both stylish and sustainable.

WHY IS CONFETTI THROWN AT WEDDINGS?

The tradition of throwing confetti at weddings dates back to the Middle Ages, and is used to say congratulations to the happy couple and wish them a lifetime of luck and happiness.

WHAT IS PETAL CONFETTI?

Petal confetti, as the name suggests, is confetti that is made out of real flowers rather than plastic, metal or paper. It is 100 per cent biodegradable, affordable and makes a stunning addition to any style of wedding. You can create bespoke petal confetti mixes or you can order pre-mixed bags online from companies such as Shropshire Petals and Pretty Petals. There is also a confetti field in Pershore, Worcestershire, where you can

carry out pre-wedding photoshoots and purchase petals.

WHAT ARE THE BEST FLOWERS FOR PETAL CONFETTI?

There are many different flowers to choose from for your eco-friendly wedding confetti, with some of the most popular options including delphiniums, wildflowers, roses and hydrangeas. In particular, delphinium petals make wonderful confetti as they are small and delicate. It is worth noting that delphiniums and hydrangeas are harmful to dogs, so if you have any four-legged friends attending your wedding, then rose petals and lavender make a fragrant alternative.

OTHER WAYS TO USE PETAL CONFETTI

As well as being used for beautiful confetti, there are other ways in which you can use petals to make your big day just that bit more special:

- > Create a petal aisle for the bride to walk down
- > Flower girls and boys can scatter petals down the aisle
- > Place piles of petals around other decorations
- > Decorate your wedding tables.





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FASHION



CONVERSE *cleaning*

If your Converse trainers are looking more grimy than gleaming, then you will be pleased to hear that this type of footwear is relatively easy to clean.

All you need is a few simple ingredients and a little bit of elbow grease.

in a warm place. Never apply direct heat to your Converse trainers.

WHAT YOU WILL NEED:

Baking soda | Toothpaste | Washing-up liquid | Stain remover | Water | A sponge | A nail brush and toothbrush | Cloths | Newspaper

STEP 3: Removing tough stains

For any stubborn stains, apply stain remover directly to the affected area. Leave for five to 10 minutes and then wash off using a nail brush. Leave in a warm place to dry. It can be a good idea to test your stain remover on a section of the shoe that is not visible first, such as the outer edge of the tongue.

HOW TO CLEAN:

STEP 1: Cleaning the laces

Remove the laces from your Converse and then create a cleaning solution using 50ml of washing-up liquid, 1 tbsp toothpaste, 1tbsp baking soda and 200ml of warm water. Soak the laces for two to three hours and then hang to dry.

NB: You should never machine wash or dry Converse trainers as this can damage the shoes.

STEP 2: Cleaning the shoe

Stuff each shoe with newspaper and generously apply toothpaste to the shoe using a toothbrush. Leave for 15 minutes. Wash off all the toothpaste using a nail brush and warm water, then leave to dry

How to keep white Converse white

If you have recently purchased a pair of white Converse trainers, spray them with a water and stain repellent spray before you wear them. When a stain occurs, spot clean immediately with an equal mix of warm water and washing-up liquid.



KIDS



CHORES

Would you like your children to start helping out around the house, but are unsure of what they should be doing? Use this guide to age-appropriate chores and create the ultimate chore calendar for your family.

AGES 2 AND 3: Most toddlers love to help their parents with chores, although their help may not actually be that helpful! Although you will be needed every step of the way, the below chores are a good place to start with this age group:
Making their bed | Picking up their toys | Helping to feed pets | Helping to wipe up spills

AGES 4 AND 5: Preschool-aged children should still be fairly motivated to help and love one-on-one time with adults. Suitable chores include:
Clearing and setting the table | Dusting | Making

their beds independently | Helping to tidy their room

AGES 6 TO 8: School-aged children are more independent and can keep track of their responsibilities. Chores you may want to entrust to them include:

Washing small plates and bowls | Helping to care for pets | Taking out the rubbish | Sweeping or mopping | Making their own breakfast or snacks | Tidying their room

AGES 9 TO 12: At this age, you can set a schedule and expectations when it comes to help in the home. Chores they are able to take on include:

Helping to wash the car | Learning to load and unload the dishwasher | Cleaning the bathroom | Operating the washing machine | Helping to prepare simple meals

AGES 13 TO 18: Most teenagers are capable of handling any household chore as long as they have been taught how to do it properly. Depending on their school commitments and schedule, tasks you may like to delegate include:

Vacuuming | Doing their own laundry | Cleaning out the fridge | Preparing family meals | Ironing clothes | Mowing the lawn | Caring for pets.



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Beautiful

BROAD BEANS

If you want to try to eat more seasonally, then now is the time of year to embrace the humble broad bean. They're delicious, nutritious and guaranteed to brighten up your day. Discover two of our favourite broad bean recipes below.

TOMATO, MOZZARELLA AND BROAD BEAN SALAD

You will need:

500g tomatoes | 150g podded broad beans | ½ tsp salt | ½ tsp caster sugar | Handful of fresh basil and chives | 1 tbsp fresh tarragon | 1 tbsp mint leaves | 3 tbsp olive oil | 2 tsp Dijon mustard | 1 lemon, zested | 1 tbsp red wine vinegar | 250g mozzarella balls | 50g toasted and chopped hazelnuts

How to make:

- Cut the tomatoes into slices and place in a bowl.
- Add the salt and sugar and leave to marinate for 30 minutes.
- Bring a pan of water to the boil and add the broad beans.
- Boil for two minutes, drain and allow to cool.
- Remove the beans from their shells.
- Finely chop all the herbs and tip into a bowl.
- Whisk in the olive oil, mustard, lemon zest and red wine vinegar.
- Season and stir in the broad beans.
- Tip the tomatoes onto a serving platter, then top

with the mozzarella and spoon over the broad bean salsa.

- Scatter over the toasted hazelnuts.

BROAD BEAN DIP

You will need:

300g podded broad beans | 3 tbsp crème fraiche | ½ a lemon | 1 tbsp fresh dill | Flatbreads or pitta bread to serve

How to make:

- Bring a pan of water to the boil.
- Add the broad beans and cook until tender.
- Drain and refresh in iced water.
- Blitz the beans, crème fraiche and a little seasoning together in a food processor.
- Tip into a bowl and squeeze in the juice of the lemon.
- Finely chop the fresh dill and stir through.
- Serve with warm bread.
- You can store this dip in a tightly sealed container for up to four days in the fridge.



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LOVE PARKS Week

Love Parks Week is an annual event that gives people across the country the chance to shout about their favourite green spaces. It takes place between July 28 and August 4 this year. Here are some of the best national parks the UK has to offer.

NEW FOREST: *Best for nature lovers*

One of the largest areas of woodlands in southern England, the New Forest is a great park to visit all year round. In spring, head to Clayhill Heath to stroll through a sea of bluebells, and in summer, look out for forest pony foals outside Beaulieu and Brockenhurst. Later in the year, don't miss the free-roaming pigs that are let loose to scavenge acorns.

SOUTH DOWNS: *Best for long-distance walks*

The newest UK national park, South Downs boasts rolling hills and stunning views down to the Weald and out to the Channel. The impressive 100-mile South Downs Way covers the entire park from Winchester Cathedral to the beach at Eastbourne, making it a must-do experience for hiking enthusiasts.

EXMOOR: *Best for isolation*

One of the least visited national parks in the UK, Exmoor is the perfect place for those who want to seek solace. Offering wild moorlands, rocky ravines and breath-taking coastal cliffs, Exmoor is also home to a population of wild ponies who wander around its expansive landscape.

DARTMOOR: *Best for camping*

If you fancy experiencing the freedom of wild camping, then this is the national park for you. You can just pitch up and explore Devon's wondrous moorlands - the only national park in the UK where this is permitted. Ideal for families, some of the most popular spots are Haytor and Hound Tor or, for adventure seekers, head out to the remote Fur Tor.



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According to a 2017 study, completing
10,000 steps a day is just as effective as
doing five 30-minute workouts a week.

Here are a few more reasons why you should be clocking
up some serious mileage.

♥ To strengthen your heart

If you walk 10,000 steps per day, you will have a larger
stroke volume than someone who only walks 1,000 steps a
day. Your stroke volume refers to how much blood the heart
beats per minute, with a larger stroke volume being a sign of
greater aerobic capacity and better heart health.

🚶 To lose weight

Walking is a great form of aerobic exercise, especially if you
walk briskly. This can help you to lose weight when combined
with a healthy and balanced diet. Furthermore, you will store less
fat than an inactive person and be better able to handle periods of
excess, such as Christmas, without gaining too much weight.

📊 To stabilise your blood sugar

People who walk 10,000 steps per day will have a much lower
glucose and insulin response in their blood after eating a meal than
someone who is inactive. This means that you are less likely to
develop type 2 diabetes in the future.

🧠 To improve cognitive function

Daily moderate exercise such as walking has been shown to
improve one's ability to learn new tasks, grow new brain cells and
stave off cognitive decline. Aerobic exercise may also be able to
stimulate new cell growth in the hippocampus, which is the part of
the brain responsible for emotion and memory.

📱 To reinforce healthy habits

It takes time to develop new habits, but sometimes all it takes is one small
commitment to act as a catalyst for change. Start with small increases to your
overall step count, before gradually increasing to 10,000 steps per day.

LOVE WHERE YOU LIVE!

The seaside has always been a dream destination for many. The sound of waves crashing against the shore, the fresh sea breeze, and the sun shining down on you as you relax on the sand - it's the ultimate summer experience. And if you've been dreaming of living by the seaside, now is the time to make that dream a reality.

Sandpiper Gardens, a brand new development of 104 homes in Clacton-on-Sea, Essex offers the perfect opportunity to live by the sea and enjoy all the benefits of coastal living. With views over the open countryside and just a few minutes' drive from the sea, this development is the ideal



place to escape the hustle and bustle of the city and enjoy a more relaxed pace of life.

But it's not just the stunning location that makes Sandpiper Gardens so appealing. The development offers a range of amenities and opportunities that make life in Clacton-on-Sea less ordinary. From the traditional charm of the town to the contemporary amenities on offer, there really is something for everyone.



Can't wait to start your dream retirement lifestyle at Sandpiper Gardens? We have taken care of every detail to ensure a seamless transition for you. With four move-in ready and meticulously furnished homes available that cater to your needs and preferences, all you have to do is bring your personal belongings and start enjoying your new abode.

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SECURE

your canine!

If your pooch loves lolling their head out of a car window, you could be breaking the law.

It's common knowledge that dogs love to hang their furry heads outside car windows in order to absorb all the fragrant wonders of the world passing by, yet did you know that this could actually be breaking the law?

It is a legal requirement as part of the Highway Code to secure a dog – or any other small animal – in a car when driving to prevent them from causing an accident. This is because they could block your vision, jump in the footwell and stop you braking, or generally distract you with their fluffy cuteness.

In the event that an animal is believed to have caused an accident, the driver of the vehicle can face a fine of up to £5,000 and could receive points on their licence. Worse still, it could also invalidate both your car AND pet insurance – meaning no financial help for Fido should they get hurt.

Mark Tongue, of Select Car Leasing, said: "We'd recommend you don't let your dog

stick its head out of the window.

"Not only does that potentially illustrate that the animal is not restrained properly, but there's also the obvious risk of its head coming into contact with something, like a bush or a tree, resulting in a bad injury. And make no mistake – if you don't have your dog properly restrained, and it's causing distraction, you could be prosecuted by the law.

"Don't take the risk. Make sure both you and your pooch are buckled up properly."

In other words, next time your four-legged friend feels like catching the breeze, make sure you've invested in a dog-friendly harness, or risk finding yourself in the doghouse.



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DID YOU KNOW?

- ▶ Earth isn't actually perfectly round. Earth's rotation causes the planet to bulge at the equator and flatten at the poles.
- ▶ Coral reefs are Planet Earth's largest living structure. These underwater ecosystems are made up of colonies of tiny animals called coral polyps, which build calcium carbonate skeletons that accumulate over time and form the complex structures we know as coral reefs.
- ▶ The Earth's interior is not solid, but rather has a semi-solid or 'squishy' consistency owing to the extremely high temperatures and pressures.
- ▶ The Earth's diameter (the distance straight through the middle) measures a massive 12,800 kilometres, which makes it the fifth largest planet in the solar system.

WORD LADDER

MICE
RATS

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.

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.

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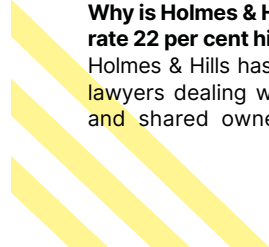
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¹Holmes & Hills' successful completion rate is calculated using sample data for 526 residential property transactions started between July 2022 to September 2022 and is compared to the national average successful completion rate of 70.3% (provided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

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