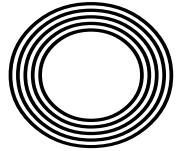




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TO STUDY
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BACK TO SCHOOL
Top tips for reluctant kids

POISON PLANTS
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Photo credit: Warner Bros.

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Creating a record-breaking blockbuster with British roots

From Banking Hall to Curtain Call

Following the closure of Barclays Bank in Tiptree Curtain Call Interiors have taken over the former bank building and transformed the space into an inspirational home interiors showroom and new workroom.

The new space showcases a wide range of designer fabrics, curtain displays as well as home accessories including, a beautiful home fragrance range, cushions, lamps, furniture and tableware.

Curtain Call specialise in making hand finished bespoke curtains, Roman blinds and soft furnishings all made by their experienced team of curtain makers. With their new workroom located adjacent to the Showroom, it allows



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Editor's notes...

SEPTEMBER 2023



Nik Allen, Editor

Hello and welcome to this month's edition of **VISION** Halstead Braintree. As we turn the page to a new season, I find myself looking at my own life as chapters in a book. Just as characters in a book evolve through the challenges they face, so too are we continually changing in response to everything happening around us.

Currently, my wife is embarking on a new chapter as she returns to the workforce full-time. This shift brings its own set of challenges, as the balance between work and family takes on new dimensions.

Our little ones are stepping into their own new chapters as they begin school. I look forward to seeing them mature and grow as they make new friends, encounter challenges and learn invaluable life lessons.

Let us remember that the narrative of our lives is never stagnant. Each chapter brings with it an opportunity to learn, to grow and to deepen our understanding of ourselves and those around us.

Just like the most engrossing novels, our lives are full of anticipation for what lies ahead, reminding us that while change can be scary, it's often one of the most exciting parts of life.

I look forward to these next few months as we head into autumn, and hope you enjoy this September edition.

Nik Allen

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THE WORLD AT THEIR FEET



Football may not be coming home after England's women lost to Spain in an eventful World Cup Final, but the fact that they made it to the final stage of the tournament signifies another huge advancement for Sarina Wiegman CBE's team, and the sport as a whole in this country.

As the final whistle sounded in Sydney on Sunday, August 20, and the Lionesses collapsed to the floor, many in tears, their big chance to clinch the Women's World Cup had slipped away... for now, at least.

Before the match, England had

been riding a wave of hope. Euro champs from 2021, and under the guidance of Dutch coach Wiegman – recognised as the world's leading female football coach – they had suffered just one defeat in 38 games, a friendly reverse to one of the co-hosts of this tournament, Australia.

Their journey to the final saw them navigate a mass of injuries, temporary loss of form, a penalty shoot-out, and a two-game ban for Lauren James, who was sent off in the quarter-final. Yet even when not playing at their best, they found ways to win – ultimately the sign of a team who have the strength and resilience to overcome challenges.

However, on this occasion, the project fell one result short. Wiegman's expertise was pushed to its maximum. After the game, the players were quick to admit the better side won on the day, as Spain's Olga Carmona fired in the winning goal in the 29th minute.

With their line-up comprising seven members of Barcelona's Champions League-winning side, the Spaniards' skills were evident from the get-go. Indeed, despite

having Ballon d'Or winner Alexia Putellas on the bench owing to ailing fitness, and a wider rift existing within the Spanish squad pre-tournament, Jorge Vilda's side proved to be a formidable opponent.

Perhaps it was England's victory against them in the quarter-finals during Euro 2021 that gave the Spaniards extra impetus, but they were stronger and more clinical when it mattered.

England, who had won their group phase with victories over Haiti, Denmark and China, had then beaten Colombia and Australia en route to the World Cup. They will likely see the defeat as a missed opportunity, particularly with defending champions USA and European powerhouses Germany both eliminated early.

Wiegman, ever the strategist, made changes at the break and shifted formations, yet while England's play improved, ultimately it was Spain who should have extended the lead after Jennifer Hermoso's penalty was brilliantly saved by Mary Earps.

Even 13 minutes of injury time couldn't save the Lionesses, yet there are positives to take.

First, Mary Earps was named FIFA Best Goalkeeper for the tournament – otherwise known as the Golden Glove Award winner. She conceded just three goals in six matches, keeping three clean sheets. The honour was a tremendous comeback for the 30 year old, who has had to battle for her spot as England number one.

Next, we have a nation that continues to embrace the onward trajectory of women's football in England.

The Lionesses remain a team who have rewritten the script, broken records, confronted societal norms, and continue to advocate for more investment and exposure in women's football.

Consider those elements, and the stylish way in which the team continue to galvanise a nation of girls growing up in the game, and in many ways they are true champions.

FIFA WOMEN'S WORLD CUP 2023™



Photo credit: James Gourley/Shutterstock, Morgan Hancock/Shutterstock

FIFA WOMEN'S WORLD CUP 2023™ THE FINAL

QuIRKY STUDIES

Are you looking to pursue further education but don't want to choose the same course as everyone else? In that case, these quirky university programmes may grab your attention.

VITICULTURE AND OENOLOGY

Do you love a tippie or two, or want to know more about the science of winemaking? Discover the wonderful world of viticulture and oenology. These courses provide all the skills and knowledge needed to become a vineyard manager, winemaker or winetaster.

HOROLOGY

If you are fascinated by time, then horology could be the course for you. Focusing on the art and science of time management, this is the perfect course for budding entrepreneurs who understand that time is money!

ETHICAL HACKING

Offering a surprisingly high graduate employment rate, ethical hacking focuses on the study of cybersecurity in order to protect businesses from computer hacking. Ideal for computer whizzes.

ETHNOBOTANY

If you have embraced the recent trend for greenery in your home, then you may be interested in a course that looks at how humans respond to and benefit from plants. A great choice for those who want to pursue a career in the field of botany.

CIRCUS PERFORMANCE

Yes, you read that correctly, you can pursue a university degree in circus performance. One of the most exciting courses we found, you can learn a whole host of skills and receive top physical training. Because who didn't dream of running away to join the circus at some point?

SURF SCIENCE

Another degree course that sounds like great fun, surf science, as you may have already guessed, involves the study of surfing. Whether you want to set up your own business or work for one of the big names in surfing, this is one degree course that promises not to be boring!



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MOTORING



Famous MOVIE cars

They say the car is the star, and with these cherished vehicles from the big screen, that's certainly the case.

ASTON MARTIN DB5: Four units of the DB5 were used for the 1964 James Bond classic *Goldfinger* – two during filming and a further two promotional vehicles. The now iconic car was modified by special effects expert John Stears to include a number of spy-worthy gadgets. Although stolen in 1997 from Boca Raton Airport in Florida, the car has since been spotted in a 'private setting' in the Middle East.

DELOREAN DMC-12: The DeLorean is one of the most recognisable cars in the world owing to Steven Spielberg's *Back to the Future* trilogy, yet what should have been a marketer's dream turned out to be anything but. Despite futuristic 'gull wing' doors and stainless steel body panels, the DMC-12 didn't sell well owing to its impracticability and lack of balance, being a rear-engine car.

BATMOBILE: Batman/Bruce Wayne was known to high-powdered supercars since he first appeared in comics in 1939, but it wasn't until 1941 that the title 'Batmobile' was first used. The first on-screen Batmobile appeared in the 1943 serial *Batman* movies and was a 1939 Cadillac Series 75. Since then, the Batmobile has gone through several iterations – from the first completely black version in the 1989 Tim Burton film, to the Christopher Nolan version which was described as a cross between a Lamborghini and a tank.

ECTOMOBILE: Ecto-1 from the *Ghostbusters* movies was an original 1959 Cadillac Miller Meteor, and the two models converted for screen use are still owned by Sony Pictures. The film provoked a number of copycat models, one of which sold in 2021 for more than £200,000.

FERRARI MODENA GT: While three Modena GTs were used in the iconic 1980s film *Ferris Bueller's Day Off* starring Matthew Broderick, all were replicas. The one that flies out the window in the movie didn't even run properly – it was a fibreglass shell version built specially for that scene. Though one of the replicas was seriously damaged in the jump scene, it was successfully repaired and sold for £122,000 at auction.

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HOME & DIY

track lighting

Track lighting is one of the most versatile lighting solutions and is currently experiencing a surge in popularity. Here's our advice on how to use it in your home for maximum impact.

altered to suit the layout and length of a room | It is energy efficient | It is cost-effective | It is simple to reconfigure

How to use track lighting in your home:
As track lighting is so customisable, it can be used in nearly every area of your home, but it is particularly useful in the kitchen, hallway, living room and in a home office.

Some of our top ideas for where to place track lighting in your home are:

1. Run a track along your hallway ceiling and aim fixtures at any artwork or directly at the wall.
2. Customise a track to fit your kitchen space such as over an island or onto the countertops.
3. Install a track system in a dark wardrobe and position several heads where you need light.
4. Use in rooms with high ceilings and opt for white fixture heads which will blend in more effectively.

What is track lighting?
When you think about track lighting, you are likely to imagine a series of individual lamps, known as heads, that slide along a metal track. While this is the case for some track lighting systems, there are now many other styles to choose from. Typically, track lighting is hardwired and connected to a wall switch. The heads can be focused spotlights, radiant spotlights or pendants.

What are the benefits of track lighting?
There are many benefits to track lighting, including: It is easy to install | It is customisable and can be



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INTERIOR DESIGN PROFILE

ELICYON

HOME & DIY

Elicyon was founded by designer Charu Gandhi, whose love of crafting has served as the inspiration for many of her designs.

The studio was founded in 2014 and has gone on to transform interiors all over the world. Gandhi claims her main influences come from "art deco, mid-century and Biedermeier", although other global influences serve as inspiration from time to time.

ABOUT ELICYON

Elicyon's style is distinctive, pairing neutral shades with darker brown accents to create a rich contrast that adds an elegant touch to the space. Designs are kept simple, working with the space to make the most of different features, while adding detail through furnishings, artwork and accessories.

Each project is carefully considered, creating a space that is practical and well orientated, while still providing a beautiful and pleasing aesthetic.

TOP TIPS FOR EMULATING THE ELICYON STYLE

With some simple touches, you too can emulate the Elicyon style, creating a look that works across different home types. Some top tips include:

- Keep spaces light and airy by using shades of white and light brown in your home. This can make spaces feel larger, while also helping to keep them serene.
- Elicyon uses darker accents across furniture, shelving and accessories to add some contrast. Think rich browns such as walnut to create a luxury space.
- Add shelving with carefully selected and placed accessories to add detail and bring personality into the room.
- A subtle pop of colour through greenery or a colourful vase can add interest and help break up some of the neutral colours.

Elicyon's style is subtle but warm, and can help transform a neutral space in your home to add depth and personality.



Winter HEALTH CHECK

THE FIVE THINGS YOU NEED TO DO NOW TO ENSURE YOUR HOME DOESN'T LET YOU DOWN THIS WINTER

Winter is nearly upon us, and it's the time of year when the prospect of something going awry in our homes can spell disaster. It might be more than just the cold shower resulting from a broken boiler that leaves you shuddering – wait until you see the call-out fee to get it fixed!

That's why giving some essential parts of your home a health check now may save you from some wintry wails of terror.

BRILLIANT BOILER

Ensuring that your boiler is serviced by a registered gas engineer should be a must ahead of the cold season. The good news is a full service is usually affordable and can cost as little as £60, and it's something you should be performing annually.

REMARKABLE RADIATORS

Bleeding radiators is essential to efficient central heating. Not only will it save you money, but it'll help to keep your house warmer too.

The process of bleeding is simple and doesn't require specialist help. By easing out air trapped in the system, you'll return your radiators to their natural efficiency.

PERFECT PIPES

It can also be a good idea to insulate exposed pipes before the winter months. This will reduce heating loss and also help prevent them from freezing and bursting during cold spells.

EXTERIOR EXCELLENCE

Debris such as leaves and twigs can accumulate in gutters, pipes and drains throughout the autumn. It pays to check and clear out these areas if necessary to ensure you don't have any lingering blockages that are going to

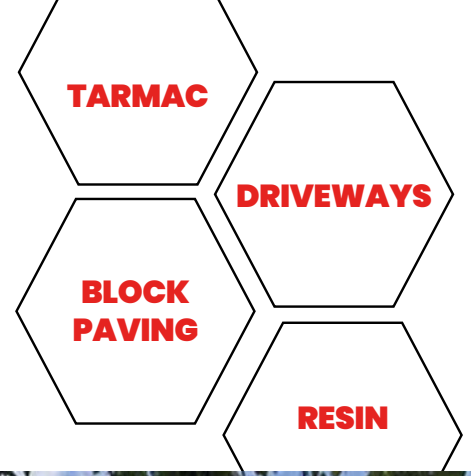
cause problems when the rainy season really hits.

WICKED WINDOWS AND DOORS

Be sure to go round the house, checking all windows and doors close properly. Now is the time to make small repairs to gaps and draughty grooves where cold air will whistle through.



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FROM YOUR AREA

Teenager arrested after suspected stabbing



Photo credit: Google Maps

Police are appealing for information following a suspected stabbing in Braintree town centre.

Essex Police responded to a serious assault that occurred in Market Place at around 9pm on Wednesday, August 16.

A police spokesperson said: "At the scene, officers found a victim with serious injuries to their hand and they were taken to hospital."

The following afternoon, officers arrested a 19-year-old man on suspicion of grievous bodily harm with intent. The man has since been released on bail until November 9.

Enquiries are ongoing. Anyone with information can submit a report at www.essex.police.uk or call 101, quoting incident 1389 of Wednesday 16 August.

Man in his 70s dies as plane crashes in field

An elderly pilot passed away in a plane crash in Halstead last month.

In the early hours of Monday, August 21, a light aircraft was reported to have crash landed in a field in Pebmarsh Road. The site is in close proximity to Stanley Hall, a Grade II listed Elizabethan manor house.

An Essex Police spokesperson said: "Officers, alongside colleagues with the ambulance service and Essex County Fire and Rescue Service, first responded to calls shortly before 9.30am.

"Sadly, we are now in a position to confirm a man, aged in his 70s, was found deceased at the scene.

"He was the sole occupant of the aircraft.

"Officers continue to work alongside investigators with the Air Accidents Investigation Branch to establish the circumstances around this incident."

Students celebrate excellent A Level results

Braintree students who endured a turbulent time at school have rejoiced as they secured impressive A Level results last month.

Owing to the COVID-19 pandemic, Braintree Sixth Form (BSF) pupils have experienced a great deal of disruption to their education in recent years.

However, they overcame these challenges to collect excellent results on August 17.

Some of the school's success stories include Rebecca R, who achieved three A's in Business Studies, Economics and Media Studies and a B in English, and has an offer from King's College London to study Business Management.

Another outstanding performance came from Alisa K, who joined the school after leaving Ukraine last summer and achieved an A* in Mathematics and two As in Further Mathematics and Spanish.

Ms Dunton, head of BSF, said: "This was their first experience of sitting external exams as their GCSEs were cancelled because of the pandemic, so they should be really proud of themselves for what they have achieved. We wish them every success."

Headteacher Miss Ryan said: "I am enormously proud of the students and their excellent achievements and thank all the staff for their hard work in supporting them, and parents and carers for their invaluable support as well. We look forward to hearing about the students' next steps in their careers."



Photo credit: Braintree Sixth Form

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NEWS FROM HALSTEAD FC...

THE **HUMBUGS**



LOCAL NEWS



At the time of writing, the new 2023/24 Essex Senior League season is now well underway. I'm pleased to report that the Humbugs have had a solid start to the season, registering nine points from the opening six games and sitting in a respectable 8th place in the league.

Equally as impressive is the style and tempo at which these six games have been played, giving great entertainment to the loyal home crowds. The game on bank holiday Monday saw 319 people watch a great 3-3 draw at the Milbank Stadium.

The day was a personal triumph for keeper Jack Chery (pictured right, with Halstead Town FC chairman Carl Pearse), who notched up his 200th

appearance, having started at the club as an under 18 player. Jack has been a loyal servant to the club over many years and his form this season has been outstanding, helping him to further cement his reputation as one of the greatest 'shot stoppers' in the club's 140-year history.

Looking slightly ahead, the club can confirm its annual firework display will take place on Saturday, November 4. Details of how to buy tickets will shortly be released, but there will be discounted prices for those purchasing tickets in advance.

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

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LOCAL FEATURE

Iconic annual carnival brings community together

The Burnham-on-Crouch Carnival is many things to many different people. Undoubtedly perfectly picturesque, and most certainly brimming with Britishness, it welcomes in thousands of tourists to this attractive part of Essex.

The carnival, which takes place on the last weekend in September, is the culmination of a number of events that decorate the rich community vibe of this special town.

In the preceding month, Quay Day, which takes place on the bank holiday Monday in August, sees the waterfront feature an eclectic mix of music, art, demonstrations and water-based activities, with the successful food and drink festival having appeared earlier in the year.

As for the carnival itself, it is a festival of community life whose origins go back to the early 20th century. Founded as a modest gathering of local musicians and artists, it aimed to showcase the unique blend of

talent that flourished in this part of the UK.

The first editions saw poets reciting against the backdrop of the estuary's waters, with streets lined with performers who drew inspiration from Burnham's idyllic ambience.

These days, the carnival is the centrepiece of a four-day explosion of energy, with the town's age-old High Street transformed into a magical place of discovery, with stalls, rides, music, history and art.

What makes this such an ideal location is its placement – far enough away from the nearest major conurbation (Chelmsford) to have its own personality and style, it's inland from the bluster of the Essex coast, yet served by the River Crouch. The town itself dates back more than 1,000 years and is mentioned in the Domesday Book.

And when darkness descends, the charm of Burnham-on-Crouch's charm only increases, as one of the largest night-time processions in the land is lit up in all its glory.

Photo credit: Daniel Reed Photography



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Courtauld Playing Fields, Colchester Road, Halstead, CO9 2ET

Monday, September 18, 7.30pm



Photo credit: 1163 Colne Valley Sqn RAF Air Cadets Facebook

Would you like to find out more about becoming an Air Cadet? Royal Air Force Air Cadets are holding an open evening at their headquarters at Courtauld Playing Fields in Halstead, which is open to young people aged 12 to 18.

Find out more at www.halsteadtowncouncil.org.uk/royal-air-force-air-cadets-open-evening

GLOWING, GLOWING, GONE – THE PLIGHT OF THE GLOW-WORM

St Andrews Church Hall, 1 Parsonage Street, Halstead, CO9 2LD

Tuesday, September 19, 7.15pm – 9pm

Essex Wildlife Trust is hosting a talk about how the glow-worm is thought to be declining in the UK.

Tim Gardiner will be in attendance to talk about this fascinating insect, what is causing its decline and how we can all help it in the Essex countryside.

The event is free, with a suggested donation of £3.

Find out more at www.essexwt.org.uk/events/2023-09-19-glowing-glowing-gone-plaint-glow-worm

HALSTEAD COMEDY CLUB WITH STEPHEN BAILEY AND MIKE GUNN

The Empire Theatre, 57 Butler Road, Halstead, CO9 1LL

Friday, September 29, 8pm – 10.30pm

The line-up for this show includes Stephen Bailey (as seen on *Live at the Apollo* and *Comedy Central*), Mike Gunn (as seen on *Michael McIntyre's Comedy*

Roadshow), a special guest and your MC for the evening, Tom Alban.

Sit back, enjoy the show, and get ready to laugh your socks off!

Tickets cost £16.50 and are available from www.rb.gy/Op1fa

A TWIST OF ABBA LIVE AT JARDINS

Jardins, East Street, Braintree, CM7 3JJ
Friday, September 29, 8.15pm – 10.30pm

Come along for a night of singing and dancing to all of the ABBA hits! This event is to help raise vital funds for cancer research.

There will also be a raffle with great prizes.

Purchase tickets via www.shorturl.at/FLNT7

FOLK MUSIC NIGHT WITH WINTER WILSON

Castle Hedingham, Halstead, CO9 3DJ

Thursday, October 12, 7pm – 10pm

Singing out for the underdog in glorious harmony, Winter Wilson bring original songs packed with punch and emotion that will get beneath your skin, and all delivered with great humour.

Before COVID-19, Winter Wilson completed tours of Australia, New Zealand, Canada and most of Western Europe, in addition to the UK.

Back in Lincolnshire throughout the pandemic, the pair wrote and recorded *The Passing of the Storm*, their tenth album, adding further to their reputation as superb writers, singers and musicians, and great all-round entertainers.

Now performing stunning new songs alongside old favourites, Kip Winter and Dave Wilson are thrilled to be back on the road.

Purchase tickets at www.shorturl.at/dCJM1



Photo credit: Winter Wilson

Barbie

AMBITION



WHY MARGOT ROBBIE HAS THE FORMULA RIGHT

Margot Robbie's elevation to Hollywood heavyweight is one of Tinseltown's true success stories.

The skill of the Aussie, who once lived in Clapham and recently revealed she still has her old Oyster card, is in her groundedness. Sure, she is a stunning multimillionaire, a pioneer for women in film and even a successful businesswoman, as the co-founder of LuckyChap Entertainment with British husband Tom Ackerley. Yet a decade in the spotlight has taught her an important lesson.

"I think humility is so important in this industry," she begins. "It's been a big part of who I am since I was a child, so I have grown up with respect for others as well as the need to present myself in the right way.

"I know very well how stardom can change you, and if you lose sight of that sense of humility, you will be exposed for it because as much as this industry is rewarding, the media spotlight can be extremely unforgiving too."

A case in point is Robbie's courageousness to back away from the powerful, punchy, script-perfect roles that have characterised so much of her success. Few actresses would have the bravery to strip their creativity back to a long blonde wig, a wardrobe of pink and white outfits, and the kooky babe appeal that comes with portraying Barbie, a character that has been entwined in the childhoods of girls for decades.

More than that, though, as executive producer, her commitment to the LuckyChap project – large parts of which were filmed at Warner Bros. Studios Leavesden – has meant she has stayed true to a story that has

inspired so many. Perhaps if Disney had approached its reworking of *Snow White* with quite the same level of respect, it wouldn't be looking at another catastrophic woke failure.

Instead, aided by the brilliant Greta Gerwig, Robbie stuck to a storyline true to Barbie, and had no intention of betraying that narrative. "Greta and I knew just how vital it was that we got this just right," she says. "We're thrilled with the outcome and hope that the audiences are too.

"I think it's every girl's dream to be Barbie, and every adult's dream to make a girl's dream come true, so this always did feel like a very special project."

It is. The movie took more than \$1 billion at the box office in its opening fortnight – an almost unprecedented footfall endorsement that clearly paves the way for the *Bombshell*, *Babylon*, *Suicide Squad*, *The Wolf of Wall Street* and *I, Tonya*, star to reach further into the creative locker for her next storyline.

Queen of the Air is up next – a period drama based on a true story that takes place on the dizzy heights of the trapeze, utilising the script from the 2013 book by Dean Jensen.

Before that, Robbie can delight in her current project setting off a Barbie-core fashion trend that is adding bright colour, innocence and no small amount of fun to the high street, at a time when we need it most.

She adds: "It's a delight when things work out. There's pressure to do everything justice, all the while conquering the self-doubt inside. It's always a battle, but fear has played a big part in where I've got to today, and hopefully I'll always thrive off it."



LAWN AERATION

Why, when and how to do it

Keeping your lawn looking luscious is no easy feat, and you need to make sure you employ essential lawn care practices if you want your grass to glisten in the sun. Find out everything there is to know about lawn aeration and why it's important below.

WHAT IS LAWN AERATION?

The word 'aeration' means to allow air to act on something. In the case of gardening, it is the process of poking small, long holes in the ground in order to provide the soil with good air circulation. Lawn aeration can also help to break through piled-up thatch (a layer of dead and living grass roots) in high-maintenance lawns and to reduce lawn compaction, which is when the soil becomes compressed.

WHY DO YOU NEED TO AERATE YOUR LAWN?

The soil in your garden needs both air and water to ensure its ecosystem remains in optimal condition. Therefore, good drainage conditions and adequate top soil intake are vital. By aerating your lawn, you allow air to enter into the soil. This leads to a gaseous exchange in which the grass roots suck oxygen in and expel carbon monoxide. It also allows water to enter more easily, which is essential during the hotter months of the year.

WHEN IS THE BEST TIME TO AERATE YOUR LAWN?

There are two perfect times to aerate your lawn: spring and autumn. This is because, during these months of the year, your soil is typically moist and suitable for holes to be poked in easily.

HOW TO AERATE YOUR LAWN USING A GARDEN FORK:

If you have a small- to medium-sized garden, you can aerate your lawn using a garden fork.

- > Water your lawn the day before you plan to aerate it.
- > Firmly spike the surface down to at least 3cm. Repeat this technique every 10cm.
- > Move the fork back and forth a little and then pull out.

If you have a large garden, you may want to invest in a lawn aerator to save you time and energy.



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Photo credit: alnwickgarden.com



THE POISON GARDEN



Home to more than 100 toxic, intoxicating and narcotic plants, the Poison Garden at The Alnwick Garden in Northumberland is not for the faint-hearted. With a sign on the black iron gate emblazoned with the message, 'These plants can kill', do you dare to enter?

See some of the deadliest plants in the garden...

THE GYMPIE-GYMPIE

A fairly new addition to the Poison Garden, gympie-gympie is known as the world's most venomous plant and is said to deliver a sting similar to being burnt with hot acid and electrocuted simultaneously.

LABURNUM TREE

The second most poisonous tree in the UK, the laburnum tree contains a poison called cytisine. In fact, this tree is so poisonous that if one of its branches fell to the floor, lay for several months and then was picked up by your dog, it is unlikely your dog would survive the hour.

HELLEBORES

The root of this deadly plant contains a cardiotoxin that will stop your heart in an instant. Its sap can also irritate the skin, so this plant should only be handled when wearing gloves.

CHERRY LAUREL

Cherry laurel, also known as English laurel, can kill you even if all you're doing is trimming its leaves. This plant contains cyanogenic glycosides and cyanide ions; when these two components are combined, they create cyanide gas which can be deadly in a confined space.

DEADLY NIGHTSHADE

As the name suggests, deadly nightshade is a poisonous plant that can cause a whole host of nasty symptoms including blurred vision, a skin rash, headaches, slurred speech, hallucinations and eventually death. In fact, eating just two to four berries can kill a child.

Other deadly plants on show include:

- ☠️ **THE KHAT PLANT** – contains a carcinogen that causes mouth cancer.
- ☠️ **YEW TREE** – eating a small number of its leaves can be fatal for livestock and humans.
- ☠️ **HOGWEED** – contains toxins that are activated by light, causing pain and skin lesions.

If you dare to enter...

The Poison Garden is open to the general public and entrance is included with a day ticket to The Alnwick Garden. Remember to follow all the guidelines to stay safe.



GARDENING





BEAUTY



A relative newcomer to the beauty scene, marula oil is the perfect all-round ingredient. Rich in protein and easily absorbed, use on your skin, hair and nails for unbelievable results.

What is marula oil?

Marula oil is derived from two sources of the African marula tree, either extracted from the marula nut or the soft kernel seeds of the marula fruit. Marula oil has multiple uses, functioning as a cooking oil, massage oil and a beauty ingredient.

What does marula oil contain?

- Marula oil contains a range of beneficial components, including:
- Amino acids, such as L-arginine and glutamic acid, which have hydrating and anti-ageing properties
 - Fatty acids, including stearic, oleic and palmitic acids, which have emollient and moisturising benefits
 - Antioxidants, such as phenolic compounds and vitamins E and C, which can help prevent sun damage

How to use marula oil

FOR YOUR SKIN: Marula oil is lightweight and is absorbed easily, making it ideal for use on the skin. Perfect for dry and/or ageing skin, as well as for stretch mark prevention, apply three or four drops of marula oil to your facial cleanser for enhanced moisturisation or directly to your body. This multitasking ingredient also has antimicrobial properties, making it a good option for treating acne.

FOR YOUR HAIR: Marula oil has hydrating, moisturising and occlusive (preventing water loss) properties, making it ideal for dry, frizzy or brittle hair. Apply to the ends of dry hair or as a scalp treatment before shampooing and conditioning.

FOR YOUR NAILS: Keep your nail beds and cuticles soft and supple by applying marula oil daily or after removing polish, which can be particularly drying for your nails and surrounding skin. It can also be effective at reducing hangnails and cracked skin around the nail bed.

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KIDS

Back to school **SHOWDOWN**

Is getting your child to go to school a constant battle? While a little reluctance to return to school after the summer holidays is to be expected, if your child is becoming severely distressed at the prospect of going to school, then you need to take action.

TALK TO YOUR CHILD

There are many reasons why your child may be refusing to go to school, such as bullying, anxiety, learning differences or emotional issues, so it is important that you try to get to the root of the problem. Sit down with your child and try to find out what it is that is making them not want to go to school and then take appropriate action.

HAVE A GOOD MORNING ROUTINE

If you do not have a calm and consistent morning routine, then this can make the process of getting ready for school a lot more stressful for you and your child. Make sure they get up at the same time

every day and that they know what they need to do and by what times, i.e. get dressed, brush their teeth, etc. Remember to provide plenty of praise.

INVOLVE THE SCHOOL

If your child is flat-out refusing to go to school, then the sooner you talk to the school about this problem, the better. Arrange a meeting to talk to their teacher or headteacher and see what advice they have. For example, they may suggest a buddy system or bringing in your child slightly earlier to avoid the crowds in the playground.

STAY CALM BUT BE FIRM

Although this can be hard, try to stay as calm as possible when trying to get your child to go to school, as getting angry or upset will only make the situation worse. That being said, you do need to be firm and don't give them the chance to say no. For example, say "Put on your uniform" rather than "Are you going to put on your uniform?"

NUTS FOR FREE

...A FORAGER'S TREAT

When the warmth of summer begins to fade, September provides a delightful free gift in the form of tasty nuts. Here are some you're sure to find in the countryside near you.

NUTS, WHOLE HAZELNUTS – Shake the branch of a hazel tree whose leaves are turning yellow, and the nuts should fall to the ground. Eat them raw and enjoy their slightly buttery flavour or use them to make your favourite chocolate spread.

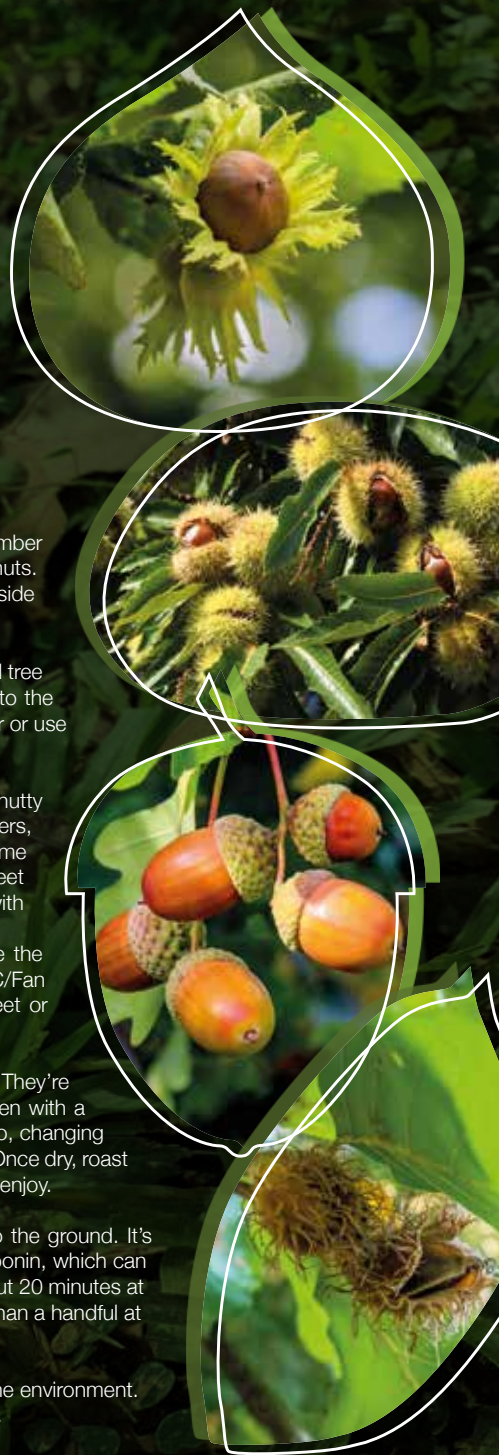
CHESTNUTS ROASTING ON AN OPEN FIRE – Our next nutty star is the sweet chestnut – not to be confused with conkers, their inedible cousins. Conkers are round and shiny and come in husks sparsely covered with thorn-like spines. Sweet chestnuts are pointed at one end and flat on one side, with husks densely covered with needle-like spines.

Chestnuts are ripe when they fall to the ground. Pierce the skins first before roasting for 15-20 minutes at 200°C/Fan 180°C/Gas 6. Eat them as they are, or use them in sweet or savoury recipes.

FROM MIGHTY OAKS – Yes, you really can eat acorns. They're ripe when you can pick them easily. First, crack them open with a nutcracker. Then soak them in warm water for a day or two, changing the water frequently, to get rid of the bitter-tasting tannins. Once dry, roast them for 15-20 minutes at 180°C/Fan 160°C/Gas 4 – and enjoy.

BEECH BABY – Beech nuts are ready when they fall to the ground. It's best to roast them before eating because they contain saponin, which can be poisonous if consumed in large amounts. Cook for about 20 minutes at 180°C/Fan 160°C/Gas 4. And to be safe, don't eat more than a handful at once – and don't give them to children or pets.

Nut foraging can be rewarding but remember to respect the environment. Only take what you need, and leave plenty for local wildlife.



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The Windmill at Chatham Green is hidden away in the beautiful Essex countryside, just outside of Chelmsford, near the city's racecourses, where Michelin Star chef Tom Clarke and his partner Nancy invite you to discover exceptional modern cuisine, using foraged, seasonal ingredients.

The menu is kept short and changes frequently to reflect seasonality and sustainability, using only the highest quality ingredients.

With a dedicated restaurant area, the pub still remains a pub, where you can enjoy unique drinks, wines and a selection of real ales at the bar or on the terrace.



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FOOD & DRINK

Surprising foods THAT CAN BE COOKED IN A PIZZA OVEN

Pizza ovens are all the rage, with more and more people embracing this simple and versatile method of outdoor cooking. However, you can cook much more than just pizza in one of these bad boys!

FRESHLY BAKED BREAD: If you love everything about delicious dough, then you will be pleased to hear that you can bake bread in wood-fired pizza ovens. To create the perfect loaf, make sure you regularly turn the bread to ensure even baking. Don't forget that you still need to leave your dough to rise before cooking.

SLOW-COOKED MEATS: For meat lovers, a large pizza oven that features a door will allow you to slow cook meat to perfection. Place your chosen cut in a casserole dish and cover tightly with foil. Then cook for around four hours until the meat is tender and juicy.

FISH DISHES: Whether you love a fish stew or you prefer a piece of lightly grilled fish, a pizza oven is a great alternative to a traditional oven. Simply pop your chosen fish in a roasting tray with herbs and spices or place on a skillet or cast-iron pan to grill.

VEGAN CURRIES: If you have a vegetarian or vegan in the family, then a pizza oven can be used to create a whole host of vegan-friendly dishes such as curries, chilli and stews. Be sure to gently fry your chosen spices first to release their flavour, add your selected liquid and veggies, and then cook in the pizza oven until soft.

DECADENT DESSERTS: Think that a pizza oven is only suitable for preparing savoury dishes? Think again. You can also bake desserts such as pies and pastries in this outdoor cooking device.





7

MOST COMMONLY ASKED gynaecological QUESTIONS

When it comes to your vagina, it is normal to have a lot of questions, but you may feel embarrassed about asking your GP about your sexual health. Find out the answers to the most commonly asked gynaecological questions below.

1. Will the contraceptive pill make me gain weight? There are multiple studies that show that the contraceptive pill does not cause weight gain. However, there are some that may increase your appetite.

2. Can I catch an STD from a toilet seat? While a toilet seat carries a lot of bacteria which can be passed on, you cannot catch a sexually transmitted disease from sitting on one.

3. Is douching the best way to clean my vagina? No! Douching is not recommended as a way to clean the vagina as it can disrupt its delicate balance of good and bad bacteria and lead to infections such as thrush. The vagina is self-cleaning, which means that internal cleaning is not necessary. Instead, wash externally with warm water or a specially formulated intimate wash.

4. What is the best way to treat period cramps? Over-the-counter pain relief such as ibuprofen offers one of the most effective ways to treat period cramps. A warm bath and a hot water bottle can also work wonders.

5. Can I get pregnant on my period? Although unlikely, it is possible to get pregnant on your period. If you have a short interval between each period, meaning you ovulate early in your cycle, you can fall pregnant.

6. Can I have sex on my period? Yes, you can. Although some couples prefer not to have sex at this time, it is perfectly safe to have sex when you are on your period.

7. Why does my vagina smell? Everyone's vagina has its own unique scent, and it is important to know your own so that you can easily notice any changes. A healthy vagina should have a mild, musky scent that is not unpleasant. If you notice an unpleasant odour, this may be a sign of an infection, and you should see your GP or visit your local sexual health clinic.



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BACK PAIN *be gone!*

Banish back pain for good with these three yoga poses that promise to align your body, reduce stress and eliminate any discomfort you are experiencing.

THE CAT-COW

A great yoga pose for beginners, the cat-cow stretches and mobilises your spine whilst also stretching the torso, shoulders and neck.

- > On all fours, place your wrists underneath your shoulders and your knees underneath your hips.
- > Balance your weight evenly between all four points.
- > Inhale as you look up and allow your stomach to drop down towards the mat.
- > Exhale as you tuck your chin into your chest and arch your spine towards the ceiling.
- > Repeat for one minute.

THE DOWNWARD-FACING DOG

This pose helps to relieve back pain and sciatica and also works out any imbalances in the body.

- > Get on all fours and place your hands in alignment with your shoulders and your knees under your hips.
- > Press into your hands, tuck your toes under and lift your knees up.
- > Bring your sitting bones up toward the ceiling.
- > Press firmly into your hands and the soles of your feet.
- > Keep your head in line with your upper arms.
- > Hold this pose for one minute.

THE EXTENDED TRIANGLE

This classic pose is great for alleviating back pain, neck pain and sciatica. It works by stretching the spine, hips and groin, and strengthening the shoulders, chest and legs.

- > Step your feet three to four feet apart.
- > Turn your left toes to face forward and your right toes out at an angle.
- > Lift your arms up to the sides, parallel to the floor and with your palms facing down.
- > Hinge at your right hip to tilt to the side with your arm and torso, keeping your arms straight.
- > Bring your right hand down to your leg or onto the floor
- > Extend your left arm up and turn your head to look at the ceiling.
- > Hold this pose for one minute and repeat on the other side.



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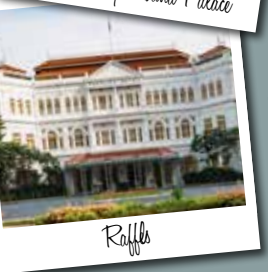
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Raffles

The Savoy, London: Located in the Strand and opened in 1889, The Savoy was the UK's first luxury hotel, and it has lost none of its charm or opulence in attracting the world's richest and most powerful guests.

Hollywood power couple Sir Laurence Olivier and Vivien Leigh met there, while guests have included The Beatles, John Wayne and Marilyn Monroe.

Chateau Marmont, Los Angeles: Los Angeles began to acquire its celebrity popularity in the 60s when the *LA Times* felt obliged to tell its readers that the Chateau Marmont was for those in show business. Its appeal was its combination of 63 rooms, suites, cottages and bungalows, not to mention the fact that it overlooks Sunset Boulevard.

When John Belushi died at the hotel of a drug overdose in 1982, its fame only escalated. Beyoncé, Jay-Z, Britney Spears, Lindsey Lohan are all regular guests.

The Plaza, New York: If you've seen *Home Alone 2* or *The Great Gatsby* (the author of which, F. Scott Fitzgerald, lived at this famous hotel), you've seen The Plaza. Overlooking the vast greenery of Central Park and located on the corner of Fifth Avenue, this hotel is iconic and instantly recognisable.

Royalty and state leaders have all stayed at the legendary Manhattan hotel.

Belmond Copacabana Palace, Rio de Janeiro: Located as the crown jewel of the most famous beach in the world, the Belmond is a masterpiece of art deco architecture and has welcomed everyone from Walt Disney to Princess Diana.

Built over a period of four years at the turn of the 1920s and designed by French architect Joseph Gire, it remains a staple place to visit for the affluent.

Raffles, Singapore: This Singapore hotel has been around since 1887, when it was established by a pair of Armenian brothers, the Sarkies. Its colonial style of architecture has led it to become a national monument for the country, as well as being the birthplace of the Singapore sling cocktail!

5

Photo credit: William Barton, Gerry Matthews, MiSHELLA, Lurja Chinman all via Shutterstock.com, en.wikipedia.org



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Why do businesses benefit from hyperlocal advertising?

1. Targeted advertising

Hyperlocal advertising allows companies to target customers who are within a specific geographic area, making it easier to reach the right audience and increase the chances of converting them into paying customers.



2. Cost-effective

Hyperlocal advertising can be cost-effective because it is focused on a specific local area, meaning that businesses can reach their target audience without wasting money on broader marketing campaigns that may not be as effective.



3. Increased engagement

Hyperlocal advertising can lead to increased engagement with customers because it is focused on the local community and the interests of the people living in that area. By targeting customers with ads that are relevant to their interests and needs, companies can build a stronger relationship and increase their chances of repeat business.



4. Improved search engine optimization

Hyperlocal advertising can improve a business' search engine optimization because it targets customers who are likely to be searching for businesses and services in their local area. By optimizing their website and other online presence for local search terms, businesses can improve their visibility and attract more customers.



5. Better return on investment (ROI)

Hyperlocal advertising can lead to a better ROI because it is focused on a specific area and customer base. Targeting customers who are likely to be interested in their products or services, can increase conversion rates and revenue.



IS YOUR BUSINESS READY TO BENEFIT FROM HYPERLOCAL ADVERTISING? CONTACT **V**ISION TO FIND OUT MORE

WILLKOMMEN KANE



What will England captain Harry Kane MBE's departure for Germany mean for Spurs, for England, and for the man himself?

It was the most drawn-out transfer saga of the summer, with neutral football fans across the country breathing a collective sigh of relief when Spurs and England forward Harry Kane finally pulled the plug on his Premier League time – for now – by signing for German giants Bayern Munich at the start of August.

While the banal 'will he/won't he' rhetoric from our sports broadcasters is at an end, attention now switches to whether the brilliant frontman can make a success of his time in the Bundesliga.

On the face of it, he should. The German league has the same physical, tactical and technical prowess of the Premier League.

And despite Bayern dominating domestic affairs, it's fiercely competitive, which the 30-year-old will thrive on. Even outside those elements, Kane's ability to affect play from everywhere around the attacking third will surely mean he will shine.

What's more, his exposure to new players, new challenges and new ideas may enhance his already stellar contributions to the England national team.

Currently just 47 goals shy of Alan Shearer OBE's record, Kane, as the second-highest all-time goalscorer in the Premier League, will likely want to return to home shores if he hopes to take the top spot.

Kane made his Bayern debut in a 3-0 defeat to RB Leipzig in the German Super Cup, though things will surely improve.

As for Spurs, chairman Daniel Levy is noted as a shrewd and tough negotiator, yet he was ultimately backed into a corner by the fact Kane only had a year left on his contract at Tottenham. To cash in now, at £86million, is common-sense bean-counting, rather than enduring the financial and emotional pain of losing that same player for nothing in 10 months' time.

Meanwhile, in Richarlison, Kulusevski and Son the Lilywhites have enough firepower to compensate for their talisman's loss.



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WORDLADDER: RAIN, GAIN, GRIP, DRIP, DROP

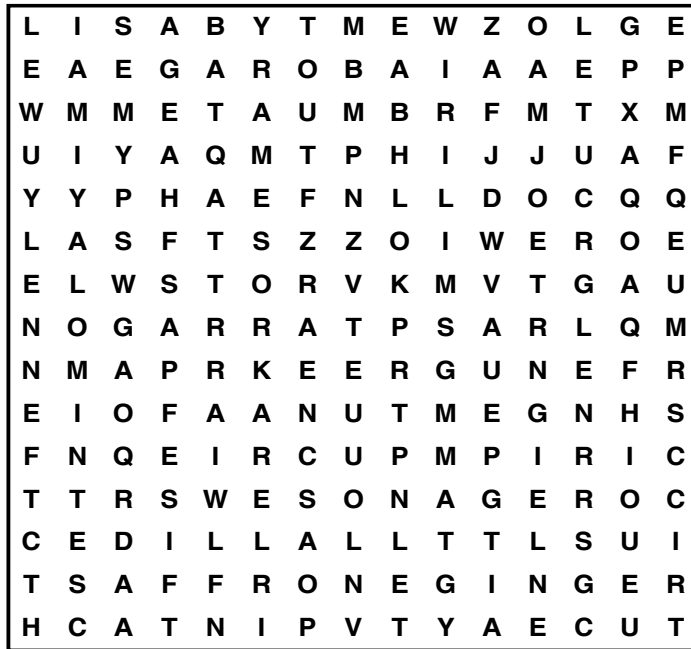


PUZZLES & TRIVIA

PUZZLES

Answers: see end of The VISION Listings

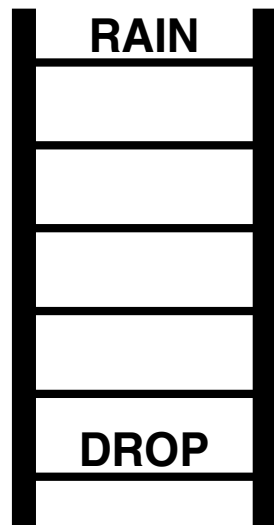
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DID YOU KNOW?

- ▶ In 1921, women were banned by the FA from playing in Football League grounds. The ban would not be lifted for 50 years.
- ▶ The first women's FA Cup final took place in 1971 and saw Southampton win 4-1 to Stewarton Thistle (now Kilmarnock FC).
- ▶ The England women's team is fourth in the FIFA world rankings. Sweden is in third place, Germany in second place and the USA in first place.
- ▶ Jamaica's women's team was able to compete in the 2019 Women's World Cup thanks to a fundraising initiative spearheaded by Cedella Marley, daughter of Bob Marley.
- ▶ Chelsea FC player Sam Kerr is reportedly the highest-paid women's football player, earning just under £400,000 a year.

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.

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% 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% 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% 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% higher?

Holmes & Hills has a large department of 22 property lawyers dealing with second-hand, new-build and shared ownership property across the country. The size of the department 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

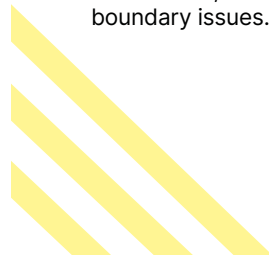
As well as an increased chance of your transaction successfully completing, Holmes & Hills provides fixed-fee residential conveyancing quotes with no hidden charges.

Partner with Holmes & Hills to secure your transaction

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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).

²Rightmove data supplied on 13/02/2023.



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