



Daisy

Birth flower
of the month

**UNUSUAL
FRUIT OF
THE MONTH
RAMBUTAN**

NIGEL OWENS

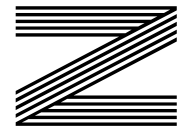
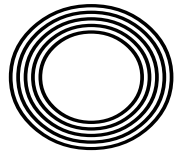
Highlighting LGBTQ+ in sport

Stacey Saloman

From TV personality to organising queen

Dame
JUDI DENCH

The actress showing no signs of slowing down



FREE

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Editor's notes...

APRIL 2021



Brett Shohet, Editor

Hello and welcome to this month's edition of **VISION**Hertford.

Last month I said that it really felt like we were coming out the other side of the pandemic now, and I'm pleased to see that pattern continuing as we approach the summer. I think it's only a matter of time before the nation feels a lot healthier, both economically and physically.

Personally, I'm always looking forward. I'd be lying if I said COVID-19 hasn't taken its toll on me and **VISION** at points, but I've continued investing time and money into the business and now we're in a better position. So much so that we're looking at expanding into new areas this year, offering more titles and more fantastic content and advertising opportunities.

Of course, we wouldn't be in the position we're in without our ever-supportive readers and clients. We've been having more interactions than ever before and I'm sure that will continue long into the future.

Something I've been thinking about plenty recently is stimulating myself business-wise and trying to create other incomes. Because I don't work a typical 9-5 job at the moment, I'm using my time to self-develop as a businessperson, and hearing feedback from people is a big help. So feel free to contact me: I'm always open to having a chat.

Brett Shohet

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

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Stacey Solomon SPOTLESS IN THE SPOTLIGHT

FOUR BOYS... AND POTENTIALLY MORE ON THE WAY – HOW THE STACEY SOLOMON/JOE SWASH LOVE STORY IS A REALITY TV STORY WE ALL LOVE

Stacey Solomon isn't too worried about the airs and graces of celebrity life. Sure, she has grown up in the lens since being catapulted into the scene in 2010 with a stellar display on *The X Factor*. While she ended up falling short – coming third, behind Joe McElderry and Olly Murs – the dye was cast as far as a career on screen was concerned. It was her casual, considered, girl-about-town image that viewers admired; the fact she was never afraid to speak up, to share her emotions and to bridge the gap between viewer and star.

“Throughout my TV career I've always just tried to be myself,” she says. “It's strange when you receive criticism for that – perhaps I don't round my consonants as well as I should, perhaps I act a bit loud at times, but that's just me. I think the era of the manufactured presenter is over and we're all allowed to be a bit more ourselves, and that's something I love.”

.....
‘I think the era of the manufactured presenter is over and we're all allowed to be a bit more ourselves, and that's something I love’
.....

The 31-year-old Dagenham-born star's TV career has ultimately been the 'x factor' that has led her to love, having fallen for the charms of chipper, funny man Joe Swash, also a near-veteran of the reality TV industry. The pair got together five years ago, drawn together by a shared passion for... well, everything.

“We connect on such a perfect level,” says Stacey, “and we're always making each other laugh.”

The pair, who got engaged just before Christmas, now also have a little reality star of their own to share – baby Rex, who arrived in 2019.

“I have two sons from a previous relationship and Joe has one, so bringing everyone together in our home has been perfect.”

The Essex-based couple have recently moved into their new home - aptly named Pickle Cottage. Stacey admitted it would need some work, but what's certain is that she will get it looking spick and span – after all, Stacey has just released her latest book, entitled *Tap to Tidy*. It's a smorgasbord of houseproud hints that also details crafting and design, as well as cleaning and keeping shipshape.

Stacey, who has appeared on and won *I'm a Celebrity...Get Me Out of Here*, and has presented shows such as *The Love Machine*, *The Jump* and *Loose Women*, also has a new BBC series, *Sort Your Life Out*, arriving later in the year; while Joe's work ranges from *EastEnders* to *Dancing on Ice* – he is also a previous winner in ‘the jungle’, which is where the likeable pair first met.

“TV was always an industry I admired, and although it has been a strange year, I think so many people have been able to keep their spirits up by escaping for a few hours in the evening to watch something,” Stacey says.

“The pandemic has really brought us back to the basics, where spending time around our family now feels like the most important thing in the world, whereas before we were perhaps more side-tracked by work and careers and more selfish things in our lives.

“That said, I want to get back to normality – it's what we all need, and I've got a wedding to plan, after all!”

Jasmine Harrison WATER BABE



Photo credit: Talisker Whisky Challenge

HOW JASMINE HARRISON BRAVED ISOLATION AND SLEEP DEPRIVATION TO BECOME A WORLD RECORD HOLDER

From rowing across the Atlantic Ocean with only the sound of waves crashing against the sides of a flimsy 21ft boat, to answering a Zoom call from the Duchess of Cambridge, Kate Middleton, on International Women's Day, Jasmine Harrison's journey from desperate isolation to taking centre stage as an example of true human endeavour and resilience has been magnificent.

The 21-year-old world record breaker was inspired to start rowing when she saw the event two years ago while teaching in the Caribbean. Yet despite having not set foot inside a boat until 12 months ago, she powered her way into the record books in February by becoming the youngest woman to row solo across the Atlantic Ocean as part of the Talisker Whisky Challenge.

Going up against a field of experienced entrants, the Yorkshire-based sailor drew on every last sinew of courage and conviction, to the delight of her friends, family and support crew who tracked

her every move across 3,000 miles of water.

The journey, from La Gomera in the Canary Islands to Antigua, took Jasmine 70 days. Despite extreme exhaustion – the longest duration of uninterrupted sleep she could have was two hours – searing heat, dehydration and no small quantity of challenges along the way – including capsizing her vessel just two days before finally making it to the finish line – the intrepid sailor says the experience was the most profound of her life.

"I will take away from this experience so many memories – some bad, but most of them good."

Asked what she was looking forward to most when back on dry land, she laughed: "That's easy – food... lots of food."

As for what comes next, the part-time bartender is almost certainly going to find herself in demand where other marine challenges are concerned.

"I'm going to take some time off then look around and decide what comes next. This isn't a one-off for me and I want to achieve more."

The personal touch



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What I love about my hometown is the incredible locality of getting into both sides of London if needed and fantastic transport links, but with the added benefit of the

If you want to chat about how I can help you, feel free to drop me a message or phone call – let's talk property!

I ♥ Hertford



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ALL CHANGE: HEDI SLIMANE

We look at the creative directors who have transformed some of the world's most famous fashion houses. In this issue, it's Hedi Slimane.

Looking at Hedi Slimane, we see someone who appears to represent the very essence of French style. A creative director of exemplary reputation and influence, he has revived the fortunes of ailing fashion houses at problematic times in their history, allowing them to emerge on the other side with a renewed take on flair, panache and relevance.

And yet the 52-year-old has genetics that originate some distance from his native Paris. Born to a Tunisian father and an Italian mother, Slimane's cultural influences are well mixed. Sure enough, he discovered photography at the age of 11, and by the age of 16 was designing and making clothes.

Perhaps it is the exuberance of Italy and fabric-adorning reputation of north Africa that combined in inspiring Slimane to creative brilliance. If it was, then Yves Saint Laurent was the grateful beneficiary. After serving his apprenticeship at Louis Vuitton, Slimane moved to YSL in 1996, and by the year 2000 was on the move again, installed as creative director at Dior Homme (the menswear line of Christian Dior).

He switched back to YSL for two years from 2016, and is now creative, artistic and image director at Celine, a move that coincided with him topping *Vanity Fair's* list of the 50 most influential French people in the world.

Slimane's edge has always been in combining art, photography, fashion and music. For someone who has operated at the very top table of some of the world's leading fashion houses, he still manages to work in influences of punk, pop, tabloid chat and broadsheet formality.

His collections are never afraid to move brands forward into brave new quarters, and that has only ever reinforced his reputation as a game changer in the fast world of fashion.

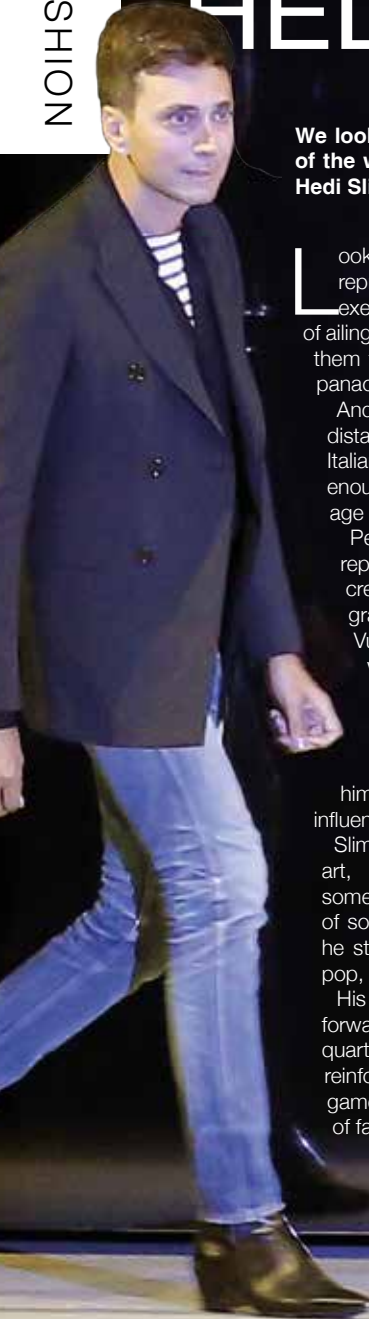


Photo credit: Michel Eliezer/AP/Shutterstock



Do you choose a conditioner based on your individual hair type? If not, you could be doing your hair more harm than good. Discover the right conditioner to transform your locks from limp to luscious.

Oily hair

If your hair is naturally oily, you may find that conditioners make your mane look and feel even worse. That being said, rather than skip conditioner altogether, look for a treatment that actively helps to reduce oil.

Choose conditioners that are:

- Light • Volumising • Balancing

Avoid products that claim to be:

- Hydrating • Smoothing • Moisturising

Dry or damaged hair

When hair is dry, damaged or brittle, you need a conditioner that will help prevent future breakages and protect against heat damage.

Choose conditioners that:

- Moisturise • Hydrate • Offer frizz control • Promote repair

Avoid products that claim to be:

- Fortifying • Volumising • Strengthening

If your hair is severely damaged, you may also want to use a coconut oil treatment or deep-conditioning cream once a week for intense damage repair.

Fine or flat hair

Straight hair that does not suffer with frizz, but can appear flat, suits conditioners that add some much-needed texture.

Choose conditioners that are:

- Volumising • Lightweight

Avoid products that claim to be:

- Heavy • Moisturising • Smoothing

Coloured hair

Coloured hair has very specific needs, especially if you want to retain your colour for as long as possible. In terms of a conditioner, you need one that will seal hair cuticles.

Choose conditioners that are:

- Colour-safe • Colour-depositing • Hydrating

Avoid:

Any conditioner that is not for coloured hair

Afro hair

Afro hair tends to be described as kinky owing to the intensity of its curl. However, with the right conditioner, it can look both healthy and shiny.

Choose conditioners that are:

- Deeply hydrating • Oil-based • Protein-based

Avoid products that claim to be:

- Volumising • Lightweight





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Beat the
BURNOUT

Do you have chronic fatigue?

The mechanics that make all of us individuals mean no two people will endure the same medical condition in the same manner, but where chronic fatigue syndrome (also known as CFS or ME) is concerned, the overriding sense of physical and emotional emptiness is one that hits all sufferers.

The health condition, which shouldn't be confused with sleepiness and general lethargy resulting from working too hard or resting for too short a period of time, can be caused by a number of factors – from stress and anxiety to depression, eating disorders and the gradual debilitating impact of life events on the mind.

There can also be medical problems at play, such as thyroid problems, diabetes, vitamin deficiencies, irritable bowel syndrome, high blood pressure and even kidney disease.

A proper diagnosis is essential and should be sought as soon as you feel you are slipping into a

phase where you simply don't have the ability to perform very basic daily functions, such as rising out of bed, conversing with people or leaving the house.

A doctor will use various tests and techniques in attempting to reach a diagnosis; only when this is done will a medical professional set you on a path of therapy to get you back on track.

While medication is a recognised route to this, it could be that making positive changes to diet, routine and physical health will make a profound difference. There might also be moves to improve surroundings, practise mindfulness and build mental positivity in putting you on the road to feeling revived and restored.

Mental health services are of prime focus to the NHS in light of the COVID-19 pandemic, so don't delay in contacting your doctor if you need help – there will be brighter days ahead.



HEALTH & FITNESS



HONE & TONE

cleaning your home



Become a lean, mean cleaning machine with the below common household tasks that are guaranteed to help you burn calories and shift those unwanted pounds.

GENERAL CLEANING: Picking clothes off the floor, wiping surfaces and dusting can all help you to work different muscle groups, making general cleaning one of the most effective household chores for burning calories.

Total calories burnt = 3,976 (based on 280 minutes per week)



VACUUMING: This daily chore that is hated by many has the ability to provide a full body workout. Forcing you to use your entire core muscle groups, the simple act of pushing your Hoover back and forth will target your abs and put both your back and legs to work.

Total calories burnt = 1,248 (based on 132 minutes per week)



IRONING: Another household task that few relish, but you may be surprised to learn that ironing burns a lot of calories. Not only does this task require you to stand up for long periods of time, but it also works your core as you move the appliance about.

Total calories burnt = 1,360 (based on 144 minutes per week)

DOING LAUNDRY: If you have a big family, you may find yourself doing laundry multiple times a day. Although not the most engaging task, you will be pleased to hear it can help you lose weight. The act of washing, folding and lifting all helps to contribute to a full cardio workout.

Total calories burnt = 1,588 (based on 168 minutes per week)



OTHER CALORIE-BURNING CHORES: Cooking = **2,856** (based on 301.7 minutes per week) | Mopping = **2,724** (based on 138 minutes per week) | Making beds = **1,316** (based on 144.2 minutes per week) | Sweeping floors = **1,304** (based on 138 minutes per week)

NB: Calories burnt is based on one month's worth of each activity and is based on the average weight of a person being 156 pounds.

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Rambutan

The rambutan is a tropical fruit that closely resembles a lychee. Grown in countries such as Thailand, Malaysia and Indonesia, the name rambutan means hairy, which refers to the fleshy spikes on the skin of the fruit.

WHAT DOES RAMBUTAN TASTE LIKE?

The flavour of rambutan is similar to a grape but with a bit of a strawberry quality. Slightly acidic and sweet in equal measures, this fruit has a pleasant fragrance that makes it ideal for using in cooked dishes.

WHAT ARE THE HEALTH BENEFITS OF RAMBUTAN?

Rambutans are high in vitamin C as well as containing lots of fibre that is good for your digestive health. They also contain vitamin E, which is known for helping to prevent both acne and premature ageing.

WHERE CAN I BUY RAMBUTAN?

You can find rambutans in most Asian markets and food shops. Look for bright red skin that indicates the rambutan is at its freshest. Green rambutans are not ready to be eaten, whereas black ones are over-ripe.

HOW TO PREPARE RAMBUTAN

You should not peel a rambutan until you are ready to eat or cook with it. To open, carefully cut the skin with a sharp knife or simply twist open with your hands if the fruit is ripe enough to do so. Then peel away the skin to reveal the egg-shaped fruit. Don't forget to cut open the fruit to remove the nut-like seed in the centre.

HOW TO STORE RAMBUTAN

Wrap them whole in a paper towel and put them in a perforated plastic bag before placing in the fridge. Your rambutans should last for up to two weeks.

HOW TO EAT RAMBUTAN

Enjoy rambutans as a healthy snack or as part of a tropical fresh fruit dessert bowl. Alternatively, add to cooked dishes such as curries and soups.





BREAKING NEWS:

PEAS OUT!

According to Harvard University scientists, peas are not as healthy as we have been led to believe and may not even count towards one of your five a day.

Find out more about this shocking revelation below. Plus, great alternatives to peas that pack a punch when it comes to improving your health.

WHAT DOES THE SCIENCE SAY?

Harvard University believes that it has found the key to leading a longer life, and it lies with consuming the right combination of fruit and vegetables. Its research shows that by eating two portions of fruit a day and three servings of vegetables, you are much less likely to die from conditions such as heart disease, cancer and/or respiratory diseases. However, not all vegetables offer the same longevity-boosting properties, with a higher intake of peas having no link to lower mortality rates.

WHY YOU SHOULDN'T CONSIDER PEAS AS ONE OF YOUR FIVE A DAY

Strictly speaking, green peas are not vegetables, as they are part of the legume family which consists of plants that produce pods with seeds inside.

Furthermore, peas have a high glycaemic index which can cause a spike in your blood sugar levels, and they contain phytates that prevent key nutrients from being absorbed by the body.

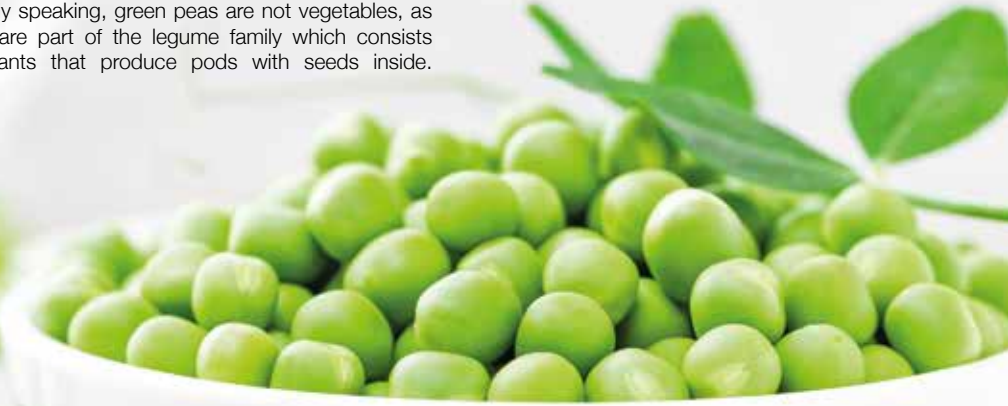
WHAT OTHER FRUIT AND VEGETABLES DO NOT AID LONGEVITY?

During the extensive study, the scientists at Harvard also found no link between a higher intake of starchy vegetables, such as corn and potatoes, and enhanced longevity, as well as drinking fruit or vegetable juices.

WHAT CAN YOU EAT INSTEAD OF PEAS?

If you like to add a bit of greenery to your own and your family's meals, there are still lots of alternatives to peas that most definitely do count towards your five a day:

- Broccoli
- Asparagus
- Spinach
- Kale
- Courgette
- Cooked greens
- Lettuce



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Drive Appeal

We were contacted by the homeowner at the beginning of 2020 as they were concerned about the large cracks that were appearing in the walls, the lack of security provided by those walls and the constant weeds growing on the drive. The remit to us was to create a modern low maintenance area with minimal planting.

On inspection we found the retaining walls were failing and the land mass starting to move which was of concern as the property is on a steep hill.

Our design involved rebuilding all the retaining walls and raising them up to include a decorative black railing with electric sliding gate. These were complimented with a stepped flower bed and sandstone staircase with matching handrail. To finish the design, we proposed a porous resin bound surface in Champagne pink.

The project began in earnest in the spring and was completed within 12 weeks. During that time we had weekly meetings to review progress and ensure we were creating the clients vision.

The customer is very happy with the result, they now have a beautiful front garden and drive that is secure and easy to maintain.

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THE BIRDS *and the bees*



Daisy



If you were born this month, your flower is the delightful daisy, a bloom that often doesn't get the appreciation it deserves. Incredibly versatile and easy to grow, daisies can make a cheerful addition to any garden, however big or small.

What does the daisy represent?

A quintessential symbol of both purity and chastity, the daisy can also be used to convey secrecy. In fact, daisies were once called "day's eyes", as they close their petals at night and only reveal their bright yellow centre in the day. This flower can also be used to symbolise true love.

What does this birth flower say about your personality?

If your birth flower is the daisy, you are said to be a happy-go-lucky kind of person who tends to brighten up everyone's day just by being you. You are also adventurous, cheerful and optimistic, all of which means you are often the person whom others choose to confide in.

Why grow daisies in your garden?

Sadly, in the UK, we have lost nearly all of our traditional meadow land, meaning that meadow wildlife is under strain. By planting natural and local meadow plants such as daisies in your garden, you will be giving a much-needed helping hand to meadow insects and other wildlife.

How can I ensure my daisies thrive?

Daisies are the perfect choice for those who are looking for garden plants that do not require much care and attention. English daisies thrive in well-drained and evenly moist soil so be sure to water them during droughts. For the best display of daisies, plant them in full sun.

Best types of daisies for a vibrant show:

English daisy | African daisy | Gloriosa daisy | Blue Marguerite daisy | Shasta daisy | Cape daisy

In the third of a four-part series that shows how even the most urban garden can be a haven for the wonders of wildlife and the nurturing of nature, we consider how birds and bees are so pivotal to everything outside our windows.

While they appear to be fluttering and buzzing about our gardens in blissful relaxation, the roles of our birds and bees is actually a vital one.

Let's take the humble bee, for instance. Forget a spoonful of tasty honey, the value of these buzzing beauties goes much deeper, with pollination the name of the game. In the first instance, bees as pollinators are responsible for more than one-third of the world's food. Add in the fact that more than 90 per cent of plants rely on bees' cross-pollination skills, and you can see why the move to halt the recent decline in global numbers has been taken so seriously.

Bees also

provide habitats for a huge quantity of insects and animals. Their complex, interconnected ecosystems allow a vast number of diverse species to co-exist. Put another way, a garden without bees would be bare, as would your plate.

A smaller role for bees is as a food source for birds, but go easy on our feathered airborne acrobats – while they have their own pollination qualities and act as pest controllers, they themselves, most crucially, act as a source of food for animals.

There's also something truly cerebral about birds, who predate our own time on the planet by some 150 million years. Sure, they're not cuddly or kinaesthetic, but through birdsong, breathless beauty, their solid commitment to building homes and raising families, and with a level of ingenuity and intelligence that many mammals can't even get close to, birds are a truly cerebral addition to nature's nest.





HOME & DIY

STYLISH SPINES

A cactus can make a great addition to any home thanks to its striking shape and often unusual flowers on some varieties. However, this spiky houseplant offers many other benefits.

CACTI ARE SELF-SUSTAINING PLANTS
If you want to inject some greenery into your home but you simply don't have the time to care for plants, then a cactus is the plant for you as it requires little to no maintenance. Native to the desert, cacti store moisture in their roots, leaves and stems and regulate their own food intake so you barely need to water them at all.

CACTI IMPROVE THE AIR QUALITY IN YOUR HOME
Green plants such as cacti actively absorb carbon dioxide from the air and release oxygen, which helps to improve the air quality in your home. Other health benefits of cacti include an ability to reduce stress levels, provide companionship and even enhance your memory.

CACTI CAN MAKE YOU MORE PRODUCTIVE
If you are currently working from home but are being driven to distraction by family life, a well-placed cactus plant can boost your productivity levels. In fact, controlled tests have shown that having a cactus in your office can improve your performance by more than 12 per cent.

CACTI OFFER SUBTLE BEAUTY
For those who follow feng shui in their home, a cactus is the perfect plant for adding an elegant visual experience while at the same time banishing any negative energy. Cacti love the sun, so choose to add one to your windowsill or near the entrance to your home. Avoid placing in the living room or your kitchen, unless you want to be on the receiving end of an unexpected spike.

BEST CACTUS VARIETIES TO GROW INDOORS:
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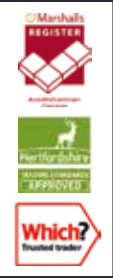
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JUDI DENCH

THE LIFE OF THE BUSY DAME

Why Dame Judi Dench is perhaps the most unique acting talent of them all

In a professional career on stage and in front of the camera, it's notable that Dame Judi Dench has, more often than not, played characters who are assertive, strong and definite. From Q in the James Bond films to Ophelia, Juliet or Lady Macbeth on stage; from Evelyn in the *Marigold Hotel* movies, right through to 13 years playing Jean, the comedic mainstay of classic BBC comedy *As Time Goes By*, there has always been a strength present.

And so it follows, then, that the 86-year-old embodies very much those same qualities in real life. How else do you explain the fact that, despite lockdown, the York-born doyenne remains ensconced in one of the busiest periods of her acting career?

"I think the intention was that when I stepped away from Bond I'd be calming things down a bit," she begins. "What actually ended up happening was I found more roles coming my way, as would, I guess, any actor breaking free of a big character."

And therein lies the problem. The determined and decorated cornerstone of British drama simply can't say no. During 2020, while the world's acting fraternity were sitting back doing very little as the entire industry fell into a state of dormancy, Dench was still busy promoting four projects – films *Artemis Fowl*, *Blithe Spirit* and *Six Minutes to Midnight*, as well as an appearance on *Staged*, the widely acclaimed lockdown-themed TV series starring David Tennant and Michael Sheen.

She was also filming parts of what 2021 presents as two major feature films. First up is *Off the Rails*, a drama about a group of friends recreating an interrail journey across Europe, in which she appears alongside Kelly Preston, Ben Miller and Sally Phillips. Then, in *Belfast*, Jamie Dornan co-stars in a drama about a working-class family in Northern Ireland in the late 1960s.

Indeed, since bidding goodbye to 007 in that dramatic, windswept Highlands setting in *Skyfall* in 2012, Dench has appeared in 24 big- and small-screen projects.

"I think, for me, it's about picking and choosing things that make me content and happy," she says. "If I'm being asked to fly halfway around the world for a few minutes on camera, or the brief means being away from home for weeks on end in some inhospitable backwater, I'll say no. The truth, though, is I'm as enchanted as much by acting now as I was when I first performed *Hamlet*, or first stepped in front of a television camera at the end of the 1950s.

"I won't deny the slower parts of lockdown were frustrating, but if you want to keep busy and you want to find yourself things to do, then those things are out there, no matter where you are in the world or in your life," says Dench, who has now been two decades without husband Michael Williams, who died of lung cancer aged 65.

"I know Michael will be looking down, proud of the fact I'm still a workaholic," she smiles. "The truth is it's the only way I know to live."



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LOCAL NEWS

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LOCAL NEWS

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Air police search Common after alleged robbery

Two teenagers have been arrested in connection with an alleged robbery in Hertford.

Police received reports that two electric scooters had been stolen shortly after 4.45pm on Saturday, March 20, in Hartham Common.

The victims, both aged 15, were with a group of friends when they were allegedly threatened by another group of males, one of whom was said to be in possession of a knife.

The group then left the area. Police carried out a search with help from the National Police Air Service.

An off-duty police officer sustained a minor injury to the hand after being threatened when assisting the search, and a member of the public was assaulted when he tried to intervene.

Two teenagers, aged 16 and 17, have been arrested and released on conditional bail while enquiries

continue. The scooters were recovered.

Detective sergeant Daniel Piper, of East Herts Local Crime Unit, said he is appealing for anyone with information to get in touch.

He said: "I would like to reassure people that, thankfully, no one was seriously hurt. We are, however, taking the matter very seriously.

"I would also urge people to please be mindful about what they are posting on social media about the incident, as it could severely affect the integrity of the case moving forward. By law, whether you agree or not, anyone aged under 18 is granted anonymity during criminal proceedings."

Anyone with information should call 101 quoting crime reference 41/20180/21 or contact Crimestoppers anonymously on 0800 555 111 or online at crimestoppers-uk.org



Building work begins on leisure centre redevelopment

Work is scheduled to start on the redevelopment of Hartham Leisure Centre this month.

The centre will be refurbished and expanded, with a new two-storey extension added to the existing studio and reception area.

The new facilities will include a soft play area, a café, outside seating areas, a fitness suite with 130 stations and new changing facilities. The pool will also be refurbished.

A spokesperson for East Herts District Council said: "The project has been in the pipeline for some time and will really add value to the town and Hartham

Common in general."

Cadman Construction Ltd (CCL) has been awarded the contract for the project.

CCL director Warren Doo said the project will conform to BREEAM (Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method) standards, which he said will leave "a legacy of long-term sustainability in terms of carbon reduction and improved whole life costs of the building once operational".

For more information, please visit www.eastherts.gov.uk/about-east-herts-0/hartham-leisure-centre-redevelopment-project

Pupils celebrate NHS with virtual art exhibition

There is still time to see artwork created by pupils from Simon Balle All-through School, which will be displayed as part of the Hertford Art Trail until May 8.

Students, parents and staff from the school organised a virtual art exhibition celebrating the sacrifices made by front-line NHS staff and support workers during the pandemic.

More than 100 entries were received. The artwork included images of doctors in PPE on hospital wards and care workers facilitating virtual meetings for care home residents.

Headteacher Alison Saunders said: "I am extremely proud of how the school and its community throughout this pandemic have really taken their role as active citizens seriously."

A selection of the entries were chosen by professional artist Marisa Culatto, to be displayed at Hertford Theatre.

Ms Culatto said: "I have been honoured to contribute to this wonderful venture of allowing the students to express themselves and making art available to the wider public which, in these times, is more necessary than ever."

The Hertford Art Trail 2021, organised by Hertford Town Council and Courtyard Arts, runs at various venues across the town from April 10 to May 8. For one month, pop-up exhibitions are appearing in spaces including Hertford Theatre, bars, cafés, beauty salons and shops.



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Gratitude project aims to boost positivity

A mindfulness and yoga instructor from Hertford has launched The Gratitude Project to boost morale after the pandemic.

Sue Hart, who runs Satori Yoga and Mindfulness from her studio in Cowbridge, is calling on clubs, schools, places of worship, care homes and community groups to think creatively about how they can express gratitude for the good things in their lives.

She said: "I want volunteers to use their social media skills to raise awareness of the project and those who have connections [in the community] to develop their own projects."

Ideas for projects include a tree tagged with messages of thanks, a notice board for positive post-it notes, and a gratitude journal.

Ms Hart added: "As we have seen from Clap for Carers, people want to give appreciation collectively and sometimes we don't know how to do this."

She hopes the project will "go global" if people post photos of their idea on Instagram.

For details on setting up your own project, to download free gratitude tags and for a free guided gratitude meditation session, visit: www.thegratitudeproject.org.uk

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Roundabout improvements move closer

Julie Marson, MP for Hertford and Stortford, said she "hopes to see shovels in the ground soon" at the congested Rush Green roundabout.

Ms Marson MP has spent months in discussions with McDonald's and BP, who jointly own a site by the roundabout, which links the A120, A414 and the B1502.

Traffic builds up as customers queue for food or petrol, causing hazardous conditions.

Ms Marson MP reported to the House of Commons on March 25 that the two companies have reached an agreement to help find a solution to the issue.

She also asked Jacob Rees-Mogg MP, the Leader of

the House, to pay tribute to everyone involved.

Mr Rees-Mogg MP said: "It is fantastic to see businesses contributing to their local communities, ensuring smooth and fast journeys for their customers."

Ms Marson MP said that getting this far was "a real team effort" involving councillors, residents and Herts Highways.

She said: "I was very pleased to have been able to share some good news [in Parliament] on the progress at Rush Green. Problems like this have such vexing impacts on the lives of local people and, after getting frustrated when driving on the roundabout myself, I knew I wanted to get the issue fixed."

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News from HERTFORD TOWN COUNCIL



LOCAL NEWS



There is a sense of excitement and anticipation around Hertford town centre as businesses and retailers reopen their doors.

Following the publication of the government's roadmap, many shops, gyms, beauty salons and other non-essential businesses are welcoming customers back through their doors, including at the Hertford Town and Tourist Information Centre.

Pubs, restaurants and cafés are also serving food and drink outside to customers across the town.

Hertford Town Council is working alongside retailers to keep you informed of opening times, offers and services, as well as any updates to government guidelines that may affect businesses reopening.

Keep an eye on our social media to see the latest

news and offers from businesses in the town, as well as any updates to guidelines and restrictions.

The Hertford Art Trail is taking place from Monday, April 12, until Saturday, May 8. This trail, in partnership with Courtyard Arts, showcases more than 30 local artists whose work is exhibited in prime locations across Hertford town centre. The public can view the pop-up exhibitions free of charge. Visitors can check venue locations and opening times at www.gohertford.co.uk

The 2021 Love Hertford Awards is now open for public voting. The competition recognises local businesses and retailers across a range of categories. Voting is open until April 25, 2021. Visit www.gohertford.co.uk to cast your vote.

Council grants help good causes

Hertford Town Council awarded grants of almost £63,000 to organisations and good causes in the town on Monday, March 15.

Presdales School was given £10,000 to put towards LED floodlights for its netball and tennis courts. Hertford Town Football Club received £30,000 towards upgrading its pitch, and Courtyard Arts was given £20,000 to create a teaching studio.

Hertford Music Festival was awarded £1,200 to help promote this year's event. CHIPS Playschemes received just over £1,000 to spend on a sensory room in the Selections Children's Centre at The Sele School.

Unite Community Radio was given just over £700 towards new equipment.

Under the council's scheme, community grants of up to £1,200 are awarded to voluntary organisations whose projects benefit Hertford residents. New Homes bonus grants of up to £30,000 are available for more ambitious projects that help residents and businesses.

There is still time to apply for a grant from Hertford Town Council to help fund an innovative project that will benefit the wider community.

The next deadline for applications is May 14. To download an application form, visit: www.hertford.gov.uk/services/grants

For further information, call Nick Kirby on 01992 584322 or email nick.kirby@hertford.gov.uk



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Whatever industry you work in, taking the time to understand and empathise with your employees is vital if you want to provide exceptional leadership. Discover how to become a more compassionate leader below. Plus, find out why compassion is crucial in the workplace.

you do not have to be better than everyone else.

Respond: Employees need feedback from their leaders, in terms of both their successes and areas in which they still have room to grow. Ensure you explain to your team that you are there to help them improve, and offer any resources they might need.

HOW TO BECOME A COMPASSIONATE LEADER IN FIVE SIMPLE STEPS:

Change: Compassion is all about commitment, and even simple changes to the way you lead can work wonders for improving employee morale. Challenge yourself to make at least one change a month and build up from there.

Listen: Think about how often you really listen to your team. Successful leaders seek to understand the perspectives, motivations and challenges of their employees. Make sure you actively listen without judgement for optimal effect.

WHY COMPASSION IS SO IMPORTANT:

- ♥ Creates enhanced employee engagement
- ♥ Decreases employee turnover
- ♥ Inspires collaboration
- ♥ Increases employee commitment
- ♥ Raises levels of trust
- ♥ Empowers you as a leader

Empathise: If you don't think that your team members feel able to open up to you, then empathy can help resolve this. Take the time to sit down with your employees and talk to them about non-work-related topics.

Share: If you aren't authentic with your staff, how can you expect them to be with you? Don't be afraid to show your weaknesses; as a leader

TAKEAWAY TIP: Compassionate leadership is not about giving people what they want; it is about giving people what they need.

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Perfect for those looking for natural beauty at its finest, the Yorkshire Dales National Park has much to offer, including Aysgarth Falls, the Yorkshire Three Peaks Challenge and the Force Gill Aqueduct.

NORTHUMBERLAND NATIONAL PARK

The most northern National Park in England, it is also the least populated and least visited. However, don't let this put you off as this park boasts Hadrian's Wall, Kielder Water and Forest Park and the Sycamore Gap Tree.

NATIONAL PARKS IN OTHER AREAS OF THE UK

There are two National Parks in Scotland: Cairngorms and Loch Lomond & The Trossachs. In Wales, there are three: the Brecon Beacons, Pembrokeshire Coast and Snowdonia.



MOTORING



DRIVER DANGER

THE PENALTIES AND REPERCUSSIONS FOR OUT-OF-DATE MOTS, INSURANCE AND TAX

The responsibility of making sure a car is being driven legally, and that all the proper checks are up to date, is one not just to ourselves and our passengers but also to everyone else both on and off the road. From motorists to cyclists and even pedestrians, it's vital our cars are roadworthy – in fact, it's so important that the government will impose strict sanctions on anyone not toeing the line.

MOT

A huge number of people drive on our roads unaware that their MOT has expired; and yet with the DVLA's reminder system, setting up a simple text message alert would prevent this happening.

The only time you're allowed to travel on the road with an expired MOT certificate is if you're en route to the test centre to get the service done, otherwise you could be looking at a fine of £1,000.

In 2020, during the COVID-19 outbreak and

subsequent lockdown, MOT dates were extended, though this is not the case in 2021.

TAX

Road tax is a necessity for any car, and you can expect a hefty fine in the post (of up to £1,000), if you're driving around in an untaxed vehicle. That may be a better scenario for some than the alternative – your car is clamped, and if the fine isn't paid quickly it is impounded, incurring a daily fee of £21.

INSURANCE

The big one – driving without insurance is the biggest threat to yourself, your passengers and other road users. It is looked upon dimly, and if you are stopped by the police, your keys will be confiscated immediately. A £300 fine and six points on your licence is the minimum, but greater penalties, including disqualification, are possible.



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Making plans for

NIGEL

How Welsh referee Nigel Owens MBE is the latest to bring LGBT issues to the front line of sport

On the face of it, it's perhaps the manliest sport of them all – where the fire and ferocity of competition demands brutish, testosterone-driven combat.

Like it or not, the past hasn't always been kind in associating homosexuality with those characteristics. And yet it's a credit to our progressiveness as a society that those attitudes are changing; and across Gareth Thomas, other male stars, both retired and still playing, plus a whole host of women who have proudly declared their sexuality, rugby is the sport that seems to be pioneering inclusion and diversity above any other.

The rise to prominence of Nigel Owens MBE as an ambassador for such inclusion is, alongside Thomas, perhaps the best example of someone emerging from the shadows. Having previously battled bulimia and suicidal thoughts as side effects to the hiding of his sexuality, the experienced referee came out in 2007.

"It's such a big taboo to be gay in my line of work," he says. "I had to think very hard about it because I didn't want to jeopardise my career. Coming out was very difficult and I tried to live with who I really was for years. I knew I was 'different' from my late teens, but I was just living a lie."

In reality, coming out only enhanced Owens' reputation in the game. He went on to claim the record for most test matches refereed, and in the Queen's 2016 Birthday Honours was awarded an MBE for services to sport. He retired in December 2000 after 17 years at the top.

And yet his work doesn't stop – in a long-term relationship with a teacher, Barrie Jones-Davies, Owens is a pioneer for LGBT issues in both sport and wider society. He works with charitable organisations in raising awareness and acceptance of gay people, using his story as a bridge to greater understanding of the issues involved.

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PUZZLES & TRIVIA

PUZZLES

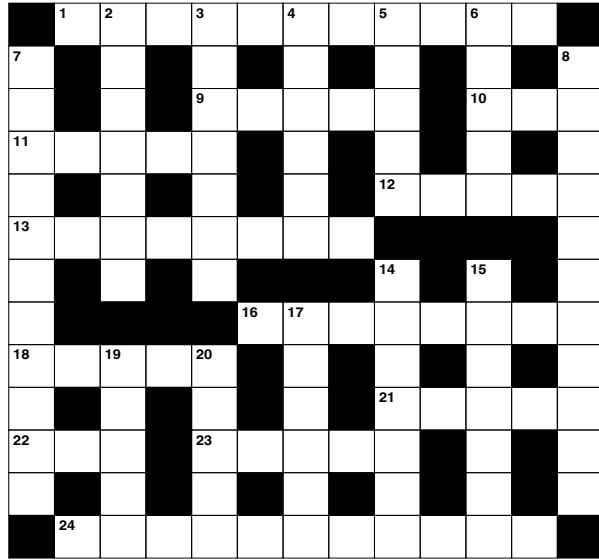
Answers: see end of The VISION Listings

ACROSS

- 1. Dishonestly (11)
- 9. Ape (abbrev.) (5)
- 10. Fish eggs (3)
- 11. Hackneyed (5)
- 12. Giraffes have long ones (5)
- 13. Mad rush (8)
- 16. Eye condition (8)
- 18. Spring flower (5)
- 21. Boredom (5)
- 22. Female chicken (3)
- 23. Island in the Mediterranean Sea (5)
- 24. Study of lawbreaking (11)

DOWN

- 2. Morally right (7)
- 3. Extract (7)
- 4. Wound together (6)
- 5. Unfasten a garment (5)
- 6. Expressing emotions (of poetry) (5)
- 7. Calamity or great loss (11)
- 8. Celebrity (11)
- 14. Panacea (4-3)
- 15. Linking (7)
- 17. Cosmetic cream (6)
- 19. Of the moon (5)
- 20. Device that splits light (5)



DID YOU KNOW?

- ▶ Saudi Arabia is one of the only countries in the world that doesn't have any permanent rivers
- ▶ In the Falkland Islands, sheep outnumber people
- ▶ Napoleon ordered the construction of the Arc de Triomphe in Paris
- ▶ It's thought that in the future, the Maldives may become completely covered by water
- ▶ In Norway, around 98 per cent of the electricity production comes from renewable energy sources
- ▶ The Great Wall of China is 21,196km long
- ▶ Reykjavik is the most northern capital city
- ▶ Indonesia is the world's largest island nation, but no one knows exactly how many islands it contains

SUDOKU

			7			3		1
4	3					2		
		5		4				8
5	6							
			3	7	6			
							7	6
7				5		8		
		6					2	9
1		8			4			



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