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MAY 2021

Editor's notes...



Brett Shohet, Editor

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

It's been great to see people face to face again as we venture out of lockdown. I've had proper conversations with readers and clients again, many of whom have said they were very pleased to see us still up and running during the pandemic.

What's more, I'm seeing so many local businesses that have been in the community for as long as I can remember continuing to move forward despite the pandemic - it truly is uplifting.

I'm expecting there will be enough local events lined up that we'll soon be able to reintroduce our 'What's On' page, which is hopefully as exciting for our readers

as it is for us.

With the weather improving, I've been able to enjoy my garden a lot more, which is exciting both because it's encouraged me to finally cut the grass and because it's provided me with the opportunity to buy gardening goods from local businesses.

I wanted to say a quick "happy birthday" to my girlfriend, Kirstie, who recently turned 30. It's the support of people like Kirstie around me that helps make **VISION** the success that it is.

Brett Shohet

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WILLIAM & KATE:

ten years on

Looking back to celebrate William and Kate as they reach the milestone of their 10th wedding anniversary.

When asked, Prince William and Kate Middleton, the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge, would doubtless suggest their first decade together as husband and wife has been wonderfully happy, uplifting and rewarding... albeit not without its challenges.

To most couples in the early throes of wedded bliss, the faint cry of babies and the bringing on of previously untapped levels of tiredness is a challenge enough. Yet it is to the couple's unending credit that they have never swayed away from their other royal duties, while having the ambition to pursue new challenges and initiatives. They are every bit the exemplars of people wanting the best for themselves, their family and those around them.

In isolation, those challenges of early parenthood – when we saw the arrival of Prince George in 2013, Princess Charlotte two years later and, most recently, Prince Louis in 2018 – are considerable, yet in recent years family events have compounded further the complications of life. The Prince Harry and Meghan Markle spat, notably, has left a devastating scar across how we perceive the Royal Family; then there's been the controversy of Prince Andrew and his links to Jeffrey Epstein; while the recent passing of William's grandfather, Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh, has further shrouded the institution at a time when the rest of the nation is finally managing to pull away from the darkness.

Regardless, the April 29, 2021, anniversary reaffirms the couple as a modern inspiration. The ceremony, 10 years ago, was a typically lavish affair, albeit laced with the style and individuality that William and Kate have wanted to imprint in the way they go about their duties.

Former Archbishop of Canterbury Rowan Williams conducted the ceremony, as 26 million UK viewers watched it live. The Royal Family and the Middletons picked up the bill for almost 2,000 guests, with 300 special invitees going on to an evening dinner hosted by Prince Charles.

Naturally, the day went off without issue, and their work as a couple was only just beginning. Few would disagree now that, during an era when criticism of the royals has been fervent, William and Kate uphold the value and purpose of the Royal Family, even if others in the clan are less proactive.

Over the past decade, the prince has committed huge amounts of time to mental health issues, as well as opening up to a more mainstream audience with his love of sport; while the Duchess of Cambridge's elegant embracing of the mum role model is notable for the familiarity it has with Princess Diana and her boys.

More than anything else, William and Kate speak to the world with the shutters up. Rarely have a royal couple been so close to the people, with honesty, humility and even the ability to laugh at themselves.

It gives all of us hope that not only will the Windsors overcome this recent spate of negative events but, more than that, with William and Kate excellent exemplars, the institution of marriage – itself in decline – once again has those to uphold its values.

"We have always loved being married," says William. "I think we are more in love now than before, and we both truly feel we have found a soulmate who will be there forever."

BETTER THAN *Just O-kay*

Vernon Kay and 25 years on camera

There's something unmistakable about people from Bolton – think Peter Kay, Paddy McGuinness, Amir Khan. Perhaps it's the accent, perhaps the exuding of confidence, or maybe it's just an ability to look on life with uplifted energy.

Whatever the mechanics are, Vernon Kay, like so many of his Greater Manchester contemporaries, has them in abundance.

The husband of Tess Daly, Kay has just celebrated 25 years on screen – no mean feat for someone once described in the Nineties by Mark Lamarr as “a lanky indie kid with bad taste in clothes”.

That's ironic, given that Kay was actually first spotted at Clothes Show Live when he agreed to strut some clothes in return for free drinks. He went on to model for several years before using the catwalk as a platform to launch a TV career.

One of the many to emerge through the T4 stable, he has gone on to present *All Star Family Fortunes*, *Beat the Star* and *Splash!*, among others. Yet it was his appearance in *I'm a Celebrity... Get Me Out of Here* last year that truly reacquainted the watching public with someone who has also spread his talent across radio DJing (notably on Radio 1) and even movie cameos (in *Shaun of the Dead* and *Keith Lemon: The Film*).

A father of two, Kay famously talks down his talents, but has become one of terrestrial TV's go-to faces. Most recently, his *Game of Talents* show has allowed him to rediscover some of the spontaneity so associated with those T4 days.

“A lot of entertainment is very sanitised these days and I want to bring energy and unpredictability back to it,” says Kay, who said recently he blames the sterility of autocue for ruining so much live programming.

“Having fun is difficult when you're reading words off a script, so I'd love us to get back to really immersive TV that throws off the shackles.”

The shackles are off, Vernon.

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REACH FOR *Retro*

Forget spending a fortune on a new wardrobe this season – simply dig into your cupboards and pull out some pieces that are back in fashion.

SUPER-STATEMENT TROUSERS

Ditch your skinny jeans and leggings, because this season it is all about the high-waisted, wide-legged trousers. A huge trend in the Eighties, this is the perfect style for anyone who likes to feel comfy in their clothes while also being fashion-forward.

ALL THAT GLITTERS

If you were a huge fan of disco, then you will be thrilled to know that glitter is back! From Louis Vuitton's stunning silver suits to Balmain's super slinky sparkle dresses, the catwalk will be lit up with glitzy, glittery glam.

TOP OF THE CROPS

Not for the faint-hearted, crop tops are making a huge comeback. Best matched with a loose blazer and high-waisted skirt or jeans – ideal if you love your tum, but not your hips! – this is the ultimate throwback look for when the heat rises.

POWER PUFF SLEEVES

You may have to reach right back into your wardrobe to find this look; the ultimate symbol of Eighties glam. That's right – puffy sleeves are back, and this time they mean business. Whether summery and voluminous or structured to create that classic silhouette, this is a big, bold trend that's here to stay.

SHEER LUCK

Incredibly versatile, this is a fantastic trend for almost every body shape. Whether you want to emulate Seventies beach chic with patterned maxi-dresses and a bikini peeking through, Nineties grunge with a see-through loose layer over a tight minidress and chunky boots, or simply a semi-sheer camisole under a blazer, this is a great way to reveal a little extra flesh while still remaining modest.



Photo credit: ASOS.com

RICE, RICE baby

When you rinse rice before cooking, chances are you let the water simply run down the drain. However, you may think twice about wasting this leftover liquid when you discover its many beauty benefits below.

WHAT MAKES RICE WATER BENEFICIAL?

Rice water is packed with vitamins, minerals and amino acids which are all needed for maintaining healthy skin, hair and nails. It contains ferulic acid, an antioxidant that helps to nourish skin and nails, as well as allantoin that has healing properties. For your hair, rice water contains inositol, which strengthens your follicles and reduces surface friction.

BEAUTY USES FOR RICE WATER

Facial cleanser: Give your skin a boost of goodness by pouring rice water onto a cotton pad and massaging over your face, both in the morning and before bed.

Acne treatment: Apply to spots to help reduce redness to act as an astringent and to prevent future breakouts.

Age spot treatment: If you suffer with age spots or skin discolouration, mix 1 tsp of rice water with

two drops of fractionated coconut oil and massage into your face and neck.

Hair conditioner: For those with dry or brittle hair, apply rice water and a few drops of lavender essential oil after shampooing, leave for 10 minutes and rinse with cold water.

Nail treatment: To help your nails grow faster, soak them in a bowl of rice water for five minutes once a day. This can also help to reduce the signs of ageing on your hands.

HOW TO MAKE YOUR OWN RICE WATER

- > Rinse ½ cup of uncooked rice to remove any dirt or impurities
- > Place the rinsed rice in a bowl and cover it with two cups of water
- > Swirl and leave to soak for 30 minutes
- > Strain the rice and set aside the water
- > Store the rice water in an airtight container. It will keep for one week in the fridge.



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HAVE A brew-tiful DAY

Coffee lovers rejoice, your morning cuppa can not only help kickstart your day but it can also help your health in more ways than you can imagine.

ENHANCED LONGEVITY

Recent studies have found that coffee drinkers are less likely to die from some of the most leading causes of death, including heart disease, stroke, diabetes and kidney disease.

REDUCED RISK OF ALZHEIMER'S AND PARKINSON'S

Drinking two or three cups of coffee a day can reduce your risk of developing dementia and Parkinson's disease. Plus, for the latter, it can help you control your movements.

INCREASED FAT-BURNING ABILITIES

There is a reason why caffeine is found in nearly every fat-burning supplement, and this is because it has the ability to boost your metabolic rate by between three and 11 per cent and potentially increase fat-burning by up to 29 per cent.

IMPROVED PHYSICAL ABILITIES

Caffeine increases epinephrine, also known as adrenaline, in your body, which can help to improve physical performance by between 11 and 12 per cent.

DECREASED RISK OF DEPRESSION

The drinking of coffee is linked to positive emotions such as pleasure, satisfaction, calmness and happiness. In fact, a study by Harvard found that the risk of depression in

women decreased as their caffeinated coffee consumption increased.

WHAT IS THE COFFEE DIET?

Popularised by the book *The Coffee Lover's Diet* by Dr Bob Arnot, the coffee diet is based around the idea that health and longevity is enhanced by a high intake of antioxidant-rich coffee. The diet is said to help boost your metabolism, burn fat, block calorie absorption and decrease your appetite.

HOW IT WORKS

- Drink a minimum of three cups of light-roast coffee per day
- Avoid adding milk or sugar
- Replace one meal with a home-made, high-fibre, green smoothie
- Stick to 1,500 calories per day
- Avoid highly processed foods





REBUND REGRET

how to move on properly after a failed relationship

When a relationship comes to an end it can be a traumatic and sad experience, with statistics showing that most of us will experience the feeling at some point in our lives.

While time is undoubtedly the greatest healer, there are a few useful techniques and ideas that can let light come through on even the very darkest days of a relationship break-up:

1. Draw a line: It's easier said than done, but the thing that makes failed relationships so painful is the brain's desire to relive happier times. While assessing what went wrong is something you will probably need to do at some point, if you feel the relationship is beyond repair you should save the soul-searching for further down the track, instead looking to draw a line in the sand.

When you can tackle the ins and outs, avoid viewing history with rose-tinted glasses by writing a list of both

the bad and the good aspects of the relationship.

2. Sever ties: The temptation when a relationship goes bad is to attempt to stay in touch in the hope of repairing or, worse still, staying friends. Both can be tricky – things happen for a reason – and you may find yourself not just prolonging that yearning for your ex, but also holding back on meeting someone new.

3. Stay busy: Keeping the brain active and distracted is an important route towards moving forward. Look for new challenges or embark on a fresh project as a way of distracting the mind away from painful thoughts.

4. Focus on your own health: The dopamine buzz we receive from exercise is a great antidote to feelings of despondency that might arise out of a split. Exercise and other steps towards building health and strength will aid recovery as well as serving to focus on 'the you', which after a painful split is important and, undoubtedly, what you deserve.



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Jicama

The jicama, also known as a Mexican yam bean, is a starchy root vegetable that is recognisable by its thick, brown skin and turnip shape. Low in calories and sweet in taste, this veg makes a great alternative to the humble potato.

WHAT DOES JICAMA TASTE LIKE?

The jicama has been described as a cross between a potato and a pear owing to its distinctive flavour which is both nutty and sweet. Its flesh is juicy and crunchy and, because it has a fairly mild taste, it blends well with other flavours.

WHAT ARE THE HEALTH BENEFITS OF JICAMA?

The perfect vegetable for people with diabetes, the jicama is naturally low in sugar but still sweet to taste. It is also high in fibre, a great source of vitamin C and low in fat and calories.

IS JICAMA SAFE TO EAT?

It is worth noting that only the root vegetable of the

jicama plant is safe to eat, as the rest, including the beans and flowers, contain rotenone, a natural insecticide that can be toxic to humans in high doses. You should also remove the brown skin before consuming.

HOW TO USE JICAMA

- > Slice thinly and add raw to a vegetable salad or Mexican fruit salad for added crunch
- > Sauté with other veg such as broccoli and carrots
- > Use as a substitute for water chestnuts in a stir-fry
- > Bake in the oven or place in an air fryer for healthy chips

HOW TO STORE JICAMA

The most important thing to remember when storing jicama is that you must keep it dry, as any moisture can cause rot and mould. Store unwrapped at room temperature if still whole or, once cut, wrap tightly in cling film and store in the fridge for up to one week. Alternatively, wrap a whole jicama in foil and freeze for up to one year.

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HOW TO CLEAN YOUR Curtains

Did you know that you should be cleaning your curtains at least once a year and preferably once every three to six months? Although this may not sound like a lot, can you honestly remember the last time you gave yours a good wash? If not, don't worry. Discover below how to clean your curtains in five simple steps.

STEP ONE: Remove all the hooks and curtain weights and loosen the heading tape. If you are worried about the fabric shrinking, you may want to let down the hem. Take outside and shake well to remove any dust.

STEP TWO: Check the washing label of your curtains to see if they are machine washable. If they are made using a lightweight fabric such as cotton, they probably are. However, if they are large and heavy you may want to have them dry cleaned or wash them by hand. This is also the case for curtains made from velvet, wool, silk or chenille.

STEP THREE: If machine washable, place your curtains in your washing machine and add your usual detergent. Set the machine to either a "delicates" cycle or a cool wash with a slow spin to avoid damage.

STEP FOUR: If you want to iron your curtains, you should do this while they are still damp. Work lengthways, on the wrong side, stretching the fabric gently to prevent seams from puckering. If not, simply hang to dry either outside if the weather permits or inside until they are at least 95 per cent dry. Do not rub or wring out your curtains.

STEP FIVE: Thoroughly dust and clean your curtain tracks, windows and sills before hanging your clean curtains back up. You should also try to incorporate a weekly curtain vacuum into your cleaning schedule to keep them in tip-top condition for longer.

**NEXT MONTH WE'LL TELL YOU HOW
TO CLEAN YOUR BLINDS**



HOME & DIY



5 alternative uses for nail polish remover

Did you know that nail polish remover is not just for nails? Oh no, it can be used for a whole myriad of other purposes around the home.

1. To shine your shoes

Although you may be wary about using acetone on your prized shoe collection, as long as you only use it on patent shoes, you are completely safe. Simply dip a piece of kitchen towel in nail polish remover and gently buff to remove unsightly scuff marks.

2. To clean your china

If you are an avid tea drinker, your china may be prone to the odd mark or two. Remedy this by scrubbing these stubborn stains with a cotton bud soaked in nail polish remover. Wash as normal before using.

3. To remove paint from your windows

Painting your windows can inject a new lease of life into the interior and exterior of your home. However, flicks of paint on your glass are a hazard of the job. Remove any wayward paint by applying acetone, letting it settle for five minutes and then rubbing away with a damp cloth.

4. To dissolve superglue

Got a bit overenthusiastic with the superglue? Don't stress. Nail polish remover will quickly and easily unglue your hands or unclog the cap of your glue. Just apply to the affected area for instant results.

5. To get rid of ink stains

Whether you have spilt ink on your fabric sofa or your child has come home from school with their shirt covered in pen marks, acetone will save the day. Mix one part nail polish remover with two parts water and dab at the stain with a soft cloth.

Other uses:

- > To sanitise your beauty tools.
- > To clean blades – dip a cotton bud in the remover, apply and rinse with soap and water.
- > To smooth minor watch scratches – drop a tiny amount onto a cloth and gently buff affected area.

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GARDENING

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MOISTURE *in the air*

In the final part of our series that shows how even the most urban garden can be a haven for the wonders of wildlife and the nurturing of nature, we look at the role of moisture in this wondrous ecosystem.

While we may bemoan the washing getting wet when we forget to bring it indoors, the cycle of moisture in our gardens is perhaps nature's greatest wonder of them all. Consider it – we've all gazed out across our lawns or poked around a plant on a window ledge and known that when nature either dries out or floods, the end is nigh.

On a local level, moisture in our plant soil is the difference between a flowering plant and a wilting one; or perhaps a ripe, juicy tomato and one that fails to develop.

On a national, mass-market scale then, getting the moisture content right means looking after the production of every variety of crop, for both human

and animal consumption.

And yet, controlling moisture goes far beyond even that, because the density of water in the soil is vital in regulating the exchange of water and heat energy between plants and the atmosphere, via evaporation. This leads to the production of weather patterns all across the world, and especially determines levels of precipitation.

Even on its way into the atmosphere, moisture is stabilising our climate, plus helping animal life that's dependent on perspiration to regulate internal body temperature – something that's key to survival.

It all adds up to the fact that the humble bit of soil around your petunias is, in the most minute of ways, contributing towards the maintenance and welfare of the flora and fauna and of people's lives in towns, villages and cities all across the world, whether their fear is flash floods, droughts or even potential starvation.





MAY BIRTH FLOWER OF THE MONTH:

Lily

The May birth flower is the delicate and sweetly scented lily. Available in a wide range of vibrant colours, each shade conveys a different meaning. Planted as bulbs, lilies are perfect for containers and flower borders, making them a great choice for small and large gardens alike.

What does the lily symbolise?

As mentioned above, the lily holds many different meanings which are dependent upon its colour:

- > Pink lilies symbolise femininity and admiration
- > Red lilies represent love and passion
- > Orange lilies convey confidence and energy
- > Yellow lilies are used to say thank you
- > White lilies portray purity and rebirth

What does this birth flower say about you?

If your birth flower is the lily, you are said to be practical, with the ability to tackle even the most challenging situations. Contrary to the toxic lily flower, you are sweet, tender and with a huge capacity to love, meaning that others always feel safe in your company.

How to grow lilies

Lilies are planted as bulbs and are ideal for placing in containers or in sunny borders. There are two main types of lily that you can choose from: Oriental lilies and Asiatic lilies. The former give off an intense aroma and are large in stature, whereas the latter are available in a wide variety of vibrant colours but are sadly unscented.

Lily bulbs thrive in moist, acid soils, so if placed in a container, be sure to add ericaceous compost.

Do lilies come back every year?

Lilies are perennial flowers which mean that they will return year after year. Requiring minimal care if planted correctly, make sure you do not overcrowd your bulbs and place in full sun where possible.



A PRINCE *among men*



CELEBRATING THE LIFE OF HRH PRINCE PHILIP, DUKE OF EDINBURGH

Meticulous, measured, majestic and more than a little eccentric... and that was just the funeral procession – HRH Prince Philip departed these strange shores just two months short of his 100th birthday, leaving behind a partner so hopelessly and publicly bereaved, and a nation of admirers wondering who could live up to the Duke of Edinburgh's lofty lovability.

Rarely is someone's passing met with almost universal solemnity and respect. It appears we all admired Prince Philip for different reasons – his faithful devotion to Queen Elizabeth II; his stolid determination to affect positive change; his humorous tendency to stray over the boundary of political correctness; or perhaps simply because he embodied so wholly that 'grandad' figure. Whatever it is, whatever it was, he had it, and in the stuffy silliness of modern media, he was exactly the antidote so many of us needed.

On Saturday, April 17, Prince Philip was laid to rest. In a ceremony he planned and choreographed himself, his coffin was lifted onto the back of a modified Land Rover Defender. Decorated in a stunning matt

Photo credit: Tim Graham/Shutterstock



Photo credit: Tim Rooke/Shutterstock

bottle green, the hearse was Philip's own creation, while various other touches clearly bore the mark of a man who wanted to slip away with energetic, original reflections of life, not the formal bleakness of most ceremonies.

There was the empty seat on the carriage, decorated with his blanket, flat cap, whip, brown gloves and pot containing a sugar cube for the ponies; then his military cap and sword on a coffin adorned with the most beautiful personal standard flag which referenced his overseas roots, family name and Edinburgh Castle. Meanwhile, various other marine references were present during the ceremony, each a nod to his cherished naval career, which came to an end in 1951.

In truth, there was so much of this special life to be celebrated. He was born on June 10, 1921 in Corfu, his family holding both Greek and Danish royal heritage. Banished from their homeland, he spent parts of his early life in France and Germany before settling in Britain.

It wasn't an easy childhood – his mother was admitted to a psychiatric institution, and he was separated from his family after landing in the UK. He studied at Cheam School before relocating to Scotland. He served in the British Navy during the Second World War, despite members of his family effectively fighting for the opposition as part of the Axis.

He denounced his Greek and Danish titles and adopted the surname Mountbatten – from his mother's side – so he could marry Princess Elizabeth in 1947 at Westminster Abbey, eight years after they had first met.

He was doted on by his four children – Prince Charles, Princess Anne, Prince Andrew and Prince Edward (Prince Edward will now take his title) – and never wavered from his role as the Queen's consort... in fact, the longest in royal history. A passionate supporter of everything she did, he also undertook his own projects, notably the Duke of Edinburgh's Award which, to this day, continues to promote youth achievement across many different disciplines.

He enjoyed polo, boat racing, piloting aeroplanes, painting and antiques, and while deteriorating health in recent years proved concerning, it was supposed he had recovered from a recent stay at St Bartholomew's Hospital; yet he slipped away peacefully on April 9, 2021 at Windsor Castle.

In total, almost 14 million of us watched the Duke of Edinburgh's funeral, and even the staunchest anti-royal must have pitied the senior Windsors being forced to display their grief in public. Such are the realities of a state funeral, and so it is conditioned that the only follow-on from a life played out in the public eye is a memorial on the same terms.

Prince Philip was born of a different time and a different generation of royalty, yet he fit so wonderfully into modern-day society and brought joy to many.

His unique, charismatic, eccentric take on the world is something we just don't see very often these days, with most public figures keeping their cards close to their chests for fear of repercussions.

His truly one-of-a-kind presence will be sorely missed by the Royal Family, the nation and the world.

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LOCAL NEWS

from your neighbourhood



LOCAL NEWS

Photo credit: East Herts Council



Plans are approved for theatre investment

East Herts Council's plans for the Growth and Legacy Project at Hertford Theatre were approved at a Development Management Committee meeting recently.

The investment of £19.9million will improve Hertford Theatre and help make it a beacon of sustainability.

Hertford Theatre will be redeveloped and expanded, with new films shown on three bespoke cinema screens, a new studio auditorium for smaller live acts and performances, and a plaza-style foyer with riverside cafe-bar.

The redevelopment also includes two hireable community spaces and improved access to all areas of the building.

Rhys Thomas, director of Hertford Theatre, said:

"Throughout the health crisis over the last year, the one thing that has been even more crucial and evident is a need to hold on to a sense of community. The improvement works will ensure that Hertford Theatre can meet demand and will sustainably stand the test of time.

"The theatre is such a hub and so well used by many community groups. The new opportunities and the emphasis on sustainability that the Growth and Legacy Project will bring are going to be exciting to watch take shape."

The theatre will close to the public from Monday, June 7, in preparation for works to commence in the summer and autumn. The next stage of the project is to appoint a main contractor.



Popular heritage trail to be expanded with more sites

Since the launch of the Hertford Heritage Trail in 2017, there has been great interest in the 41 historic buildings that are recognised in the Trail.

Hertford Town Council (HTC) and Hertford Civic Society are now considering expanding the Trail to include additional historically significant and interesting buildings in Hertford.

Residents, property owners and businesses have been asked to nominate buildings or premises within Hertford which they think should be added to the Heritage Trail.

Successful properties will be honoured with the installation of a blue plaque, as well as having their

story documented in the Trail leaflet and online.

A HTC spokesperson said: "The Hertford Heritage Trail is a popular way to discover fascinating information and historical facts about Hertford's architecture and buildings.

"Expanding the Trail to include more interesting stories from premises within Hertford will only help to strengthen our understanding of Hertford's rich history, and provide tourists and locals with a chance to appreciate Hertford even more."

All nominations were submitted by May 14, and are now being considered by HTC and the Hertford Civic Society.

School hosts health and well-being initiative

The Sele School in Hertford recently hosted a health and well-being initiative called Fit, Fed and Read for primary-age children.

During the two weeks of the scheme, a total of 14 children from five different primary schools took part in a variety of exciting activities, including a talk from Hertfordshire Constabulary about the role of a police officer and healthy eating sessions from Herts Catering Ltd. Pupils were also given the chance to try out a smoothie bike, a stationary bicycle that harnesses energy from pedalling to power a blender.

There was a fire safety session from Hertfordshire Fire Service, resources and free books provided by Hertfordshire Library Service, and an interactive session on the five ways to wellbeing from Herts Mind Network.

The children also took part in Learn 2 Ride and Bikeability sessions, delivered by Herts Disability



Sports Foundation, with some of the participants riding a bike for the first time.

Fit, Fed and Read is a school holiday activity programme delivered by Herts Sports Partnership. The programme received funding from the National Lottery Community Fund for Easter and summer delivery in 2020, 2021 and 2022.

The Sele School thanked its site team for their support in making this holiday programme possible.

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Roundabout signals return to stop accidents



Work has been carried out at Bluecoats Roundabout in Hertford to help reduce the number of road accidents that take place at the junction.

These changes have coincided with the easing of lockdown and higher levels of traffic returning to the road network.

As a result, journey times in and through Hertford have become more unreliable and congestion has increased, leading to residents raising concerns over road safety.

Hertfordshire County Council is now trialling a return to part-time signals to see how the road network responds.

Mark Kemp, director of environment and infrastructure, said: "With around 30 per cent of pre-COVID traffic travelling on the A414 through Hertford being associated with local journeys, I would encourage everyone to think about the difference that small changes can make to our local environment. Where possible, consider walking, cycling or using the bus for local trips.

"The council has ongoing investment programmes to improve the highway network, including schemes to improve facilities for people when they walk and cycle. These are part of ambitious plans to help the county become net zero greenhouse gas before 2050.

"The pandemic has placed us all in unprecedented and often challenging times, but there are also opportunities for us to change. Working together, and with small changes to our behaviour, we can create a better environment for everyone."

Shopping locally encouraged as COVID-19 restrictions ease

East Herts Council is encouraging Hertford residents to make a pledge to shop with local businesses by supporting the local high street.

The pandemic has had a huge impact on shops,

pubs and restaurants, but the council is hitting back with its Shop Safe, Shop Local campaign.

Richard Cassidy, chief executive of East Herts Council, explains: "By buying your meat from a local butcher, or ordering a takeaway from a local cafe or restaurant, you will provide much-needed support to your local community.

"The latest research reveals that, for every £1 spent with a local, independent business, between 50p and 70p circulates back into that local economy.

"That's why this campaign is encouraging residents to shop safe and buy from local businesses wherever they can."

Extinction Rebellion members hold protest outside bank

Members from Extinction Rebellion East Hertfordshire protested outside Barclays bank in Hertford on April 1 to draw attention to banks' investment in fossil fuels.

The group feels that the continuing investment in fossil fuel projects is a threat to the future of the planet. The organisation has held similar protests all around the country.

A man (pictured) had to be forcibly removed from the premises shortly after 1.10pm after refusing to leave the bank.

He was holding up a sign, which read: "CLIMATE EMERGENCY: Conscientious protector sitting in love for my two children and all children everywhere, while Barclays bank invests \$145billion in coal, oil and gas."

A Hertfordshire Constabulary spokeswoman said: "Police were called just after 1.10pm on Thursday, April 1, to reports that a man was refusing to leave a business premises in Hertford.

"The man, who was part of a peaceful protest on Market Street, had entered Barclays bank and refused to leave when staff attempted to close the branch.

"Officers attended and escorted the man from the premises before he rejoined a small number of people peacefully protesting in the street.

"No arrests were made."



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News from HERTFORD TOWN COUNCIL



LOCAL NEWS



Hertford town centre has been thriving since the reopening of non-essential businesses last month. Many shops, gyms and beauty salons, as well as cafes, pubs and restaurants, have warmly welcomed customers back through their doors.

Hertford Town Council celebrated local retailers and traders at the Love Hertford Awards on May 13. Recognising the wealth and variety of shops and services on offer in Hertford, the public voted for their favourite businesses across a number of categories, and the winners were crowned at this year's online celebration. Find out who the lucky winners were at www.gohertford.co.uk

During May half-term, children and families can enjoy the Hertford Castle Enchanted Fairy Trail.

Visitors can follow the self-guided trail through the grounds of Hertford Castle, where local businesses and organisations have constructed mystical displays of fairies and pixies around the ancient trees, flower gardens and castle walls.

On June 6, Hertford Castle sees the return of the popular Cars at the Castle event, sponsored by EweMove Sales & Lettings in Hertford and Welwyn. With up to 45 classic, vintage and modern cars exhibiting, there will be plenty to marvel over for the whole family. Entry to the event will be permitted according to government social distancing guidelines and a one-way system will be in place.

Find out more about Hertford Town Council's events at www.hertford.gov.uk/events-listings/

MP welcomes new police officers

Julie Marson, MP for Hertford and Stortford, has welcomed the announcement that 155 police officers have been recruited in the county during the first year of Prime Minister Boris Johnson's campaign to recruit 20,000 new officers by March 2023.

The new recruits bring the total number of police across Hertfordshire up to 2,232. She said: "Getting more police officers onto our streets is one of the people's priorities, and so I am pleased that the government has already delivered an extra 155 officers across Hertfordshire.

"Every one of these officers will make an enormous difference in helping to cut crime and keep people safe. Many more will follow as the government continues to deliver its promise to recruit 20,000 more over the next three years."





COASTAL HOTSPOTS

for home buyers

With summer staycations being on the cards for many families this year, homes by the sea are attracting more interest than ever before.

But if you are thinking of making a more permanent move to a coastal location, check out the below hotspots that are proving to be popular with home buyers across the UK.

SWANAGE, DORSET – average asking price £394,762

Only six miles from Bournemouth, Swanage was recently named as one of the best places to live in the South West by *The Sunday Times*. Offering an old-fashioned seaside charm, this town is your best bet for affordable family homes with sea views.

Choose from Victorian terrace houses, bungalows and modern sea-view apartments.

ROTTINGDEAN, EAST SUSSEX – average asking price £596,699

Another highly popular spot for home buyers, Rottingdean combines a picturesque village with a beautiful beachfront and boasts a lively community. Explore a mix of Georgian town houses, Edwardian family homes and character cottages.

ST MAWES, CORNWALL – average asking price £963,398

For those with a larger budget, the small fishing village of St Mawes, near Falmouth, is the perfect coastal location. With more than five million searches on Rightmove in February, Cornwall has now overtaken London as the most searched for place for home buyers.

Popular for boating and yachting, if you want to do a bit of daydreaming, check out its selection of stunning sea-view mansions.

THORNHAM, NORFOLK – average asking price £223,898

A small coastal village situated in the Norfolk Coast Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, Thornham's attractive and traditionally styled properties make it a highly sought-after location for home buyers. Ideal for those looking for a more remote place to live; if you work from home, you won't find a more idyllic setting.



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QUIDS IN

How to make money back on your online purchases

While the three lockdowns we've endured since March 2020 may not have done much for our mental health, they have at least, as very small consolation, given new energy to consumerism. From shops and online retailers needing to find new ways to connect with a marketplace unable to act in the same way as before, to huge quantities of dormant pre-lockdown stock needing to be shifted, it's a good time to be on the lookout for deals.

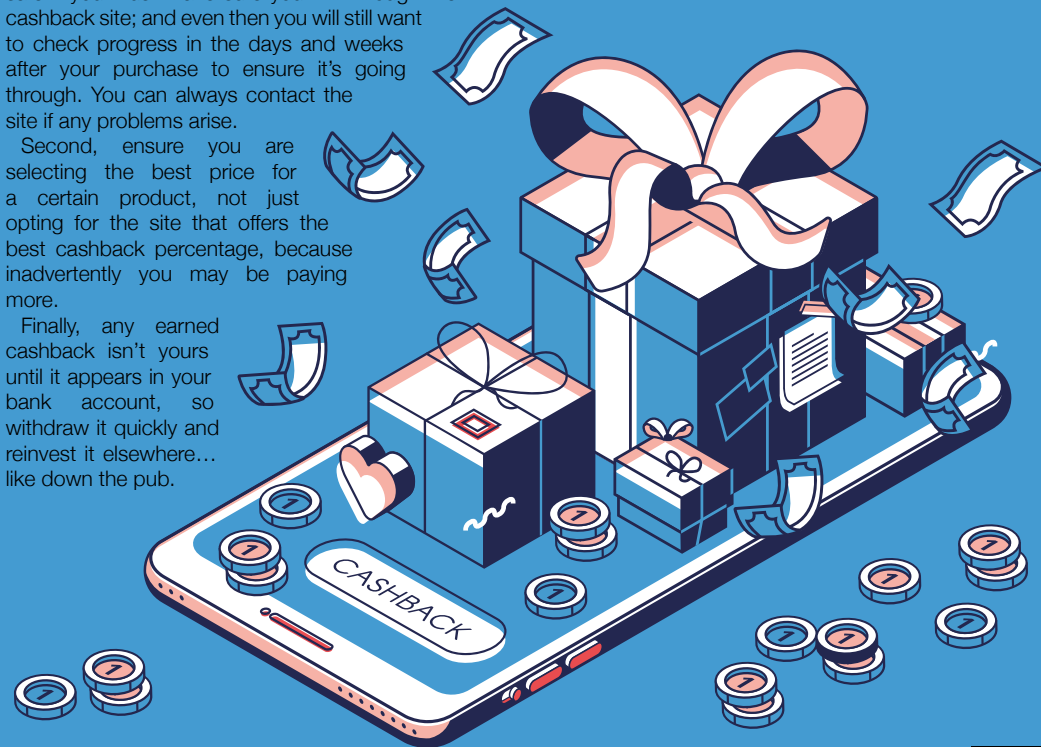
Sure enough, in a world that is more driven than ever towards consumerism, online tracking of purchases through cashback sites can provide an additional useful bonus to purchases – they might even determine which retailer you buy from in the first place.

Sites such as Quidco and TopCashBack advertise cashback offers from thousands of retailers. Simply follow the link to Nike, Next, New Look or whoever has a product you desire, and make a purchase, which will be tracked using cookies. You will have been given a percentage cashback level – usually between one and 10 per cent. A few weeks later, that cashback will appear on the platform, ready to be withdrawn into your bank account or converted into a gift card.

There are a couple of operational points worth noting. First, the tracking process isn't 100 per cent fail-safe – you must make sure you link through the cashback site; and even then you will still want to check progress in the days and weeks after your purchase to ensure it's going through. You can always contact the site if any problems arise.

Second, ensure you are selecting the best price for a certain product, not just opting for the site that offers the best cashback percentage, because inadvertently you may be paying more.

Finally, any earned cashback isn't yours until it appears in your bank account, so withdraw it quickly and reinvest it elsewhere... like down the pub.



BUSINESS & PROPERTY



Brexit, travel and your

PASSPORT

ENSURING YOUR PASSPORT IS FIT FOR OVERSEAS TRAVEL IN 2021

We've become used to the uncertainty suffered from the drawn-out Brexit process and what our departure from the EU ultimately means for the UK; yet gradually the intricacies of us operating as an independent nation are becoming clear.

A hot topic has been the use of our passports when going abroad, although the intensity of this discussion has been held back by COVID-19 and a general inability to travel anywhere in the world.

In essence, there are two main points to take into consideration: from January 1, 2021, anyone leaving the UK needs to have six months left on their passport in order to be able to travel throughout Europe. Not only that, but your passport will need to be less than 10 years old.

The one exception here is when travelling to Ireland. Although this is still part of the EU, you

are able to use your passport any time up until its expiry date.

While these are the immediate changes when it comes to travelling to Europe, throughout 2021 we will continue to be issued with new blue passports. These are a throwback to the old-style British passports which were in use until 1988, before the burgundy EU passport came into play.

As far as visiting EU countries goes, no visas are required when travelling to mainland Europe, and stays are permitted for 90 days in any 180-day period. Again, there are some exceptions – when travelling to Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus and Romania, for instance – so it's best to check the finer details on the Foreign Office portal of the gov.uk website to ensure your deserved holiday doesn't come unstuck before you've even made it to the aircraft.



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CHECKING IN

WHY PROTECTING THE YOUNG PEOPLE AROUND
YOU MEANS INSISTING ON THE RELEVANT CHECKS

In the past decade or so, Criminal Record Checks (CRCs) have become commonplace in situations where organisations need to safeguard the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults. And this can be the case in everything from 9-5 employers ensuring their staff have been honest in job applications, to volunteers working for charities, right through to local sports teams safeguarding the welfare of young players.

The checks are done by the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) and take the form of a simple and relatively cheap process that takes a couple of weeks. The application can be submitted by the individual or an employee (but only after an offer of employment has been made – in other words, for a successful applicant, not for an interview candidate).

The request goes to the DBS, where a criminal background check will be made. A certificate is subsequently issued that lists any convictions.

The process has become an essential part of

verifying people who are in positions of responsibility where young and vulnerable people are concerned, and replaces what was previously a somewhat more convoluted process between the Criminal Records Bureau and the Independent Safeguarding Authority. By merging these two organisations into one entity, the DBS, in 2012, the government was able to streamline welfare checks, which meant not only a safer and more comprehensive system, but also one where people could begin helping and assisting youngsters without having to go through swarms of red tape.

Of course, while a DBS check will list noted convictions, organisations can and do undertake additional protection, welfare and safeguarding training. And as ever, as parents, the most effective reference to those helping our children comes through our own communication with both our loved ones and the organisation – it always pays to be vigilant.

Photo credit: Ascarnio/Shutterstock.com



KIDS



Buy or Lease?

The ins and outs of buying versus leasing, and which one you should choose

The trend in modern motoring, certainly where new cars are concerned, is to lease rather than buy. The advantages of leasing speak for themselves – you'll need to put down only a small amount of money upfront, your monthly payments can be configured according to the budget you set out at the start, and you have the option of upgrading the car every few years so you're always rocking about town in the latest model.

There's also the reassurance of knowing that if something goes wrong with the vehicle, you'll be covered by the manufacturer's warranty; and that fear of the unexpected, when you hear that horrible, grinding sound... well, it's someone else's problem!

You'll also find that road tax can be covered, and you may even get the vehicle delivered to your door.

The appeal of what is, in effect, borrowing a vehicle is at odds with the way we view other things in life. Home ownership, for instance, is taken as preferable over renting, yet owning a car outright is fraught with perils.

If you can afford the entire cost of a vehicle upfront you're immediately into the realms of depreciation

the moment you turn the key in the ignition – and of course any repair bills fall to you and you only.

That said, you won't have to subscribe to any mileage limitations, nor will you be dealing with broker fees. And while many pay for new cars through PCP (personal contract purchase) or HP (hire purchase) finance, you do have a potentially substantial asset ready to be cashed in when you decide you want to switch to another vehicle.

Buying over leasing very much comes down to personal circumstances – what's right for you will be wrong for someone else. As ever, do the maths and, more than anything else, drive safely!



How modest but magnificent jockey Rachael Blackmore made history

On April 10, Rachael Blackmore stood aloft Minella Times, triumphant in becoming the first female jockey to have ridden a horse to victory at the Grand National.

In 182 years of the world's most famous horse race, never before has a member of the fairer sex come home victorious, though in Blackmore, who hails from Killenaule in County Tipperary, there is a jockey of prolific character, determination and future potential.

Already 10 years on the circuit, having ridden her first winner as an amateur back in February 2011, she truly announced herself at Cheltenham in 2019 when she came home first on A Plus Tard in the Close Brothers Novices' Handicap Chase.

That year she also had her second taste of riding at Aintree and, with each passing iteration, enhanced a game plan that would help her take home the big prize.

"I think as a jockey you are always learning; and although the courses and the horses are different, every race for me has felt like a rehearsal for a big victory."

Cheltenham success this year on favourite Honeysuckle reaffirmed the jockey's status to perform when the pressure was on, though starting out at 11/1 at Aintree in the Grand National left plenty of room for doubt. Those who bet on her to bring home the greatest victory of her career needn't have worried – Blackmore rode an impeccable race as the eight-year-old horse came through in style, winning by six and a half lengths.

"It fell right for me on the day, and that's all you can ask as a jockey," she said with immaculate modesty. "I never at any point thought I had a divine right to win, and nor will I in future – I've always regarded myself as being in the right place at the right time; and I'll hopefully continue to be."

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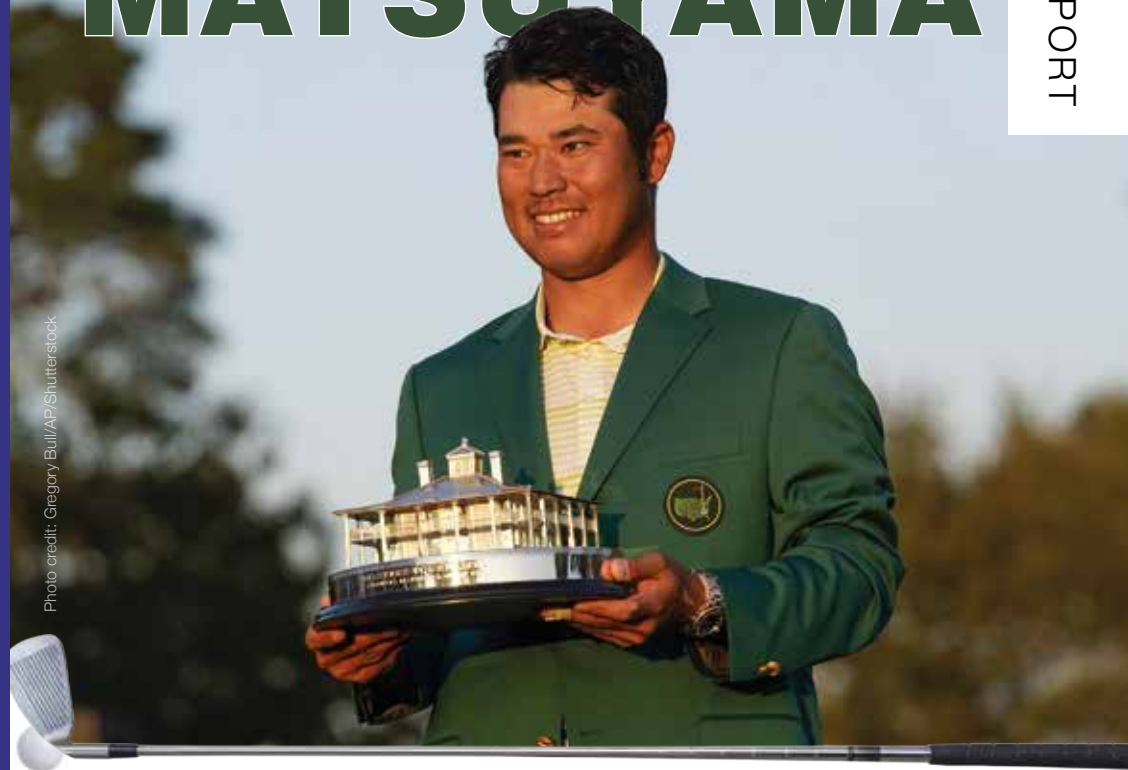
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SPORT

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HOW A SHY JAPANESE GOLFER MADE HISTORY AT THE MASTERS

In all honesty, golfer Hideki Matsuyama probably isn't cut out for a life in the spotlight of the sporting world. The 2021 Masters champion, who originates from the place in Japan that gave him his name – Matsuyama is a city in the Ehime region on the island of Shikoku – claimed victory at the iconic Augusta course in April, finishing a shot clear of American youngster Will Zalatoris.

"I am relieved," he said afterwards. "It looked good coming into the final day – the course was playing well for me and I knew I just had to hold my nerve."

"It is the proudest moment of my sporting life."

Success hasn't come quickly or easily. Indeed, Matsuyama has had to wait four painful years to make amends for a catastrophic loss of confidence on the back nine of the 2017 PGA Championship when he seemed set to take the title.

Recovering from hitting five bogeys in the final

trappings that cost him that victory has taken the 29-year-old time, and although he again wobbled on his way to finally setting the record straight as he posted an overall 10 under par, this time he held on to the clamours of delight emanating from his homeland.

Japan is a golf-mad country and finally it has a golfing champion to call its own; not just that but a man who values respect and humility. He bowed to the 18th fairway at Augusta as a mark of respect and, despite pocketing the \$2million first prize, still flew back to his homeland alone, on a standard flight. Indeed, perhaps the most iconic image of the whole weekend was Matsuyama sitting at Augusta airport on the Monday, dressed down, checking messages, and that famous green blazer casually draped over a neighbouring seat.

Japan has a champion to be proud of, as does the sport of golf.

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PUZZLES & TRIVIA

PUZZLES

Answers: see end of The VISION Listings

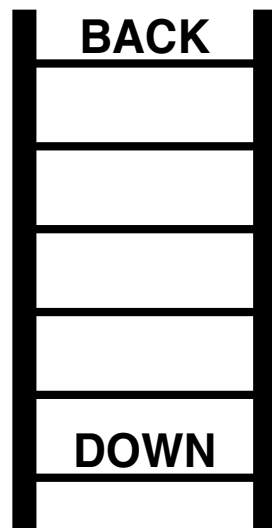
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N	Y	I	W	F	S	S	P	S	O	Q	U	I	R	K
J	B	T	P	U	T	E	T	O	U	Q	C	J	W	S

DID YOU KNOW?

- ▶ Lots of plants are used as dyes. For example, teabags and stewed onion skins
- ▶ According to Guinness World Records, the tallest planted tree was a Eucalyptus regnans planted in Dunedin, New Zealand. It measured 82.25 metres on November 15, 2018
- ▶ Pollen from trees provides essential food for bees in the early spring
- ▶ Orange carrots were created by crossing various other colours of the vegetable
- ▶ Seeds can be dispersed in several ways. Some of the most common are the wind, water and animals
- ▶ The stem of a plant is used to transport water and nutrients to different areas
- ▶ Mushrooms have their own immune system

WORD LADDER



THE AIM: Change the word at the top of the ladder one letter at a time to make the word at the bottom.

HOW TO: Change one letter on each step to make a new word. By the time you reach the end, you should have created the new word.

DO NOT rearrange the order of the letters.

TIP: There is usually more than one way to solve this puzzle.



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