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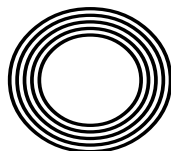
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Editor's notes...

DECEMBER 2022



Brett Shohet, Editor

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

Like many people concerned about the cost of living at the moment, I've been reviewing my bills and expenses to see where I can make savings. It comes down to luxury versus necessity, but make sure you think twice before deciding what you can do without.

Some businesses may be thinking they should cut down on their advertising and marketing in the current climate. However, I'd argue that it's now more important than ever to do all you can to generate income for your business. I have always used the phrase, 'If nothing changes, nothing changes.'

This can be used in life as well as in business.

Of course, if you need support or help getting visibility for your business, please get in touch with us and we'll see what we can do to help.

It seems no sooner are the Halloween decorations taken down than the Christmas decorations start appearing. As a child, the festive season seems to take forever to come around, while as an adult, it comes round all too quickly - and goes by just as fast. So it's important to enjoy every second while it lasts.

Please also try to spend your pound locally and support your local businesses this Christmas. I'm sure they will appreciate it. Wishing everyone a merry Christmas and happy New Year.

Brett Shohet

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WHIPPING UP A STORMZY

Stormzy's appeal is widespread – a musician, a fashion icon, a fulcrum for equality in what is a complicated social landscape, and the first grime artist to headline Glastonbury. With a new album out, the rap star – real name Michael Ebenezer Kwadjo Omari Owuo Jr – explains that his journey to greatness is no accident, but the result of sheer determination and hard work.

Stormzy will never be everyone's cup of tea. His music is genre-splitting but ultimately relies on a listener's ear for rap, grime and dubstep-infused combinations. Meanwhile, his politics often lean on diversity, equality and race, leading to an unapologetic prevalence of support for Black artists, musicians and students.

Yet whether you respect the 29-year-old Croydon native for his take on music and life or not, the fact he has battled back from depression, and is vocal in promoting good habits and good actions as methods for combating the mental and psychological ills of modern society, mean he deserves the stage he finds himself on.

Stormzy also possesses the humility to talk about the wider elements that influence his music, rather than simply pushing the marketing button for *This Is What I Mean*, his third studio album.

"Nothing would be possible without having a clear head and knowing what it is we have to do in this world to survive," he begins. "I realised a long time ago that exercise was the only mechanism that would truly keep me straight, and that's why so much of my focus is on building physical and mental strength.

"When you put on muscle, people are quick to label you as someone who wants to pose or show off, but it's nothing like that for me. Strength is just a by-product of a fitness regime that keeps my brain, my head, in the right place.

"If I didn't do it, some days I don't think I'd be able to cope."

Pushing his own vulnerability at potentially falling back into "the darkness" is an interesting slant, particularly in a music genre where confidence and bravado play such a big role in the promotion game. Yet while the rapper does accept imperfections in his armour, Stormzy is never less than 100 per cent driven to achieve.

"I find it strange and uncomfortable to aim for anything less than the greatest," he offers, with typical bravado. "That doesn't even make sense for me, that.

"If I was going to be an engineer or I was going to be a baker, or I was going to be a fireman, why would I not aim to eventually be the greatest at my job?

"I've never understood why I should just try to be the best rapper in London, or even the best rapper in the UK. I don't want to be the best rapper in the UK. I want to be the best artist in the UK."

Stormzy's new album will doubtless take him another step closer to his goal. It is a collection of 12 tracks revolving around race, love, fame, influence and contentment. "All our experiences get us to a certain place, and right now this is where I am," he says. "It feels right to be putting this record out – it feels good."



Photo credit: Tracey Welch/Shutterstock



Blind Ambition

**CELEBRATING INFLUENTIAL BROADCASTER
AND BLOGGER LUCY EDWARDS**

There's not a teenager out there who hasn't had to overcome setbacks – disappointing A Level results, the pain of unrequited love, and more.

For Lucy Edwards, the pain was rather longer lasting. When she was 17 years old, a life-changing operation designed to cure a rare genetic condition called incontinentia pigmenti turned out to be the most temporary and painful of reprieves. Lucy's sight returned to its fullest state, yet for a brief and tormenting four hours only.

Now aged 24, Lucy's sight has deteriorated to the point where she is holding on to the very last bits of light perception. However, she refuses to buckle under the pain of missed experiences or opportunities.

Instead, by "owning" the condition, she has styled for herself a career at the BBC – she was Radio 1's first-ever blind presenter, and is a notable fashion and style blogger/vlogger, with more than 650,000 YouTube and 150,000 Instagram followers. She regularly posts under the #blindnotbroken hashtag and has also published a book, *The Blind Beauty Guide*.

In everything she does, Lucy looks to give hope and encouragement to countless others looking to get their life ambitions back on track following disability setbacks.

"It is the trauma that drives me forward," she says. "I thought I should be open about my feelings because this brings about change. If I didn't share my life online, I don't think others would be as knowledgeable about blindness.

"It is important to show that anyone can do anything if they want to."

An important element of that is a new perception of beauty. For Lucy, her beauty routine is a holistic exercise that doesn't just rely on visuals. It's about taking time for herself, relaxing and unwinding with candles, music and aromas.

She adds: "As a blind person, these are things that mean so much to me."

Photo credit: lucyedwards.com, BBC, Twitter @lucyedwards



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Wan WAY OF LIFE

AUTHOR, ACTOR, STYLIST, CHEF AND BUSINESSMAN, GOK WAN MBE CELEBRATES 15 YEARS ON OUR SCREENS

Gok Wan MBE has spent the last decade as a fashionista, an agony aunt and a leading light for empowering men and women to love their bodies.

He has endured a sometimes arduous journey on the road to fashion individualism and finesse, starting out in murky make-up rooms before personality and precision forged his path into magazine shoots, then onto our TV screens, where he has remained ever since.

"I was a terrible make-up artist," he laughs. "I made everyone look like a drag queen."

Yet despite working the celebrity circuit and becoming a magazine regular, the now 47 year old was "petrified" about making the leap to TV when asked to audition for a show.

"The producers wanted me to be really horrible to a woman. I walked out thinking, 'I wouldn't do that to anybody on set'. I wouldn't go up to a model and say, 'You're not good enough'. I definitely wouldn't go up to a celebrity and say, 'Your bum looks fat in that dress'."

Instead, Gok – who as a teenager weighed 21 stone before battling anorexia in his early twenties – saw TV as an opportunity to celebrate women, advancing the notion that being a stylist is about creating the best solutions and broadest fantasies for everyday people.

Much of this success came via *How to Look Good Naked*, whereby Gok repeatedly challenged the taboo that stops women from celebrating their bodies regardless of shape, and set about installing a sense of confidence within the female population.

Success breeds success, and across *Easy Asian*, *This Morning* and *Say Yes to the Dress*, the fashion guru – always instantly recognisable by his glasses, which he rates as his "best friend, and which can guide me sometimes and help me vanish in others" – has remained relevant and respected in a fast-changing world.

Ravishing reds

There is nothing like a bold slick of red lipstick to signal the start of the festive party season, and the right shade has the ability to transform any look from okay to outstanding. Here's how to get the perfect red lip, plus how to choose the right shade for your skin tone.

STEP 1: Prep your lips – Always buff your lips before you apply lipstick as this will help to ensure that your lips are free from flakes and plumped up ready for application. Use a clean toothbrush or lip scrub, followed by lip balm.

STEP 2: Apply foundation – Foundation makes a great base for lipstick and can help your chosen shade stay put for longer. Use your normal foundation for best results.

STEP 3: Use a nude pencil – Rather than using a red lip pencil, a nude one is more forgiving of mistakes and can help you to achieve the perfect shape.

STEP 4: Fill in the colour – Use a lip brush to gradually build up colour on your lips rather than applying the lipstick directly. Add several coats for best results.

RED LIPSTICK SHADES FOR EACH SKIN TONE

Universal shades: True red shades that boast equal amounts of blue and orange look good on every skin tone.

Fair complexions: Opt for a pink-based undertone such as raspberry, which will complement the pink tones in your complexion.

Light complexions: Both neutral and warmish complexions suit orange-based reds as these will pick up the golden undertones of your skin.

Medium complexions: If you tan easily, then you should change your lip shade based on the season. In the summer, choose an orange-based red. During the winter, opt for a cherry red.

Olive complexions: With yellow-green undertones, you should look for a brick- or rust-coloured red that will warm your complexion.

Dark complexions: Dark and golden skin tones boast a yellow undertone so can pull off a bold red lipstick.

Alternatively, blue-based reds give a more natural look.





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The Benefits of WINTER WALKING

When the weather gets wintry, it's tempting to hang up your walking boots and stay indoors. But instead of curling up on the sofa with a tub of chocolates, why not get outdoors? Recent research has shown that it could be just what your mind and body need, and it's a great way to escape the Christmas bustle.

A walk in the countryside during a downpour could improve your mood, your respiratory system and your body's immunity. This is all down to the sweet compounds released by plants, trees and soil – and the negative air ions created when water and air collide.

To get the maximum effects, go walking in the woods. Researchers found that there are twice as many negative air ions in woodland as in the open countryside. And if it's a muddy wood, so much the better – because mud contains an extra dose of health-boosting microbes.

Cold weather is another good reason to go for a wintry walk. That's because there's a type of fat in our body called 'brown fat', which helps control our weight and the sugar levels in our blood. For

some reason not yet clear, brown fat works better when we're cold.

If you want to join others for some local winter walking, check out the following:

RAMBLERS ASSOCIATION

This is Britain's walking charity, which organises Ramblers Wellbeing Walks – free, fairly short walks suitable for all, organised by local volunteers. For longer walks, you'll need to take out membership with the association.

> Website: ramblers.org.uk

> Telephone: 020 3961 3300

LONG DISTANCE WALKERS ASSOCIATION

The home of everything to do with long-distance walking, including a network of local groups.

> Website: ldwa.org.uk

There are lots of other local walking groups, some for specific groups within the community. To find out more, have a look online or visit your local library or community centre.



Kitchari

IS THIS THE ULTIMATE CLEANSE?

Do you love a good cleanse? Offering you the opportunity to reset your eating habits and rest your digestive system, kitchari cleanses are common in Ayurvedic medicine and offer a whole host of health benefits.

What are the benefits of a kitchari cleanse?

Eliminate toxins from the body | Aid weight loss | Improve energy | Improve digestion and restore regular bowel movements | Promote overall good health

How to perform a kitchari cleanse

Pre-cleanse: A pre-cleanse period typically takes place one week before the cleanse. During this time, you should cut back on sugar, caffeine, alcohol and processed foods.

Cleanse: During your three-day cleanse, you should aim to eat a grain-based dish for breakfast, such as oatmeal with warming spices, and then a bowl of kitchari for lunch and dinner. Aim to drink 8-10 servings of water or herbal tea each day.

Post-cleanse: In the 7-10 days following your cleanse, you should slowly reintroduce other foods into your diet. You may want to continue eating kitchari for one meal a day for the first few days to avoid upsetting your digestive system.

Kitchari recipe

You will need:

1 cup white basmati rice | ½ cup yellow mung dal | 2 tbsp ghee | Kitchari spice mix (¼ tsp black mustard seeds, ½ tsp cumin seeds, ½ tsp turmeric powder, 1½ tsp coriander powder, ½ tsp fennel powder, 1 tsp fresh grated ginger) | 1 tsp natural mineral salt | 6 cups water | 2 cups of vegetables such as asparagus, carrots, celery, green beans, sweet potato, squash or courgette, cut into bite-sized pieces

How to make:

1. Soak the mung dal overnight.
2. Strain the soaking water and then combine the mung dal with the rice.
3. Rinse the mixture until the water runs clear then set it aside.
4. Warm the ghee over a medium heat and add the seeds until they pop.
5. Add the rest of the spices.
6. Stir in the rice and mung dal and then sauté for a few minutes.
7. Add the water and bring to the boil.
8. Add the salt, reduce the heat and simmer for 20 minutes.
9. Add the vegetables.
10. Cook for a further 20 minutes.

NB: The consistency should be thick – more like a stew than a broth.

Photo credit: One Green Planet

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ARE YOUR SLIPPERS ruining YOUR HEALTH?



Soft, warm and oh so comfy, slippers are a staple for many. However, could they be doing more harm than good to your feet? Let's find out.

INSUFFICIENT HEEL SUPPORT: Your choice of footwear should provide both support and protection, especially if you are wearing them for long periods of time. However, with every step you take in slip-on footwear, your toes are forced to grasp the slipper to lift it off the ground and carry it, which has a negative effect on the muscles and joints of the foot.

INSTABILITY ALL UP YOUR BODY: Slippers challenge all the joints in your body owing to their lack of ankle support. In fact, an unstable ankle can drag both your knees and hips in, downwards or outwards, depending on your body type. This can cause a whole host of problems, including pain and poor posture.

HIGHER RISK OF FALLS: For the elderly, who are already at a greater risk of slipping and falling, slippers can be extremely dangerous. Slippers provide very little grip compared to other types of

footwear, which means that you are more likely to lose your balance, especially when walking on tiled, wooden or vinyl floors.

NON-BREATHABLE: Although slippers are meant to keep your feet cosy, they can easily make them too hot if they are made of poor-quality, synthetic fabric. This can create a breeding ground for fungi and bacteria and increase your risk of athlete's foot.

SO WHAT SHOULD YOU WEAR ON YOUR FEET IN THE HOUSE?

Opt for supportive, lace-up shoes that stay on the foot as you walk as these will cushion and protect your feet.

Some of the most supportive footwear brands include:

- > Birkenstock Milano
- > FitFlop
- > TOMS
- > Kalahari

It is also a good idea to walk around barefoot sometimes as this can help to strengthen and stretch the muscles, tendons and ligaments in your feet. This helps to improve balance and to prevent injury, knee strain and back problems.



HEALTH & FITNESS



HOW TO COOK WITH CHESTNUTS

When it comes to festive food, chestnuts go hand in hand with Christmas. However, did you know that there are so many different ways that you can cook and enjoy these mouthfuls of nutty deliciousness.

ABOUT CHESTNUTS

Chestnuts are the large edible fruit of the chestnut tree and are popular in both Europe and China. When you cook chestnuts, they produce a delicate and slightly sweet flavour with a soft texture that has a similar consistency to baked potatoes. You cannot eat raw chestnuts so they must be cooked before they are served.

3 WAYS TO COOK CHESTNUTS

Boil them: To boil chestnuts, you first need to score them, before placing in a saucepan of cold water. Bring the water to the boil and allow to simmer for 3 minutes. Remove from the heat and then carefully scoop out a few at a time, peel off the shell and skin with a knife.

Roast them in the oven: To roast chestnuts, you first need to pierce each nut to prevent them from exploding due to internal pressure. Then place on a baking sheet in an oven that has been preheated to 200°C/180°C fan/ gas mark 6. Roast for 15-20 minutes, stirring occasionally. Wait until they are just cool enough to peel and serve warm.

Roast them on the fire: Take an aluminium pie plate or tin foil pudding dish. Make cuts in the chestnuts and place the plate on a grill over white-hot coals. Shake the plate or dish periodically using heat proof gloves and roast until tender.

HOW TO ENJOY CHESTNUTS

- Mashed with sweet potatoes, carrots or cabbage
- Mixed with sausage meat, bacon and cranberries to make stuffing
- Blended with chickpeas to make a festive hummus
- Made into a puree and used to make chocolate chestnut cupcakes.



Time for TIRAMISU

CELEBRATING THE BOOZY ITALIAN DESSERT THAT ALWAYS OFFERS A LIFT

We're used to hearing about the history and provenance of our culinary loves – tales of family traditions and secret recipes that have been handed down for centuries.

To say that tiramisu doesn't fit into that category perhaps sounds like an attempt to besmirch it slightly, but the opposite is actually true. Instead, this is a dessert whose parentage is surprisingly recent.

The dish was invented by Italian restaurateur Ado Campeol in 1972 – thus the tiramisu has just completed half a century of service in cafés, restaurants and kitchens. In that time, it has been popularised the world over.

Now is an apt moment to celebrate the dessert, as Campeol passed away at the age of 93 this October.

The pudding has an impressive legacy, especially as a combination of eggs

whipped with mascarpone cheese, coffee-soaked biscuits and bitter cocoa powder perhaps doesn't sound like the most obvious taste combination.

The name 'tiramisu' translates to mean 'lift me up' in Italian due to the kick offered by the coffee, while rum or marsala is typically added to the mix to offer a premium, eclectic edge.

QUICK TIRAMISU RECIPE

INGREDIENTS:

3 tsp instant coffee granules | 3 tbsp coffee liqueur |
250g tub mascarpone | 85g condensed milk |
1 tsp vanilla extract | 4-6 sponge fingers |
1 tbsp cocoa powder

STEP ONE: Mix the coffee granules with 2 tbsp boiling water in a large jug and stir to combine. Add the coffee liqueur and 75ml cold water. Pour into a shallow dish and set aside.

STEP TWO: Make the cream layer by beating the mascarpone, condensed milk and vanilla extract with an electric whisk until thick and smooth.

STEP THREE: Break the sponge fingers into three pieces and soak in the coffee mixture for a few seconds. Put a few of the sponge pieces in the bottom of two wine or sundae glasses and top with the cream mixture. Sift over the cocoa and chill for at least one hour before serving.



Christmas CACTUS

A popular winter flowering houseplant that will make a great addition to your home this festive season and beyond, the Christmas cactus is easy to care for and maintain.

Why choose a Christmas cactus?

You may have already seen Christmas cacti in your local garden centre as they seem to be everywhere at this time of year, and with very good reason. A blooming succulent which is very easy to grow, Christmas cacti boast stunning flowers, and when tended to properly, can live for up to 100 years. They also release oxygen at night instead of throughout the day, which means they can help to improve your quality of sleep.

How to plant a Christmas cactus

Christmas cacti are easily propagated by cutting

a short Y-shaped segment from the stem tips of healthy plant foliage. Plant the segment a quarter of its own length deep in slightly sandy soil and then evenly moisten it. Place the cutting in a well-lit area but not in direct sunlight.

How to pot a Christmas cactus

When choosing a pot for your Christmas cactus, you need one that features a drainage hole at the bottom. This will help to prevent the soil from becoming too wet. Christmas cacti thrive in almost any type of potting mix that is formulated for succulents.

How to care for your Christmas cactus

Unlike other cacti, Christmas cacti are not native to hot and arid environments, which means they require completely different care. This houseplant should be kept in bright but indirect light, with an ideal daytime temperature of around 21 degrees and an evening temperature of 15-18 degrees. Water your Christmas cactus around once every 2-3 weeks, but only when the top one-third of the soil feels dry to the touch.



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DULUX COLOUR OF THE YEAR 2023

Wild Wonder

HOME & DIY

For the past two decades, the design experts at Dulux have been translating global insights into their Colour of the Year, and the chosen shade for 2023 has been revealed as Wild Wonder. A warm and fairly neutral colour, there are many ways that you can incorporate Wild Wonder into your home in the new year.

WHAT IS WILD WONDER?

Wild Wonder is a mix between green and mustard yellow, and is a great choice for those who prefer warmer and more neutral shades in their home. Dulux says that this colour was created to “capture the wonders of the Earth” and hopes that it will “inspire creativity and bring a sense of nature’s magic to your living and working spaces in 2023”.

WHAT COLOUR HUES COMPLEMENT WILD WONDER?

As a colour for your home, Wild Wonder is quite hard to visualise with others, which is why Dulux has

created four colour palettes to support it:

- > Lush – soothing forest tones
- > Buzz – vibrant shades that celebrate the biodiversity of a wildflower field
- > Raw – a warm and enriching palette that embodies nature
- > Flow – shades to bring balance to your home

HOW TO USE WILD WONDER IN YOUR HOME

- > In your bedroom: Pair with other neutral tones such as sage or olive green to transform your bedroom into a restful retreat.
- > In your living room: Team with pastel pinks and blues for a contemporary look that is fun and fresh.
- > In your kitchen: Try using Wild Wonder on your ceiling, your kitchen units or as an accent behind open shelving.
- > In your bathroom: Paint your bathroom walls with Wild Wonder and then add layers of forest hues from the Lush palette in your bathroom accessories.



Photo credit: dulux.co.uk

HOW TO DEFROST YOUR FREEZER

HOME & DIY

A STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE TO DEFROSTING AND CLEANING YOUR FREEZER

Can you remember the last time you defrosted your freezer? If not, then it is probably long overdue.

Although it's not one of the most enjoyable tasks, but if you don't defrost your freezer, it won't work as efficiently and will be more prone to faults.

STEP 1: TURN OFF AND UNLOAD

First, turn off your freezer and unplug it from the socket. Then, remove all the food and place it in a cooler to prevent thawing.

STEP 2: DECIDE WHERE THE WATER WILL GO

If your freezer has a drainage hose, then you can place this in a bucket to assist with the drainage process. Alternatively, lay towels or plastic liners on the floor to soak up the water.

STEP 3: ALLOW THE ICE TO MELT

The simplest way to defrost a freezer is to allow the ice to gradually melt on its own. After you have unplugged the appliance, simply leave the door open and wait for the ice to melt.

To speed up this process, you can position a fan near the door so that room-temperature air circulates into the freezer, but make sure to keep it away from any water on the floor. If you don't have a fan, you can use boiling water in pans and place on the shelves, but be careful if there are children or pets around.

STEP 4: MOP UP AND CLEAN

As the ice melts, mop it up with a rag or towel to prevent any damage to your flooring. Once all the ice has melted, you can start to clean the inside of your freezer. Mix one tablespoon of baking soda with four cups of hot water and then apply to the walls, racks and door of your freezer with a cloth. Wipe with a damp cloth to remove any residue.

STEP 5: TURN IT BACK ON AND REFILL

Once your appliance has fully dried, shut the door, turn it back on and then wait for it to reach the required temperature. This typically takes a few hours, but it can vary from one appliance to another.

Lastly, put the food back in. Repeat once a year or more if needed.





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HOW TO untangle CHRISTMAS LIGHTS

Decorating your home for Christmas should be a joyous occasion but, if your Christmas lights are a tangled mess, this task can quickly turn into a full-on stressfest.

STEP 1: Get in a positive frame of mind

If you are already feeling frazzled and frustrated, then things are only going to get worse when you start trying to untangle your lights. Therefore, you need to make sure you are feeling relaxed and in the right frame of mind. Pop on some festive songs, pour yourself your favourite festive drink and take a few deep breaths before you begin.

STEP 2: Make sure you have enough space

You need to make sure you have sufficient space to lay your lights out on a flat surface, such as on the floor or across a large table.

STEP 3: Start with the plug

Always start with the plug when untangling your Christmas lights. Once located, gently work the plug through the knots. Be careful not to pull too hard as this may damage the lights.

STEP 4: Use a pencil or pen

If you come across any knots that are preventing you from unravelling your lights, gently use a pencil or pen to tease them out.

STEP 5: Keep your lights in a straight line

As you untangle your lights, make sure you keep them in a straight line to prevent further knots. It can be beneficial to enlist a helper to do this with you and to help you hang your lights on the tree.

HOW TO STORE YOUR LIGHTS TO PREVENT TANGLING:

- > Wrap your lights around a piece of cardboard and then wrap tissue paper around them to prevent damage.
- > Alternatively, wrap them around a wire coat hanger and store somewhere safe.



HOME & DIY





Everything's going TO BE OKAY

ONE OF BRITAIN'S BEST-LOVED COMEDIANS RETURNS

For a few years, it seemed you couldn't turn on the television or open a newspaper without seeing a mention of Peter Kay.

The larger-than-life Bolton-born comedian always seems to have had the Midas touch since bursting onto the scene when winning Channel 4's *So You Think You're Funny?* contest in 1997.

A year later, he was nominated for a Perrier Award for his stand-up show at the Edinburgh Fringe Festival, and by the time the Millennium came round, he was a regular on our TV screens, extolling a brand of observational yet irreverent comedy across multiple successful sitcom series. Included in these is the iconic *Phoenix Nights* – which, despite its legacy, only totalled 12 episodes – *Max and Paddy's Road to Nowhere*, *Peter Kay's Car Share* and *Peter Kay's Comedy Shuffle*. Switching almost seamlessly between filmed commitments and hilarious stand-up, it seemed Kay could do no wrong.

Kay's self-removal from the public eye was the subject of much speculation after he wrapped up his last TV projects back in 2017. It happened when his 90-date *Have Gags, Will Travel* tour planned for 2018/19 was cancelled.

He broke cover on events shortly afterwards, referencing The Lily Foundation, which works to raise awareness of mitochondrial disease in the UK.

He wrote: "The Lily Foundation is an inspiring charity that helps to improve the lives of children with mitochondrial disease."

Mitochondrial disease is a term that covers a range of often devastating conditions involving the failure of mitochondria, which live inside cells and which play a key role in providing energy. If they do not work properly, this can lead to serious problems for the body.

"I've had first-hand experience of the foundation's work and I'm proud to raise both awareness and much-needed funds to help with the inspiring work it provides to children and their families," said Kay.

With his family's health issues now, seemingly, in a place where he can refocus on work, the funnyman, now 49, is getting back to what he does best with his first UK tour in 12 years. Aptly titled *Peter Kay Live: Better Late Than Never*, he will visit Manchester, Birmingham, Liverpool, Leeds, Sheffield, Belfast, Newcastle, Dublin, Glasgow, Cardiff and Nottingham between December 2022 and August 2023.

However, such was the demand for tickets that the Ticketmaster site crashed under the weight of demand. Subsequently, additional dates have been added for 2024 and 2025.

Kay insisted that the ticket prices reflect the £35 cost from his last UK tour, way back in 2010. "The cost-of-living crisis has hit most and will hit everyone at some point," he said. "It's something I would do for free if I could. But even if I can't do that, this isn't a money-making exercise – it's an honour to be in demand still after all this time and I'm excited about having a laugh with people in a live setting all over again.

"I also may be a bit rusty... hence the freezing of the ticket price," he joked.

In addition, Kay, the recipient of four BAFTAs and a National Television Award, has been announced as the first artist in the world to perform a monthly residency at the O2. At a time when what we're allowed to laugh at seems under more scrutiny than ever before, it seems we could all benefit from knowing the way to Amarillo... or the North Greenwich arena, at least.



LOCAL NEWS

from your neighbourhood



Photo credit: Hertford Town Council

High Street Award winners celebrated at event

The winners of the Hertford High Street Awards were announced at a ceremony last month.

A total of 63 businesses were nominated for the High Street Awards, which are organised by Hertford Town Council.

Residents cast thousands of votes for their favourite Hertford retailers and businesses across 10 categories, with the finalists selected by a combination of public votes and a judging panel of local representatives. The winners were announced at a ceremony at the newly refurbished Corn Exchange on November 20.

Hertford Cake Co. won in the Café or Fast Food Outlet category, while Mint of Hertford won in the

Fashion category and The Beauty Room won in the Health and Wellbeing category. The team at Tom Ashley (pictured above) won in the Hair and Beauty category.

The Mayor of Hertford councillor Sue Barber (pictured third from right) said: "The Hertford High Street Awards have once again highlighted the wealth and breadth of outstanding shops and services we have on our doorstep in Hertford.

"It was a joy to read so many hugely positive comments submitted by those voting.

"The awards have confirmed how fortunate we are in Hertford to have so many fantastic local businesses."

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Calendar with residents' photos goes on sale



Photo credit: Hertford Town Council

The official Hertford 2023 calendar, featuring photos submitted by members of the public, is now on sale.

During the summer, more than 80 people submitted 200 images for the competition, with the final photos selected by a judging panel made up of the Mayor of Hertford councillor Susan Barber (pictured centre), the chairman of Hertford Town Council's Development and Leisure Committee councillor Jane Sartin (pictured third from right) and Hertford-based designer and photographer Paul Crowley.

Mayor Barber said: "There were so many wonderful photographs of our lovely town in all its glory. We have tried to portray our town in all the seasons and hope that you will enjoy turning over each page every month."

The calendar is available to purchase from www.hertfordtownshop.co.uk/products/hertford-calendar-2023/ or from the Hertford Town and Tourist Information Centre for £10 each or two for £18.

Taxi driver jailed for nine years for sexual assault

A taxi driver has been jailed for nine years for raping a customer from Hertford in the early hours of Christmas Day 2021.

Syed Ahmed Ali, 49, was convicted last month of rape and five charges of sexual assault.

Ali, who was working as a Bolt driver, picked the woman up from a friend's house in Enfield for what should have been a 20-minute journey to her home in Hertford.

But prosecutor Paul Fairley told St Albans Crown Court that Ali, who had two previous complaints against him from female passengers, drove her around for one hour and 20 minutes.

The 21-year-old victim recorded Ali, a married man from Southall, having a sexualised conversation with her. He then stopped the car three times and

assaulted her.

Judge Caroline Wigin said that Ali may have been "emboldened", having got away with the two earlier complaints.

She said: "This was a sustained incident. It was abuse of trust by a late-night taxi driver.

"Clearly, she [the victim] has suffered serious psychological harm. There is no remorse from the defendant."

Ali must abide by the terms of a Sexual Harm Prevention Order and register as a sex offender for life. The order bans him from working as taxi driver.

Football club raise £3,000 through lottery

Local sports club Bengoe Tigers FC have raised more than £3,000 since signing up to the East Herts Lottery in 2019.

The club boasts one of the lowest membership fees in the area thanks to the funds raised through the lottery, which it also uses to support families in financial difficulties, improve its clubhouse and increase the number of girls joining its development group.

Charities and groups can sign up to be a beneficiary of the East Herts Lottery and receive money from ticket sales.

Speaking on behalf of Bengoe Tigers FC, chairman Andy Sheen, who is also the lead coach for the under 12s, said: "As a club, we are proud to have one of the lowest membership fees in the area, which has been made possible because of the funds raised via the East Herts Lottery.

"I would like to thank all the individuals who play the lottery and choose us as a cause to support."

Councillor Jonathan Kaye, executive member for communities at East Herts District Council, said: "The East Herts Lottery was set up for exactly this reason – to help support local community groups, charities, voluntary organisations and sports clubs.

"I'm delighted to learn how Bengoe Tigers FC are using this to help keep membership fees down and support families in financial difficulties."



Photo credit: East Herts District Council

Photo credit: Save Bengoe Field



Campaign to save popular field is relaunched

A campaign has been relaunched to protect an area of Hertford from a potential development.

After successfully blocking the creation of a quarry on the site in 2018, members of the Save Bengoe Field campaign have now relaunched their efforts to protect the area after developer Durkan Homes stated its intention of submitting a planning application.

The Save Bengoe Field group is aiming to protect the landscape and its value as a community amenity.

Save Bengoe Field spokesperson Aska Pickering said: "We believe any new development on the field is not appropriate for this location – it has been found to be of exceptional value by the Planning Inspector and Secretary of State in the last public inquiry."

A spokesperson for Durkan Homes said: "Our proposals would deliver around 100 much-needed, high-quality and affordable homes.

"Our vision is to create a green and leafy development that retains trees and hedgerows, enhances ecology and creates new amenities for the community to enjoy.

"We've really appreciated the feedback on our proposals to date, and we're continuing to work with East Herts District Council and others to develop our plans. We remain committed to applying for planning permission before the end of the year."

Hertford Town Council has been contacted for comment.

Visit www.savebengeofield.org.uk to find out more.

Midwives protest poor working conditions

Midwives marched through more than 30 towns and cities across the UK last month, including Hertford, to protest poor working conditions and under-funding of maternity care.

Healthcare professionals took to the streets of Hertford on November 20 to complain about the overworked and under-resourced taskforce which they say leaves those giving birth in danger.

This follows a survey in 2021 which showed that 60 per cent of UK midwives were considering leaving the profession, while 57 per cent said they had plans

to leave the NHS. More than 80 per cent of those planning to leave cited inadequate staffing levels.

A spokesperson for the Royal College of Midwives said: "Not a day goes by that we don't hear of a maternity service having to close temporarily, suspend services or divert women to other maternity units just because there simply aren't enough midwives.

"This can't continue because we know it compromises safety and means women don't always get the safe, positive pregnancy and birth experience that they should."



Photo credit: Hertford Town Council

Council signs new Armed Forces Covenant

Hertford Town Council (HTC) officially signed the Armed Forces Covenant on November 9 following a Remembrance service at Hertford Castle.

By signing the covenant, HTC has pledged to support and promote Armed Forces events, maintain war graves at Hertford Cemetery and churchyards, and encourage local communities to support the Armed Forces community.

HTC has nominated councillor Robert Cinnamon (pictured second from left) and councillor John Lynch MBE, both former members of the Armed Forces, to be HTC's champions for the Covenant for 2022/23. The two councillors will oversee all activities related to the Armed Forces.

Mayor of Hertford councillor Sue Barber (pictured

third from left) said: "We are proud of the strong links we have with both our Armed Forces and veterans, and we recognise the sacrifices that our many military families make every day."

"Signing the Armed Forces Covenant is a public pledge of support for the Armed Forces and their families."

Cllr Cinnamon said: "Men and women in the Armed Forces risk their lives for our country, and will often need support when returning from the service, both practically and emotionally, which I have seen first-hand."

"I am honoured to be nominated an Armed Forces champion and to provide support for the Armed Forces community."

Appeal for information following assault

Police are continuing to appeal for information following an assault at a cocktail bar in Hertford on Sunday, October 30.

The incident, in which a man was injured after being struck over the head with an object, occurred at Cinnabar in Fore Street between 1.30am and 1.45am. Another man was arrested on suspicion of actual bodily harm and released on bail until December 30.

Detective Constable Richard Christian, who is investigating, said: "An arrest has been made in

connection with the incident and our enquiries are continuing at this time.

"As part of this, we are appealing for anyone who saw the incident, or the events leading up to it, to please come forward."

"The town was busy with people out celebrating Halloween at the time, so it's likely a number of people would have seen what happened."

Anyone with information is asked to please email richard.christian@herts.police.uk

Queen for 70 years

BUT COULD IT HAVE BEEN DIFFERENT?

Would Elizabeth have become queen if her uncle, King Edward VIII, hadn't renounced the throne to marry the woman he loved? And would she have reigned for so long?

In December 1936, King Edward VIII abdicated the throne to marry divorcee Wallis Simpson. This was because he didn't want to live without the woman he loved by his side and, at the time, the Church of England didn't allow divorced people like Mrs Simpson to remarry in church if their ex-spouse was still alive. And as Edward was the nominal head of the church, it was felt he had no choice but to step aside.

So the crown passed to Edward's younger brother, who became King George VI. When George died in 1952, aged just 56, his elder daughter, the 25-year-old Princess Elizabeth, became queen. As Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, she became the UK's longest-ever reigning monarch – leading the country for 70 years until her death earlier this year.

But what would have happened if things had gone differently?

What if Edward had married Mrs Simpson but refused to give up the throne? Because the couple didn't have children together, Edward's younger brother George would still have been his heir. Edward survived his younger brother by 20 years – so the crown would have still gone to Elizabeth. But this would have happened in 1972, not 1952. So she would have ruled for 50 years rather than the record-breaking 70.

It's also possible that Edward would have had at least one child if he'd married someone other than Mrs Simpson. The line of succession would then have passed through this child – and Elizabeth may have never become queen.

Another line of thought is that Edward's attitude to the monarchy and politics was troublesome, and the monarchy wouldn't have survived his rule.

But that's another story.

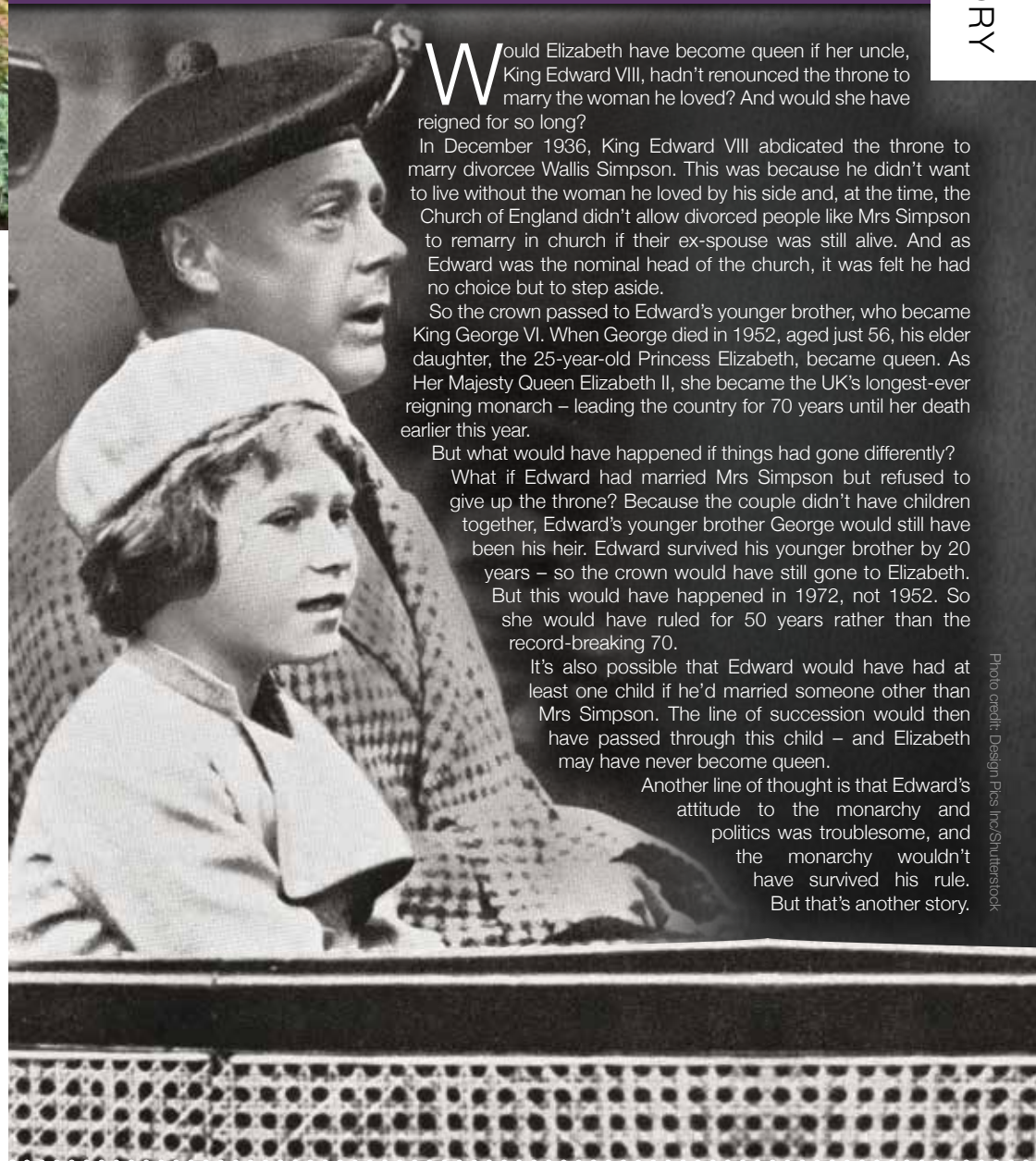


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COMPANIONS *at Christmas*



PETS

Christmas is a time to relax and spend time with your loved ones. And your four-legged family members also love the chance to enjoy more time together, as well as greeting visitors, taking in different sights and smells, and giving you puppy-dog eyes for extra treats.

Your dog can bring joy this Christmas, and hanging out together can also help you escape from the seasonal stress.

Dog behaviourist Zoe Willingham, who has 23 pups, shares seven magical moments you can enjoy this Christmas.

1. Count down to Santa Paws' arrival with their own doggy advent calendar and make them happy every morning.

2. Give them a special toy to play with when you dress the Christmas tree so they're not jumping up at the baubles.

3. Top up your training to make sure they have the essential skills to wow your guests and anyone you visit with their impeccable manners.

4. Get social and enjoy a festive feast at your favourite dog-friendly pub or restaurant.

5. Wrap up warm and get outdoors together. It might be chilly, but being in the fresh air, taking in the scents, and spending time with you means your dog will be happy and content.

6. After your wintry walk, what's cuter than seeing your dog curled up snoozing while you watch your favourite Christmas film?

7. Your pup is sure to be top of Santa's Nice List, so make sure they have a doggy stocking packed with fun toys and healthy treats to open on Christmas morning.

Want to chat about fun activities you can enjoy with your dog or ask a question about training? For more tips and advice, please visit www.bestbehaviourdogtraining.co.uk



Create your own SENSORY GARDEN

A sensory garden is designed to stimulate the five basic senses of sight, smell, sound, touch and taste, and has the ability to enhance your sense of wellbeing, reduce stress and calm the mind. Find out the best sensory garden plants and features below.

CURRY PLANT: An evergreen shrub that boasts silvery grey foliage and pale yellow flowers, the curry plant provides a beautiful aroma and is known for attracting bees and other pollinators. Plant in a sunny, sheltered spot in well-drained soil and trim regularly to help it keep its shape.

ORNAMENTAL GRASSES: Ornamental grasses such as pampas grass and architectural seed heads add structure and movement to a sensory garden. Pick creeping, hanging and straight standing grasses for maximum effect.

LAMB'S EAR: Featuring velvety foliage that looks just like a pair of lamb's ears, this evergreen perennial produces stunning purple-pink flowers in the summer months that promise to add colour and depth to your garden. Plant them in open borders with other perennials or grow in containers.

WILD STRAWBERRIES: Wild strawberry, known as *fragaria vesca*, produces small and super-sweet fruit that is perfect for stimulating your senses of smell and taste. This plant loves partial sun and fairly damp conditions.

LAVENDER: Easy to grow and care for, lavender can add both scent and colour to your garden, as well as attracting pollinators. Weave in among other summer-blooming flowers or plant near your home to enjoy its strong aroma whenever you pop your head outside the door.

A WATER FEATURE: A water feature such as a pond, fountain or bird bath makes a great addition to a sensory garden. Providing beautiful reflections, calming sounds and contrasting texture, it will also attract wildlife and a wide variety of colourful birds.



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THE TREND FOR COMMUNAL LIVING IS HERE, AND IT'S CALLED COLIVING

Our cities are not only more crowded than ever before, but more expensive too; yet the desire for young people to thrive in the heart of these fantastic urban spaces is real.

The solution to those priced out of traditional accommodation is something called Coliving.

It is an innovative social construct that uses a new blueprint for accommodation design, whereby tenants in a space have individual rooms, but shared social and kitchen areas.

The concept is much the same as you would have in a student house, though the target market is very much young professionals, and the architectural and interior finish reflects a demographic who are in employment and looking to build careers and interactions with like-minded people.

While in terms of location, Coliving can provide a huge advantage with reductions in commuting time and cost, an additional environmental impact comes by way of shared amenities, all-inclusive bills and

communal events and facilities.

While for some young people the idea of being thrown into a space with a number of strangers may be daunting, Coliving spaces are typically extremely careful to maintain high safety standards for residents, with letting agents carefully screening both residents and staff, and most include a 24/7 concierge service to help manage the building.

Coliving also provides flexibility for residents who don't want to be caught in long-term renting situations; nor might they have the ability to put a large deposit down. Instead, a rental term might be for just a few days up to a few months, and longer if desired.

What people therefore get is a ready-made community of like-minded people, excellent facilities, and all the social and practical benefits of living in a central, busy part of town.



BUSINESS & PROPERTY

Take me to the MOUNTAINS

If mountain climbing is on your bucket list, there's no better day to start planning your trip than International Mountain Day, which takes place on December 11.

Mountains are home to 15 per cent of the world's population and about half of the world's 'biodiversity hotspots' – areas with the richest concentration of threatened plant and animal life. But go carefully and you can experience all the thrills of the mountain, while also helping local communities and protecting fragile ecosystems.

Here are three mountains suitable for a range of abilities – though remember, you'll still need a high level of fitness and endurance to tackle any mountain.

MOUNT FUJI, JAPAN – 3.776M

The hike along the most popular route to the peak of Mount Fuji takes around eight hours. Most climbers start at night to reach the summit at sunrise. The official hiking months are July and August.

PIKES PEAK, COLORADO, UNITED STATES – 4.302M

This 21km hike in the Rockies lasts the whole day and takes you to the highest point on the US mainland. As well as stunning views at the summit, there's also a state-of-the-art visitor centre.

MOUNT KILIMANJARO, TANZANIA – 5.895M

Most trails up Africa's highest mountain take five or six days, allowing climbers to acclimatise to the thin air as they go. If you're brave enough, you can even spend a night camping in the mountain's crater.

MOUNTAIN FACTS:

- There are 1,187,049 mountains in the world.
- The tallest sea mountain in the world is Mauna Kea in Hawaii at 10,205m, but more than half of it is underwater. Everest is the world's highest mountain, at 8,848.86m above sea level.
- Bhutan is easily the most mountainous country in the world – nearly 99 per cent of it is made up of mountains.
- Annapurna I in Nepal is widely regarded as the most difficult and dangerous mountain to climb.
- Around 300,000 people a year climb Mount Fuji, making it the world's most frequently climbed mountain.



Pikes Peak



Kilimanjaro



Mauna Kea



Mount Everest

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CHARACTER

CHRISTMAS CREATIONS

Do you love creating handmade cards and gifts for your family and friends at Christmas? These handprint and footprint designs are super cute and offer the perfect way to personalise a wide range of presents this festive season.

If you are making a custom plate or mug, after following the below steps, apply a glaze with a brush or sponge to protect from water and wear and tear.

Rudolph the Red Nosed Reindeer

YOU WILL NEED:

Child-safe paint (red or brown) such as finger paints or poster paints | Red pom poms or buttons | Goggle eyes | PVA glue | A small bell | Ribbon | What you would like to print on – A4 card, a roll of paper to make wrapping paper, plate, etc

HOW TO MAKE:

- > If making a card, fold the A4 card in half.
- > Dip your child's hands in the paint and place on the front of the white card – these are the reindeer's antlers.
- > Dip one of your child's feet in the paint and place on the card below the handprints – this is the reindeer's face.
- > Glue the eyes to the top of the footprint.
- > Glue a button or a red pom pom to the centre of the footprint for the nose.
- > Glue the bell and ribbon to the heel area of the foot.

Father Christmas

YOU WILL NEED:

Red and white poster paint | Cotton wool | PVA glue | Goggle eyes | Black marker pen | What you would like to print on – card, wrapping paper, plate, mug, etc

HOW TO MAKE:

- > If making a card, fold the A4 card in half.
- > Paint your child's fingers in white paint.
- > Paint the lower half of their palm and thumb red.
- > Paint the top of their palm peach (mix some red and white paint together to make this colour).
- > Press down on the coloured card.
- > Once dry, draw on Santa's face and glue on the eyes.
- > Stick cotton wool at the end of the thumbprint and along the top of the red to form Santa's hat.
- > If painting an item of crockery, omit the cotton wool; use enamel paint instead and apply a clear gloss glaze to finish.



Photo credit: Tink UK



Photo credit: Nicolas Datiche/SIPA/Shutterstock

ケンチキ KRAZY!

Did you know that while you're tucking into your roast turkey and all the trimmings on Christmas Day, over in Japan, they're chowing down on crispy chicken with a selection of sides?

HOW DO THE PEOPLE OF JAPAN CELEBRATE CHRISTMAS?

In Japan, Christmas is still a secular holiday as less than one per cent of the population identify as Christian. Instead, they use this holiday as a time for families and friends to have parties, make plans for dinner and enjoy general celebrations.

WHAT IS THE JAPANESE KFC CHRISTMAS CRAZE?

An estimated 3.6 million Japanese families treat themselves to KFC every festive season, with what has to be one of the world's most unique Christmas food traditions.

In fact, demand is so high that locals often have to queue for hours to get their hands on a bucket or two of this popular cuisine.

HOW DID THIS TRADITION START?

This peculiar demand for KFC at Christmas came about because of a campaign that was inspired by Takeshi Okawara, the manager of the first-ever KFC in Japan. Shortly after it opened in 1970, he woke up at midnight with the idea to sell a 'party barrel' of fried chicken on Christmas Day. In 1974, the marketing campaign went national, calling it Kurisumasu ni wa Kentakkii, or Kentucky for Christmas. The rest, as they say, is history.

WHAT DOES THE KFC CHRISTMAS MEAL CONSIST OF?

As well as buckets of fried chicken, families in Japan tuck into lots of sides, cakes and even wine. Some of this year's offerings include:

- > A box of chicken for 3,780 yen (around £22)
- > A party box with eight pieces of chicken, a lasagne and a chocolate cake for 4,000 yen (around £25)
- > A premium roasted chicken and sides for 5,800 yen (around £35)

On average, these packages account for a whopping one-third of the chain's yearly sales in Japan.

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V

MOTORING

BIDDING FAREWELL TO THE *Fiesta*

WITH NEWS THAT THE FORD FIESTA IS TO TAKE A PERMANENT SIESTA, WE CELEBRATE THE LEGACY OF THIS BRITISH MOTORING MAINSTAY

If there is one car that portrays the modern era of motoring, it is undoubtedly the Ford Fiesta.

It was 1976 when the first Fiestas rolled off the Ford production plant in Dagenham, arrowing their way to the driveways of motorists looking for an affordable, fuel-efficient and fun way to conquer the roads.

The Fiesta has always been instantly recognisable among an ever-increasing and sometimes perplexing range of Ford models. Indeed, even though its lifespan traverses four decades and eight generations, the car that has shifted more than 22 million units – one fifth of those in the UK – has always stood out as the ultimate fun run-around.

The car has come in saloon, hatchback and even convertible versions – always nippy, always chic, and with a speediness that belies what has always been a modest price tag.

Indeed, the Fiesta epitomised a new generation of car buyers through the 1980s, who were keen to ditch the clumsy, clunky motors of the era, looking instead for a rather more streamlined and sporty approach.

Yet while the model arrived as a mark of practicality and fashion, it has found its exit governed by the same elements, ultimately being undone by the green car revolution. Hence Ford is also ditching the Galaxy and the S-Max, with the last of these being produced next April. Instead, the manufacturer – which has slipped to fifth globally in recent years, behind Toyota, Volkswagen, Hyundai and General Motors – is channelling all its energy into three new electric passenger vehicles and a further four new commercial models.

The Fiesta's day may be done, but the car's presence will be celebrated on our roads for many years to come.

Photo credit: emihankaramuk/Shutterstock.com, redbubble.com



SPORT

BOWLED OVER

CHAMPIONS

ENGLAND CLINCH T20 WORLD CUP SUCCESS

England's hard-hitting, bombastic-bowling T20 side are the best in the world – their clinching of the World Cup in Australia in the middle of November capped a memorable few weeks Down Under, in which captain Jos Buttler MBE's side battled back from adversity to lift their first world crown since back in 2010.

Chasing a modest Pakistan total of 137 in the Melbourne final, an early batting wobble was calmed by the inspirational Ben Stokes OBE, as England knocked off the required runs with an over to spare.

It was another monstrous moment for Stokes, who has made a habit of being England's go-to man for the big occasion. Indeed, when entering the crease with the side 45/3, there were fears his side might wilt at the final hurdle, having got themselves into the final despite a group defeat to Ireland and a rain washout draw versus Australia.

Perhaps we shouldn't have worried. After all, it's getting be something of a regular thing, both for Stokes and in the way the England team have showed real prowess in their white-ball cricket over the past few years.

Stokes was instrumental as the Three Lions clinched the ODI World Cup in 2019, and although he has stepped down from 50-over duties now, he will look to overturn the odds and inspire the Test side to victory over Australia in next year's Ashes.

In the final, he smashed 52 off 49 balls to steer his side home, with Buttler's 26 and Harry Brook's 20 other notable contributions.

No one can question the fact that England were deserving champions. On the way to lifting the trophy, they defeated T20 heavyweights New Zealand, Sri Lanka and India, and in the final, repelled the threat of arguably the most feared bowling attack in the game, as Pakistan failed to find the breakthroughs they needed.



BRITAIN'S GREATEST SPORTING MOMENTS...

A score to REMEMBER

Each month, we look at one of the most significant events in British sporting history. This month, we go back 21 years to England's famous 5-1 victory over the Germans at the Olympic Stadium in Munich.

"This is getting better and better and better," enthused John Motson OBE as Michael Owen sauntered through to propel England into a 4-1 lead against old foes Germany. And there was still more to come as Emile Heskey made it five, capping a special night for Liverpool, as all the goals were scored by Reds; for Sven-Göran Eriksson, who truly arrived as Three Lions' manager on that incredible Saturday evening; and for England fans everywhere, who finally felt justified in putting expectation over hope.

Of course, the expectations we had over the so-called Golden Generation were, in fact, misplaced. England crashed out to a freak Ronaldinho goal in the World Cup finals the following year, then suffered countless other false dawns throughout the Noughties, more often than not involving penalty

shoot-outs... for a change.

However, on that special night in Munich, all was good with the world. Very good. England had trailed to Carsten Jancker's fifth-minute goal, but Owen's hat-trick and Steven Gerrard MBE's piledriver on the stroke of half-time confirmed a special night for British sport.

Not only had England exorcised the spectre of Euros heartbreak five years previously, but they'd also exacted revenge on the Germans for the 1-0

defeat they suffered at the old Wembley Stadium in 2000 – a match that was to be Kevin Keegan's final game in charge.

That his replacement, the enigmatic Swede Eriksson, had turned the tide to such an

extent in the 11 months in between, was a big part of arguably the most complete England performance of a generation (and right up there with the 4-1 hammering of the Netherlands at Wembley at the 1996 Euros).

The project may not have finished the way it should have, but we could revel in the glory for one night.

Deutschland
England
1 : 5
Olympiastadion:
München



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PUZZLES & TRIVIA

PUZZLES

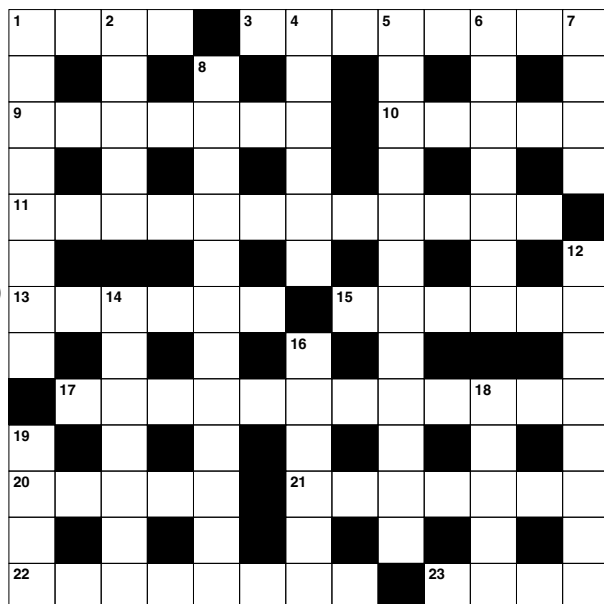
Answers: see end of The VISION Listings

ACROSS

1. Prima donna (4)
3. Stated emphatically (8)
9. Shackle (7)
10. Animal that walks on two legs (5)
11. Narcissism (4-8)
13. Contributes information (6)
15. Not noticed (6)
17. Easy to converse with (12)
20. Person who flies an aircraft (5)
21. Pays no attention to (7)
22. Where photographs are developed (8)
23. Stitches (4)

DOWN

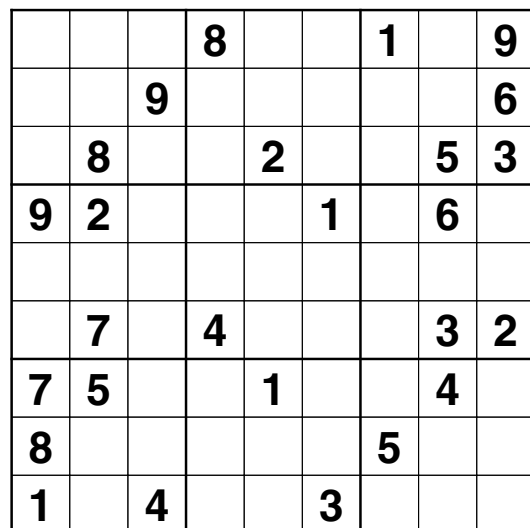
1. Relating to the home (8)
2. Type of plastic (5)
4. Constructs a building (6)
5. Intricate and confusing (12)
6. Retaliatory action (7)
7. Extinct bird (4)
8. Author of screenplays (12)
12. Opposites (8)
14. Liked by many people (7)
16. Gambling house (6)
18. Flat-bottomed boat (5)
19. Moved quickly (4)



DID YOU KNOW?

- Christmas takes place on December 25 – the day the Roman Catholic Church chose to mark Jesus' birthday. No one actually knows the exact date Jesus was born.
- Not everyone celebrates Christmas on the same day. For example, Greek Orthodox Christians often celebrate on January 7.
- Many Christmas traditions come from the Victorian era, including crackers, roast turkey and gift-giving.
- Christmas trees were first seen in Germany in the 16th century, when fir trees were decorated with fruit and nuts.
- *Jingle Bells* was originally a Thanksgiving song written in 1850.
- It only took six weeks for Charles Dickens to write *A Christmas Carol*.

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