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Editor's notes...



Brett Shohet, Editor

Hello and welcome to this month's edition of **VISION**Hornchurch. Where has the year gone? December is here, the lights are going up and the Christmas adverts are out to play.

Due to demand we are looking at increasing the distribution numbers of the magazine early in the New Year. This has come sooner than expected, so get in contact if you do wish to promote your business.

This month's edition is jam packed with things to do, places to go and features to read to fully immerse you in the holiday season.

In this month's local news, *Love Island* winner Kem Cetinay has joined the line-up for *Dancing on Ice*, students have raised hundreds of pounds for charity and a carer at a former care home has been jailed for non-recent child sexual abuse.

I would personally like to take this opportunity to thank all of our readers and clients for the publication's success so far. I wish all your family and friends a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Remember to share your stories for our local news pages. If you have something interesting, please send it to hornchurch@visionmag.co.uk

Remember this is your magazine for your town.

I hope you all enjoy the festive edition of **VISION**Hornchurch. Happy holidays.

Brett



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BLUE IS THE COLOUR

As Sir David Attenborough returns to our screens with arguably his most spectacular and revealing series yet, we ask the world's most renowned naturalist if human beings will ever know everything about the deep.

From brine pools that lure in unsuspecting eels to cuttlefish that hypnotise their prey; from shrimps living in deep sea coral sponges to airborne trevallies – fish that leave the water to eat low-flying birds – we are discovering new mysteries of the deep with every mission. And no better are these more elegantly presented than in *Blue Planet II*, Attenborough's majestic, subterranean return to form, and currently the Sunday night feeding frenzy for natural world fans of all ages, all backgrounds.

"Nature is one of those unique things that unites us," begins Attenborough, now 91, and in his sixth decade of documentary-making with the BBC. "It pays no attention to social class or skin colour or wealth – nature inspires everyone in equal measure, and that's what makes it so perfect for me."

Of all nature, the ocean remains arguably the biggest mystery. Clearly, humans are not genetically equipped to venture to the depths, but even the latest technology can only take us so far.

"They say 95 per cent of the oceans are still unexplored, and when you get to the ocean floor that figure climbs to 99 per cent. If 70 per cent of the Earth's surface is water, you can see how little we actually know," Attenborough continues.

"We need to prepare ourselves for some spectacular discoveries in future. We will learn more about ecosystems and these strange environments, building a greater understanding of just how magnificent mother nature is.

"But with learning comes responsibility, and that's what I am most interested in ensuring we preserve, long after I've departed. We have a duty to protect what we find – from the coral reefs to fishing quotas to sand dunes – because if we can do that, then all the exploration is worthwhile."

Every week, viewers are mesmerised by the sights that are shown on their TV, with many calling the show a real-life Pixar. The filming is something to be admired, with the crystal-clear imagery, but it's the creatures of the sea that are the real stars. Here are some of the extraordinary moments from the show.



Bobbit Worm

Viewers were left terrified during the third episode of the show with one of the scariest creatures – the bobbit worm. At around a metre long, the predator hides underneath the sand stalking fish until they come close enough to make their move.



Giant Trevally

The giant trevally can grow to around 1.7m in length. It is no normal fish, as it tracks the flight path of a bird and then leaps out of the ocean to catch it. It will capture any bird sitting or gliding over the surface.



Transgender Fish

Female wrasses have the ability to become male, but not all of them do. This is still puzzling to scientists and they are still trying to figure out why.



Cuttlefish

One of the most fascinating creatures to be shown on the show was the cuttlefish, which has hypnotic powers. It lurks in south-east Asia and changes colour and pattern and pulsates its body to put its prey in a trance. This gives the fish enough time to capture its prey.



Ocean Swells

Impressive ocean swells aren't just for blockbuster movies, the stunning scenes were shot by the film crew showing enormous waves forming and crashing, displaying their true power.

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THE GREAT BRITISH BAKED OFF



The eighth series of *The Great British Bake Off* returned to our screens in August, with this being the first to be broadcast on Channel 4. Many of the show's fans were sceptical with the channel move which meant a new judge, new presenters and adverts, however they quickly warmed to the changes.

Prue Leith was chosen to judge the bakers alongside Paul Hollywood and Noel Fielding and Sandi Toksvig fronted the show.

Throughout the weeks there were several incredible bakes, as well as some the contestants would like to forget. But one of the constant front runners was Sophie, who was crowned the overall winner of the series.

In week one, she made herself known to the other bakers as she received the famous 'Hollywood handshake' and came first in the technical challenge. There were only three weeks in the whole competition where she wasn't one of the judge's

favourite bakers, announced star baker or the winner of the show.

However, outside of the Bake Off tent, Sophie was in the media for the wrong reasons. It was reported by The Sun that she was being investigated over benefits fraud for claiming single person's allowance despite living with her boyfriend.

But a Bake Off spokesperson denied this, telling *The Sun*: "Sophie has recently declared a change in her circumstances to the Department for Work and Pensions. Any suggestion of benefit fraud relating to Sophie is categorically untrue."

On the day of the final, Prue tweeted the result hours before the show had been aired. She blamed the blunder on being in a different time zone and later apologised to fans for ruining the result. Despite this, 7.7 million people still tuned in to watch Sophie be crowned the champion.

The Great British Bake Off returns to Channel 4 in 2018.



Photo credit: Channel4

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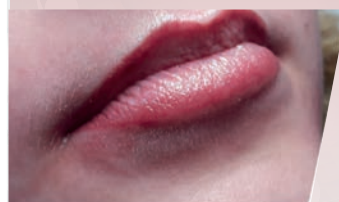
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FASHION

Snow Queens

It is the season for Christmas and New Year parties, so it's time to start thinking about party cover-ups. Many think that by adding a jacket you will be ruining your glamorous look, but these cover-up ideas will have you turning heads.

Sequin shrug

If you have a simple outfit with little embellishment or detail, sequin shrugs will be the perfect addition. If you have a dark-coloured dress such as black or navy blue, then add a contrasting coloured shrug such as gold. It will make the overall look more glamorous and sparkle when the light hits.

Furs

This timeless piece will add a touch of chic to any look with its faux fur finish and bow. With the cold weather setting in, it will also keep you warm and is available in a variety of colours to go with any outfit.

Ponchos

Ponchos are a great addition if you want something to keep you snug. They make the perfect layering piece and can easily be paired with any outfit.

Cape

While more expensive to buy, capes are the perfect substitute for a coat. They are great whatever the weather and with a relaxed fit, they will slip on easily. Buy your cape in a colour that will go with any outfit, such as black, and wear it time and time again.

Cover-up

For something simpler and just as stylish, why not opt for a knitted cover-up? They are great for wrapping up on a cold evening and will complement any outfit, particularly print dresses.



Photo Credit: www.debenhams.com

FOLLOWING SUIT

What every man should consider when buying a suit

THE FIT

Get it right and you'll stroll about like a king; get it wrong and you'll feel (and perhaps even look) like a teen at prom wearing his dad's old suit.

If you're buying off the rack, try assorted brands to get a fit that suits you. The shoulder pads ought to lie flat, the jacket should fall straight and just cover your buttocks, while the trousers are meant to rest on the top of your shoes. Too long and they start to look sloppy.

THE LINING

Feeling fancy? Then why not indulge in a lining, which makes the suit feel heavier and more luxurious. Choose a colour that's a shade or two darker than the suit, or if you're feeling bold, a rich purple or royal blue.

THE BUTTONS

Three-button suits used to be the most popular, but the higher V-shape they create can make them feel restricting and stuffy. Two-button varieties are ubiquitous now and feel formal without being old-fashioned; while the slim-fit suits horribly popular among Shoreditch types have only one.

THE FABRIC

Even on a tight budget, a 100 per cent polyester suit ought to be avoided. They look shinier than other materials and don't breathe well, meaning you might be sweating long before you walk through the door for that important meeting.

Wool is always the safest option and comes in a variety of cloths. Whereas flannel and tweed are heavy and a tad old-fashioned, worsted wool is durable, long-lasting and can be woven into various thicknesses.

THE ACCESSORIES

With your perfect suit nailed, you can add your own embellishments. Ties are no longer essential, but belts are, and ought to be of a decent quality. Other accessories include cuff links, pocket scarves, socks and lapel pins, but while it's good to show your personality, be sure to err on the right side of novelty.



Get knotted

Christmas and New Year celebrations are approaching, so it is time to get out your finest suits and practice your tie knots. This year, impress your friends, family and work colleagues with these knots. We have included the traditional bow tie and the adventurous Eldredge.

The Eldredge Knot

Difficulty – 5/5

1. Start with the wide end of the tie on the left and the small end on the right. The tip of the wide end should rest at the top of your belt buckle. Only move the small end.
2. Move the small end over the wide end to the left.
3. Move under the wide end and to the right.
4. Move up to the centre towards the neck loop.
5. Place down through the neck loop and to the left.
6. Move across the front, to the right, then up into the neck loop from underneath.
7. Place down to the left and around the back of the wide end to the right.
8. Bring it across the front towards the left and through the loop made in the previous step.
9. Pull the small end towards the left to tighten.
10. Move up to the centre towards the neck loop. Down through the neck loop and to the left.
11. Move up to the centre towards the neck loop. Down through the neck loop and to the right.
12. Place across the front towards the left and through the loop made in the previous step.
13. Pull the small end towards the left to tighten.
14. Tuck the rest of the small end behind the neck loop on the left side.

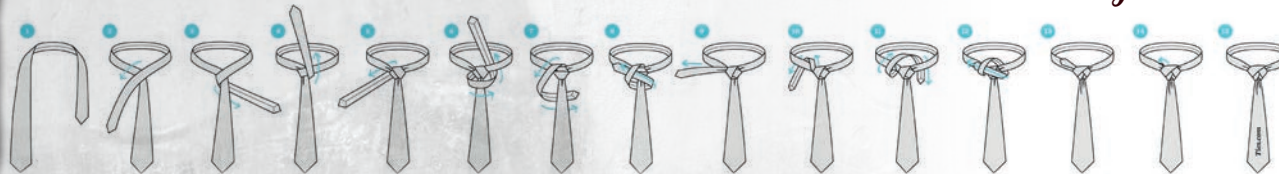
13. Pull the small end towards the left to tighten.
14. Tuck the rest of the small end behind the neck loop on the left side.

Bow Tie

Difficulty – 4/5

1. Start with the bow tie lying face up. Adjust the bow tie so the right side is slightly shorter than the left. The end on the left will be referred to as A and the end on the right will be referred to as B.
2. Move A to the right side, across B.
3. Bring A under B and up through the neck loop.
4. At the joint, fold B towards the right and then towards the left to create a bow shape.
5. Bring A straight down over the middle of the bow shape that was made with B.
6. Fold A back towards the chest and pinch the fold.
7. Push the pinched end (A) through the loop behind B.
8. Pull on the folded parts of the bow to tighten.
9. Adjust until balanced on both sides.

The Eldredge Knot



Bow Tie





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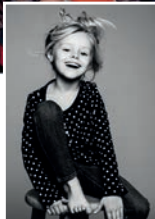
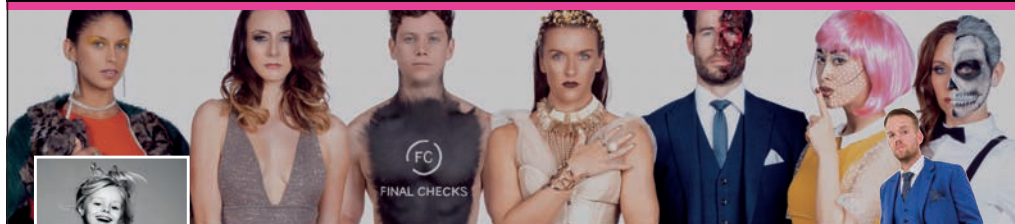


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HOW TO BEAUTY: eyes and hair



BEAUTY

When it comes to Christmas parties, hair and make-up are often the most talked about subjects. How should you have your hair? Up or down? Should you go all out and wear your new red lippy or be subtle and go for a nude shade? Whatever you plan to wear, these hair and make-up ideas will be the perfect accompaniment to any outfit.

Smoky eye

A smoky eye is the perfect choice as you can often achieve this look by adding to your original make-up. So, if you're rushing to get ready after work, this is a great time saving make-up idea. If you want to make more of an impact, use darker shades, or for a subtler look, use light brown tones.

Start by using a light tone of eye shadow and applying this all over the lid and slightly above. Then, using a darker shade, apply a small amount

to the outer eye and blend in towards the inner eye. This will create your smoky eye look. You can also add winged eyeliner for added impact and top up your mascara for bolder eyelashes.

Waves

Waves are a must this festive season. With the cold weather, they are perfect for when you are wearing a woolly hat or ear muffs. Waves are also longer lasting than straight hair as often the cold weather will make it wispy and frizzy. This is less noticeable with wavy hair and it can be styled in numerous ways which are simple yet stylish.

For a perfect party updo, create a messy bun. This is easy to do and will only take a matter of minutes. Creating a bun with wavy hair will also give it more volume. The messy bun trend has been huge recently and you can even add hair accessories such as pins and clips to add a touch of glamour.





BEAUTY

SKIN *Rescue*

How to save your complexion from the perils of cold winds and central heating.

It's no secret that summer skin is easy to master. You've been wearing your SPF 50 tinted moisturiser every day, getting a regular dose of vitamin D and enjoying a dewy natural glow with just a dab of lip gloss and a lick of mascara. But then, overnight, everything changes and you wake up with skin that's as flaky as a Greggs sausage roll. Everything feels like it's attacking your pores, from scalding shower water to the drying central heating and the bruising cold air.

The trouble is that when your skin is healthy with its moisture barrier intact, it's glowing and plump and easy to care for, but once that barrier is damaged it can feel like nothing will repair it, ever, and even the products it once found nourishing now sting and burn – this is because chemicals are absorbed easier, leading to a greater chance of irritation. So how do we repair skin that has been stripped of its protective layer? The answer: through gentle nourishment and lipid replacement.

Firstly, get back to basics. Simplify your routine with a gentle cream cleanser and avoid alcohol-based products and scrubs at all costs. Find a moisturiser that boosts ceramide production or anything with omega oils. Rosehip oil is a great way to slowly start rebuilding your layer of protection and is best applied when your face is slightly damp to trap moisture.

When cleansing, use tepid water and try drinking green tea. Next, you'll find eating lots of berries and oily fish will boost antioxidants whilst reducing inflammation within the body. Once skin is healed, you can protect it by avoiding harsh products, investing in a humidifier and drinking lots of water. Oh, and like Baz Luhrmann sagely said: "Wear sunscreen (even when it's cloudy)."



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HEALTH & FITNESS

Festive Fatties

THE ABSOLUTE CALORIE CON OF CHRISTMAS BEVERAGES

It used to be that Christmas indulgence lasted for a couple of days at the end of December. And while it is possible to put on weight from even just a day or two of excessive eating, it's fairly easy to bounce back. The trouble is, with every high street chain keen to offer an abundance of fattening festive fare, often from as early as late October, it can be easy to unwittingly consume massive amounts of extra calories.

The most insidious of these festive 'treats' is arguably the ubiquitous Christmas beverage, be it hot chocolate with festive sprinkles or a latte infused with gingerbread. The first problem is – like when consuming wine or beer – it can be easy to forget that what you're drinking is counting towards your daily calories.

But the biggest problem is just how much fat and sugar is packed into some of these mugs, particularly when you consider the barista's casual upsell to a bigger size or the addition of cream and marshmallows. In anticipation of this year's fair cocktail menu of hot drinks, we looked at the calorific content from last year's recipes, and found...

COSTA MINT HOT CHOCOLATE MEDIO 452 calories | 20.4g of fat | 45.5g of sugar

TALL STARBUCKS GINGERBREAD LATTE 305 calories | 15.6g of fat | 28.6g of sugar

CAFFÈ NERO PRALINE LATTE & WHIPPED CREAM 325 calories | 20.9g of fat | 25.4g of sugar

But there is some good news. It appears some coffee chains are aware of the problem: Starbucks has been whispering about reducing the sugar content in its most iconic Chiribo drinks, and have already removed the largest size from menu boards, with others set to follow suit.

Plus, remember, it's actually okay to treat yourself occasionally, but try to limit your intake and do your best to resist the dreaded 'whipped cream upsell'!



FESTIVE holiday maths

+ - x ÷ = + - x ÷ = + - x ÷ =

How much exercise do you need to do to burn off a mince pie? **VISION** finds out...

It is widely believed that we double our calorie intake on Christmas Day, which means that by the end of the entire chocolate-scoffing, Baileys-quaffing festive marathon, you would have to do, well, a marathon to burn off the damage. But what if you could drop some of the excess along the way?

A mince pie for example, is around 295 calories, which would require you to jog for around 45 minutes, but you could also inspire a family footie match down the park or have a rambunctious game of tag around the house.

A single portion of Christmas pudding is sadly a little more fattening at 350 calories (not including cream), but the good news is that dancing can burn up to 400 calories an hour, meaning you can have seconds AND an evening of jiving to *Rockin' Around the Christmas Tree*.

So with two of the worst festive offenders taken care of, let's take a look at everyone's favourite Christmas tipples. Sweet and spicy mulled wine can sometimes go down a little too easy, but at only 106 calories a mug, it's not that hard to expend. In fact, you can burn an extra 42 calories an hour from just standing, so if you volunteer to do the post-lunch washing up you'll be both popular and slimmer by the end of it.

A large glass of Baileys (100ml) however, is around 327 calories which equates to a three-mile run. Include the customary chocolate liquor on the side of it and those calories are creeping back up. Thankfully Christmas comes but once a year, and if you're prepared to do a little work after the main event, then it's probably better to just enjoy yourself and prepare to lace up those running shoes in the New Year.



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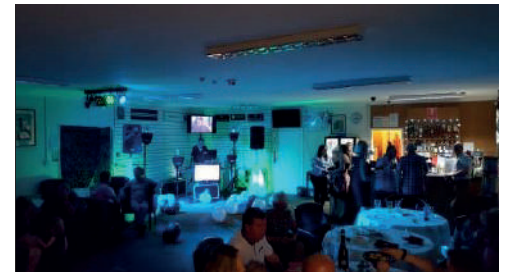
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When Vanessa Jacoby's job with a leading city bank started to affect her health and family life, she knew that something had to change.

She said: "When my teammate resigned and they didn't replace him, it effectively doubled my workload. I was suffering in every kind of way under the pressure."

It was when Vanessa attended a yoga class with her mother that her next step became clearer.

She explained: "At the end of the class, the teacher rang a singing bowl on my heart. I felt alive, deeply at peace, balanced and blissful. I felt truly awake for the first time."

Vanessa spent the next four months in deep meditation exploring her new found vitality, sensitivity and awareness.

She said: "I studied the Eastern arts and was drawn to the Chakras and also a Shamanic Herbalism course which talked of a deepened relationship with the plants. I started to experiment with herbal extractions and combined them in ways I felt worked with each of the Chakras."

Over the last year, Vanessa and her husband James have sourced, researched and experimented with

more than 300 herbs, plants and roots to build their business – Real Remedies.

Vanessa explained that she and James have created a range of products for people sensitive to the energetic effects of plants, and for those who want to become more so.

She said: "We're helping people to explore and develop a conscious understanding of their own internal experiences. When we look inward at our own feelings and how they're affected by and connected with the world, we can become incredibly alive and aware."

"Without exception, we can all do this and it results in immense peace, clarity and fulfilment."

If the past year is anything to go by, there is a growing market for businesses like Real Remedies.

Vanessa said: "People love the offering – they love that we are using natural healthy, organic ingredients, no additives or nasties and that they're designed to inspire greater connection and awareness. And yes, the market is growing - We've actually just been approached by a leading supermarket who are interested in our products."

With Real Remedies booked to appear at a number of festivals and also hosting their own events in the New Year, it seems demand is growing.

For more, go to www.realremedies.co.uk



REAL
REMEDIES



5 WAYS TO GET CREATIVE WITH Brussels Sprouts

Far from being just a Christmas dinner side dish, these vitamin-packed powerhouses are a superb way to brighten up many a comfort food, adding a wealth of health benefits along the way.

Bacon and Brussels hash

A classic flavour combination, this hash topped with a poached egg makes a fantastic hangover breakfast and is a great way to use up leftovers. Simply fry bacon, onions, parboiled potatoes and cooked Brussels sprouts in a little oil until crispy, golden and delicious.

Caramelised sprouts with garlic

Set a sturdy roasting pan on the stove with oil and add a pound of halved, raw Brussels sprouts (cut side down) with five peeled garlic cloves and sauté until the bottoms are browned. Season the pan and transfer it to a pre-heated oven (approx. 200C) for 10-15 minutes, shaking occasionally. Add a glug of good balsamic vinegar and serve.

Lemony sprouts and breadcrumb penne

A superb use for leftovers, just fry cooked sprouts with garlic and chilli until warmed through, then add half a glass of white wine and reduce. Finally, stir in cooked penne and toasted breadcrumbs with the zest of half a lemon.

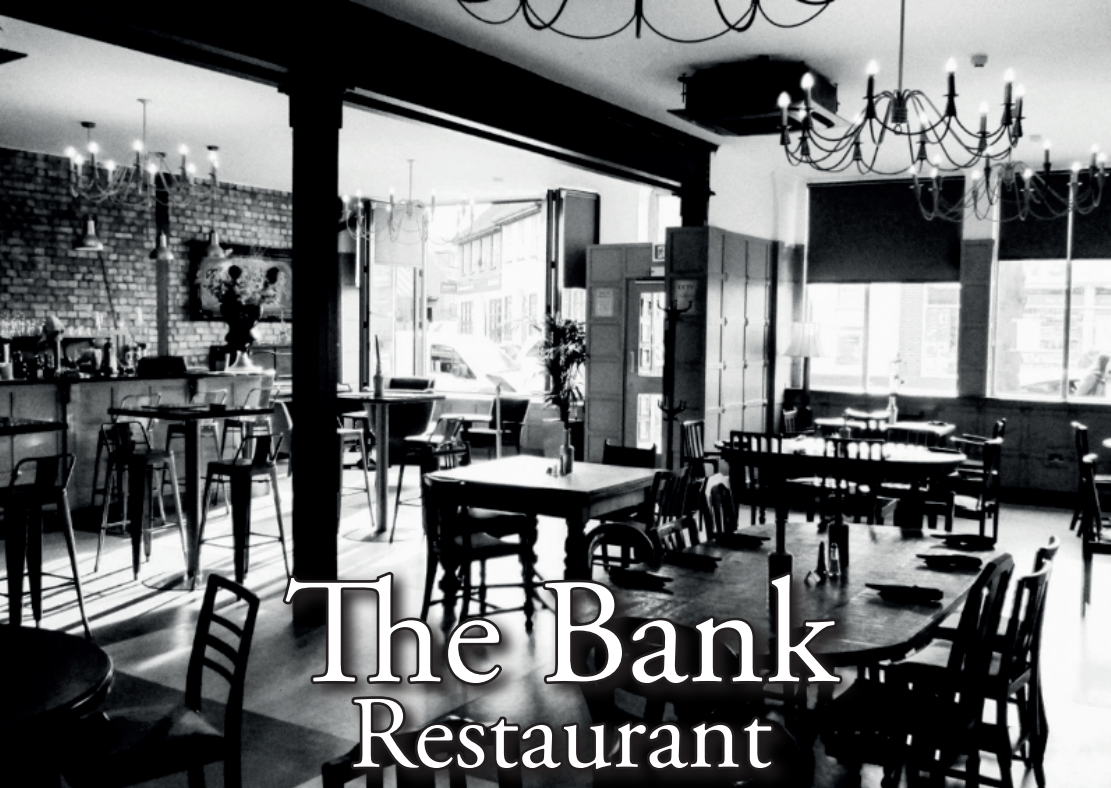
Sprout salad with apple, walnut and blue cheese

Wash your sprouts and separate the leaves before tossing with toasted walnuts, shredded apple and chunks of blue cheese. Finish with a classic vinaigrette dressing.

Gruyere and parmesan gratin

If you are going to serve sprouts as a side, consider mixing it up by including them in a gratin. Rich, creamy and flavoursome, this makes an impressive little dish and the only skill required is the ability to whip up a béchamel sauce with plenty of tangy gruyere and parmesan, which you can then bake with your parboiled veg. Consider Brussels sprouts haters fully converted.





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ANYTHING BUT *turkey*

Tired of the traditional bird for your Christmas Day feast? Then consider one of these tasty delights instead...

beef wellington

Christmas is the perfect excuse to buy a tender hunk of beef fillet. First sear your meat in a pan, then put mushrooms, chestnuts and garlic in a food processor until it forms a paste that you gently fry. Once cooked, spread onto ready-made puff pastry, roll up your beef, and bake.

coca-cola ham

Place your gammon joint in a big saucepan then add two litres of Coca-Cola, a peeled onion, halved, and simmer for around two-and-a-half hours. Once cooled, remove the skin and score the fat and stud it with cloves, before smearing with black treacle, brown sugar and mustard. Once roasted, this gammon will be magnificently moist with a fragrant glaze.

stuffed pumpkin

Vegetarians needn't miss out this Christmas with this decadent dish. Neatly chop off the top of your pumpkin and scoop out the seeds. Then fry your choice of spices – onion, garlic, dried cranberries, ginger, mixed spice, saffron, clementine zest – before adding rice and vegetable stock. Simmer until cooked. Once cooled, stuff your filling into your pumpkin and transfer to a deep roasting pan with foil protecting the base. Add an inch of water and roast in the oven for approximately two hours.

pomegranate-braised pork belly

Brown your pork in a sturdy roasting pan on the hob before adding pomegranate juice, cinnamon, allspice, lemon juice, honey and red wine vinegar. Simmer, cover with foil and transfer to the oven for an hour. Then remove your meat before reducing the juices on the hob until it becomes a sticky glaze which you can then baste your pork with. Return all to the oven for another 45 minutes and serve sprinkled with pomegranate seeds for a dish that's even prettier than your Christmas tree.



FOOD & DRINK

SHAKEN & STIRRED cocktail for Winter

From James Bond to Tom Cruise, the humble cocktail has been a staple of every party-lover's back catalogue of booze. Here is a fantastic recipe for a winter cocktail that will revolutionise your reputation as a master mixologist.

HOT TODDY

With honey, sugar and lemon combined with the full-bodied blast of dark rum, this cocktail is perfect to enjoy with friends around a roaring fire – and will even stave off any sniffles in the process.

INGREDIENTS

- 1 part dark rum
- 1 bar spoon honey
- 1 large lemon peel
- 1 ounce hot water

INSTRUCTIONS

Prepare a mug by rinsing it with boiling water and pouring the water out. Add the honey (or sugar) and the lemon peel and pour in an ounce of hot water and stir until the sweetener has dissolved. Add dark rum and top off with more boiling water.



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SCHOOL SAVVY

Forget Christmas, if you're a parent with a child enrolling into a new school next year, then this is the most stressful period for you. But don't fret, for here are some dos and don'ts for picking the right school for your little one.

DO attend the open days: It's easy to gloss over an establishment's flaws when looking at a fancy brochure, which is why attending a school's open day is essential (even though this is still arguably the best the place will ever look). Upon arriving, pay attention to how the school feels – what's on the walls, how organised are the classrooms, are the teachers friendly and, if it's a daytime opening, how engaged are the kids?

DON'T be afraid to ask questions: Take the opportunity to ask teachers and pupils alike how they feel about the school, and don't fret about being upfront with representatives regarding any nagging doubts you have.

DO pay attention to the Ofsted report and league tables: Official statistics will tell you test and exam

results for the schools you're looking at, offering a pretty reliable snapshot of how each is performing, while the Ofsted report will offer a broader understanding of how the curriculum is taught and the pupils' overall wellbeing.

But **DON'T** base your decision entirely on that: If an institute has an 'outstanding' Ofsted rating, but you've heard of excessive bullying or disruption at the school, it's important to bear both in mind. Similarly, if a school has a 'satisfactory' rating but seems to have got its act together since the report, it may be worth giving it a second look.

DO go with your heart: Whatever the facts and figures, the most important barometer is how you and your little one feel about the school, and that feeling normally comes from the heart.

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KIDS

Potato Stamp wrapping paper

Christmas is one of the best times of year to get crafty. This year, instead of buying wrapping paper, why not create your own? All you will need is some brown paper for the base, some good-sized potatoes (yes, potatoes), paint, a paint brush and a knife.

Step one: Cut your potato in half ensuring you get a clean cut.

Step two: Using a knife, slice in the shape for your stamp making sure you only go part of the way down. Roll the knife around the edge of the potato where the slices end and lift out the pieces you don't want.

Step three: Paint your potato stamp.

Step four: Stamp your potato onto the paper.

Leave for a few hours to dry to ensure that it doesn't smudge when you wrap your presents.

For Christmas...our favourite Christmas stamps include Christmas trees, stars, stockings, candy canes, snowflakes and holly. You could also create snowmen and baubles and once dried, decorate them with felt tip pens.



It's a Wonderful Life

Home Alone 2: Lost in New York

If you aren't a nine-year-old boy who harbours a secret desire to ditch your family for a solo frolic in New York, then you likely have a soft spot for the Big Apple and would love nothing more than a pre-Christmas shopping spree at Bloomingdales.

Bad Santa

You're the kind of person who tells very inappropriate jokes at the Christmas dinner table to varying degrees of success, like the year you almost made your grandmother choke on her stuffing.

The Holiday

If this is on the top of your viewing list, you are probably a very stressed-out mum who would happily swap your shambolic household for a bit of peace and quiet by the beach this Christmas.

It's a Wonderful Life

You're a philosopher. Of course, Christmas is expensive and stressful and more hassle than it's worth, but hey – it could always be worse. It could be New Year's Eve.

Holiday Inn

Oh, you old romantic. Do you remember when Christmas really used to mean something? When it was all about love rather than consumerism? Do you remember when everything was in black and white? *Sigh*

The Muppet Christmas Carol

You love a classic, but also feel that even Charles Dickens would prefer this hilarious and musical retelling of his most famous novella.

Love Actually

You might be a wee bit lonely, actually...

Elf

You're a child at heart and love to revel in all the Christmas merriment, from hollering out carols to tearing open presents and drinking candy cane-flavoured vodka until you pass out.

Die Hard

You always initiate the annual Christmas Nerf war in your mother's house, and when she berates you for knocking over the Christmas tree, yell: "Welcome to the party, pal."



Ideas to make your very own DIY Christmas wreaths, easily and inexpensively

What a corker

Hide (or exhibit) your Chrimbo booze consumption by threading wine corks interspersed with baubles onto string until they form a circle. The perfect dining room decoration.



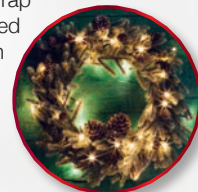
Disco doorbell

Create that Christmas party feeling at home with a sparkle-studded bauble wreath. Incredibly simple to make, just take a polystyrene ring base and glue on as many miniature baubles as possible until you can no longer see the white underneath. Finish with an extra sprinkle of glitter, or if you're feeling traditional, a spray of fake snow.



Light fantastic

Guide Santa to your house with a fabulous neon wreath. Use a wire metal wreath as a base and wrap layers of different coloured lights (battery-powered LED preferably) around the wire, alternating with tinsel to cover the light leads. Keep all-white for a classic effect or go colourful and flashy so everyone knows where the party is.



Fun floral

Naturally, one wants to avoid a wreath that feels funereal rather than festive, so you may think you ought to steer clear of flowers. Consider using pom-pom bursts of hydrangeas in alternative colours for a look that is both bright and beautifully Christmassy.



Rustic romance

Create the classic wreath using gifts from Mother Earth as you forage and find bits and bobs from an autumn walk (or just pop to your local florist). Using either a straw or metal ring as a base, attach anything from pine cones to fir branches, apples and cinnamon sticks, dried lemon slices and flowers, and even candy canes and ribbons.



Gingerbread bake

Using either a cardboard circle or gingerbread base, bake an array of biscuit shapes (leaves, trees, candy canes, etc.) which you can attach and decorate with icing. How fabulously festive of you.



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HOME & DIY

THE INTERIOR DESIGN TRENDS THAT ARE TAKING SCANDINAVIA BY STORM

Lagom

Cited as the new 'hygge' – think cosiness and contentment – lagom is more about 'not too little, not too much'. A tad less indulgent than its plaid-clad predecessor, lagom is about finding the balance in life. In interiors it is interpreted as having less clutter with a focus on good-quality, ecologically-sourced investment pieces.

Stylish storage

A step on from the Ikea clothes rail you used to overload in your student dorm, this is more about having a storage unit which is almost a work of art in itself, which you can then use to create a capsule wardrobe of your most aesthetically-pleasing pieces. A dead-cert way to impress the lover you could never get in college...

Outdoors indoors

There's nothing better than sleeping out under the stars, but if your locale is more the North Circular than the Northern Lights, you can still delight your little ones with a wood-stick tent bed. Fast becoming popular in Sweden, these adorable

tented canopies are light, easy to assemble and fit over existing frames. Glow-in-the-dark stars not essential.

Tech-free spaces

Philistines rejoice. Bedrooms can be device-free once more. Scandi style has always had a certain minimalism to it and this is now beginning to extend into people's desires to have bedrooms that are an oasis rather than an extension of one's TV room/office. Colour palettes soften to milky whites and greys, and designers are drawn to natural fabrics once more: like sheepskin and leather.

Black and white

Live your life like a Nordic noir television show by drenching your home in monochrome. Following in the lagom style of not too little, not too much, the trick is to add touches of black and white while keeping the overall colour scheme soft and neutral: a chevron throw, for example, or your favourite black and white film poster, though perhaps not one you can buy in Ikea.





Smells LIKE HOME

Whether you prefer candles, sprays or diffusers, find out what your candles and home scents say about you.

Vanilla and sugar scents

If you love to fill your home with sweet and soothing fragrances, you are likely to be a homebody – someone who strives to make their home as welcoming and comforting as possible. Vanilla is one of the most calming aromas and is often used in candles that aim to evoke childhood memories like cupcakes or ice cream.

Pine and woody scents

You have get-up-and-go and like to wake up in a home that is as invigorating as a clear winter's day. You decorate your home with rustic flourishes and lots of wood to match this wonderful earthy perfume.

Rose and floral scents

In Victorian times, flowers were used as a way of expressing love, making them a very romantic scent to spritz. Die-hard dreamers can't get enough of the heady scent of rose, which is evocative of a first kiss, while those who prefer lighter florals like daisy and honeysuckle have a more whimsical and care-free approach to life.

Cotton and fresh scents

Throw those windows open and let the sunshine in! If bracing fragrances that evoke the ocean or fresh laundry are your thing, you are likely to be a very breezy, care-free person. You love bright, airy spaces and your home is an immaculate retreat from the chaos of the world.

Frankincense and musky scents

You are mysterious and have a penchant for the exotic. Your home is equally provocative and features lots of dark wood and velvet. Candles which feature amber and frankincense are ideal for the bedroom and are virtually guaranteed to set the mood.

Citrus and fruity scents

You have a happy and optimistic outlook on life and prefer a home fragrance which uplifts, even on the gloomy days. But citrus scents can sometimes overwhelm and be reminiscent of bathrooms, so consider fig as a summery alternative.



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MOULD WATCH

Damp weather makes a perfect environment for mould to grow, which can lead to health problems and even structural damage to your home. As with most things, prevention is better than cure and by following these tips you can keep your household healthy and mould-free all year long.

Ventilate

One of the simplest ways to prevent mould is to keep air flowing throughout your home, particularly in areas like bathrooms and laundry rooms where moisture builds up. Try to open windows for at least half an hour to allow steam to clear post-shower, or if your bathroom doesn't have a window then a decent extraction fan is vital.

Bleed radiators

Mould loves cold, damp corners, which is why it will often accumulate in rooms that are used less, like spare bedrooms or closets. Proper insulation will reduce your risk of mould enormously, but if you have a room with a faulty radiator there is no heat there to insulate, so at the start of the cooler season check all your radiators are heating up the way they ought to.

Clear gutters

If dampness starts appearing in a ceiling or exterior wall, there is a good chance that a blocked gutter preventing effective drainage is to blame. By clearing gutters regularly in autumn and winter, you will prevent the build-up of fallen leaves that will turn into pipe-blocking mulch when it rains.

Use specialised paint

If mould has already appeared, you can clear it with a fungicidal wash. Then re-paint the area with a good quality fungicidal paint or gloss – note that the paint becomes ineffective if finished with non-fungicidal products.

Wipe down

The best way to avoid mould is to keep your home warm, ventilated and dry, so if you find condensation building up on windows, crack the window open a little and give them a wipe down daily with a tea towel. And always wring it out rather than drying on a radiator, as that puts the moisture straight back into the atmosphere.

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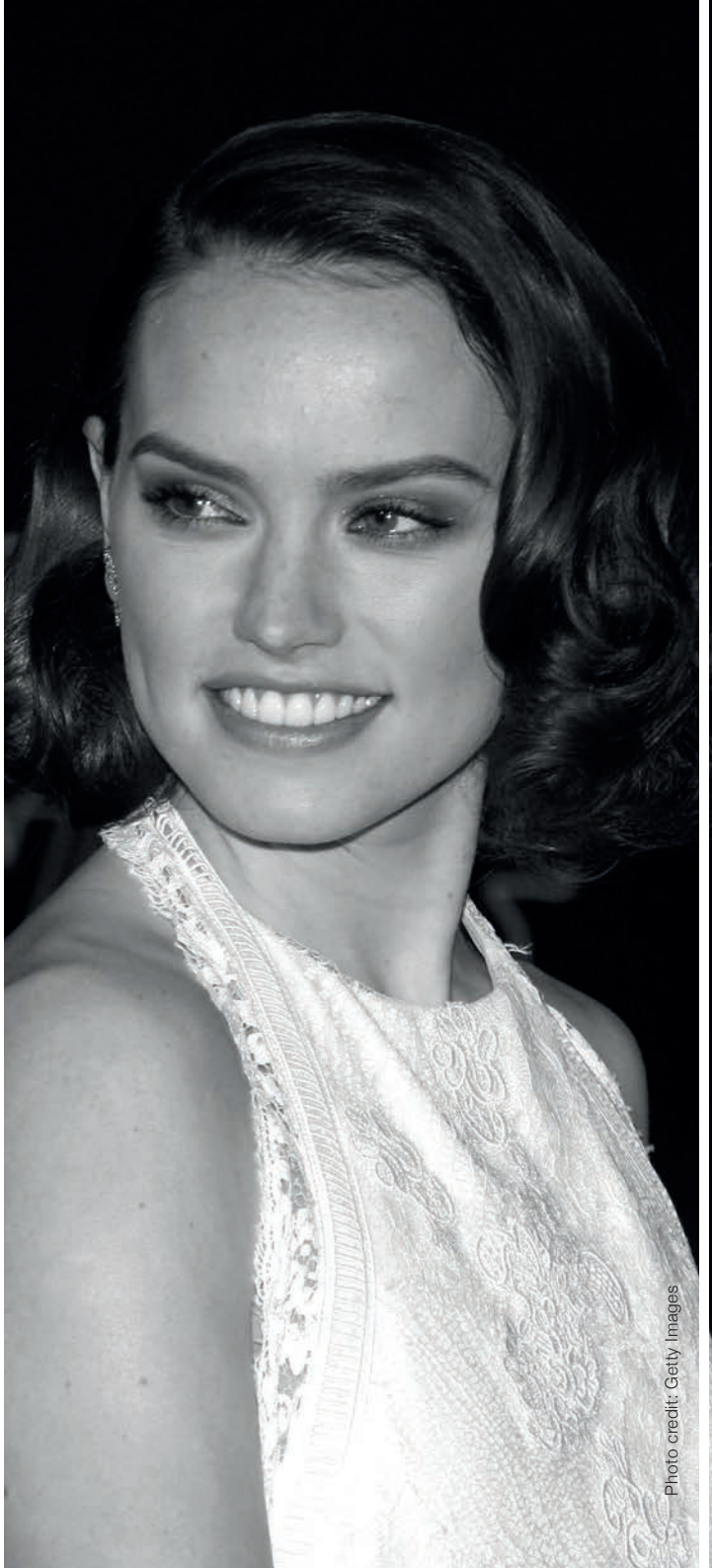


Photo credit: Getty Images

STARRING *Miss Daisy*

Her cinematic journey may have begun in a galaxy far, far away, but *Star Wars* actress Daisy Ridley is still as down-to-earth as they come.

In the last few years she has become one of Hollywood's biggest and brightest stars, but Daisy Ridley is exactly the same – bubbly, grounded and infectiously relatable, which is all the more astonishing given that her breakout movie, *Star Wars: The Force Awakens*, is the third highest grossing film of all time. “Everyone keeps asking me how I have changed, like it was this guaranteed expectation. Was I supposed to? I don’t feel any different,” demurs the 25-year-old star.

Having won a scholarship to Tring Park School for the Performing Arts in Hertfordshire, followed by small, earnest roles in TV shows like *Casualty* and *Mr Selfridge*, it’s hard to imagine a faster onward ascent to stardom, with Ridley plucked from obscurity and placed smack bang into one of the biggest, most lucrative franchises of all time.

So how is the London-born beauty coping with her fledgling fame? “In terms of personal life, nothing has really changed,” she says with a shrug. “Professionally, it’s been brilliant – the people I’m getting to work with and the places I’m travelling to, places I never thought I would get to see at this stage in my life... that’s all different, of course, and sometimes you have to stop and think, ‘How is this possible?’. It’s madness. And I don’t believe I will never stop being wowed. It’s all astonishing to me.”

The so-called “madness” is set to continue, with two major films released before the end of the year. Already in cinemas is Kenneth Branagh’s lavish re-imagining of Agatha Christie’s classic mystery *Murder on the Orient Express*, starring Branagh himself as the infamous and immaculately moustachioed detective Hercule Poirot. Ridley plays the indignant Miss Debenham, alongside Johnny Depp, Judi Dench, Olivia Colman and Michelle Pfeiffer.

When asked if she was excited about featuring in such a stellar line-up, Ridley is unable to contain her glee, saying with a laugh: “Oh my god, are you kidding? Seriously, if someone had asked me my dream cast, I don’t think I’d have come up with a combination so utterly amazing.”

Next year, Ridley will play the titular role in *Ophelia*, a reimagining of Shakespeare’s *Hamlet* told from the perspective of Ophelia, arguably one of the Bard’s most tragic female characters. She also lends her vocal talents to the cast of animated romp *Peter Rabbit*.

But first, we have the release of *Star Wars: The Last Jedi*, which continues the journey of Ridley’s Rey as she and the Resistance seek out Luke Skywalker. Shrouded in secrecy, principal photography of the film was completed almost a year-and-a-half ago, but fortunately, Ridley has become very good at keeping secrets.

“I quite like it,” she says with a wry smile. “I’d done it before with the first film, and I thought it would be completely impossible to keep my mouth shut because, you know, I like to talk. Yet it was easier than I predicted, and seeing the reaction from moviegoers makes it all worthwhile.”



LOCAL NEWS

from your neighbourhood



Music school gets a royal visit

Havering Music School had a royal appointment recently as they were visited by the Band of the Coldstream Guards.

The Band of the Coldstream Guards hit the high notes on Saturday, November 4 as they visited the music school in Hornchurch to deliver a large-scale performance with pupils.

The band, who regularly play at both Buckingham Palace and Windsor Castle providing musical support, worked with local students and community music

groups where they performed several hymns and anthems.

Havering Music School is a specialist music service that teaches instrumental lessons to children of any age or standard.

The school, provided by Havering Council, focuses on developing sound technical and musical skills to promote self-expression and confidence.

For more information about Havering Music School visit www.haveringmusicschool.org.uk

Allotment society raises £3,000 for hospice

Hornchurch and District Allotment and Gardening Society raised thousands for its local hospice.

They presented a cheque of £3,000 to Saint Francis Hospice, after giving the community a chance to sample the finest organic fruit and vegetable produce.

The society has donated more than £30,000 to the hospice over the past 16 years by selling fruit, vegetables, jams, plants and flowers at the annual Havering Show in Hornchurch.

Anne Brown, head of fundraising at the hospice,

said, "We are truly grateful to Hornchurch and District Allotment and Gardening Society for all the time and effort its members have put into supporting the hospice over the years.

"They are making a difference to patients and their families at the most difficult time in their lives.

"It costs £21,000 a day to provide our extensive range of specialist care and support services and we would not be able to do so without the generosity of organisations such as this."

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Love Island star gets his skates on

Love Island winner Kem Cetinay is swapping the salon for the ice rink after being announced as a contestant on the new series of *Dancing on Ice*.

The show will be returning to ITV in 2018 with a new format and Holly Willoughby and Phillip Schofield fronting the show.

The 21-year-old, a hairdresser in a Hornchurch salon, shot to fame after winning ITV2's *Love Island* alongside girlfriend Amber Davies in the summer.

Since the announcement that he would be appearing on the show, Kem has been pictured in training and has been keeping fans up to date with his progress on social media, even admitting he is like Bambi on ice.

Kem has always been a fan of the show. The social media team even dug out Kem's tweet from 2013 saying: "I love *Dancing On Ice*."

Following the announcement, Kem tweeted: "*Dancing On Ice* lets ave it."



A little bit read it

A VISIONHornchurch distributor bumped into a familiar face on her rounds.

Lucy saw *Love Island* winner Kem Cetinay while she was distributing last month's edition.

She walked up a driveway and acknowledged a man in a hat. She smiled and asked if he was Kem from *Love Island*.

He said yes and Lucy then asked for a picture, where he was happy to pose.

Lucy said: "He was very nice and friendly – a true gentleman."

"I was so happy to meet him. I never meet anyone famous."



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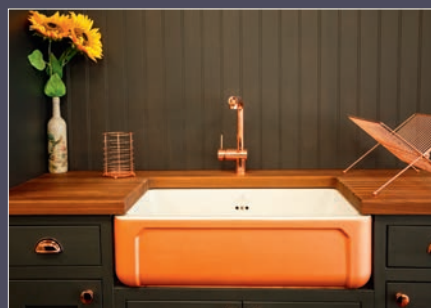


Photo credit: Metropolitan Police



LOCAL NEWS

Two prolific burglars jailed

Two prolific burglars, who are known associates, have been jailed following investigations by detectives from the East Area Command Unit.

Luke Thurogood, 26, of Kilmartin Way, Hornchurch was jailed for a total of six years and three months having been convicted of multiple offences on Friday, November 3.

Jesse Orme, 26, of Dagnam Park Drive, Romford was sentenced to six years' imprisonment having been convicted of multiple offences on Monday, October 30.

Thurogood's string of offences comprised six counts of residential burglary, two counts of handling stolen goods, two counts of theft of a motor vehicle, aggravated vehicle taking, having no insurance and being unlawfully at large.

Orme's offences comprised two counts of residential burglary and one count of theft of a motor vehicle.

All the offences were committed between June 2016 and June 2017.

Detective Constable Christopher Yianni, based in Havering, said: "I am pleased that these men have been jailed so that they will not be able to commit further crimes for many years.

"Burglary is an unpleasant crime that involves invading what should be someone's private and safe space. The total disregard they have shown for other people's property and the way they ransacked their homes before fleeing in stolen cars is reflected in their sentencing."

Forensic examinations at the scene of the burglaries identified both Orme and Thurogood through DNA found at each of the scenes. This along with other investigative techniques allowed police to secure these convictions.

Although officers have been unable to confirm whether the men were working together on the burglaries, Thurogood was convicted of handling stolen goods that were taken during one of Orme's burglaries.

Carer at former children's home jailed for indecent assault



Photo credit: Metropolitan Police

A carer at a former children's home in Hornchurch has been sentenced to nine years in prison after he was convicted of 11 charges of non-recent child sexual abuse.

Paul Setchfield was sentenced at Snaresbrook Crown Court recently after he was found guilty of indecently assaulting a girl and boy, both aged under 14.

The charges relate to a period between October 1978 and November 1981 when Setchfield was a member of staff with the title of House Parent at St Leonard's Children's Home in Hornchurch.

The court heard the female victim, who is now in her 40s, contacted police in 2011 after being given access to her social services file.

She was interviewed by officers from the Met's Child Protection Team. In two police interviews, she said she was sexually abused by Setchfield at the children's home when she was aged under 14.

She said that on two occasions, Setchfield took her into his bed in the sleep over room for staff.

The victim said Setchfield also drove her to motels in Kent and Chester and took her to his friend's flat where sexual abuse took place.

The male victim, who is now in his 40s, came forward to police in 2013 and said he had witnessed the abuse of the girl. He said Setchfield had also got into bed with him and sexually abused him.

Setchfield was interviewed by police in June 2012 and August 2013. He denied the allegations against him in prepared statements and replied "no comment" to all questions put to him.

Officers in the Met's Child Abuse and Sexual Offences Command obtained statements from a number of witnesses who corroborated what the victims had said and Setchfield was charged with 11 counts of indecent assault in May 2016.

He was convicted of 11 charges of indecent assault, eight against the girl and three against the boy, after a one-week trial at Snaresbrook Crown Court.

Detective Constable Daniel Stevens, of the Met's Child Abuse and Sexual Offences (CASO) Command, said: "Setchfield continued to deny he was responsible for the abuse, even after being confronted with the compelling testimony from the two victims, along with corroborating witness statements. Although it has taken more than 30 years for the victims to gain justice, Setchfield has now been brought to account for his actions."

Back the bid to win London Borough of Culture 2020

Havering Council is asking for the public to back their bid to become the London Borough of Culture in 2020.

Winning the bid will bring over £1million to fund arts in the borough and will help to strengthen and showcase Havering's unique cultural offer.

Two winning boroughs will be named London Borough of Culture in February 2018, one for 2019 and the other for 2020.

Councillor Roger Ramsey, leader of the council said:

"Havering is an exceptional borough full of culture. Entering for this award provides us with the opportunity to shine the light on our unique heritage and arts offer across the borough. Winning the London Borough of Culture would enhance our cultural strategy for the benefit of our residents and businesses.

"We want all artists, designers and creators to come forward and showcase their work."

If you would like to support the bid please email culture@haverling.gov.uk

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LOCAL NEWS

Photo credit: Havering Council

Council leader calls for legal action against police station closures

Following the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC) announcing Hornchurch police stations would close, the leader of the council has called for legal action.

Councillor Roger Ramsey met with the Deputy Mayor for Policing, Sophie Linden and the council has lobbied to save the borough's access points.

Councillor Ramsey said: "The outcome of MOPAC's consultation is unacceptable and fails to consider the needs of our residents and of our population growth. This is why we will be looking at the prospect of a legal challenge. This is a short-sighted decision that will leave residents in the south of the borough with the need to travel to Romford for a police station in the borough with a front desk service.

"The Consultation Institute has said that MOPAC's approach was 'deeply flawed' with 'leading questions biased to elicit a particular answer' and failed to seek 'any demographic data to understand who responds'. This means that our residents' voices have not been taken into consideration, which questions the purpose of this consultation as it seems a decision had already been made.

"The council has offered to provide space for police use in outlying areas and will stick to that whatever happens.

"I urge local residents to send their comments to their local MPs, who I would encourage to raise this issue in Parliament."

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Students raise £700 to help educate youngsters in Africa

Students raise £700 to help educate youngsters in Africa

Hundreds of pounds were raised by students from a sixth form college in Hornchurch for charity.

Pupils from Havering Sixth Form College raised £700 for their international charity, EducAid.

The money was presented to EducAid director Miriam Mason-Sesay who visited the college in Wingleye Lane to give a hard-hitting but inspiring talk to students about life in Sierra Leone for young people.

The presentation marked the end of Black History Month, which saw various events run by the student council in the college.

Miriam, who has been awarded an MBE for her outstanding contribution to education and charitable work in the African country, has been at the helm of EducAid since 1998, helping the very poorest children gain access to an education.

The charity emerged from the Rebel Wars of the 1990s through the insight and commitment of two students who "needed to do something" - and so they did.

Miriam, the sister of one of those students, gave up her job as head of modern languages in a London school to go to Sierra Leone, the then poorest country in the world, and start the first of the 11 schools and girls' Safe Houses that the college now helps to support.

During the presentation she told students that EducAid works on the principle that education is the key to the elimination of poverty. She spoke about the devastating floods and mudslides of just a few weeks ago and also told of the struggle to empower women in under-developed countries like Sierra Leone, where there is political corruption and female genital mutilation.

She was thrilled with the £700 which she said would pay to fully educate three children for a year.

She said: "This money really does make a difference. Every penny goes towards the education of an oppressed child. We are trying to give people a chance to live like humans."

Top results for outstanding engineering course

A college in Hornchurch has been named in the top 10 per cent of highest achieving engineering courses in the UK.

Havering Sixth Form College's Engineering BTEC Diploma course has had huge result success this year.

Every student received no lower than a distinction in the first year and a double distinction in the second year.

Data from the government's Advanced Level Performance System (ALPS) shows that 79 per cent of students on the course achieved the highest possible mark of distinction* and 21 per cent achieved a distinction.

John Crossley, assistant principal at the college in Wingleye Lane, Hornchurch, said: "The statistics speak for themselves. We believe there is nowhere better to study engineering and no other provider has stronger results."

Projects by Havering Sixth Form's successful engineering students include prosthetic limbs, recycling machines, music speakers, a drone, a Nerf

gun and a pedal box for a car.

The majority of students progressed to excellent destinations.

Student Cameron Dugate, formerly from Hall Mead School, is now on a civil engineering apprenticeship with Aecom in Chelmsford. Ex-Gaynes School student Liam Thomas is studying electrical and electronic engineering at the University of Brighton and Jamie Tull, formerly of Abbs Cross School, is now studying mechanical engineering at the University of Leeds.

Subject leader Guy Reid said the success was a team effort, having enthusiastic and hard-working students as well as dedicated staff.

He added: "I am very proud of the students. They were passionate about the subject and keen to progress to either university or a higher-level apprenticeship which really motivated them to produce outstanding projects."

"When the senior verifier from the exam board visited he praised the high standard of students' work and said we had produced what he thought were the best results in the country."

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Night time safety award given



Photo credit: Metropolitan Police

The Romford Town Pubwatch partnership with Havering Council, licensees and the police has been crowned the winner of a prestigious award.

The partnership was crowned winner of the Diageo National Pubwatch Awards for 2017 for its significant contribution to community safety, which has been reduced the number of crimes in licensed premises in Romford.

The scheme, that aims to tackle anti-social behaviour, impressed the judges with their initiatives including the use of ID scanning machines and online messaging for members to communicate and administer its banning scheme, while working closely with local medics and street pastors.

The award ceremony took place at the House of Commons on November 2, with MPs, lords and notable names from the pub industry.

Councillor Osman Dervish, cabinet member for community safety, said: "We are extremely proud to win this award. This scheme has reduced the number of crimes committed at Romford venues by more than half (56 per cent) in the last year.

"Winning this award highlights the great work we do, in partnership with the police and licensees, to keep our residents and visitors safe whilst on a night out in the borough. We look forward to improving these figures and keep Havering safe."

Ambulance emergency calls increase by over 30,000

Emergency calls to the East of England Ambulance Service have increased by more than 30,000 during the winter compared to the same period in 2010/2011.

The East of England Ambulance Service NHS Trust (EEAST) released the figures as part of their Winter Wise campaign, which aims for people to

take practical steps to stay well this winter.

The figures show that in Essex, 119,707 calls were received in winter 2016/2017 compared to 89,697 in winter 2010/2011.

The most common types of call to the ambulance service in winter include patients with chest pain, abdominal pain, breathing difficulties unconsciousness, falls, and traumatic injuries. Alcohol-related injuries and illness are also a factor during the festivities.

Kevin Brown, director of service delivery for EEAST, said: "Winter is a really busy time for the ambulance service and we are prepared. We will be there for patients who are suffering from life-threatening illnesses and injuries this winter. We always prioritise our response to those with the highest priority need so ask that we are only called from emergencies where other health advice and support is not appropriate.

"However, we would urge everyone to take measures to protect themselves and their family to avoid a 999 call this year. Getting vaccinated against flu and using the most appropriate service for your needs such as NHS 111, GP or pharmacist will really help the emergency ambulance service."

Essex Police rated good for efficiency

Essex Police have been rated 'good' in four areas following a report by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire Services.

They received the rating for efficiency, understanding the demands for its services, how it uses its resources and planning for the future.

Chief Constable Stephen Kavanagh said: "In policing every decision has a consequence, but today's report demonstrates that Essex Police have taken the right steps in the face of severe financial constraints to prioritise keeping the most vulnerable people in our county safe.

"Being told we're 'performing well across the board' recognises not only the good work Essex police officers and staff do every day but also our ambition and clarity about the future."



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Support hub opens for children in care and care leavers

The Cocoon, one of east London's only dedicated support hubs for children in care and care leavers, has been opened.

The centre provides a safe drop-in space for children and young people living in care or leaving care, where they can meet with key workers and progress with personal development.

The Cocoon will enable young people to develop life skills, get access to training, receive additional education support, learn how to cook and get help with housing and health.

Children's commissioner for England Anne Longfield attended the ribbon cutting with local young people in

care, who were also joined by the leader of the council, The Deputy Mayor of Havering, cabinet members and council staff in Romford.

Anne said: "The opening of The Cocoon marks a significant day for children in care and care leavers in Havering. It's a positive and exciting development which reflects the specific needs of care leavers.

"It will provide a hub for young people where they can learn key life skills and receive training. But it will also be a place where they can meet with friends and socialise at a time in their lives where they might need the extra support."

Thousands attend Remembrance Sunday services

More than 2,000 people attended Remembrance Sunday commemorations, services and parades across Havering to remember those who lost their lives and to honour their sacrifices.

Services and parades took place all over the borough, including in Hornchurch.

Councillor Roger Ramsey, leader of Havering Borough Council, said: "No one plays a greater role in keeping us safe than our Armed Forces and these services gave us the chance to remember the servicemen and women past and present."



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Brookside Theatre to raise money for raked seating



A local theatre is looking to raise funds to install tiered theatre-style seating into their auditorium. The Brookside Theatre, in Romford, has created a crowdfunding page to raise £35,000 to help them complete the project.

Since 2011, a number of local volunteers have given their time and effort to restore the long-neglected Romford War Memorial Social Club.

The buildings were reopened as the Brookside Theatre which now plays host to full scale plays and musicals, live music, comedy and occasionally celebrity guest performances.

All the events being staged raise money for the continued restoration and upkeep of the War Memorial buildings.

The theatre receives regular comments on their seating, but they have never been able to afford to address the problem.

A spokesperson from the theatre said: "We have worked so hard here over the last six years and the theatre has truly become an important part of the community and an essential source of culture in Havering. Now we need the community's support to get the theatre seating installed – it would mean so much to so many."

Brookside Theatre is looking for individuals and businesses to donate to their appeal. At the time of going to print, £1,675 had been raised.

For more information or to donate, visit www.crowdfunder.co.uk/brookside-theatre-seating-fund

current housing needs assessment prepared for Havering's draft Local Plan, which shows a need for 1,366 new homes per year. In the draft Local Plan a target of 1,170 per year is proposed on the basis of land availability.

The leader of Havering Council, councillor Roger Ramsey, has spoken out against the latest housing targets.

He said: "The government's paper identifies an annual housing need target of a third more than what has been determined as part of our draft Local Plan. Not to mention, our figures were deemed appropriate by the Mayor of London's planners less than a few weeks ago."

"More than half of Havering is green belt, and to suggest such a significant increase to our housing targets shows that the government's methodology is flawed and unrealistic, and could put large swathes of the borough's green space in danger."

"We have submitted our formal feedback on the proposals as part of the DCLG consultation and have asked the government to think again about making the targets more practical and realistic."

Town centre transformation gets the go-ahead

The Bridge Close site in the centre of Romford will be transformed as part of an ambitious plan that is hoped will be a catalyst for regeneration.

The funding for the scheme will now be subject to approval at a meeting of the full council on Wednesday, February 21, 2018.

Havering Council cabinet members considered proposals to create a residential-led development, with at least 30 per cent affordable homes, and a local workspace, a primary school and community and health facilities, as well as other proposals.

Councillor Roger Ramsey, leader of the council and lead member for regeneration, said: "This is an important and exciting project that will change the face of the town centre in Romford."



Photo credit: Havering Council

Almost 2,000 homes a year proposed

Havering has been set a target of delivering 1,821 new homes each year between 2021 and 2026 with further updated targets produced after that, as part of the latest housing targets proposed in the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) consultation paper.

This is against a backdrop of the current London Plan target of 1,170 new homes per year and the

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Christmas trees

Christmas trees are probably the most popular plant to bring indoors over the festive season. Although not a major concern, cedars, pines and firs are mildly toxic. The biggest concern if swallowed is the possibility of puncturing part of the gastrointestinal tract. The tree oils could also cause irritation to the skin.

Holly

As holly is so widely used it may seem surprising that this plant is poisonous if eaten. The berries are poisonous to both people and pets and swallowing them can cause a number of illnesses, including vomiting, diarrhoea, dehydration and drowsiness. Holly leaves can also cause problems if eaten, but due to their prickly nature, they are usually left alone.

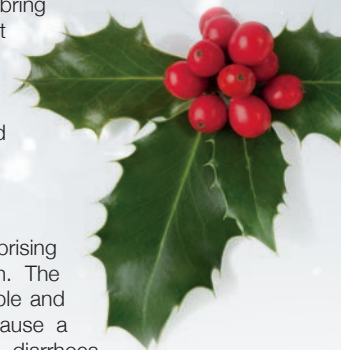
If you are decorating with holly this winter, remove the berries before displaying the leaves, as even if they are out of reach, the berries can soon dry out and fall to the floor.

Mistletoe

Mistletoe is one of the most popular Christmas plants, but also one of the most dangerous. If a child eats a couple of berries it's unlikely to cause much of a problem, but a small pet could be harmed by this. However, if any amount of mistletoe is eaten, it's advised to seek medical advice.

Poinsettia

Although the poinsettia isn't particularly dangerous, it can cause irritation if the sap gets onto your skin. It will leave you with an itchy rash, but this is one of the safest festive plants.



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PUZZLES

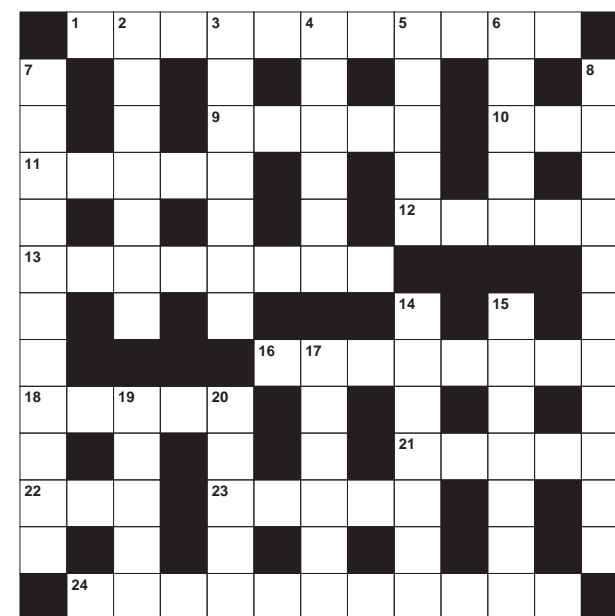
Answers can be found on the Contents Page 4

ACROSS

1. Disenchant (11)
9. Holy chalice (5)
10. Arrest; apprehend (3)
11. Academy award (5)
12. Active cause (5)
13. Sweet on a stick (8)
16. Definite and clear (8)
18. Meat and vegetables on a skewer (5)
21. Musical times (5)
22. Grandmother (3)
23. Group of eight (5)
24. Rural scenery (11)

DOWN

2. Freezing (3-4)
3. Firmly establish (7)
4. Temporary shelter (4-2)
5. Latin American dance; sauce (5)
6. Snow leopard (5)
7. Attractive (4-7)
8. State of preoccupation (11)
14. Segregated groups or areas (7)
15. Impressed a pattern on (7)
17. Experienced adviser (6)



19. Small drum (5)
20. _____ Ulvaeus: member of ABBA (5)

DID YOU KNOW

► Britain was introduced to the Christmas tree in 1841, when Queen Victoria's German husband Prince Albert brought one to Windsor Castle for the Royal Family

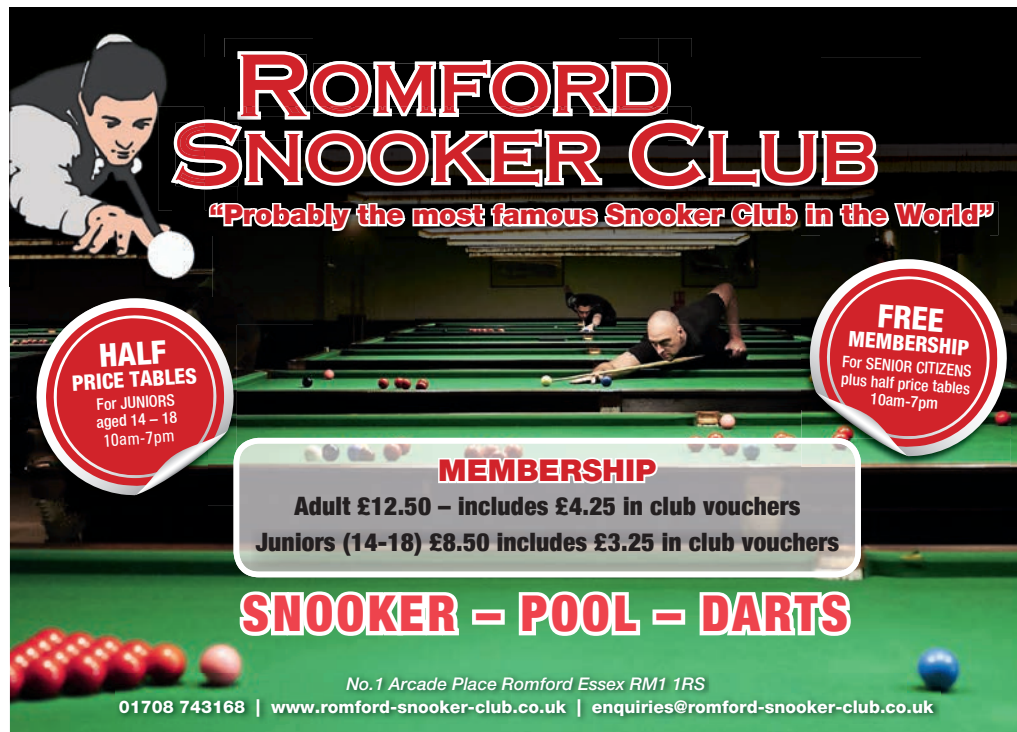
► The Christmas cracker was invented in 1847 by Tom Smith, a baker of wedding cakes from Clerkenwell, London.

► The Christmas candy cane, shaped as a shepherd's crook, represents the humble shepherds who were first to worship the new-born Christ.

► In some countries, the baby Jesus delivers the gifts, in others, the Three Wise Men. But in most countries, Santa Claus does the honours.

SUDOKU

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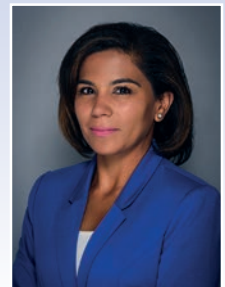


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SHRINKFLATION SCANDAL

You might recall the recent furore over the new shape chosen for Toblerone chocolate – but the much-loved and mountain-bedecked sweet treat isn't the only product feeling the force of 'Shrinkflation'...

Younger people may have heard their elders complain about how products have changed from their day – and it seems they have a point. Recent analysis from the Office for National Statistics has revealed that more than 2,500 products have shrunk in size but not price in the last five years.

This phenomenon, whereby products shrink in size while their cost remains the same or increases, is known as 'Shrinkflation'.

Angry consumers have noticed Toblerone, Maltesers and Mars bars are smaller than they used to be – with a Maltesers sharing bag shrinking by a whopping 15 per cent – and the most blatant examples of

'Shrinkflation' appear to be coffee, confectionary and fruit juices. But it's not just those with a sweet tooth that have been hit: a standard roll of Andrex toilet paper now contains 221 sheets, down from 240.

The reason behind 'Shrinkflation', according to confectionary manufacturers, appears to be an increase in the cost of raw materials, despite the fact that sugar and cocoa costs have actually dropped in recent years, with the latter seeing a sharp drop after a five-year period of increases. The recent fall in the value of the pound may also have had an effect on prices.

Andrex has reasoned that its toilet roll is now better quality, despite there being less of it, and Maltesers maker Mars has attributed the 15 per cent decrease to a bid to make the product more affordable. With the inflation rate for products such as chocolate actually 1.22 percentage points higher (when the smaller size was taken into account) than the national average, consumers with a sweet tooth may soon have to look elsewhere for an affordable sugar fix.





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Gold PLATED

Whether you consider them ostentatious or a symbol of prestige, the market for personalised number plates has established itself as a multimillion-dollar industry. But what are the most expensive number plates in the history of automobiles, and who owns them?

For many multimillionaires, owning the latest model of luxury sports car just simply isn't enough, with a few adding their own touch of individualism to the vehicle with a personalised number plate. While anyone can own one of these fancy auto accessories, the very top end of personal plates can often cost their buyers a seven-figure sum – with the world's most expensive, a plate bearing the single number '1', currently belonging to Saeed Abdul Ghaffar Khouri of Abu Dhabi, who parted with £7million for his prized possession.

Looking a little closer to home, here's a run-down of the three most expensive plates that the UK currently has to offer:

VIP 1

3. 'VIP 1' – ROMAN ABRAMOVICH

Abramovich's name has become synonymous with splashing the cash since taking over Chelsea Football Club in 2003, and the Russian oil mogul grabbed the 'VIP 1' plate in 2006 for £285,000

in a deal he hopes to provide more value for money than the £50million he gave Liverpool for the services of Fernando Torres. Interestingly, this unique plate was originally commissioned to be put on Pope John Paul II's Popemobile for a papal visit to Ireland.

M 1

2. 'M 1' – MIKE McCOMB

After selling his Mobile Phone Store to BT Cellnet in 2000, Mike McComb had a fairly large pile of wonga lying about. Six years later he decided to put £330,000 of that to good use by purchasing the 'M 1' plates as a present for his son... who was just six years old at the time.

F 1

1. 'F 1' – AFZAL KHAN

Bradford-born entrepreneur Afzal Khan takes the top spot for vehicular vanity in Britain by grabbing the holy grail of petrol-head plates to affix to his Mercedes SLR McLaren for a massive £440,000. At the time, Khan described the figure as "a good price to pay" as the plates were "probably worth 10 times that".



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Beauty and the Beast

**The Queen's Theatre, Billet Lane,
Hornchurch, RM11 1QT
November 29 – January 6, 2018**



Come and join in the fun as your favourite fairytale comes to life in a magical, fun-packed panto for the whole family.

Beauty and the Beast has it all – sparkling sets, colourful costumes, tunes that you all know, lots of laughter and audience participation.

From the team that brought you the box office smash-hit spectacular *Cinderella*, it's going to be the best Christmas extravaganza in town.

Make sure you book before the final rose petal falls.

**Christmas Ramble - RSPB Rainham Marshes NR
44 North Street, Hornchurch, RM11 1TB
December 9, 10am -12.30pm**

Join us for a stroll around our local RSPB reserve to enjoy the views, fresh air and see some good birds. Our local reserve with its modern visitor centre which has a café, gift shop and toilets.

We meet in the reserve car park, off the New Tankhill Road, Purfleet at 10am. Entrance is FREE to RSPB Members. Read more at www.rspb.org.uk/groups/havering/events/#7D8cKbY2Les67Hkl.99

Santa and the wishing tree

**Havering Museum Ltd, 19 – 21 High Street,
Romford, RM1 1JU
December 9, 11.30am – 12.30pm, 1.30pm – 2.30pm**

A Christmas treat for your kids...bring them along to the museum on December 9 at 11.30am - 12.30pm and 1.30pm - 2.30pm.

They will meet Santa, listen to his amazing adventures with his elves and reindeer, receive a

present and a magic bell. The young ones will also get the opportunity to record what they want for Christmas by placing their messages on Santa's Wishing Tree. The visit includes a craft activity and is suitable for kids aged four to 10.

Cost: £6.50 per child, adults free. This event must be booked in advance.



Christmas Craft Fayre

**Ardleigh Green Family Centre, 165 Ardleigh
Green Road, Hornchurch, RM11 2LF
December 16, 10am – 3pm**

Celebrating the fifth year of this annual event, come and see Father Christmas for free. Children who have pre-booked will receive a special present, and those not will also receive a free gift. Father Christmas is very busy so book early.

Book in store at 90 Ardleigh Green Road by December 9.

Havering SCI-FI Charity Convention

**YMCA Thames Gateway, Rush Green Road,
Romford, RM7 0PH
December 16, 10am - 4pm**

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