



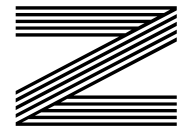
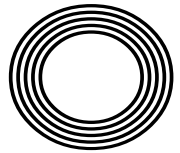
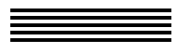
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**MARK WRIGHT MAKING
HIS FOOTBALL COMEBACK**

Valentine's Day traditions
FROM AROUND THE WORLD

Alison
HAMMOND

The TV presenter emerging into the spotlight



FREE

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Editor's notes...

FEBRUARY 2021



Brett Shohet, Editor

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

I hope everyone is coping with this rather dreary start to the new year. It's not the start to 2021 we had in mind, but with the vaccine roll-out hopefully the end of this lockdown will soon in be sight.

Having said that, we can't just rely on our Fabulous NHS to fix all our problems - the worst thing we can do once the COVID-19 figures begin to fall is live our lives as if the pandemic never happened. We must continue to keep our distance and wear our masks until we are fully in the clear.

In the meantime, it's easy to go stir-crazy. My lockdown philosophy has been that, if I'm going to be living similar days over and over, I want them to be productive ones. That's why setting up a routine and structuring my days has been pivotal, and I suggest that anyone struggling at the moment tries to do this themselves.

I'm having more Zoom meetings than ever before; I've started going for longer walks and I bought a bike from a local business to add something else to the mix. Little things like these can make a huge difference.

I hope you enjoy our latest edition. If you have any queries or contributions you would like to share with us, please get in touch. And as always, stay safe.

Brett Shohet

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



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The WRIGHT STUFF

HOW ONE OF OUR MOST ADORED REALITY TV STARS WENT BACK TO HIS ROOTS... GRASSROOTS

It's a fantasy that has crossed the mind of every grown man in his late twenties who has a normal, run-of-the-mill, everyday job. It's the thought, 'Perhaps it's not too late to realise every boy's dream and become a professional footballer; perhaps I can still make it.'

That reality TV star and Heart DJ Mark Wright still held those very unfulfilled ambitions is perhaps less of a surprise. He was, after all, on the books of West Ham, Arsenal and Tottenham as a youngster. When released at the age of 18, the left back was picked up by Southend United, but drifted into non-league football as the distractions of nightclub promotion and reality TV came about.

After spells in then Conference with Grays Athletic, Crawley Town and Rushden & Diamonds, the charismatic Essex-born star joined the cast of *TOWIE*. One of the original cast members, he was only with the ITV show a year, but the die was cast, and from *I'm a Celebrity... Get Me Out of Here!* to *Take Me Out: The Gossip*, through presenting jobs on *Mark Wright's Hollywood Nights*, *The Bachelor* and *This Morning*, the husband to actress Michelle Keegan has been a permanent fixture on our screens for a decade. And when adding in his Heart radio show duties – a gig he's had since 2012 – it's any wonder he has any spare time...

But what about those football ambitions?

"I've never got over the fact I didn't make it in the game," he says. "And despite everything I achieved elsewhere, being a professional footballer now would top it all."

In October last year, Wright set out to make one final crack at the game he loves, and a call to John Yems, his former manager at Crawley, saw the now 33-year-old invited to West Sussex to train with the club.

The presenter describes the three months that followed as a whirlwind, combining media duties with a punishing physical routine designed to get his fitness up to League Two standards. His every move has been followed by a BBC film crew, whose iPlayer series *Mark Wright: The Last Chance* has proved a huge hit.

"I never had any expectations, but I always knew I'd give it everything I had, and the welcome I got at the club was tremendous from day one."

In December, Wright's dreams moved a step closer – he signed a contract until the end of the season. And being named on the bench for Crawley's FA Cup fourth round clash with Leeds United on January 10, just two days after his brother Josh signed for the club, set up the most impossible of scenarios. Could he make the comeback of all comebacks?

Crawley strode 3-0 up against their star-studded Premier League visitors, on their way to grabbing all the weekend's giant-killing headlines. A perfect day could only be topped by a call to the bench for a substitution. And so it happened... he may have only come on in the 91st minute, he may have only touched the ball three times, but a dream was realised on that cold Sunday lunchtime at the People's Pension Stadium.

And it doesn't stop there – the Reds are eyeing up promotion from League Two and there will be no resting on his laurels for Mark Wright... a reality star in every sense.



THE WORLD AROUND US *Part 4*

In the last part of our environmental series, we look at the final key driver in the health and well-being of the planet: global warming.

The phrase 'climate change denier' has become commonplace in conversations about the gradual warming of the planet and the causes of this. Scientific opinion points to humans and our explosion of population, industry and consumption as the real effects of the Earth increasing in temperature by 1° Celsius since 1880.

It doesn't sound a lot, does it? And yet, a one-to two-degree drop was all it took to plunge the Earth into the Little Ice Age in the Medieval Period.

The platform climate change deniers have generally sees their voices amplified well beyond what they should be. The results of various studies often level out at around the same rate – namely that only two or three people out of 100 will dispute the scientists' theory that humans are the cause of global warming.

With such a large accepting consensus, the drive to combat this gradual warming of Earth has

accelerated in recent years. Equipping ourselves with data, while ensuring we have the ability to interpret it, is vital.

Temperatures across a timespan of a year, five years or even a decade might rise four degrees in one region and drop six in another (which is why anomalies occur, such as Greenland's Jakobshavn Glacier actually increasing in mass since 2016), but overall, there is trouble ahead.

The next, vital step the Earth faces is a willingness of its people to do something about it. For all the UK's action over the past couple of decades, for all the destruction global warming has already contributed, such as coastal erosion, moorlands fires, floods and more, we contribute just 1.2 per cent of the world's total emissions.

It means that, as if it were ever in doubt, a global solution requires a true global investment of action from the planet's inhabitants.



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dress to impress
pierre cardin

Remembering and reflecting on the life of designer
Pierre Cardin, who passed away in December.

FASHION

Mention the name Pierre Cardin and a modern generation of fashionistas will most likely point you to a range of smart casual shirts and t-shirts adorning the racks of retailers over the UK, from House of Fraser to TK Maxx. And yet, to think that the French clothing label should end up in such safe, formal surrounds is to besmirch the work of a designer who fairly revolutionised high-street style in the Swinging Sixties.

Cardin passed away at the end of December having cast an artistic pencil over the fashion world for more than seven decades. His passing was met with genuine sadness by a list of admirers and proteges, including designer Jean-Paul Gaultier, but his legacy is one to be admired and celebrated.

For starters, Cardin was one of the first designers to display a logo on garments, and a self-titled brand logo at that. The idea of giving a piece of clothing its own status well beyond the cuts of cotton or cashmere was something the industry had not seen before, and it led to a host of other licensed products emerging from the Paris-based fashion house, from pens to perfumes, sunglasses to food.

Cardin's idea was to bring ready-to-wear, premium-looking clothes to the everyday market, and at a price that meant people could indulge in the image and grandiosity of the catwalk.

Always looking to be different, he revolutionised design with sharp edges, outlandish curves and stylings that border on architecture as much as clothing. Inspiring so many, he dressed everyone from Bardot to The Beatles, all the while satisfying his own desire to be different.

What we see in so much of today's collections is more than a little influenced by a humble Frenchman with big ideas, Pierre Cardin.



Photo credit: catwalker/Shutterstock.com



CLEANSE ME... quick

Whether you are looking to remove stubborn mascara, thick sun cream or the dirt and impurities that your skin has picked up over the course of the day, a cleansing balm should be your go-to product, providing a delicate, yet effective, way to clean the skin on your face.

WHAT IS A CLEANSING BALM?
Cleansing balms are creamy and rich cleansers that gently remove any make-up, dirt and impurities from your skin without leaving it stripped of its natural oils. Unlike oil cleansers, which can be a bit messy, cleansing balms deliver oils to melt make-up, in a solidified form, meaning portion control is easier.

Furthermore, cleansing balms can be used around the eyes to remove make-up, as they are made with natural ingredients and are therefore suitable for this delicate area.

WHAT ARE THE MAIN BENEFITS?
> They provide a deep cleanse which can help to prevent breakouts
> They hydrate your skin
> They are suitable for sensitive skin

- > They provide quick results
- > Many contain antioxidants
- > They are high in oils, meaning you can skip daily moisturiser if you wish

HOW TO USE CLEANSING BALMS

1. Take a 10p-sized amount of balm and warm it between your fingers
2. Apply to dry skin in circular motions
3. Once the make-up starts to break down, add warm water to your skin
4. Continue to massage
5. Remove with a warm, damp cloth or muslin

WHAT ARE THE BEST CLEANSING BALMS?

- > Clinique Take The Day Off Balm – best all-rounder, suitable for all skin types
- > ESPA Nourishing Cleansing Balm – best for dry skin
- > Pond's Makeup Remover Cleansing Balm – best for sensitive skin
- > Slaai Makeup Melting Butter Cleanser by Drunk Elephant – best for removing waterproof make-up
- > Emma Hardie Moringa Cleansing Balm – best for ageing skin

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NO MEAN FOOT

Why our humble feet may be the lynchpin to overall body health alignment

Never underestimate just how fantastic our feet are – sure, they will get you around the house, to work, or down to the pub, but more than that, they are the lynchpin to overall body health too.

Balance
Balance in the human body is finely configured so that any imbalances can have negative effects on general health, from wobbliness through to vertigo-type symptoms.

Consider 10 toes, more than 50 bones (that's around a quarter of all those in the human body), and more than 60 joints, plus more than 200 muscles, tendons and ligaments, and it's clear why your feet are the cornerstone to overall body health.

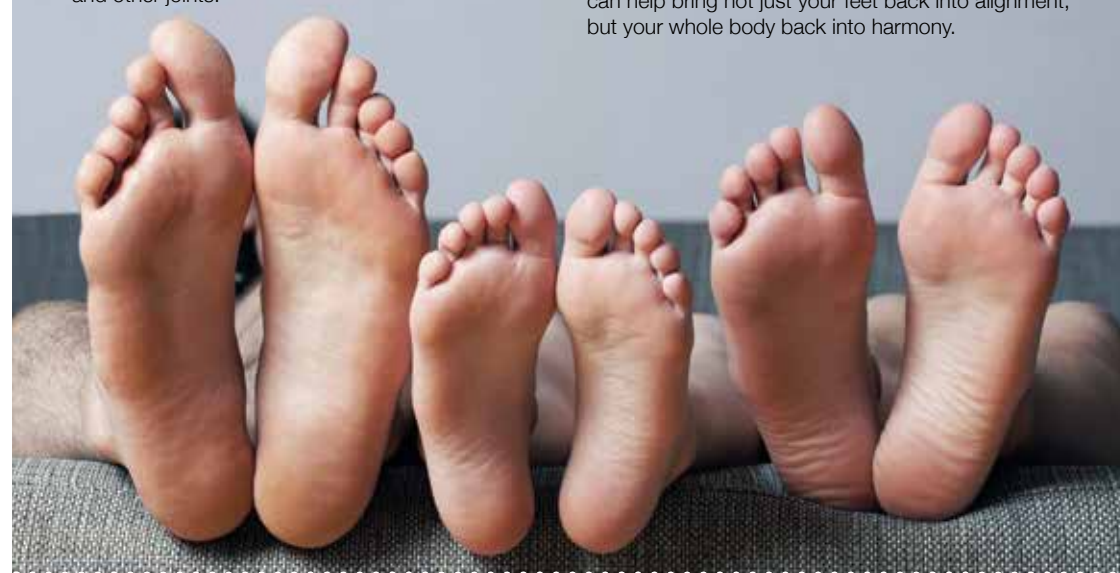
Organs
In the most extreme cases, when the mesh of nerves and touch receptors in our feet are blocked, insufficient messages can send disruptive adjustments through the body, including into our organs.

Mobility
In the most obvious sense, your feet are the tools that move you around. Essential for almost every form of exercise, health and well-being, which begins at ground level.

It is for these reasons that looking after our feet is pivotal to good health. Sure, get the pumice stone out in the bath, but more than that, ensure you are wearing properly fitting shoes. That might mean accepting that narrow styles are not going to work for your wide feet, or that perhaps you will need to buy flip-flops with a little more support.

Back and joint issues
The way we walk ultimately affects the way the rest of our body functions, and this is no truer than in people who suffer with flat feet. This condition causes a misalignment with the ankle, which can move up through the body into the knees, hips, spine, neck and other joints.

Also consider a whole variety of foot exercises that can help bring not just your feet back into alignment, but your whole body back into harmony.



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WORKOUT TIMEOUT

HOW LONG VARIOUS EXERCISES TAKE TO BURN 300 CALORIES

You're carrying a bit more timber than you'd prefer, but you're busy, right, and don't have huge amounts of time to invest in a new fitness regime? Don't worry, we've all been there.

Backed by a sensible diet, of course, what you need to know are the methods of exercise that will burn the most calories most quickly.

Well, we're happy to help out. And because none of us are Joe Wicks and we need to keep this realistic, we've compared time taken to exercise to the calorific content of a Mars bar, which you might promptly reward yourself with afterwards... however counterproductive.

Skipping Rope: At an expected rate of two jumps per second, this old playground favourite is actually the best possible exercise you can do.

Time required to burn 300 calories: 20mins

Sprinting: You'll find embarking on some eye-bursting sprinting around tracks, pavements, fields and more is just as effective... whether you can sustain it is another matter.

Time required: 20mins

Kickboxing: Upper body strength, big on cardio and an exercise that, despite the name, actually gives your legs a break from high-impact activity (such as running).

Time required: 25mins

Spinning: A spin class is big on knees and hamstrings, and with good posture is great for burning fat – just try not to ease off too much on the pedals when the going gets tough.

Time required: 28mins

Running: Calorie burn by running depends on a number of factors, such as pace, incline and your environment, but generally speaking you're burning off a Mars bar every half-hour.

Time required: 30mins

Kettlebell Circuits: Arguably the newest fitness fad, kettlebell circuits improve strength and boost metabolism, and keeping the heart rate high is great for all-over body health.

Time required: 32mins



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THE REAL PiLL

Placenta encapsulation: is it gross or full of goodness?

We all know the value of a mother's placenta. A rich, nutritious, nourishing source of life that feeds, grows and sustains a baby in the womb. As the miracles of nature go, it's right up there with the best of them – in fact, we wouldn't be here without the placenta.

It follows, then, that some mothers are loath to let the placenta go, post-birth. From using it to make jewellery or picture frames to donating it to medical science, through to something rather more symbolic such as planting it, there are a number of ways to respect this incredible organ.

Of course, given its goodness, reingesting the placenta makes perfect sense too – welcome to the world of placenta encapsulation.

In this process, the placenta is put into ice then sent off to a lab where it's made into pill form. Many mums feel a physical and emotional boost when consuming their placenta as a daily supplement,

saying that it helps with general well-being, limits the ups and downs associated with those immediate weeks and months after giving birth, gives an energy boost, and helps with breast milk production.

And that all makes sense – the placenta is loaded with vitamins B6 and B12, plus iron and reproductive hormones that drop after birth. To repackage those and put them back into the body makes sense.

However, there are risks. There aren't any standards in place for the process, meaning poorly encapsulated pills may harbour bacteria. There are also environmental toxins such as heavy metals – like lead and arsenic – that accumulate in the placenta, while a theory exists that the progesterone present in the pills may actually slow down milk supply.

Placenta encapsulation remains one for the scientists to unpick, but in the meantime it continues to increase in popularity.



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If you enjoyed an alcohol-free January, here are some alternatives to alcohol to try...

It's that time of year when we reflect on our bad habits and do our best to become healthier, happier and wiser, and if giving up alcohol is your New Year's Resolution, then all is good. Low-booze business is booming, and that means there are plenty of delicious, low-calorie options to help keep you motivated.

BEER

Any designated driver will tell you that the previous offerings from major breweries fell a little flat in the flavour department. But just as burgeoning independent brewers have completely transformed our ale habits, they too have tasked themselves with creating exciting low-alcohol options that don't skimp on that gloriously hoppy flavour. With 'endless session' IPAs, low-alcohol lagers and sobering stouts and sours, craft beer connoisseurs have a raft of options for their refined palates.

SPIRITS

For those lamenting their 5pm gin and tonics or pre-dinner Negronis, there are even more options as teetotalers use distilling alchemy to create potions that offer all the depth and nuance of an expertly concocted spirit with none of the units. There are juniper and bergamot blends that perfectly complement tonic water for that G&T experience, luxurious citrus and herb creations that mimic the dry bitterness of vermouth, and even elegant elixirs containing herbs such as lemon balm and valerian root – ideal as a soporific nightcap for those who would otherwise drink whisky.

WINE

In the past these underwhelming alternatives have often had their alcohol violently removed, leaving an unsatisfying liquid that would barely satisfy as grape juice. Now, canny cultivators have turned to nature in order to create wines that are naturally lower in alcohol by halting the fermenting process earlier. With red wines this can often lend a natural sweetness, whereas whites have a more delicate profile. The best low-alcohol wines, however, are the ones with a natural fizz, such as Pet Nat, which offer all the celebratory joy of champagne without the hangover.



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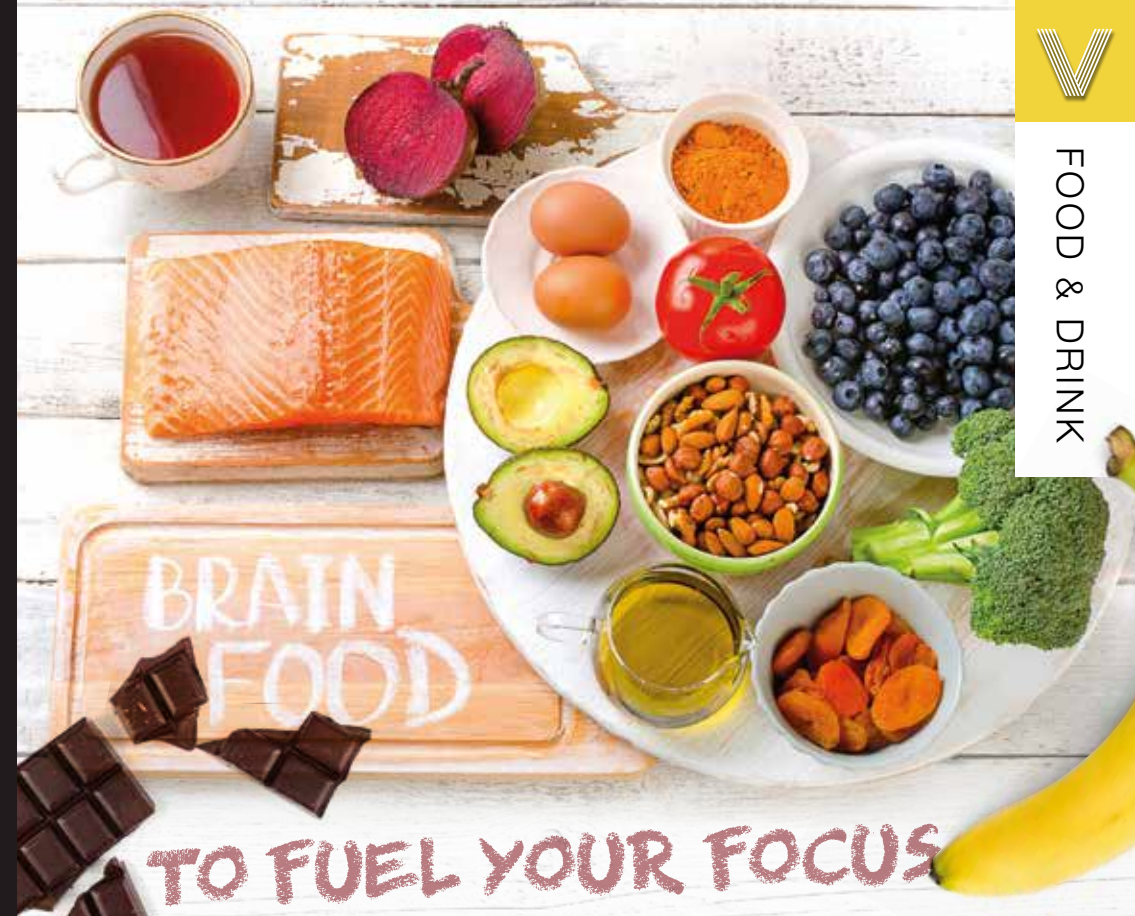
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If you are still struggling with getting back into a routine and could do with some help improving your concentration levels, these foods will boost your brain power and motivate your memory.

SUPER SALMON: Providing a concentrated source of omega-3 fatty acids, salmon can help to rebuild your brain cells, slow cognitive decline and strengthen the synapses in your brain that are responsible for memory.

BEETROOT: A shockingly underused root vegetable, beetroot contains nitrates that increase blood flow and oxygen to the brain, resulting in improved mental performance.

BANANAS: Cheap, filling and high in potassium, bananas are the ideal afternoon pick-me-up for times when your concentration levels are waning.

SPINACH: Spinach is known as the ultimate brain food and it's not hard to see why. Rich in folate,

lutein and beta-carotene, this leafy green has been linked to the prevention of dementia. Aim to eat three portions a week for optimal results.

AVOCADOS: Avocados are a bit like Marmite – you either love them or you hate them. Fortunately for those who fall into the former category, this fruit can fire up your brain cells and keep hunger pangs at bay.

NUTS: The best thing about nuts is that you only need a very small serving to enjoy all the benefits of this super snack. Both nuts and seeds are great sources of vitamin E, which is associated with a reduction in cognitive decline. Plus, they contain essential oils and amino acids that help you focus.

DARK CHOCOLATE: Because we all deserve a treat from time to time, dark chocolate makes a great alternative to coffee in the morning, having the ability to boost your serotonin and endorphin levels which are both associated with increased concentration.



FOOD & DRINK



Supermarket Savings

THE BEST TIMES OF THE DAY TO HEAD TO OUT TO GRAB A BARGAIN

As a percentage of our annual food bill, saving 50p on a carton of fresh soup, or picking up a pack of crumpets for an amount taken care of with just a handful of coppers, doesn't make any real imprint. And yet, that unique feeling of satisfaction that only comes with landing a bargain is something we all crave, and knowing when's best to land sneaky supermarket snips has become a fine art.

While different food retailers have slightly different rules, there are a few general trends you can follow:

The mid-afternoon discount
For items going out of date that day, you can expect a token discount (perhaps between 10 and 20 per cent) around mid-afternoon.

Supermarkets here are attempting to lure shoppers who would have purchased those items anyway into a small saving, in exchange for goods that aren't quite as fresh.

The teatime tease
You can expect up to 50 per cent off as soon as early evening comes around. The target market is people grabbing a bargain for their dinner, or who are happy to consume something later in the week that's past its best before or use-by date.

Closing time
In the last minutes up until closing time, prices fall like water cascading out the bottom of a sieve. The major supermarkets will discount up to 90 per cent in order to save on the cost of waste disposal.

The final freebie
And for those of you who shop at the more salubrious stores – this is common for Waitrose and M&S – it's not unknown for staff to approach customers at the till to offer free items, usually immediate perishables such as fruit, veg, dairy and cheese. Yum.



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What is the difference between a Loss Adjuster and a Loss Assessor?

THE INSURANCE **LOSS ADJUSTER**

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THE POLICYHOLDER'S **LOSS ASSESSOR**

You have the legal right as the Insured to appoint a **Loss Assessor** to provide a professional service to you- the Policyholder and protect your interests. Your own **Loss Assessor** is an expert representative who will challenge any attempt to refuse or repudiate your claim. A **Loss Assessor** will prepare and present your Claim on your behalf.

Loss Assessors will work for you handling the entire claim process and working with other professionals such as; Surveyors, Contractors and Legal Entities. "A **Loss Assessor** usually obtains up to 40% more then you would by handling the claim yourself." (Financial Mail)



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Oakleafe Claims **Loss Assessors** are the proud award winning recipients of **Loss Assessor** of the year at the U.K British Claims awards and have been helping people and businesses with Insurance Claims since the Second World War. We operate 24/7 throughout the UK with our head office in Gidea Park and supporting offices in London, Brighton, Manchester, Cardiff & Glasgow.



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Oakleafe
CLAIMS



THE WONDERFUL WEE VILLAGES THAT MAKE A TRIP TO THE SCOTTISH BORDERS WORTHWHILE

There's something about the Scottish Borders that transports minds back to heavy conflict, deep patriotism and bloody warfare, with emperor Hadrian, way back in AD128, constructing a literal divide between two countries that has lasted ever since.

It's peculiar, then, that the battles that existed in this huge belt of masonry are totally at odds with the picturesque villages that decorate a swathe of land that you could spend a lifetime exploring, without ever conquering.

Here are five picture-postcard villages and towns that will grab your attention if you ever find yourself on the Scottish Borders:

St Abbs: A stunning fishing village on the south-east Berwickshire coast, the journey up through Northumberland holds beauty that can rival any coastline in the UK. When you arrive at St Abbs, sample still waters, characterful pubs and the beautiful expanse of the North Sea.

Selkirk: Selkirk combines industrial power with royal heritage, a gateway to the north that dates back to the 13th century. The closeness of the streets offers a feel that likens itself to the Cotswolds, but the open expanses beyond remind you of rich Scottish countryside.

Peebles: Strange sounding but beautiful looking, Peebles has royal roots and is based on the River Tweed. Golf, fishing, mountain-biking and walking are popular pursuits, with the Victorian architecture offering hotels and hostleries to relax in after a day in the wilds.

Kelso: A sleepy market town that has the potential to burst into life at any moment, Kelso is a holidaymakers' dream, with great accommodation, impeccable dining, stunning architecture and a horse racing track that's the envy of the rest of Scotland.

St Boswells: Community is the buzzword in sleepy St Boswells – this place was recently named one of the top 10 places to live in Scotland. Flanked by stunning countryside and the River Tweed, and featuring a number of artisan independent businesses, this cosy village is worth a visit.



Photo credit: credit Frank Gaertner/Shutterstock.com

TRAVEL



Photo credit: Phil Silverman/Shutterstock.com

St Abbs



Selkirk



Peebles



Kelso



St Boswells

BRUSH UP

on children's oral health

February is National Children's Dental Health month, so what better time to tackle any tooth-brushing issues your child has?

Discover the top five reasons why your child doesn't want to brush their teeth below. Plus, how you can encourage them to practise good oral hygiene.

WHY DOES MY CHILD HATE BRUSHING THEIR TEETH?

1. They are sensitive to having their teeth brushed

Some children experience a gag reflex when brushing their teeth that can be unpleasant. Others might not like the feel of the brush against their teeth or in their mouth. Sensitivities are more common in children with autism or attention disorders.

2. They are asserting their authority

If you find yourself caught in a battle with your child every morning and evening when it comes to brushing their teeth and there is no physical reason why they won't brush, they could simply be pushing boundaries.

3. They have become anxious

You may not be able to determine the initial reason why your child started to hate brushing their teeth, but if it has become a daily issue in your household, your child may now feel anxiety around this daily activity.

4. They don't like the taste of the toothpaste

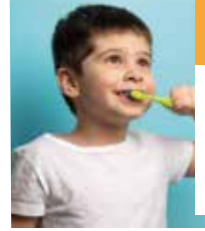
It is always a good idea to ask your child if they would like to choose a different flavoured toothpaste if they do not like the one you are currently buying.

5. They are a picky eater

Children who are picky eaters are more likely to not like the texture and taste of a toothbrush and toothpaste in their mouth.

How can I encourage my child to brush their teeth?

- 👉 Stick to a routine
- 👉 Make it fun
- 👉 Provide choice in terms of what products they use
- 👉 Stand behind younger children
- 👉 Allow your child to hold a toy they can squeeze to calm them
- 👉 Offer a reward such as an extra bedtime story



KIDS



Valentine's traditions AROUND THE WORLD

Love is in the air with these beautiful, and in some cases bizarre, Valentine's Day traditions from around the globe.



SOUTH KOREA: In this country in east Asia, lovers celebrate the day of love on the 14th of every month. May 14 is the "day of rose", June 14 is the "day of kisses", and there is even a "black day" in April when couples eat black noodles together.



PHILIPPINES: Young couples in the Philippines are sponsored by the government to get married as a form of public service. Well, there are worse ways to serve your country.



GHANA: Known as National Chocolate Day, February 14 is used to increase tourism in Ghana, one of the largest cocoa-producing countries in the world.



BULGARIA: A simple yet highly enjoyable tradition, in Bulgaria, couples young and old celebrate their love by sharing a glass of local wine.



WALES: Lovers from Wales celebrate Valentine's Day on January 25, and rather than exchange cards and flowers, they

give their partners handcrafted wooden spoons.



SPAIN: The day of love in Spain falls on October 9 and is known as the feast of Saint Dionysius. On this day, men gift their women a "macadora", which is a marzipan figurine.



ESTONIA: Still taking place on February 14 but with a slight twist, Estonians celebrate all relationships on this day rather than just romantic ones.



JAPAN: A country that prides itself on being unique, Valentine's Day in Japan is quite unlike anywhere else in the world. On February 14, women buy gifts for men, but men are not allowed to return the favour until March 14, known as the "white day".

HOW TO SAY "I LOVE YOU":

- > South Korea: Saranghae
- > Philippines: Mahal kita
- > Ghana: Me do wo
- > Bulgaria: Obicham te
- > Wales: Rwy'n dy garu di
- > Spain: Te amo
- > Estonia: Ma armastan sind
- > Japan: Aishiteru



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HOME & DIY



DULUX LOOKS TOWARDS SAFE GROUND IN NAMING ITS COLOUR FOR 2021

There's only one contradiction at play as far as Dulux's Colour of the Year goes – namely that in establishing a tone that speaks quietness, calmness, unassuming peace and tranquillity, the paint manufacturer is treading safe ground and not, as the shade's name implies, Brave Ground.

And yet, despite Dulux failing to state what is courageous about this tone, we can at least revel in its ability to encapsulate the mood of the world. It pleads for calm, reflection and philosophical thoughts, and offers a serenity to interiors that is very different from the intention borne out in Pantone's Colour(s) of the Year.

This warm beige shade is one that will work beautifully when matching with light woods, particularly in the bedroom or living room.

Combined with white it reclines elegantly into the

background, and as a flat shade, it can find itself offset by fabrics and furniture that offer depth and detail.

The tones of grey present in Brave Ground are also earthy enough to take interiors away from the overly beige patterns of the 1970s that often strayed too far in the way of oranges and browns.

Consider also mixing with pastels, or sharpening the edges with blacks and greys, particularly in cushions, throws, curtains or lampshades. Ultimately, Brave Ground is a colour that will bring lightness while offering a knowing nod to dark luxury.

Indeed, perhaps in adopting a shade that is the very epitome of neutrality, perhaps in offering a platform on which we can place our existing belongings as well as bring in new renovations, Dulux is showing itself to be brave after all.

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Magic MATERIALS



Tencel bedding

In a world where sustainability is not just desirable, but necessary, these alternative fabrics and leathers are presenting as viable options for global brands who want to do their bit for our planet.

TENCEL

Already a ubiquitous eco-fabric, Tencel is used by several major design brands linked to both interiors and fashion.

Produced by environmentally responsible processes from the sustainably sourced natural raw material wood, Tencel is not only a wonderfully soft and breathable material, it also combines beautifully with other fabrics such as cotton, silk and polyester for maximum versatility.



Econyl chairs

ECONYL

Fabric recycling has come a long way since the days of simple reupholstering that saw tired sofas and chairs less reinvented and more clumsily repurposed into something you could palm off to the kids or into the guest bedroom.

Econyl regenerated nylon is made from, you guessed it... nylon waste, and with an emphasis on closing the loop, this brilliant and innovative brand confesses to having an appetite for creating an infinite quantity of new products, but all using existing resources. In short, we've come a long way since the 1980s.

With 10,000 tonnes of Econyl raw material saving 70,000 barrels of crude oil, this fabulous fabric is being used to create everything from carpets to swimsuits.



Piñatex furniture

PIÑATEX

Piñatex is a leather alternative made from the leaf waste of pineapples. This fluff-like leaf fibre (PALF) gets mixed with a corn-based polylactic acid (PLA), undergoing a mechanical process to create Piñafelt, a non-woven mesh that forms the base of all Piñatex collections.

Coloured using natural pigments and coated with resin to give additional strength, durability and water resistance, this luxurious leather alternative is already doing its bit to lessen the environmental impact of mass leather production and chemical tanning.

Photo credit: westernm.co.uk, econyl.com, 21gstudio.com

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making MEMORIES

Whether you are looking for a birthday present, graduation gift or unique anniversary offering, a memory quilt is the perfect choice. Allowing you to create a personalised and completely original gift, expect tears of joy when you present one of these to your loved one.

Alternatively, you can make your own personalised fabric by transferring photos onto a piece of white or coloured cotton.

- Step 2:** Determine the desired size of your squares and quilt. For a large quilt, use 25 t-shirt squares 5x5 – see step 4.
- Step 3:** Cut your fusible interlining slightly larger than your quilt to allow for cutting back later.
- Step 4:** Cut off the necks and sides of your t-shirts. You will be left with two squares from each one.
- Step 5:** Following the manufacturer's instructions, lay the fusible interlining on the back of your squares and fuse using an iron.
- Step 6:** Once all pieces are fused, cut to size.
- Step 7:** Decide upon the layout of your squares and pin together before starting to sew.

Step 8: Using your sewing machine, start to sew each row together before attaching the rows to complete your quilt top. Remove pins.

Step 9: Make a quilt sandwich using backing and batting which needs to be 5cm bigger on all sides. Fuse the batting using an iron and then attach your backing with an adhesive spray.

Step 10: Complete your quilt using the stitch-in-the-ditch technique using your sewing machine, or use free-motion quilting.

Congratulations. Your memory quilt is complete.

WHAT YOU WILL NEED:

- > Your chosen clothing or fabric for quilt squares
- > Fusible interlining
- > Batting
- > Backing fabric
- > Adhesive spray, such as Elmer's Multi-Purpose Spray Adhesive
- > An iron
- > Scissors
- > Pins
- > Sewing machine
- > Ruler or tape measure

HOW TO MAKE:

Step 1: Gather the fabrics you want to make your quilt with. This could be t-shirts, blankets or baby clothes.



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I think we can all agree that the sooner we see the back of 2020 and this dreadful corona virus the better. That said, there are also some heart warming positives that we can take out of this situation. It has often been said that we can only really get to know one another and realise what is truly important in times of crisis. I think few would argue that in this case what has proven to be important is local community spirit.

When talking to the Manager of Cloudy2Clear windows Chris Miller it became clear that these values have been held dear for a number of years. Since starting the business some years ago Cloudy2Clear have remained true to their core values of

supporting the local community by providing a service that saves the public money.

The Cloudy2Clear service only requires the glass to be replaced and not the whole window once the unit has failed. Chris commented "Cloudy2Clear were able to assist our community through the last financial crisis in 2008 due to the savings that can be made in using our service. Unfortunately we might be going through something similar again soon and the public can rest assured that we will be there to help again".

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BETTER SAFE than sorry

Whether you are investing in home security for the first time or you want to upgrade your existing set-up, the below guide will ensure you pick the perfect home security system for your property.

Determine the purpose: The first step in choosing a security system for your home is to determine its primary purpose. There are three types of home security systems: home automation, intruder protection and environmental monitoring.

Home automation is the most advanced option, where all your devices are connected to each other via the internet of things. Intruder protection is designed to protect your home from burglars, and environmental monitoring systems detect anomalies like fire and leaks.

Choose the right components: There are many different home security packages on the market and you need to decide which elements you want in yours to make you and your family feel safe and protected. Popular choices include smart

doorbells, motion cameras, burglar alarms, smart lights and window sensors.

Pick a monitoring system: If your budget allows it, you could invest in round-the-clock call centre monitoring for your home. Your chosen provider will call you if they notice anything strange or to alert you of a natural disaster. Alternatively, you could use DIY monitoring and opt to receive notifications to your phone.

Select a network: Every home security system needs a network to function. You can choose either a wired or a wireless one. Wireless networks are becoming increasingly popular as all they need is a Wi-Fi or cellular connection and they are good to go.

Decide about installation: You can either install your home security system yourself or pay a professional to do it for you. Professionally installed systems tend to be more reliable but will obviously cost you more money than doing it yourself.

Understanding

THE DOS AND DON'TS TO ACHIEVING PERFECT UNDERFOOT CONDITIONS

You think splashing the cash on a swanky new length of carpet is the first and last bit of expense you need to worry about, before someone reminds you that carpet without underlay is akin to a new motor without tyres on the wheels.

It's recommended that you change your underlay whenever you change your carpet – after all, years of wear, tear, and no small amount of gravity will have squashed the best life out of it.

New underlay will provide for you a number of things – firmness, bounce, insulation, noise reduction, preservation of your new flooring, as well as reinforcing the feeling that your new piece of carpet is worthy of something you'd find on the way into a film premiere.

Premium underlay will set you back up to £10 per metre square, though perfectly good brands can be picked up for less than half that. It's true to say the higher quality your underlay, the longer it will, in

turn, look after your carpet.

Typical depth is around 10–13mm, with a lower grade on the stairs. You'll also have to consider the tog rating – anything higher than 2.5 tog will insulate nicely, though if you have heated floors then switch back down to a lower tog of around 1.0.

As for the fabric, PU foam is the most common underlay on the market. It offers a soft feeling underfoot, is made from recycled materials and is a good insulator. Other types are made from rubber, sponge rubber and crumb rubber, the latter being made from car tyres. Felt and wool carpet underlay also come well recommended.

And if you're fitting wood or laminate flooring, then consult a specialist who can bring forward a range of hardfloor-specific underlays that are lighter and thinner, and respect what is an intentionally solid top layer.

UNDERLAY



PU FOAM



Sponge RUBBER



CRUMB RUBBER



WOOL FELT

Photo credit: www.diydoctor.org.uk

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ARE YOU READY TO

Wabi-sabi

YOUR HOME?

Although it may sound like that spicy green paste that you get with sushi, wabi-sabi is actually a Japanese term that means “finding beauty in imperfection”.

The perfect interior design trend for people who prefer their house to look lived in rather than like a showroom, wabi-sabi is all about embracing authenticity, flaws and all.

Showcase homemade décor

Whether you are an artist yourself or not, homemade décor items or things that you have collected over the years on holiday or at local craft fairs are ideal for creating a wabi-sabi home. Allowing you to foster feelings of warmth and originality, even just proudly displaying your children's artwork contributes to the characteristics of this Japanese philosophy.

Clear away clutter

Just because wabi-sabi values imperfection, that doesn't mean you can let your home become a cluttered and chaotic mess. To achieve wabi-sabi, your home should be a calm and peaceful place where you and your family can relax, so make sure you stick to your cleaning regime.

Embrace nature

With a focus on simplicity, bringing elements of the outside into your home is a key component of wabi-sabi. Whether you choose to put some freshly cut flowers in a vase, invest in a house plant or two, or you decide to incorporate natural materials into your home such as stone or wood, nature will always be able to lift your mood.

Be a partial minimalist

Although a wabi-sabi home is not fully minimalistic by nature, it does invite people to keep their possessions to a minimum by only allowing things in their home that offer nostalgia, beauty or utility. This means that you can keep an item that does not necessarily match the décor of your home, as long as it makes you happy.



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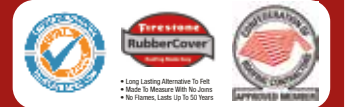


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The infectious personality of
ALISON HAMMOND

The presenter who has chuckled, chortled and guffawed her way through almost two decades on camera... and we're all better off for it.

The Brummie whose laugh-a-minute approach to presenting has won her admirers across the entertainment world... and we include Harrison Ford and Ryan Gosling in that number.

As if proof were needed that Alison Hammond, while always kind, enthusiastic and respectful, does not subscribe to the idea that celebrities and film stars are unreachable demigods not worthy of our time, in a hilarious 2017 interview for *This Morning*, Hammond charmed and bewildered two of Hollywood's finest in a recording that had more than 12 million YouTube views. You could say she upstaged her two guests by laughing them into submission.

Having first appeared on our screens as a contestant in the *Big Brother* house, Hammond is another example of a reality star who has maximised the possibilities out of what is a very simple and short-lived platform.

She has swept her way through a variety of entertainment shows over the past decade, appearing in *Celebrity Fit Club*, *Celebrities Under Pressure*, *Stars in Their Eyes*, *Celebrity Ready Steady Cook* and many, many more; she has been a panellist on *Loose Women*, and made it to the seventh week of *Strictly Come Dancing* when she partnered Aljaž Škorjanec.

"I've always been someone who wants to grab life by the horns and go for a ride," she laughs. "It's very rare that I'll turn down an opportunity, and if I do it's because it's taking me too far from home and being around the people I love, and those are the ones who must always come first."

And Hammond's reputation as a brilliant reporter on *This Morning* has borne fruit in a way she wouldn't have imagined – in the middle of December 2020 it was announced that she and Dermot O'Leary would take over full presenting duties on Fridays from regular incumbents Eamonn Holmes and Ruth Langsford.

The shake-up is further evidence of a nation embracing those down-to-earth personalities who reflect our own thoughts, ideas and sensibilities.

"A long time ago I realised that to get on in the world you just need to be yourself," she says. "I think in the early days of getting TV work there was a temptation to be the person you thought people wanted to see, and when you do that you lose an edge."

"What people see is what they get, but it is all me – an uplifting, fun, sparky person who treats everyone as equals."

Indeed, geographically, Hammond, 46 in February, has stayed true to herself as well. Despite *This Morning* being filmed at Television Centre in White City, the presenter still lives in 'the second city', commuting to the capital for work. "I couldn't ever leave Birmingham behind – it means everything to me, as do the people."

"It's also my son's home, and I want him to grow up a proud Brummie like me... who likes to laugh."



LOCAL NEWS

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Photo credit: Michael Baah

Resident helps family win a fortune

A personal trainer from Hornchurch, his girlfriend and her family won £10,000 after they appeared on ITV quiz show *Family Fortunes* earlier this month.

Michael Baah starred in the episode with his partner Kate Mills, her parents and her stepfather on the long-running show now hosted by Gino D'Acampo in an episode that was filmed in September.

Michael said he did not expect to do so well. He added: "It felt amazing to win. I'm quite competitive but we weren't going out there to win."

Although the episode was filmed out of lockdown, Michael said there were still strict procedures that had to be followed.

He revealed: "We had to be socially distant when filming and the whole set-up was like an airport. There were areas where you could and couldn't go."

Michael said he will always remember a particular moment from his appearance.

When the team was asked to name a commonly used emoji, Michael suggested an aubergine. In this context, it represents male genitalia. Michael said the video of the moment has gone viral and has received 40,000 plays so far.

Kate disregarded his answer – which was among the most popular – and chose the flame emoji, which wasn't.

Michael said: "When I said it, she gave me a nudge and said I couldn't say that."

PT Michael has several celebrity clients, including Kojo from *Britain's Got Talent*, and will be working at the new Harrow Lodge Leisure Centre in Hornchurch when lockdown is lifted.



LOCAL NEWS



Get a glimpse inside town's new leisure centre

People in Hornchurch got a glimpse inside the town's new leisure centre last month even though it was temporarily closed owing to the lockdown.

A grand opening scheduled to take place on January 3 was postponed, but locals can look forward to the new facilities they will be able to enjoy after a series of photos were released.

They include a 25 metre eight-lane swimming pool, a 20 metre wide learning and diving pool, a health and fitness suite, a sports hall and three exercise studios.

Tom Fletcher, contract manager at Everyone Active, commented: "The brand-new Harrow Lodge Leisure Centre will be a welcome addition to the town, and

the local community will benefit greatly from all the fantastic facilities we have to offer."

Councillor Damian White, Leader of Havering Council, said: "After what has been a terrible year for our leisure centres, it is wonderful news that the long-awaited Harrow Lodge Leisure Centre will soon be opening its doors.

"Our leisure centres are very popular with the local community, and this new addition really demonstrates our commitment to providing everything residents need to live happy, healthy lives."

The building is complete and will be open to the public as soon as possible.

Council helps wedding dream come true



When Hornchurch was placed under Tier 4 restrictions in Decemeber 2020, it looked like Becki Fowls and Billy Green's dream wedding would be dashed, until Havering Council came to the rescue.

When the announcement came the day before the wedding, the registration team made sure Becki and Billy, the local couple, could say, "I do".

With only two hours to spare, Havering concierge, Dave Russell, opened up Langtons House in Hornchurch, and council registrars Carlie Hammond and Louise West gave up their evenings to perform the service for the couple.

The happy newly-weds said: "We went from feeling so low to completely ecstatic. Carlie called us at 6.30pm, saying we could get married at 8.30pm that evening. We are so grateful for everyone at Langtons for pulling out all the stops and allowing us to get married."



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Photo credit: Met Police

Landlord ignored safety warnings at pub where boy was killed

A pub landlord from Hornchurch ignored warnings to have numerous safety risks fixed before a seven-year-old boy was electrocuted in 2018, a court heard last month.

Jurors at Snaresbrook Crown Court heard David Bearman, landlord of the King Harold in Romford, and electrician Colin Naylor were both responsible for the death of Harvey Tyrell (pictured) in October 2018 during Naylor's trial.

Naylor, of Rayleigh, denies gross negligence manslaughter. He is accused of failing to fit the premises with safe lighting. Bearman, of Ardleigh Green Road, has admitted manslaughter.

Harvey Tyrell received a massive shock when he sat

on a garden wall light and touched a metal railing while playing with his friend, jurors heard.

Duncan Penny, prosecuting, said Bearman flouted his legal responsibilities to arrange health and safety inspections. He had been warned about numerous electrical defects by officers from Havering Council in January 2009.

The landlord also ignored advice given to him by numerous servicemen who frequented the pub to make changes to the premises, it was said.

The lethal garden lights were an old set from Bearman's home which he had reused for the pub despite the fuse tripping throughout the summer before Harvey's death, the court heard.

Brave Lucy takes on Polar Bear Challenge

While the cold weather has most of us dreaming of cosying up by a log fire, one brave woman from Hornchurch has been bracing the chilly temperatures.

Lucy Edwards has taken on the Polar Bear Challenge, and until March she'll be swimming 200 metres twice a month in the sea and in lakes to raise money for Saint Francis Hospice.

Although Lucy may be an experienced triathlete, she insists swimming outdoors in temperatures below 15 degrees without a wetsuit is definitely outside her comfort zone.

She revealed: "I absolutely love triathlons and they've become a big part of my life, but while there are no races on at the moment, I wanted to do something different to challenge myself. For me, this isn't about fitness, it's a mind-over-matter challenge to embrace the cold water, as painful as it may be."

You can support Lucy by making a donation on her fundraising page by going to justgiving.com/fundraising/lucys-polar-bear-challenge





JULIA LOPEZ MP



Hornchurch and Upminster



LOCAL NEWS

After a long and difficult 2020, I know we were all looking to 2021 to bring us brighter days. Unfortunately, I write this column during January's lockdown, and the pandemic continues its dreadful impact on all our lives. Nonetheless, hope feels firmly on the horizon after the final fortnight of 2020 brought us both additional vaccine approvals and the start of a new relationship between the UK and the EU with the positive conclusion of our trade deal negotiations.

This has allowed us in government to make significant progress on many different fronts in the first weeks of the year. With the opening of the London ExCel Centre as a mass vaccination hub, alongside hospital hubs and an increasing number of GP surgeries and pharmacies, our capacity to vaccinate is rapidly expanding and we hope to offer a first dose to all the top four priority groups by mid-February. I have been speaking weekly to our local NHS teams at every level and we have been working together to troubleshoot issues when they arise, share critical information with residents and keep as many services running as possible while the vaccine roll-out gets under way.

In my ministerial role at Cabinet Office, I have been working over the past few months to clamp down on COVID-19 fraudsters. The latest scam is one of the most despicable yet, targeting the elderly and vulnerable by asking for bank details or cash payments for access to vaccines that are fake or non-existent. Along with the National Economic Crime Centre, the vaccines minister Nadhim Zahawi, and law enforcement I have been trying to highlight this scam to as many people as possible. Please do remain vigilant and follow basic advice in relation to the NHS COVID-19 vaccination programme, which will always be free. The vaccine is only available via the NHS, who will never ask for payment or request bank details as part of an identity verification process to secure a vaccine appointment.

I have also been working with ministers across government to see what we can do differently and better now that we have left the EU. One of those



things is regional development, and we are looking at how freeports might create new jobs, skills and opportunities. An exciting proposal has been put forward by Tilbury, London Gateway and Ford in Dagenham that would look to generate improvements across North East London and Essex.

Following on from the success of my previous virtual jobs and apprenticeships fairs, I will be hosting another on Friday, February 12, to coincide with National Apprenticeship Week. During this event we will specifically be focusing on employers with apprenticeship opportunities and those employers who have signed up to the government's Kickstart Scheme to provide roles for those aged 16-24 who are in receipt of Universal Credit. More information on this event will be available on my website, and readers can sign up by contacting my office at: julia.lopez.mp@parliament.uk

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MP for ROMFORD



Let's keep our loved ones safe in 2021... then celebrate our Queen's Jubilee in 2022.

When I wrote my previous article for VISIONHornchurch, COVID-19 restrictions were very real. Yet the people of Hornchurch and Romford could still visit a pub, retail deemed "non-essential" was allowed to stay open and Christmas promised a precious few days with family... but then it all changed.

We began 2021 in very different circumstances. I fully understand why the government has taken the action it has by imposing another lockdown, although a more balanced approach, thinking about the long-term effects, would, I feel, have been wiser. Today, we all now hope for a quick, safe and effective vaccine roll-out to save lives and keep our loved ones safe.

One of the most difficult parts of this pandemic has been the absence of those many moments when the nation comes together during the year for great national occasions.

I am genuinely optimistic that these happy times will return soon. One great occasion we can all look forward to is next year's celebrations for the Queen's Platinum Jubilee, marking Her Majesty's 70th year on the throne.

Like me, the people of Havering are staunchly patriotic, and I remember fondly the amazing parties and celebrations we held for the Golden Jubilee in 2002 and the Diamond Jubilee in 2012... so let's make the Platinum Jubilee in 2022 the best party ever and toast the service of our gracious Queen and our cherished island nation.

Isla's cancer battle continues

The mother of a girl from Hornchurch who has been battling against neuroblastoma is appealing for help. Isla Caton, six, was diagnosed in March 2017 with the aggressive form of cancer which only affects 100 children in the UK each year.

After undergoing treatment in the UK and Spain, the family returned to the UK last July for a new trial in Southampton. Owing to COVID-19, the trial was postponed.

Isla's mum Nikki said the family has now decided to start chemotherapy again in London.

She said: "We have spoken to doctors from UK, Spain and USA and decided to start chemo again here in London with the hope that COVID-19 starts to get better and new trials will open. But we now have to start to find a way to raise the much-needed funds for the treatment as it's so expensive to go abroad and private treatment has to be paid for."

"She has spent her life fighting and in pain and deserves a long, healthy life more than anyone. We are so very grateful for every single penny, and for your love."

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LOCAL NEWS



NHS worker praises Otis

A teacher at Havering Colleges Arleigh Green Campus in Hornchurch has been praised by a hospital worker.

Otis Griffith, electrical installation teacher, created a metal sculpture back in the first lockdown as a tribute to the NHS. He was inspired to make it when he saw the appreciation in the regular clapping for the NHS on a Thursday evening. It is now displayed on a wall at King George Hospital in Ilford.

The words of praise have come from Alex Skinner, who said: "I work at King George Hospital and I have been meaning to write for a while. I just wanted to say a huge thank you for the amazing sculpture you

made for the NHS. It is one of the only things that both inspires me and lifts my spirits each and every time I see it.

"We are very grateful to have it on display in our workplace. It has been positioned near to the staff entrance, so luckily most people get a chance to see it on their way in or out of work, which I hope was deliberate."

Otis, a self-taught sculptor, said: "I wanted to do something to show appreciation for all the hard-working NHS staff. I am so pleased that they like the sculpture and it is lifting spirits during these hard times."

Landlord of neglected house hit with fine

The landlord of a house in Hornchurch with no working fire alarms and high levels of mould in a bathroom has been fined £12,500 by Havering Council after losing an appeal.

The council took action after private-sector landlord licensing officers visited the seven-bedroom house on Albany Road in August 2020.

They found there was no fire detection, and hygiene levels were well below required standards across the property.

This included smoke alarms not working, no fire doors, poor ventilation and lack of cleaning, resulting in black mould, which could, if left, affect tenants' health.

The Courts and Tribunals Service refused an appeal lodged by the landlord against the penalty fines in

October 2020.

Councillor Viddy Persaud, Havering's cabinet member for public protection and safety, said she hoped the case would send out a message to other people.

She added: "Under our Landlord Licensing Scheme, we are continuing to crack down on irresponsible landlords, those who are taking advantage of local families and individuals by providing poorly maintained properties. We won't tolerate it, and neither will we stand for landlords not having the correct licences.

"We are also here to support landlords to help them make sure tenants are living safely in private rented accommodation in Havering. However, landlords that break the rules must be aware that we will use the strongest possible action against them."

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News from

Councillor Paul Middleton

St Andrews Ward, Hornchurch Residents' Association



This year, we (at the time of writing this) are in lockdown. Many people are obeying the rules; a small percentage are not.

I can fully understand that some people do not want to wear a mask or have a medical reason not to. I can see no reason why these people cannot wear a face shield. Don't get me started on people not willing to respect personal space while shopping.

Last month I had a question for full council, asking for one free hour parking to be given in the council car parks in Hornchurch and Upminster (the council had removed the free half-hour). This free hour would encourage the use of the car parks and would help the ailing shops.

The outcome was a resounding no. I followed up with a question, to which the answer was that we had never had a free hour parking before, so it was a moot point. There you have it, folks – the people running the town hall do not want to help the recovery of Hornchurch and Upminster as we never had a free hour parking before. The council car parks remain mostly empty; side roads and any free parking bays are full.

Please shop safely and locally – support your local shops if you want them to survive.

The scammers have been busy during lockdown –



LOCAL NEWS

please be aware you will never be charged or asked to supply bank/credit card details for you to receive the COVID-19 vaccination. You will be contacted by the NHS when it is your turn to be vaccinated.

Forward email scams to report@phishing.gov.uk, or Google actionfraud, and forward text scams to 7726.

The Boundary Commission has returned with changes to the draft submission on how the various wards in Havering will look in 2022. This is viewable on its website (Google 'boundary commission havering'). The submission is open for comments until March 8.

Hair today, gone tomorrow

A selfless 10-year-old from Hornchurch has raised nearly £2,500 for charity by having his hair cut after he grew it for more than two years.

In July 2018, Freddie Fisher decided he wanted to grow his hair to donate to make wigs for children who lost their hair through cancer treatment.

He donated 14 inches of his hair after it was recently cut for the Little Princess Trust.

His mum, Carly-Jane, said Freddie decided to grow his hair after watching *Stand Up to Cancer* in 2018. He also took on the challenge in memory of a family friend who had recently lost her battle with ovarian cancer.

She commented: "We are so proud of him for sticking to this even through some nasty comments about his hair at school."

You can still donate to Freddie. Go to justgiving.com/fundraising/freddiesbigchop



Photo credit: Carly-Jane Fisher



Photo credit: Peter Tinder



Shootout sees Urchins progress in the FA Trophy

Although they haven't played in the league since November, Hornchurch FC reached the fifth round of the FA Trophy for just the second time in their history last month.

Mark Stimson's men saw off a third National League side on penalties as they emerged victorious from the match against Kings Lynn Town, who are 33 places above them in the National League pyramid.

The Urchins had to come from behind after Kairo Mitchell fired the visitors in front in the first half, but they were back on level terms after 52 minutes when

Liam Nash struck a volley to level the match.

The hosts were unable to capitalise after Town were reduced to ten men and so the game was decided by a shoot-out.

Jordan Clark, Ellis Brown and Sam Higgins made no mistake from the spot, but keeper Joe Wright emerged the hero after he saved all three Town penalties to send Hornchurch into the next round.

Hornchurch FC were due to take on Maidstone United FC at The Stadium on February 6. Keep an eye on their social media pages for updates.

Men reported for organising baby shower

Two men have been reported for breaching COVID-19 regulations after police found 20 people attending a baby shower in Hornchurch.

Officers attended an address in Elm Park Avenue at 6.10pm on Sunday, 24 January, where they found 20 guests from several different households. Those attending ranged in age from young children to teenagers to people in their late 40s.

After seeing the gifts and balloons, it was clear that the gathering was not spontaneous, and they reported the two organisers – men aged 22 and 44.

Others involved were advised and left the premises.

Chief Superintendent Stephen Clayman, from East Area Basic Command Unit, said: "This gathering had people of widely different ages and from different households present. While I fully understand that people want to get together to celebrate events, this is definitely not the time to do it in person.

"A gathering like this can have tragic consequences for all those involved and risks spreading this terrible virus to our loved ones and the wider community. Please have no doubt, we are determined to deal robustly with those who breach the COVID regulations in this way."



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GARDENING

FEBRUARY BIRTH FLOWER OF THE MONTH:

Violet

The February birth flower is the vibrant violet. People born in this month tend to be both modest and mild mannered, hence the popular expression “shrinking violet”. Sweet violets are regularly found in the UK in woods and hedgerows and are often candied and used to decorate cakes.

WHAT DO VIOLETS SYMBOLISE?

Violets have been around for centuries and were first cultivated by the Greeks around 500BC. According to Greek mythology, violets were created when one of Artemis' nymphs was pursued by her twin brother Apollo. To protect her, Artemis turned her into a violet, which in turn led to this flower being known to represent modesty.

WHAT DOES THIS BIRTH FLOWER SAY ABOUT YOUR PERSONALITY?

If you were born in February, you are said to be wise beyond your years. A private person, you are also prone to being a bit of a dreamer. It can take you a while to warm up to people, but when you do, you are fiercely loyal.

CAN I GROW VIOLETS IN MY GARDEN?

Violets typically grow in the wild, although they are decreasing in numbers owing to habitat loss, which means if you want to grow them in your garden, you need to recreate these conditions. Violets thrive in winter and spring sun but need summer shade, so their ideal spot is under a deciduous tree or shrub.

Violets will self-sow, but growing your own from seed is a challenge as the seeds need to be fresh. Instead, buy plants during the spring and plant immediately in moist but well-drained soil.

WHAT PESTS ARE COMMON TO VIOLETS?

If your violet leaves turn yellow, this could be the result of an attack by red spider mites. This pest strikes when your plant becomes too hot or dry.

The best remedy is to defoliate the plant completely.





GARDEN OF LIFE

FOX IN *the box*

In the first of a four-part series that shows how even the most urban garden can be a haven for the wonders of wildlife and the nurturing of nature, we look at the faithful fox. Whether out at night or hiding in plain sight, this sly urban dweller has adapted better than any other animal to human environments.

Perhaps we shouldn't be so surprised when we spot a fox meandering its way through the park, across a garden, or even on the pavement outside where we live. These beautiful creatures are, after all, past masters in urban environments, even if they are just as accustomed to survival in the rugged wild.

For all its impressive presence, your average fox will rarely approach humans or animals – chickens, rabbits and guinea pigs notwithstanding. This sly old foe simply wants to hunt for scraps, play, mate and return to its den to rest and tend to its offspring. Only when threatened will a fox move into offensive mode.

The fact foxes have become so much a part of our urban and suburban lives has a lot to do with the way they feed. They'll consume almost anything they find – from fruit and veg, raw and cooked meat, cheese, bread and even dog biscuits. Increasingly brave around humans, they'll often take food for storage, burying it for later consumption.

That means there's little risk in leaving food out for foxes if you're hoping to get a glimpse of these fiery nocturnal beauties, who will happily roam around in the late afternoon as well.

There is a downside, however. From fouling the garden to chewing shoes left outside, to trampling lawns and even digging up deceased pets, if you encourage foxes in, you'll have to go along with their inquisitive, playful habits.



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GARDENING

Squirrelled Away

PROS AND CONS OF ATTRACTING SQUIRRELS TO YOUR GARDEN

It's one of the cutest and most beautiful sights in nature – a squirrel bounding around the back garden, scaling trees, leaping from branches, and finding any possible hiding place for acorns and hazelnuts.

And yet, opinion is divided over whether or not these immaculate grey creatures are good for our green spaces. Let's look at the evidence:

THE GOOD:
Nature's gardeners... Squirrels are known as 'nature's gardeners', meaning they are chiefly

responsible for shaping plant composition. Their constant removal, replanting and redistribution of nuts means nature flourishes where they live.

Entertainment... squirrels are a constant source of entertainment and they'll let you get relatively close to watch.

Education... there is no better garden dweller for helping kids learn about animal behaviour – from food preservation (including rubbing their nose on an acorn to leave a scent they can come back to) to evading the threat of cats and foxes; from mating to playing, there is so much to savour.

THE BAD:
Bark... squirrels are known to peel bark off trees, resulting in sometimes extensive damage, as well as causing branches to die.

Wires... they are often the culprits of chewed wires or gnawed joists in lofts, although proper insulation and plugging of gaps in buildings can prevent this.

Bad for birds... we often see these hoarders stealing food left out for birds, or hanging from feeders.

What's certain is that attracting squirrels to your garden means you have a friend who will keep coming back. Loyal and dependent, they will return looking for food frequently, all the while leaving a trail of pellet poos that will quickly decorate any immaculately paved area.



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BEAM ME UP



TECHNOLOGY



A level of gadgetry once reserved for Bond films or the mind of Jason Bourne might soon be coming your way, with boffins in Israel having found a way of beaming music into the brain without the need for speakers or headphones.

It goes by the name of soundbeaming, and this futuristic audio technique has the ability to transform the way we listen to music, play computer games, watch TV or process satellite navigation instructions forever.

The product is called a Soundbeamer 1.0 and is made by Noveto. It sits on a desktop and beams sound to the user – and not just any sound, but rich 3D, circling and weaving soundscapes that fill the ear, swirl around the head and infiltrate the brain, without really seeming to come from any one direction.

What's more, there are no implants required – simply, the 3D sensing module locates and tracks your ear position and sends audio via ultrasonic

waves, creating sound pockets next to the ear. And because there are no headphones blocking other sounds, you will still pick up what's being spoken in the room, so no need for those awkward taps on the shoulder.

The technology is so new and so advanced that even the company's CEO admits he has struggled to come to terms with it.

"The brain doesn't understand what it doesn't know," he says. "It sounds like a speaker but it is just you who can hear it, and that's quite something for the brain to come to terms with.

"We have other technologies that happen around us that are difficult to comprehend but vital to our lives – the internet is perhaps a good example – and I hope this will come to be regarded in the same way."

As for when we can get our hands on the Soundbeamer – the company hopes that the first will be available for sale by Christmas 2021.

Photo credit: Noveto Systems/www.robbreport.com

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they are arguably far more desirable to look at than your common or garden goldfish.

ZEBRA FINCHES: Originating from Australia, these feathery little friends are fantastic pets for those wishing to bring a little music into their lives. Prone to loneliness, zebra finches crave companionship and require exercise. They're also daytime creatures, so prefer to play in the day and sleep at night.

TROPICAL FISH: You may not be able to cuddle a koi carp when you're feeling low, but bright-coloured, beautiful tropical fish are clinically proven to have a calming effect on our minds. From gorgeous, fantailed guppies to bright little neons, you can buy tropical fish in an array of dazzling colours, even creating your own underwater paradise with the addition of ornaments and plants. Tropical fish, of course, require a little more in terms of heating and pumping systems, but

BENGAL CAT: They may look like tiny leopards, but Bengal cats are actually incredibly tame and love a cuddle. They are agile and love to play, which means they do need a little space to jump and run around in. However, they're better off being kept indoors, not only because it is far safer there but also because of their high value.

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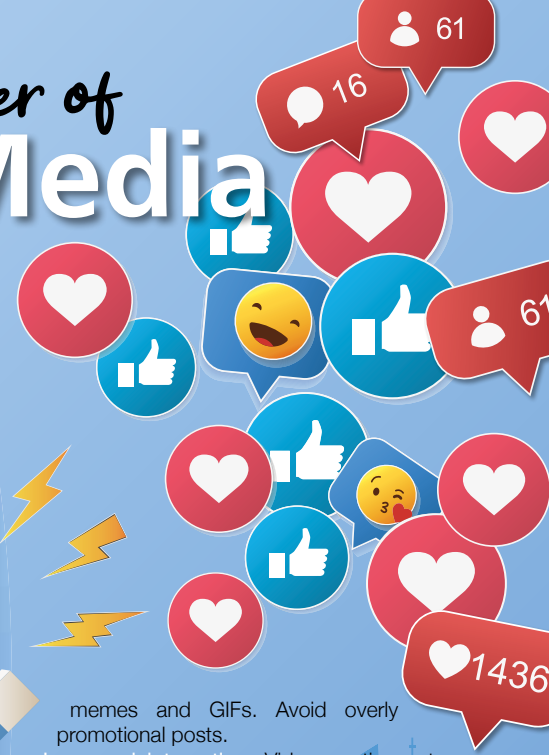
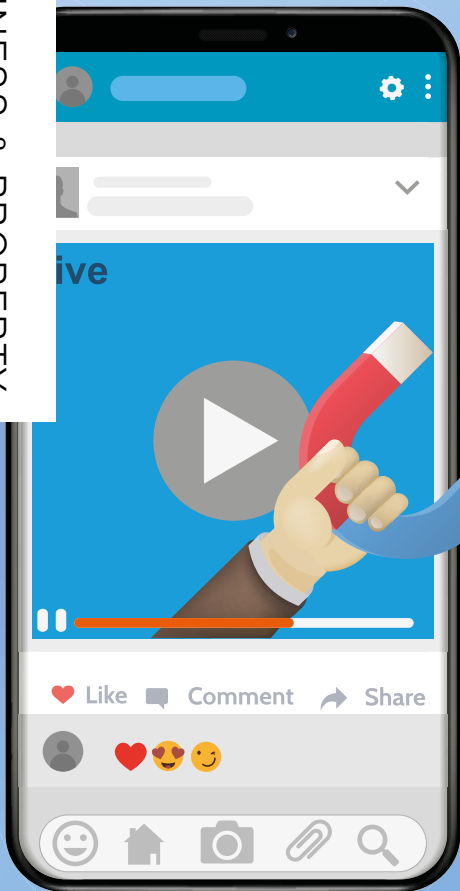
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The Power of Social Media



memes and GIFs. Avoid overly promotional posts.

Increased interaction: Video continues to be one of the strongest social media strategies, with an estimated 78 per cent of users watching video content on a monthly basis. Ideal for grabbing people's attention, conveying your brand personality and showcasing your passion as a business. You could even try live-streaming an event.

Improved customer service: Although social media can be a blessing for your business, it can also cause a lot of damage if you don't keep an eye on it. Remember that, first and foremost, social media is a customer service channel, so you need to monitor your mentions and keep tabs on your reviews. Always respond to comments asap and deal with any problems via private messaging.

The lowdown on the popular social media platforms:

- > **Facebook.** Best for generating leads and building relationships
- > **Twitter.** Perfect for businesses with a younger audience
- > **Pinterest.** Great for driving sales and for brands with visual appeal
- > **Snapchat.** Ideal for building relationships with influencers and driving brand recognition and loyalty
- > **Instagram.** The best option for e-commerce sites and for telling your brand story
- > **YouTube.** To help you get seen by Google and tap into YouTube traffic

If you only implement one digital marketing technique to boost your business and build brand awareness this year, then make sure it involves social media.

Providing you with the chance to improve customer service, drive traffic to your site and even spy on your competitors, the power of social media should never be underestimated.

Enhanced engagement: Social media is the perfect technology for engaging with both your existing customers and potential new ones. Make sure you take full advantage of social capability and encourage interaction through competitions, industry news, tips and advice and humorous

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TIDY HOUSE, TIDY MIND: House viewers need to imagine their own possessions in your house, so the brighter and emptier your rooms are, the easier it will be for them to make that connection.

It may mean you need to give up a weekend or two to repaint a couple of rooms, and that mass of clutter can find a new home in the loft – or the bin – but the rewards could be huge.

TIGHT IS RIGHT: Your house needs to give off a feeling of quality – it will all add to a sense of your potential purchaser stepping up a level when they move in. With that in mind, tighten and make sparkle door handles, taps and bannister rails. No wobbles, no worries.

A MEAN CLEAN: While it sounds obvious, any appearance of dust is hugely off-putting for those looking around a home. Paying professional cleaners to really give your rooms a spruce may be one of the best investments you make.

(VERY) FIRST IMPRESSIONS: Most people think first impressions are made when someone walks through the front door, but the process begins way before that. Is the lawn mown? Is the front door wiped down? Can you convince your neighbour to move his rusty Ford Mondeo around the corner?

WEATHER WITH YOU: Try to book viewings when the sun is there to light up your home. Open windows to let heat and the breeze in, and consider delaying if torrential rain may see your potential buyers soaked through before they even enter the property.



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Charles & Diana

40 years on

Looking back to 1981, and the 40th anniversary of the engagement of Prince Charles and Lady Diana.

February 6, 2021, marks the 40th anniversary of when Lady Diana Spencer made a step into the public spotlight from which, inevitably, she would never return.

At just 19 years old, her engagement to Prince Charles, at 32, was celebrated the world over; 40 years on, with the benefit of hindsight, we look back on the union in a rather different way.

The fact the pair met in peculiar circumstances perhaps should have been a sign – Charles originally dated Diana's sister, Sarah. And in later years it was revealed that the pair had only been together on 13 separate occasions, across six months, before becoming engaged.

Of course, peculiarity and the royal family are common bedfellows. In fact, February 2021 marks another interesting anniversary – the 50th anniversary of the first time Charles met Camilla, his now wife.

So while February 6 certainly won't be looked on as a date in history to be cherished, it is at least a mark in the sand. The couple brought two boys into the world who, in their own way, have made significant contributions; and while their marriage – which was confirmed on July 29, 1981, at St Paul's Cathedral – lasted only 15 years, it's appropriate to remind ourselves that time mends most ills.

Diana, up to her death in 1997, did so much to cultivate her own life away from the stranglehold of the royal epicentre, and largely succeeded; while Charles has reinvented his persona across philanthropic, environmental and entrepreneurial projects, and enjoys a higher grade of popularity now in 2021 than he has at any point in the past.

Photo credit: Getty Images, Shutterstock

NEW OLYMPIC SPORT:

BREAKDANCING

THE NEW SPORT SET TO DEBUT AT THE 2024 OLYMPICS IN PARIS... BREAKDANCING!

While the postponement of the Olympic Games in Tokyo proved one of 2020's most frustrating episodes, hosting the Games this coming summer has at least given the International Olympic Committee (IOC) the chance to run its eye over prospective new sports that could be showcased.

And fans of breakdancing – a pursuit created and styled on the mean, urban streets of New York in the 1970s before being exported to a truly global audience – will be glad of the extra time, albeit the first we'll see of it will be in 2024 when Paris hosts.

A movement centred as much on music as it is dance, there are distant similarities with other performance events at the Games, such as synchronised swimming and dressage.

In the Olympic format, competitors look likely to go up against each other 1v1, as was

the case at the 2018 Youth Olympics in Argentina. The success of the event there, some significant backing by Red Bull and a desire by organisers for the Olympics to speak to a younger, more urban demographic, means breakdancing – or 'breaking', as it will be called in event terms – sailed through the trial on its way to debuting at the world's biggest sporting tournament.

It's also significant that the IOC has embraced breaking despite some of the activity's leading purveyors insisting that it needs to retain its artistic and cultural edge, and shouldn't be bracketed in with the Olympics' sometimes rather formal take on sport.

Whether breaking will inspire anyone older than the teenage market to take it up is unclear. If it does, expect sales of paracetamol to soar.





MOTORING

How To CLEAN AND PROTECT your Car seats

Even with the best will in the world, your car seats will eventually succumb to stains and spillages. Fortunately, if you care for and clean them appropriately, they can be restored to their original glory.

FABRIC CAR SEATS

- > The first step when cleaning your fabric car seats is to vacuum the upholstery to ensure the area is free from dirt and debris. If pet hair is an issue, utilise a pet hairbrush to lift the hair before vacuuming.
- > Next you need to apply your chosen cleaner or shampoo. Try not to make the area too wet – damp is best – and then gently rub in the solution with a soft-bristled brush.
- > Top tip: Concentrate on small areas and an even spread of solution to avoid water stains.

LEATHER CAR SEATS

- > Leather car seats are less prone to stains than fabric ones but they are also more delicate and susceptible to abrasions. Therefore, when vacuuming you need to be extra careful and take your time to avoid any scratches or tears. You also need to purchase a leather-specific upholstery cleaner, which often comes as a cream rather than a spray or shampoo.
- > Apply the product and gently rub the area with a microfibre towel.
- > Top tip: The more matt your leather seats appear, the cleaner they are.

HOW TO DRY YOUR CAR SEATS

It is always advisable to clean your car seats early in the day and when no rain is forecast. If you can keep an eye on your vehicle, leave your windows slightly open to prevent trapped moisture and let your seats dry naturally.

HOW TO PROTECT YOUR CAR SEATS

- > Condition leather seats to prevent cracks
- > Spray fabric seats with a fabric protector




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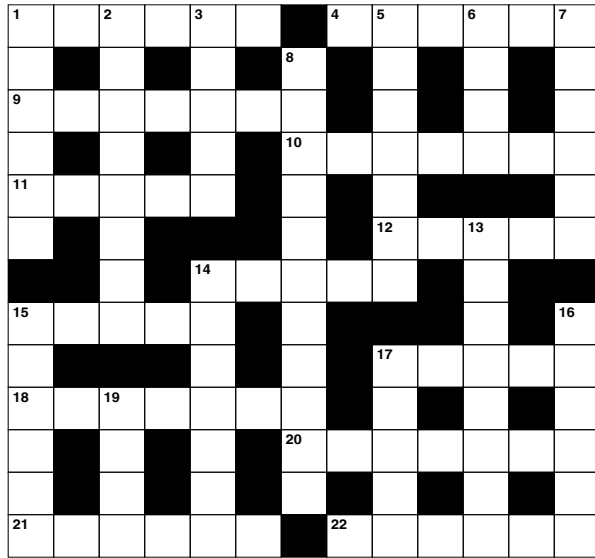
PUZZLES & TRIVIA

PUZZLES

Answers: see end of The VISION Listings

ACROSS

- 1. Straighten out (6)
- 4. Vocalist (6)
- 9. Animal fat (7)
- 10. Not friendly (7)
- 11. Oozes (5)
- 12. Compassion (5)
- 14. Expect; think that (5)
- 15. Word of farewell (5)
- 17. Wedding assistant (5)
- 18. Supervisory worker (7)
- 20. Burdensome work (7)
- 21. Short choral compositions (6)
- 22. Entertains (6)



DOWN

- 1. Except when (6)
- 2. Musical pieces for solo instruments (8)
- 3. Regulations (5)
- 5. Annoying (7)
- 6. Large desert in Asia (4)
- 7. Make less dense (6)
- 8. Residents (11)
- 13. People with auburn hair (8)

- 14. Furthest away (7)
- 15. State publicly (6)
- 16. Tremulous sounds (6)
- 17. Deprive of weapons (5)
- 19. Speak in a wild way (4)

DID YOU KNOW?

- ▶ Adélie penguins breed and raise their offspring in Antarctica
- ▶ Puffins can flap their wings up to 400 times a minute. They can fly at around 55 miles an hour
- ▶ The bald eagle, which was once on the brink of extinction, has been the national symbol of the United States of America since 1782
- ▶ Once a flamingo lays an egg, the parents take turns sitting on it to keep it warm. The egg usually hatches in around 30 days
- ▶ The ostrich is the tallest and heaviest of all the birds
- ▶ As a male snowy owl gets older, it turns whiter. Males are often whiter than females
- ▶ Red-tailed hawks can spot a mouse from 30 metres up in the air

SUDOKU

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

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