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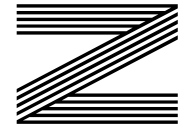
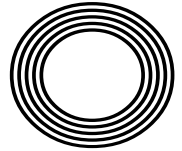
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# Editor's notes...

MARCH 2021



Nik Allen, Editor

Hello and welcome to this month's edition of **VISION** LeighThorpeBay. I am, at the moment, planning our areas of expansion this year, in regard to the towns where we will be launching new editions of **VISION**. In a year of ups and downs so far, it would certainly be looked at as a bold move by most, especially because the last 12 months have been focused on preserving and saving what we have.

I mentioned this plan to a friend the other day and he was aghast. "Why are you expanding?" he said. "Most people I know are scaling back."

He had a point, of course. And yet I answered him by explaining that everything I've done in business and, more importantly, in life has been with a focus on positivity, expecting change, planning for it, and hitting the ground running when it comes about.

To some, planning expansion so soon after a lockdown is a strange move, but to me it says nothing more than this - we will get out of this (sooner rather than later), we will get back to normal, and those wise and brave enough to prepare for when we come out of it now will have the ultimate head start. Why not start planning your next chapter now? I believe the message will be more than ever about supporting your local high street and tradespeople. Keep supporting local.

*Nik Allen*

This is your town's hyper-local magazine, delivering to homes and businesses every month.

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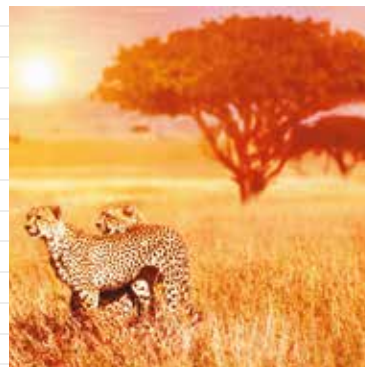
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At the time of print all content in **VISION** was relevant and up to date according to COVID-19 government guidelines Inside pages recyclable

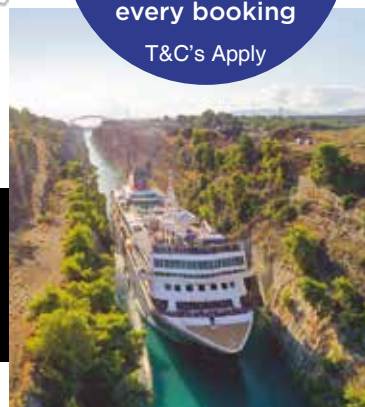
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# MORNING GLORY

Good Morning Britain

HOW PIERS MORGAN AND SUSANNA REID ARE PUTTING THE 'GET UP AND GO' BACK INTO BREAKFAST TV

In many ways, the Piers Morgan/Susanna Reid combo shouldn't work. The former is an ex-red-top editor decorated in a history of salacious headlines, controversial tabloid practices and a puffed-up sense of self-importance that flits between entertaining and aggravating.

The latter is a vastly experienced journalist who, while she possesses a chipper, jagged edge, is a calming weekday morning influencer, a sympathiser and an empathiser whose delivery is effortlessly measured and reassuringly sensible.

Put mildly, Piers Morgan and Susanna Reid are poles apart.

Yet as far as breakfast television goes, there is a chaotic chemistry that links the two and, in the process, knits together perfectly two and a half

hours of early-morning chat, debate and news delivery. Perhaps not since the days of Anne Diamond and Nick Owen has there been a duo who seem so comfortable, calm and considered as our breakfast companions; and their ability to spar, speak up and fire off each other is completely borne out in viewing figures which show *Good Morning Britain (GMB)* to be making impressive moves in the breakfast TV battle.

In the latest round of figures, the ITV show has been narrowing the gap on *BBC Breakfast*, although still remains about a million viewers behind its rival.

Piers and Susanna first worked together back in 2014. It was a strange time for Morgan, the former editor of the *News of the World* and *Daily Mirror*, who was looking to revitalise a career that had

enjoyed a surprising leg-up through reality TV shows and his partnership with Simon Cowell. The 55-year-old has perhaps never looked the epitome of cutting edge, but his breathless honesty – be that in front of a Whitney wannabe on *Britain's Got Talent* or a politician crumbling under his indomitable journalistic scrutiny – wicked turn of humour and fearlessness to voice an opinion – both on TV and across social media – have earned our respect. Certainly, it all provided the perfect tonic to Reid's punchy, spiky, slightly girl-next-door approach to topical news.

Fifty-year-old Reid first came to our attention in the early Noughties when she worked for Radio 5 Live, before moving to *BBC News 24* and, latterly, *BBC Breakfast News*. The broadcaster made a controversial switch to ITV in February 2014 as *GMB*

replaced the outgoing *Daybreak*.

As a combination, you sense there is a 'good cop, bad cop' approach to getting sunrise answers the news headlines demand. There's little of the stuffy formality that decorates the styles of Dan Walker, Louise Minchin and others over on the Beeb; instead, issues are tackled using a tried and tested approach which delivers debates without holding back.

Perhaps what's best about the pair is they know how to push each other's buttons. *GMB* feels like a news programme, a lifestyle show and an episode of *Coronation Street* rolled into one. If the dynamic duo can get anywhere near to the longevity of Jack and Vera, they'll have done well, and we'll have been treated to perhaps the best wake-up call of a generation.



Photo credit: 10 Downing Street

# DOCTOR'S ORDERS

THE *LOVE ISLAND* DOC HELPING US FIND A HAPPIER REALITY

Doctor Alex George is the *Love Island* contestant who wowed viewers with an altogether different take on what constitutes 'national health'. For an army of admirers, his great looks, impeccable shape, well-spoken manner and charm added up to a dream combination. He's also rumoured to be particularly good with a stethoscope.

Moving away from the reality show, the doc has carved for himself an impressive career in the spotlight. And yet, unlike so many other names who have built their brand through reality TV, there is real substance behind the style.

The 30-year-old was announced Youth Mental Health Ambassador by Prime Minister Boris Johnson in February and is a passionate advocate of well-being initiatives, not least because he sees a nation struggling to come to terms with the various effects of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Indeed, the death of his brother, Llyr, who took his own life having suffered with depression, only reinforces a desire in the popular doc to open up channels of communication and encourage people to talk.

Alex's five top tips to boost mental health and well-being:

**> ONE:** Get outside

"Getting natural light and filling our lungs with air is crucial for well-being. It's uplifting and can instantly make us feel better."

**> TWO:** Exercise

"We've all had those times when we just can't be bothered to get out and exercise, but be it a run, a walk or a bike ride, just 20 minutes per day will boost blood flow and increase endorphins."

**> THREE:** Call a friend

"Lockdown has been very frustrating and a lonely experience, but staying in touch with friends is essential."

**> FOUR:** Eat well

"What we consume affects the way we feel, so fuel and replenish your system, and eat as much green stuff as possible."

**> FIVE:** Sleep routine

"Sleep is very important, but so is resting at regular times, so monitor your sleep habits and ensure you're getting what you need."

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Daughter of Resident, Admiral Court

Review excerpt taken from [carehome.co.uk](http://carehome.co.uk) review 2020

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# INTERIOR

*traveller*



HOME & DIY



Embrace the global influence trend to cure your wanderlust

**H**ave you tried catching a flight out to Zambia recently in order to sample the breathtaking, unique wonder of an African safari? Let's just say, your luck is out.

Of course, so much of interior design is about taking ideas and influences from around the world and incorporating those into our living spaces. With that in mind, and ignoring the fact all our planes are grounded, the trend of 'global influence' aims to embrace the charm and beauty of the world, while we remain resolutely stationed at 29 Acacia Avenue.

While 'global influence', as a term, suggests embracing interior design influences from all corners of the globe, in reality its focus is on the colours, textures and ideas you might commonly associate with African savanna safari expeditions – nature's most expansive showcase of wildlife.

Global influence takes on board woven fabrics; it focuses on earthy colour palettes, shows off cooling stone patterns and embraces natural textiles and all manner of woods, rattan and bamboo. The styles are uncomplicated, uncluttered and unpretentious.

Furniture and objects are wholesome, earthy and rugged. In matched a leather sofa, linen and perhaps some animal-themed art prints, you can truly bring the breathless elegance and simplicity of nature into your living space.

Of course, the individuality of interior design ultimately means global influence can represent whatever you may want it to. So if tropical flavours and flourishes are more your thing, why not embrace bright colours, wicker items, a beach vibe and miniature palm trees? Similarly, a Scandinavian vibe is easily put together with hardwoods, light colours and a style vision that's stripped back and simplistic.

Ultimately, whatever your individual taste, global influence is there to compensate for the fact that while we may not be able to visit these enchanting places, we can at least still sample their uniqueness.



Photo credit: noorroom.tumblr.com, myamazonghings.com, Simon Whitehouse via IdealHome.co.uk, Jake Curtis via IdealHome.co.uk, Maria Vilela via apartmenttherapy.com



# CUTLERY

care guide

Whether you use stainless steel, silver-plated or silver cutlery, or a combination of all three, if you want your silverware to last and looks its best for longer, you need to take care of it.

**STAINLESS STEEL CUTLERY:** The most popular material choice for cutlery, stainless steel is both durable and versatile, but that doesn't mean it is completely stain-resistant.

- HOW TO CLEAN: > Rinse before placing in dishwasher  
 > Never leave to soak or in damp conditions as this can lead to corrosion  
 > Remove stubborn stains using stainless steel polish and a soft cloth

- HOW TO STORE: > Store in its original canteen to prevent pieces rubbing together  
 > Can be stored in kitchen drawer but may reduce lifespan

**SILVER-PLATED CUTLERY:** A more decadent choice, silver-plated cutlery is relatively easy to care for but does require some special care.

- HOW TO CLEAN: > Keep away from stainless steel cutlery, as contact can cause corrosion  
 > Place in dishwasher, but turn off the drying cycle and dry each piece by hand to avoid staining  
 > Polish to maintain shine

- HOW TO STORE: > Store in a tarnish-proof cutlery roll and then in an airtight container

**SILVER CUTLERY:** Ideal for use at dinner parties and other special occasions, silver cutlery is both lavish and luxurious.

- HOW TO CLEAN: > Clean as soon as possible after use  
 > Wash separately from stainless steel and silver-plated cutlery to avoid corrosion  
 > Do not put in dishwasher; instead, clean by hand  
 > Do not polish too often as this can wear down the finish

- HOW TO STORE: > When not in use, roll each piece of silver cutlery in acid-free tissue paper or unbleached cotton muslin and then place in a resealable plastic bag.  
 > Add a piece of chalk wrapped in cheesecloth to the bag to absorb moisture and prevent tarnishing.



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# DIY reed diffuser

If you want to enjoy an aromatherapy experience at home, then a scented reed diffuser is the ideal choice. However, you don't need to spend your hard-earned cash on shop-bought varieties when you can make them at home with a few simple ingredients and supplies.

**WHAT YOU NEED:** Small bottle or vase | 20–25 drops of your preferred essential oil | ¼ cup of baby oil | 3 tbsp of vodka or rubbing alcohol | Bamboo skewers or ideally diffuser reeds | Zest peels and herbs are optional

**HOW TO MAKE:** Pour the baby oil into a bowl | Add the rubbing alcohol or vodka | Carefully add the drops of essential oil and zest peels and herbs if preferred | Pour the mixture into your vase or glass bottle using a funnel until it is ¾ filled | Place five skewers into the vase | Cut the skewers to size if necessary so that they stick out roughly 4–6 inches

#### Top tips for your DIY diffuser

1. Check the liquid quantity monthly and top up if needed
2. Rotate the diffuser reeds once a month
3. Replace diffuser reeds after 4–6 months
4. Recycle a perfume bottle if you don't have a suitable vase
5. Cut your skewers carefully to avoid splinters

#### How to choose essential oils for each season

**Spring:** Choose fresh floral notes, such as a mix of citrus, lavender, geranium and jasmine.

**Summer:** Uplift your home with magnolia, bergamot and lemon.

**Autumn:** Embrace the cooler weather with a combination of juniper berry, cedarwood, cardamom and cinnamon.

**Winter:** Cosy up with a warming blend of spruce, patchouli and Douglas fir.

#### An alternative to reed diffusers

You can purchase an electronic oil diffuser, but make sure to do your research first as they come in different sizes. These diffusers produce a more concentrated fragrance and add moisture to the air, albeit in quite small amounts.



HOME & DIY





# O, Easter tree!

Who says that decorative trees are just for Christmas? We think everyone could do with a bit of extra cheer this year, so why not have a go at creating your own Easter centrepiece tree, complete with ornamental eggs?

### How to create your Easter tree:

For the tree itself, simply gather a selection of branches and place in a vase. The best tree branches to look out for include: Cherry blossom | Magnolia | Willow | Forsythia | Dogwood

### How to hollow out your eggs:

Poke a small hole in the pointier side of an egg and then another, slightly larger, hole on the opposite side. Place your mouth over the smaller hole and blow out the egg. Wash the shell and leave to dry.

### Marbled eggs:

Mix 1 cup of hot water with 10 drops of liquid food colouring and 1 tsp of vinegar. Submerge the eggshell in the water for two minutes and leave to cool. This is your base colour.

Next, fill a bowl with fresh hot water and add a darker food colouring and 1 tbsp of olive oil. Roll your egg around to allow it to absorb the second colour.

### Egg nests:

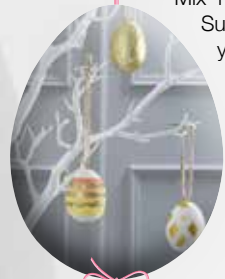
If you favour a more natural look, these miniature nests, complete with tiny Easter egg treats, are the perfect decoration for your tree. Gently break away some of the egg shell on the front of your egg, fill with straw and then add a single mini egg to each one.

### Glitter eggs:

Create a pattern across your egg using tape, apply PVA glue to the rest of the egg and sprinkle generously with glitter. Leave to dry and remove tape. Choose to paint your eggs first for more a more vibrant end result.

### How to hang your eggs:

To finish, simply thread a ribbon or piece of cotton through the top hole of each egg, wiggle it until it pokes out the other side and tie a knot to secure.



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# LOCAL NEWS

*from your neighbourhood*



Photo credit: Nicky Hayes Photography

## Murder investigation launched after teenager's death

A murder investigation is under way after a teenager was stabbed to death in Leigh-on-Sea.

Luke Bellfield, 18, was assaulted in an alleyway near The Peterboat pub in High Street and taken to hospital at around 6pm on Friday, February 26.

A post mortem examination found he had died as a result of a single stab wound to the heart.

Following the murder, police stepped up their presence in Leigh with increased patrols and search powers. They introduced a Section 60, which allows them to search people for weapons without the need to have a reasonable suspicion.

Detective Chief Inspector Stuart Truss, who is leading the murder investigation, said: "We're progressing our enquiries into the circumstances behind this young man's death and are treating it as a targeted incident.

"My officers are supporting his family at this distressing time and I fully understand the wider community will also be concerned and affected by what has happened.

"We are making good progress with our investigation and I would ask anyone considering taking matters into their own hands not to do so, but let us investigate so we can bring people to justice."

## Restaurant gains place in Michelin Guides book

Food by John Lawson earns a place in the Michelin Guides red book last month.

Despite the undoubtable tough times for the hospitality business, chef John Lawson has been determined to make his restaurant a success.

Having worked with some of the best in the industry, such as Gordon Ramsay and Raymond Blanc OBE, chef John Lawson aims to produce the

freshest seasonal cuisine with the best locally sourced ingredients.

In a Facebook post, the restaurant described being over the moon with the decision after a tough year.

John Lawson said: "I am so proud of all the people around me who make this restaurant thrive, past and present. It's wonderful to be recognised; it's very much a community restaurant and a door to so much more."



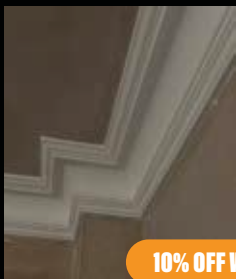
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# SIR DAVID AMESS MP



Member of Parliament for Southend West



So, at long last we all have something to look forward to, with the Prime Minister announcing the target date of June 21 to end all legal restrictions on social contact. Now, I know not everyone will be satisfied with this cautious approach, but if you look at the three stages before that date is reached, our lives will steadily return to some sort of normality. I do know that many parents are certainly pleased that our children have returned to school. I have no doubt that our wonderful teachers are doing their very best to reassure children in terms of the challenges that they face with learning. As far as any assessments are concerned, the lost time will certainly be taken into account. As for those businesses that are able to reopen, I and my team stand ready to help in whatever way we can. I do recognise how incredibly tough and stressful it has been for our entrepreneurs.

The vaccination programme locally and nationally has been extremely successful – it leads the world. Anyone who has difficulty with being vaccinated and needs help, do contact me. My heart goes out to anyone who has lost a family member, friend or relative during this pandemic. It is truly heart-breaking when one considers the damage that this virus has done. With the virus mutating we must continue to be vigilant in how we lead our lives. So much has changed since the pandemic started. However, with our strong community spirit I have no doubt that we will be able to rebuild our lives again and enjoy a far better future than what has been a truly miserable 18 months. I am still holding regular virtual surgeries and you can contact me with any issues you may have by emailing amessd@parliament.uk or calling 020 7219 3452.

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## Town brightened up by new signs



Leigh-on-Sea has been brightened up with new innovative and helpful signs. The Wayfinding project was set up after Leigh-on-Sea Partnership Group (LPG) asked local independent businesses what they needed. Signage and marketing came out as one of the areas that businesses wanted to see improved. LPG worked with Leigh-on-Sea artist Joanne Holbrook to create distinctive maps, which are installed at Chalkwell Station, Leigh Station, Broadway, Leigh Road and Gypsy Bridge. Joanne said: "Leigh-on-Sea is a really special place. I'm constantly inspired by the people, the buildings and the history, and this was a great way to celebrate it all. "It wasn't hard to put pen to paper to bring to life our town in map form and share all the best bits with visitors." The maps are bursting with people, including musicians, artists, cyclists, fisherman, shopkeepers, families and friends. There will also be eight finger posts installed around the town to help people discover all Leigh has to offer. LPG member David Elcock said: "Residents and businesses have come together during lockdown to help each other and we want that to continue, but we also want to welcome more visitors into the town when it's safe to do so."



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Sliding doors

# LOCAL NEWS

*from your neighbourhood*



LOCAL NEWS THORPE BAY



## Evening parking is scrapped but charges hiked

The council has made a U-turn to its proposed parking changes, although it remains a mixed bag for Thorpe Bay.

Under proposals initially announced in January, Thorpe Bay was due to see parking charges introduced after 6pm, with the cost of parking all day rocketing from £8 to £24.

However, Southend Borough Council's (SBC) plans were heavily criticised, and its original plans were amended on February 16.

For Thorpe Bay it means the Thorpe Esplanade will move into zone 1a, which means along the seafront, from Warwick Road to Maplin Way, charges will only apply from 8am to 6pm.

SBC says this follows feedback from Thorpe Bay businesses, while the move to zone 1a also means

the cost of parking will more than double.

That's because SBC plans to charge £18 for anyone who wants to park for between seven and 10 hours.

The eye-watering rise, however, is still lower than the £24 the council initially wanted to charge.

The move has been criticised by Conservative leader councillor Tony Cox, who said: "We have gone from ludicrous proposals to ridiculous proposals and instead of destroying the central seafront area we are going to destroy Thorpe Bay too - £8 all day parking charge now £18."

Councillor Ron Woodley, deputy leader of SBC, said: "All our budget proposals need to be taken in the context of the severe financial pressures we face and the fact that we have to set a balanced budget that protects front-line services."



## 'Bittersweet' as family wins tribunal case



stock image

A family from Thorpe Bay has won a court battle against the council to secure a £264,000 place at a specialist school.

Colin and Jessica Nickless faced Southend Borough Council in legal proceedings in their bid to get the support they need at a residential school for their daughter, Ellie.

Ellie, nine, has autism, ADHD, severe insomnia and cystic fibrosis and needs the correct care to manage her conditions.

Colin shared his experience on social media, citing the council's lack of support as a reason why it got to tribunal.

Colin said: "It is quite a bittersweet 'victory' as my daughter will no longer be living with us.

"I can't help feeling sorry for those who will miss out, other families who are denied support they need because, and let's be honest here, this was always about budgets.

"I'm writing this to show people, especially those who live in Southend, the underhand tactics used. In my opinion this also represents a fundamental failure of leadership at the council, from the very top, to hold the people who act in this manner accountable.

"There will be many families facing similar circumstances, and I want them to know the malpractices carried out."

Councillor Anne Jones said: "We are aware that some details of this case have been shared in the public domain, but it is not appropriate for the council to comment on individual cases."

## Man uses skis to get round the seafront

Thorpe Bay was turned into a winter wonderland as heavy snow provided residents with a chance to take an icy swim and strap on skis.

In early February the area was covered in a blanket of snow, and local man Jonathon Gittoes took the opportunity to get some skiing in.

He was spotted along the seafront at Thorpe Bay as he passed the beach huts.

Jonathon wasn't the only one to brave the wintry conditions, as a group of swimmers took the opportunity to head to the sea.

They were seen enjoying the water, despite the conditions, for their daily exercise while they also enjoyed the opportunity to make snow angels on the beach.

The rare sights were celebrated by local resident Katrina Peason, who said: "Thorpe Bay looks great when it snows but isn't it great to see such unusual ways to enjoy the conditions? I never in my lifetime expected the seafront to become a ski run."

## Youngsters nominated for national competition

Two inspirational local youngsters have been nominated by Thorpe Bay Rotary Club for a national award.

Danielle Zamora and Grace Bower have been nominated for the Rotary Young Citizen Award.

Danielle, 18, the youngest volunteer reader for *Southend Talking Newspaper*, was nominated for her efforts to help others.

When COVID-19 hit, the weekly recordings of local news had to be brought to a halt. However, Danielle, at the time a pupil at Southend High School for Girls, recruited three of her schoolfriends to record remotely using their mobile phones, with *The Echo* newspaper kindly allowing them to access its online news free of charge.

Thanks to Danielle and her friends, more than 100 residents continued to receive their news.

Meanwhile Grace Bower, 13, helped other youngsters during lockdowns.

Grace has learnt how to plan, prep and deliver sessions for the younger Triple Teen Youth Club members.

During the period of COVID-19 restrictions, Grace continued to support others, helping to produce more than 15 activity packs delivered to 50 local families.



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# Positivity of the MIDDLE MAN

## ANT MIDDLETON'S CLIMB TO PHYSICAL AND MENTAL MAGNIFICENCE

Anyone who has watched his SAS series knows Ant Middleton isn't a guy to be messed with. Grit, steel, determination, power and a large dose of bloody-mindedness have propelled the former military man into the mainstream; and while a new career in the lens suits the 40-year-old Army and Royal Marines veteran nicely, the impact he is having on everyday folk is profound.

For a long time the various fitness, health, strength and well-being trends that have taken up countless column inches and patterned our social media feeds have needed a confident, high-energy figure to take them forward. Yes, we have various reality stars putting out fitness tutorials, and Joe Wicks is always there to advise on the best way to pull off the perfect burpee, but can they do it on a cold Tuesday night in Stoke? The answer, undoubtedly, is no.

Ant Middleton, however... let's just say he makes The Potteries look like a beach holiday in the Maldives.

So much of what this inspirational tour de force has done up to now has been about physical determination. His Channel 4 SAS: *Who Dares Wins* series, which he fronted for five years before announcing recently he will no longer be part of the show due to differences with the production company, is a military training show of brutal extremes, with an adventure/reality crossover that pushes participants to the absolute limits of body endurance.

While this type of programming has seen the Portsmouth-born hardman make his mark, in truth it represents only one half of what it takes to truly ascend to the next level. Thus, squaring the circle in his new project, which centres on a series of talks on the subject of positive mindset, seems the natural progression.

"We all know that physical toughness can only take you so far," says the author of the best-selling book *Zero Negativity*. "You need to have the mental strength to keep pushing on when the body says no."

"The brain can outlast and outpace anything the body can do, so training our minds to interpret, recycle, repair and renew the messages flowing through us means we can achieve things way beyond what our muscles tell us is possible."

Middleton's emergence as a mainstream player is no better exemplified than in the fact he was joined on a recent project by terrestrial TV poster boy Ben Shephard. "Ben's a good guy who has absolute determination in his career. He's a great example of someone who is a winner – we all come in different shapes and sizes."

In a streamed live event that took place at the start of February, Middleton's *Be Prepared for 2021* did exactly what the title suggested, with an unscripted, unrehearsed and unfiltered conversation designed to unpick the various roadblocks that 2020 had put in the way of so many of us.

"The past year felt like such a crushing low for a lot of people, but rather than dwell on the negativity, as a nation we need to look at the things we learned, and appreciate the positives we took out of the year," he says.

"We need to appreciate how we grew and developed strengths many of us never knew we had."

**"This is the road to ensuring 2021 is a better year. We cannot change the world around us, but we can alter the way we decide to tackle its challenges."**





# PUZZLES & TRIVIA

PUZZLES

Answers: see end of The VISION Listings

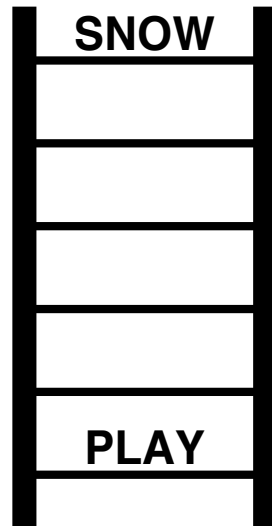
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- ▶ FILMS
- ▶ HAND LUGGAGE
- ▶ JET LAG
- ▶ LANDING
- ▶ REFRESHMENTS
- ▶ RUNWAY
- ▶ SEAT BELT
- ▶ SECURITY
- ▶ SHOPS
- ▶ SLEEP
- ▶ SUITCASE
- ▶ TAKE OFF
- ▶ TURBULENCE

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## DID YOU KNOW?

- ▶ Central Park in New York is one of the world's largest urban parks, covering 843 acres
- ▶ Paris has few skyscraper buildings compared to other cities owing to building height restrictions
- ▶ The Flavian Amphitheatre in Rome became known as the Colosseum because of a colossal statue that is situated nearby
- ▶ Istanbul lies in two continents – part in Europe and part in Asia
- ▶ The world's first electric traffic signal was put into place in Cleveland, Ohio, in 1914
- ▶ It's thought that Amsterdam has more bikes than people
- ▶ More chocolate is bought at Brussels Airport than anywhere else in the world

## WORD LADDER



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

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

DO NOT rearrange the order of the letters.

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

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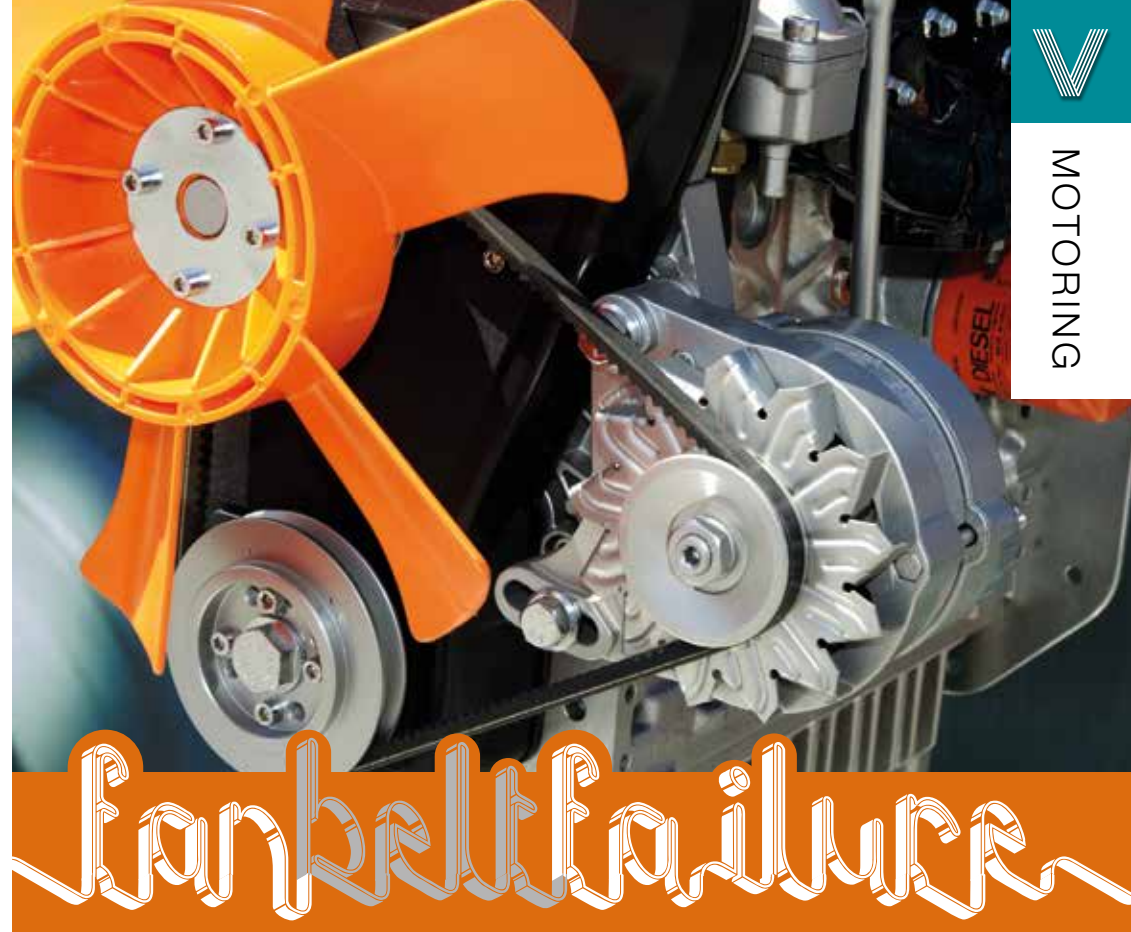
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MOTORING



HOW TO DIAGNOSE ONE OF THE MOST COMMON MOTORING ISSUES

The serpentine belt, alternator belt, or fan belt as it is better known, is a peculiar piece of rather essential kit as far as your car engine goes. We all know our car has one, a few of us can locate it, yet very few know what it does.

What's important is that when it does malfunction – usually through being worn out – we can get it fixed cheaply and easily.

**THE SIGNS**

Most people become aware of fan belt failure when they begin to hear a loud screeching or squealing sound coming from the engine. You may also discover the power steering or air conditioning isn't working, and in really bad cases the engine may overheat.

All of these effects result from the fan belt's faulty function, and that function is working with the idler, tensioner and pulleys inside the accessory drive

belt system – essentially, it provides power to key components in the engine.

A dodgy fan belt is bad news, and although the car may be driveable, you're risking a breakdown.

**THE DIAGNOSIS**

Fan belts can become cracked, split, grazed, misaligned or might fall off completely. Unless your amateur mechanic skills are really up to Henry Ford levels, it's probably best to take your motor to the nearest garage.

**THE COST**

Thankfully, a faulty fan belt won't see you off the road for too long; nor should it set you back any significant amount. Typically, a new one will cost somewhere in the region of £100-£200. It's a relatively quick job and your garage should be able to turn it around in a couple of hours.



MARCH BIRTH FLOWER OF THE MONTH:

# Daffodil



If you were born in the month of March, your birth flower is narcissus, also known as the daffodil. The quintessential flower of spring, the daffodil is instantly recognisable by its bright yellow petals. Perfect placed in beds and borders, daffodils will brighten up your garden every year.

### WHAT DOES THE DAFFODIL REPRESENT?

Named after Narcissus, a character from Greek mythology who was so in love with himself he drowned in a pool of water while admiring his own reflection, this flower is said to be a symbol of vanity. It is also known to represent new beginnings, rebirth and rejuvenation. The daffodil is also:

- > The national flower of Wales
- > The official 10th wedding anniversary flower
- > The official emblem of cancer charities
- > A symbol of luck and prosperity during Chinese New Year

### WHAT DOES THIS BIRTH FLOWER SAY ABOUT YOUR PERSONALITY?

If your birth flower is the daffodil, you are said to be extremely creative. You are also known for being kind and welcoming to everyone you meet and dedicated to living a life of peace and happiness.

### ARE DAFFODILS EASY TO GROW?

Anyone can grow daffodils in their garden and you can choose to plant your bulbs in beds, borders, grass verges, lawn edges, hedgerows and banks. Plant your bulbs between September and November in well-drained soil and aim to keep your bulbs 4-8 inches apart, as overcrowding can cause daffodil blindness – when daffodils shoot up with foliage but no flower.

### HOW TO LOOK AFTER DAFFODIL BULBS FOR ANNUAL GROWTH

- > Allow the leaves to die back naturally before cutting off
- > You can lift bulbs between June and August and store in a cool, dry place ready for replanting
- > Apply a rich fertiliser to the soil once you have removed bulbs

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GARDENING

**GARDEN OF LIFE**

**TREES AND SOIL**  
*socialism*

In the second 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 role of trees and fungi below the surface.

We view our trees with respect and admiration – a fluttering, swaying mass of potency and life that evolves with every passing season, presenting a haven for all manner of wildlife, from insects to birds, plant-life to rodents, as well as being a valuable source of oxygen for all living things.

And yet, the true strength of a tree is not what we see above ground, but its rooted, tangled masses beneath it. At the heart of this are microbes called mycorrhizal fungi.

Once considered an enemy to plant life, in recent decades the fungi – which release hyphae, tying together tree and fungus at cellular level – have been better understood. This mycorrhiza bond links below-surface connections... a 'Wood Wide Web'.

It leads to the creation of one superorganism that looks after, supports and talks to each tree, be that a small crab apple just a few yards away, or a thundering oak several hundred metres down a ravine.

The creation of this network is for mass sustainability – the fungi have minerals that the tree needs; the tree has carbon that the fungi need – but the result is a kind of soil socialism that looks after its own.

For so long it was believed that trees and fungi were at war, both looking to snatch what they could from the ground. Now, it's believed that without the mycorrhizal fungi, trees would be toy-sized, and in the case of the 400 species of mycoheterotrophic plants that cannot photosynthesise, they would die out altogether.

So the next time you stand back and admire the beauty of a tree, perhaps take a respectful glance towards ground level while you're at it.





# to floss

or not to floss?



No, we are not talking about the dance craze that swept the nation in 2018, but the act of cleaning in between your teeth using dental floss.

Sadly, only an estimated 31 per cent of people clean between their teeth on a daily basis. This is despite the fact that the NHS recommends that from the age of 12 people should include flossing in their daily oral health routine.

### HOW TO FLOSS: A STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE

1. Break off between 18 and 25 inches of dental floss
2. Wind the floss around both of your middle fingers, leaving between one and two inches for your teeth
3. Hold the floss taut with your thumbs and index fingers
4. Place the dental floss between two teeth
5. Gently glide the floss up and down, making sure to rub against both sides of each tooth
6. When the floss reaches your gum, curve the floss

- at the base of your tooth, creating a C shape
7. Be careful not to scratch or bruise your gums
  8. Repeat as you move from tooth to tooth
  9. Always use a clean piece of floss for each tooth section
  10. Do not recycle or reuse dental floss as this can redistribute bacteria around your mouth, even if you wash it first

### WHEN SHOULD YOU FLOSS?

For optimal oral health, you should always floss first and brush your teeth afterwards. It is recommended that you brush your teeth twice a day and floss once, preferably in the evening.

### WHY SHOULD YOU FLOSS?

Flossing helps to remove food and plaque from in between your teeth. Brushing alone cannot do this as the bristles are not able to reach deep enough. Regular flossing can result in less dental plaque in your mouth and therefore a lower risk of developing gum disease.



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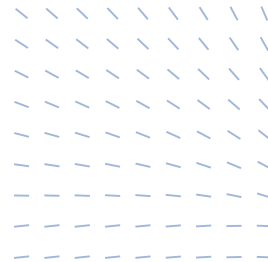
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# Are HIGH HEELS good for your health?

**M**arilyn Monroe famously once said, "I don't know who invented high heels, but all women owe him a lot." A pair of killer heels is undeniably the most effective way to add oomph to any outfit, but do you know what they are doing to your overall health?

**Stress on your spine:** Walking in high heels causes your spine to sway unnaturally, which, in turn, results in stress on your lumbar erector spinae muscle and an increased risk of a sore lower back.

**Pressure on your knees:** High heels put extra weight on the inner side of your knees and knee joints. This can increase your chances of experiencing twisting injuries to the knees.

**Swelling of the feet:** Bunions are synonymous with high heels, but the uneven weight distribution that occurs when wearing this type of shoe can also cause blisters, calluses, pinched nerves, swollen joints and tendonitis.

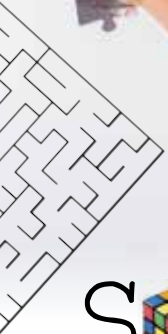
**Restricted circulation:** High heels force your ankle to bend forward, which restricts blood circulation in your lower limbs, leading to varicose veins.

**Shortening of the calf muscle:** Over time, wearing high heels can cause the muscles and tendons in your calves to shorten. This can lead to stiffness, reduced range of motion and a higher risk of strains, sprains and lower-body injuries.

## Treatment & pain relief

- > Look for cushioning in the soles to absorb the impact of your foot hitting the ground
- > Opt for high heels with a wider toe box
- > Carry out foot and toe stretching exercises
- > Choose a thicker heel rather than a stiletto
- > Treat any blisters or sores with a foot balm and use blister pads
- > Ice your feet after wearing
- > Take an over-the-counter pain reliever





# SOLVE A PUZZLE

If you are struggling to keep your kids occupied indoors, then look no further than a good old-fashioned jigsaw puzzle. With the ability to not only provide educational benefits, this calming activity also helps to promote good mental health...

## ENHANCED COGNITIVE FUNCTION

When you are doing a jigsaw puzzle, you use both the left and right sides of your brain. The right is in charge of creativity and your emotions, whereas the left is the logical and methodical side. Using both sides helps to increase cognitive function, a crucial part of your child's development.

## IMPROVED PROBLEM-SOLVING ABILITIES

At its simplest level, a jigsaw puzzle is an activity of trial and error. Your child is required to try out different pieces in different places in order to find the right fit. This helps to improve their problem-solving abilities and helps them to see things from varying perspectives.

## DECREASED STRESS LEVELS

If you have been worried about your child's mental health during this challenging year, you will be pleased to hear that jigsaw puzzles are a great stress-buster. In fact, when your child is doing a puzzle, there is a distinct shift in their consciousness, with their brains changing from a state of 'Beta' to 'Alpha'. The 'Alpha' state is similar to when they are dreaming and can lead to an improvement in mood, relief of stress and a lower heart rate.

## INCREASED IQ

Certain studies have shown that just 25 minutes a day spent doing a puzzle can raise a person's IQ by four points. Furthermore, this activity will help improve your child's memory, concentration and reasoning skills.

## OTHER BRAIN-BOOSTING PUZZLES FOR KIDS:

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# Kohlrabi

This month we will be starting a new regular feature: we will be introducing you to a lesser-known fruit or vegetable, allowing you to expand your palate and widen your repertoire of recipes. This month we bring you kohlrabi, an undeniably odd-looking vegetable that packs a real punch in terms of flavour.

## WHAT IS KOHLRABI?

Kohlrabi is also known as a cabbage turnip and is very popular in northern and eastern European countries. Part of the broccoli and cabbage family, it can be green, white or purple in colour and is available all year round. When buying kohlrabi whole, look for crisp-looking and vibrant leaves, which indicate freshness.

## WHAT DOES KOHLRABI TASTE LIKE?

It has a similar flavour to cabbage but with the spicy kick of a radish; the smaller the bulb, the milder the taste. Crunchy when eaten raw, the stems and leaves can also be cooked and eaten; they resemble a mild-tasting Swiss chard.

## HOW TO COOK KOHLRABI

All edible elements of kohlrabi need to be peeled before cooking to avoid a bitter taste. Once peeled, trim the brown end and separate the leaves from the bulb.

Choose to steam, sauté or roast kohlrabi, or you could even hollow out the bulbs and stuff with other vegetables or grains. Alternatively, serve raw in thin slices on a salad or added to coleslaw. You can also steam or sauté the leaves in the same way that you would fresh kale or spinach.

## HOW TO STORE KOHLRABI

A kohlrabi bulb can be kept uncovered in the fridge for up to one month. The stems and leaves should be cooked as soon as possible as they wilt within a day or two.

## WHAT ARE THE NUTRITIONAL BENEFITS OF KOHLRABI?

Low in fat | High in fibre | High in calcium | Low in calories | Contains anti-cancer and anti-ageing properties

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# A CUT ABOVE the rest



Are you guilty of buying the same cuts of meat week in and week out? If yes, surely it's time to try something different?

To celebrate National Butchers' Week, we have found the tastiest, not to mention most cost-effective, meat cuts which we guarantee you and your family will love.

### Beef Onglet

Also known as hanger steak, this forgotten choice is a flat cut from the diaphragm or lower belly of the cow. Great value and with an intense flavour, this meat cut is best served medium rare.

**HOW TO COOK:** Fry in a hot pan for 3-4 minutes on each side and then leave on a warm plate to rest for 10 minutes.



### Pork Cheeks

Incredibly cheap, pork cheeks offer a leaner alternative to pork belly, plus they are mouth-wateringly moist.

**HOW TO COOK:** Brine in sugar and water before braising until tender. Once cooked, cut into small pieces, breadcrumb and fry.



### Lamb Sweetbreads

Classified as offal, lamb sweetbreads are the pancreas and thymus glands and considered to be a delicacy in the culinary world. Providing all the B vitamins, lamb sweetbreads are creamy and tender with a delicate flavour.

**HOW TO COOK:** Soak in cold water for a few hours before simmering quickly. Allow to cool before trimming away any sinew or gristle. Sauté as they are or lightly breadcrumb first.



### Venison Ribs

Low in fat, relatively cheap and full of flavour, venison ribs make a great alternative to pork ones. Like all wild game, deer ribs are very lean so need to be prepared with moist methods of cooking.

**HOW TO COOK:** Trim the ribs of fat and cut into strips. Cover the venison in brine or your chosen marinade. Bake, grill or slow cook for optimum tenderness.



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FASHION

# EMBRACE YOUR

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## HOW TO DRESS FOR SPRING FOR ALL BODY SHAPES AND SIZES

Spring is on the way, so it's goodbye to oversized jumpers, and hello to skin-exposing, spring-ready pieces.

This might sound scary if you have a certain part of your body that you don't like drawing attention to, but it doesn't mean you should spend the spring/summer season covered up. Instead of focusing on a part you're conscious of, accentuate what you love with some easy styling hacks. Here are a few examples...

**I'M CONSCIOUS OF MY SMALL CHEST...** Adding things that draw attention to your chest is not counterintuitive, so bulk the area out with some accessories such as chokers, necklaces, and tops with intricate collar detailing | Doing all of the above will steal the show, so no one will focus on your chest if you don't want them to.

**I DON'T LIKE SHOWING MY ARMS...** It seems obvious, but keep the area you are conscious of covered | In warmer temperatures, avoid strapless pieces and choose three-quarter-length sleeves in a light, breathable fabric instead | If you want to brave a shorter length in the height of summer or at a formal event, don't let your insecurities stop you, but carry a bolero or jacket in case you change your mind.

**HOW CAN I HIDE MY BELLY?** Many dresses now come with ruched detailing around the stomach area for this very reason, so stock up on a few staples | Stick to darker colours and patterns | Prints are also another great distraction | Stay away from baggy, shapeless silhouettes, and opt for high-waisted trousers and loose-fitting blouses to pull focus from your stomach | Wear leggings or skinny jeans with longer tops that sit on or bellow your hips | Curvier shapes look great in A-line dresses | Add a belt to nip in the waist, and say goodbye to added shapewear.

**HOW DO I GIVE THE ILLUSION OF CURVES?** To break up the straight silhouette, try a belt on the waist or hip area | Alternatively, tuck your top inside your trousers to add some definition | Go one step further and try the French tuck, whereby the front is tucked in and the back is loose | Peplum tops and dresses add volume and drama, perfect for less-curved shapes.

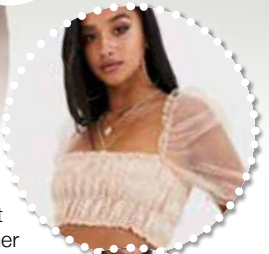


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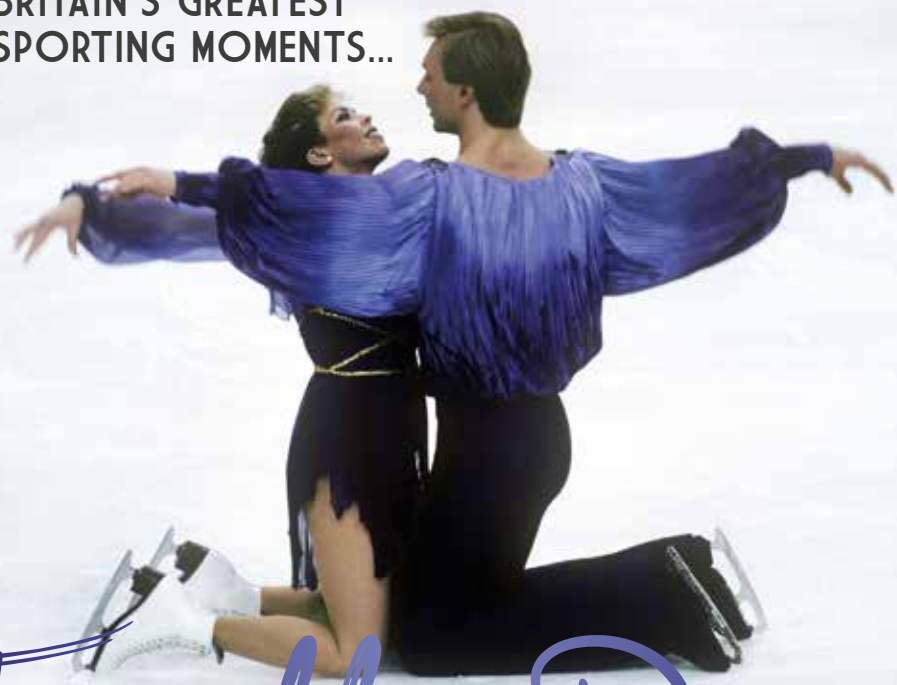


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# BRITAIN'S GREATEST SPORTING MOMENTS...



# Torvill & Dean

Each month we look at significant events in British sporting history. This month, it's 40 years since ice skaters Torvill and Dean were awarded MBEs, but their greatest moment was yet to come.

To an entire generation of terrestrial TV watchers, the mere sound of Ravel's *Boléro* will instantly bring about memories of Jayne Torvill OBE and Christopher Dean OBE's incredible gold-medal-winning routines at both the Olympics and the World Championships in 1984.

At both events, the duo performed a modern artistic masterpiece that captivated a generation of fans. The routine had emotion, precision and drama packed into four and a half minutes of twists, turns, lifts and pirouettes.

At the World Championships, in Ottawa, the couple received a standing ovation from the entire crowd as flowers rained down onto the ice. It was the last amateur performance of the greatest ice dancers the world had ever known, performed with such ease that it belied the incredible technicality of a routine coached by Betty Callaway.

Their score of 13 perfect 6.0s was the most ever

scored by any skaters in competition, as the couple, who had been performing together since 1975, truly went out on top of the world, having taken 11 6.0s at the Olympics two months previously.

While 1984 was ultimately the pinnacle, it's easy to forget how respected and regarded they were before then. Already prolific World and European champions, they had been awarded MBEs previously, with the 40th anniversary of their trip to Buckingham Palace being marked this year.

That these iconic skaters could still push for perfection as amateurs was the ultimate endorsement of their decision to turn professional and begin to earn a living for their art beyond grants and sponsorship. And that has been borne out in the fact that their dedication to ice skating in all its forms rolls on even today, with the pair regulars on our television screens, notably in ITV's *Dancing on Ice*.

Photo credit: Colorsport/Shutterstock



# CRISTIANO RONALDO

## CRISTIANO RONALDO AND THE COMPLETION OF A UNIQUE GOAL FEAT

When Cristiano Ronaldo signed for Manchester United at the age of just 19, football knew it had a real talent in its midst. Yet it's still unfathomable that the Portuguese striker would go on to create a new goalscoring world record – something the 36-year-old achieved in January when he notched up his 760th senior goal (even if his strike for Juventus versus Napoli was from just a yard out).

The feat was celebrated all over the world, and rightly so, even if there's still some conjecture regarding exactly how many goals some of his net-busting rivals have clocked up over the years.

The problem is not with CR7's total, more the tally of his contemporaries. Brazilians Pelé and Romário, for instance, both claim to have scored more than 1,000 goals, yet these totals appear to include amateur and reserve games.

Even the man whose total Ron bettered, Austrian-Czech footballer Josef Bican, who clocked up 759 strikes across a career surpassing two decades, has a claim for more goals, with the Rec.Sport.Soccer Statistics Foundation (RSSSF) claiming more than 800, in part because of missing records from the Czech second division in 1952.

Ronaldo's total is unquestionable, though – five goals for Sporting Lisbon, 118 for Manchester United, 450 for Real Madrid, 92 for Juventus (at the time of going to print), and an incredible 102 for Portugal.

Knowing Ron, the status of being the world's most successful goalscorer of all time will mean a lot to him. Though while he won't be able to completely silence the doubters who may quote other players and their respective tallies, what we can all agree on is that, over the years, he's been a handy little striker who, more often than not, has chipped in with a useful goal or two.

Photo credit: Action Press/Shutterstock



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