

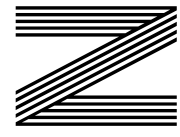
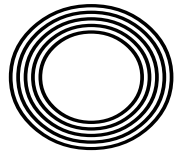
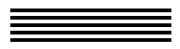


Could COVID-19 science help cure other illnesses?

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J.K. Rowling
The author's success with Harry Potter



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Editor's notes...

JUNE 2021



Nik Allen, Editor

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

It's a beautiful day. Shops, pubs, restaurants, soft-play areas and endless others in the hospitality sector are open; we can mix, gather, hug and interact with more freedom than we've had in a long time.

We hope and pray we are in the final throes of the COVID-19 pandemic, yearning for a return to normality and a life that, by our own admission, a lot of us took for granted.

So what have we learned during the past year and a quarter? For me, I'm in awe of how we have all become such versatile creatures,

adaptable to new conditions - from how we work to how we socialise.

At the heart of it for me is resilience, and that is no better exemplified than by our local businesses.

From the clever ways they interact with customers, new products and services, delivery initiatives and a stubbornness to make it through the mire, they deserve the good times that we hope are coming their way.

So, as readers, I implore you to channel this admiration by getting behind those shops, trades and services in our square mile. Please support hyperlocal and, in doing so, tighten even further the grip our community has gained. It may yet be a year we cherish.

Nik Allen

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

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CONTRIBUTORS | Tabatha Fabray, Geraint Roberts

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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Under your spell

A decade since the final Harry Potter film was released, we look back on the success of a fantasy character who has shaped a generation.

Thinking purely in fantasy fiction terms, it's difficult to comprehend what the literary landscape was like pre-1997. Okay, so such a statement will attract clamouring voices extolling the virtues of the likes of Terry Pratchett, Douglas Adams and Robert Rankin, but few will dispute the impact J.K. Rowling OBE's first novel had on the book world, the film industry and the sensibilities of a whole generation of children – and adults – who could once again revel in the fantastical delights of wizardry.

For that reason, the date of June 26, 1997, should be referenced on the scribble books of every aspiring author. It was then that a tired, forlorn and wholly unappreciated author finally saw her prized character, Harry Potter, come to life.

No sooner had *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone* hit the shelves than a revolution in fantasy storytelling gathered pace. And this wasn't a movement catapulted into the ether by mass promotion, social media or overhyped YouTubers – the internet was still in its infancy. Instead, this was a word-of-mouth, page-turning trend that lured a nation – and beyond – to platform 9¾, to Hogwarts, and on into a realm of magnificent mystery.

Rowling, who was 31 at the time and a single parent, had battled tirelessly over the preceding decade to be taken seriously. Her image of a young wizard and his fresh-faced cohorts finding their way at a school of witchcraft and wizardry that creaked and crackled with intrigue had been rejected by 12 major publishers.

That her persistence was rewarded by stratospheric acclaim is undoubtedly a victory for belief more than anything else, a quality Harry Potter himself has had to master on numerous occasions across seven book instalments and eight films, as our loveable hero has leapt out from inked pages to become the most successful film franchise star on the planet.

At the last count, the Harry Potter books had sold 500 million copies worldwide; while the proceeds from the immaculately styled film series top £7.7 billion.

As well as creating and shaping the careers of stars Daniel Radcliffe, Rupert Grint and Emma Watson, the books – concluding with *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows* in 2007 – have also stimulated a breathless array of other fantasy stories, constantly refreshing our appetite to escape into other worlds.

As for Rowling, the seat she previously occupied in the window of The Elephant House coffee shop in Edinburgh remains, and is perhaps the simplest tie she has back to uncomplicated days. In recent times she has discovered that not even the greatest fantasy author of a generation is immune to the melting pot of social media, after her comments on gender courted approval and upset in equal measure.

Whether someone who has acquired a fortune in the region of £500 million really cares is for J.K. Rowling to know and for us to speculate, though only the most critical Harry Potter commentator would suggest, on balance, her output has been anything short of spectacular.

To an author, a wizard and a wonderful fantasy world, we continue to fall under your spell.

“That her persistence was rewarded by stratospheric acclaim is undoubtedly a victory for belief more than anything else.”



Photo credit: NEIL HALL/EPA-EFE/Shutterstock

CELL *mate*

HOW THE SPECTRE OF COVID-19 COULD, EVENTUALLY, START TO SAVE LIVES

While in the short-term at least it feels as though the coronavirus pandemic has restricted and impacted the lives we for so long took for granted, scientists believe the messenger ribonucleic acid (mRNA) technology used to create the COVID-19 vaccine may have truly ground-breaking effects on our ability to fend off fatal diseases in the future.

At the heart of this theory is the way mRNA vaccines are being regarded as a breakthrough in modern medicine. This is because the mRNA works in a different way from traditional vaccines – namely that instead of implanting a tiny piece of the virus for our bodies to counter, it simply supplies information about what the virus looks like.

The body is told what the spike protein resembles, and it is this spike that provides the route for

COVID-19 to infect our cells.

The mRNA vaccine subsequently gives our body the information which teaches our cells how to make the protein that triggers an immune response inside our bodies. Extending the usefulness of this means personalised vaccines can, in theory, be developed so our immune systems can attack and kill off an illness that is specifically ours. So that could mean the potential to be able to cure everything from cancer to HIV to autoimmune diseases.

Scientists have been cautious not to overstate the theory, particularly because cancer, for instance, constantly mutates, and no two cancers are the same.

What is clear, however, is that this could be a major game-changer for the preservation of life... and we would have COVID-19 to thank for it.



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Blinds

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FABRIC BLINDS

Start by dusting your fabric blinds from top to bottom. You can use a vacuum cleaner to save time. Next, spot clean your blinds using a mild detergent solution. If your fabric blinds are really grubby, you may prefer to take them down and soak in the bath with three tablespoons of washing-up liquid. Leave to soak for half an hour to an hour and then clean with a soft brush.

Suitable for vertical, roman, roller, panel and pleated-style blinds.

WOODEN BLINDS

Real wood blinds do not like moisture so you should focus on maintaining a consistent dusting routine above all else. If your wooden blinds do

require more than just a dust, use a very slightly moist cloth to remove any dirt or grime. Be sure not to rub the slats too aggressively as this can ruin the wood stain.

This method is suitable for both vertical and horizontal slats.

FAUX WOOD BLINDS

The good news is that faux wood blinds are made from plastic and are therefore not susceptible to water damage. This means that once you have dusted your blinds, you can wash them thoroughly with a bowl of warm, soapy water and a cloth. Blot dry with a soft cloth or kitchen roll.

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The easiest way to clean metal blinds is by taking them down and placing them in a bathtub filled with warm water, a few squirts of washing-up liquid and a cup of baking soda. Leave to soak for about an hour and then rinse with warm water.

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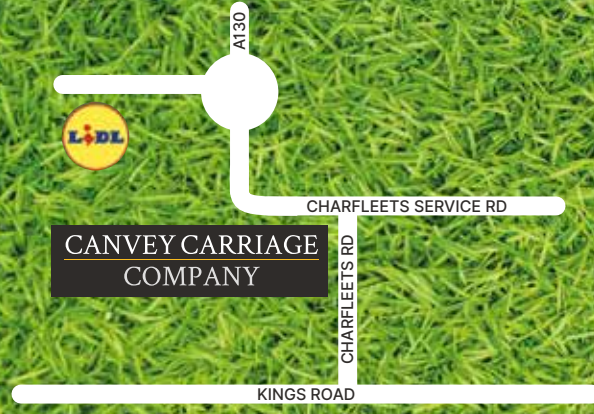
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Other features include: Adjustable storage spaces that can be used as a fridge or freezer | Sensors to open and close the door hands-free | Artificial intelligence that detects maintenance issues

INSTALL SMART LIGHTING: The beauty of smart lighting is that it allows you to add the wow factor to your kitchen without blowing your budget. From smart dimmers that can be controlled from your phone or your smart speaker, to smart bulbs that plug into your existing light fittings and boast an adjustable colour temperature.

Other features include: Control individual bulbs, groups or your whole home's lighting | Set light themes to create different atmospheres | Motion-sensing lights



COOK WITH A SMART OVEN: Whether you love to cook or see it as more of a chore, a smart oven will revolutionise the way you feed your family, providing you with the means to control your cooking from your smartphone or tablet, whether you are in your home or not.

Other great features can include: Voice control | Automatic setting selection | In-oven camera

ADD A SMART TAP: No kitchen is complete without a sink, and for times when your hands are either full or dirty but you need water, a smart tap offers the perfect solution. Choose from a touchless faucet that works by waving your hands in front of the sensor or a voice-enabled tap that can be customised with your preferred commands.



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Luke Arthur Wells

INTERIOR INSPIRATIONS



HOME & DIY



Photo credit: lukearthurwells.com

Who is interior designer Luke Arthur Wells? Find out more about the interiors expert who's taken social media by storm – your new interiors inspiration.

Luke Arthur Wells has emerged as one of the most influential designers of 2021, following a year when various lockdowns and being asked to 'stay at home' have really shone the spotlight on interior design. But who exactly is Luke Arthur Wells? Based in the South West of England, Luke is an interior designer, stylist and writer, helping to style homes all over the world. He's a former *Great Interior Design Challenge* contestant, with a classic, timeless taste that's accessible and incredibly stylish.

With more than 70,000 followers on Instagram and a successful blog, Luke has amassed a dedicated following. He recently moved into a Victorian terrace in need of freshening up, and interiors enthusiasts have been following his incredible transformations over the past year. From the art of styling a room to creative DIY tutorials such as simple, custom radiator covers, Luke provides plenty of inspiration to those who seek it.

To bring Luke's classic style into your own home, here are some tips:

- > Incorporate neutral tones against beautiful textures and striking accessories.
- > Light tones don't need to be boring. Use them to flood light into the room, and bring in contrasting accent colours like black and charcoal to make your home's features pop.
- > Mix high-street items alongside upcycled pieces and the perfect finishing touches to create a look that's accessible, timeless and beautiful.
- > Love accessories. From prints and floral displays to statement vases and plant pots, accessories add colour and character to your home.

Want to recreate Luke's incredible home styling? Covering everything from creating mood boards to on-trend DIY panelling, check out Luke's projects at www.lukearthurwells.com/blog for inspiration.

SUPER SOLAR

Are solar panels really the future for all homes?

There was a time when it seemed everyone was investing in solar technology. The premise was simple – instal solar panels on your roof, often with the aid of a decent government subsidy, and within a few years you'd have saved on electricity costs to the extent that your investment would be paid off.

Thereafter, any energy pulled into the panels would be sold to the national grid and you'd be quids in.

Homeowners rushed in their hundreds of thousands to attach the cumbersome, shiny panels to their rooftops or across garden spaces, with many finding the initiative was true to its word, but has it worked out that way?

THE GOOD:

- ✓ Solar panels genuinely do make money, reducing bills by anything from £60 to £250 per year
- ✓ As well as generating free electricity, they potentially raise the resale price of a house
- ✓ No planning permission required
- ✓ Low maintenance and rarely go wrong

- ✓ Easy-to-read devices that let you know how much electricity is being generated
- ✓ The Smart Export Guarantee (SEG) features a number of different tariffs, so homeowners can shop around in order to get the best price for their electricity

THE BAD:

- ✗ Unless you have a south-facing roof, you may find the rate at which you earn back your investment is highly impacted
- ✗ Similarly, better weather conditions in the south meant our northern cousins were less incentivised to take part
- ✗ Back to house sales, and some potential buyers have been known to be put off by the sight of solar panels on rooftops
- ✗ Some people have discovered it will take more than two decades for them to make their money back – those at home all day (and with higher electricity costs) will benefit more

As with most things, it's a case of doing your maths to see if the idea of solar panels shines brightly for you.



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LOCAL NEWS

from your neighbourhood



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Three people charged after drugs and knife seized

Three people have been charged after officers found drugs worth £4,000 in a car in Leigh-on-Sea on Saturday, May 8.

Police stopped the car on Eastwood Road North at around 10pm.

A 17-year-old boy from Leigh-on-Sea has been charged with possession with intent to supply crack cocaine and heroin, and possession of cocaine. He cannot be named for legal reasons.

Harley Hamilton, 18, of Johnson Close, Wickford, has been charged with possession with intent to

supply crack cocaine and heroin, and possession of a knife in a public place.

Vitalijs Saveljevs, 38, of West Road, Westcliff, was charged with being concerned in supplying class A drugs. He is due to appear at Southend Magistrates' Court on June 28.

A 28-year-old man from Southend was also arrested on suspicion of being concerned in supplying a controlled drug, possession of an offensive weapon and possession of drugs. He has been released under investigation.

Care home residents enjoy pop-up museum

In the run up to VE Day, Admiral Court, a care home in Leigh-on-Sea, created a Second World War pop-up museum, giving residents an opportunity to reminisce and share their experiences.

To create the museum, several historical artefacts were given on loan to the home, including gas masks. Items designed to support memory and recall were also used to promote meaningful conversations.

Lifestyles assistant at Admiral Court, Jamie Church, said: "The event made us realise how much that generation sacrificed for our freedom."

Resident Colin Chapman spotted a tin in the museum which sparked memories from when he was younger.

He said: "When I was in the Merchant Navy, I'd buy those same cigarettes. You could only buy them in the 50s. Back then, they cost about 20p."



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LOCAL NEWS LEIGH-ON-SEA

After the nightmare and distress our country
and the world has suffered since the start of
the coronavirus pandemic, the next stage, and
what I hope may be the final stage, on June 21
will hopefully mean freedom. The success of the
vaccination programme has made all of this possible
and I thank and congratulate everyone who has
been involved. It is understood that viruses mutate
and, as such, the scientists stand ready. However,
it is my earnest hope that, while giving everyone the
opportunity to be fully vaccinated and protected,
we will be able to live with the virus. I now want to
help each and every individual and organisation to
rebuild, and I hope that those needing assistance

will not hesitate to contact me.

Moving onto a different subject, the BBC has
let those paying the licence fee down in a very
real sense. I have long thought that the lack of
accountability and the ridiculous amount of money
paid to senior management and presenters have
never been addressed. I and many other politicians
are insisting that those who are responsible for
what has gone on are made to pay and that the
organisation itself is restructured.

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.

Restaurant confirms closure

A popular restaurant in Leigh-on-Sea has announced
that it is shutting its doors permanently, to the
disappointment of its many loyal visitors.

The Regatta Restaurant, on Leigh Road, confirmed its
closing on Facebook on May 19.

The family-run restaurant served locally sourced food,
including a wide range of fish, meat and vegetarian dishes.

The restaurant is rated 4.5 on Tripadvisor and was
among the top 20 restaurants in Leigh-on-Sea.

The coronavirus lockdown has had a damaging effect on
many hospitality businesses, with The Regatta Restaurant
forced to close for the majority of the last 14 months.

In a Facebook post, a spokesperson for the restaurant
said: "The Regatta Restaurant is no longer taking
bookings, as we are now permanently closed.

"We would like to thank you for your continued support
and custom over the years."

Many residents commented on the Facebook post,
wishing them well for the future and sharing their fond
memories of the restaurant.

One comment read: "Such sad news. Thank you for
keeping us well fed and watered over the years and good
luck for your future plans. We will miss you."

Another said: "So sorry to hear this. I only just heard
about your restaurant and was hoping to visit. Wishing
you all the best."





LOCAL NEWS

from your neighbourhood



Photo credit: Google Maps

School honoured with award at national ceremony

Thorpe Hall School has won the Whole-School Community Initiative of the Year Award at TES Independent School Awards.

TES celebrates the outstanding individuals and institutions of the independent education sector in the shortlist for its annual Independent School Awards.

Thorpe Hall appeared on the shortlist twice this year, being nominated for the much-coveted TES Senior School of the Year Award and winning the Whole-School Community Initiative of the Year.

Speaking before the ceremony, headteacher Andrew Hampton (pictured inset) said: "I am so delighted that Thorpe Hall School has been recognised in these

prestigious awards. To be nominated as Senior School of the Year is an extraordinary achievement when you consider the illustrious and world-famous schools that we are competing against.

"My congratulations go out to everyone involved in the school.

"To have also been nominated for Whole-School Community Initiative of the Year is a testament to the commitment that the school is making to be at the heart of the Southend community, with the aim of making lives better for local people.

"This is only the beginning, and we will see a lot more from the school in years to come."

Coastguard called to incident on the beach

HM Coastguard Southend was called after people reported concerns for a vessel and member of the public on Thorpe Bay Beach on May 4.

Southend Coastguard proceeded to the scene and identified the vessel as one that the team had been called out to previously. The vessel was sitting on the water's edge, with the owner struggling to secure it in the strong winds.

Coastguard officers helped the owner to secure the vessel. The owner explained they had obtained a new mooring and a member of their family was coming down to the beach to help them secure the vessel before moving it to the new mooring. Once this was communicated back to Dover, the team stood down.



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LOCAL NEWS THORPE BAY

Our roadmap out of lockdown is continuing well, and with it comes a sense of normality that we have all longed for. As I write this, we can finally meet up indoors again with groups of up to six people, or two households.

It also means we can get back to enjoying the things we have missed, whether that's shopping with friends or having something to eat or drink at our favourite eatery.

As I am sure you will be aware, the Thorpe Bay Broadway has a fantastic array of independent retailers. These businesses are the beating heart of our local community, and not only do they offer a more bespoke service, but they also employ locally too.

It has been great to see The Broadway coming

back to life over recent weeks. We can also breathe a sigh of relief that we no longer have to rely on the great British weather if we want to eat out somewhere.

I know the last 14 months have been particularly tough, and I wish our local traders every success for the future. I would, therefore, encourage readers to support our local businesses where they can, whether that's getting a haircut at one of the local salons or barbers, trying a new takeaway or enjoying a meal out.

Your support is vital to ensuring our local businesses bounce back from this pandemic, and my door is always open to any local firm or resident who may need my help as their Member of Parliament.

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We can get through this together, local companies employing local people



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Stock image

Beach given Blue Flag award

Southend-on-Sea has been commended for the quality and management of its beaches after five beaches, including Thorpe Bay, were awarded the Blue Flag and all eight of the town's beaches were given a Seaside Award.

The awards match the previous year's record of five award-winning beaches.

The Blue Flag award, managed by environmental charity Keep Britain Tidy, is an international award for well-managed beaches with excellent water quality.

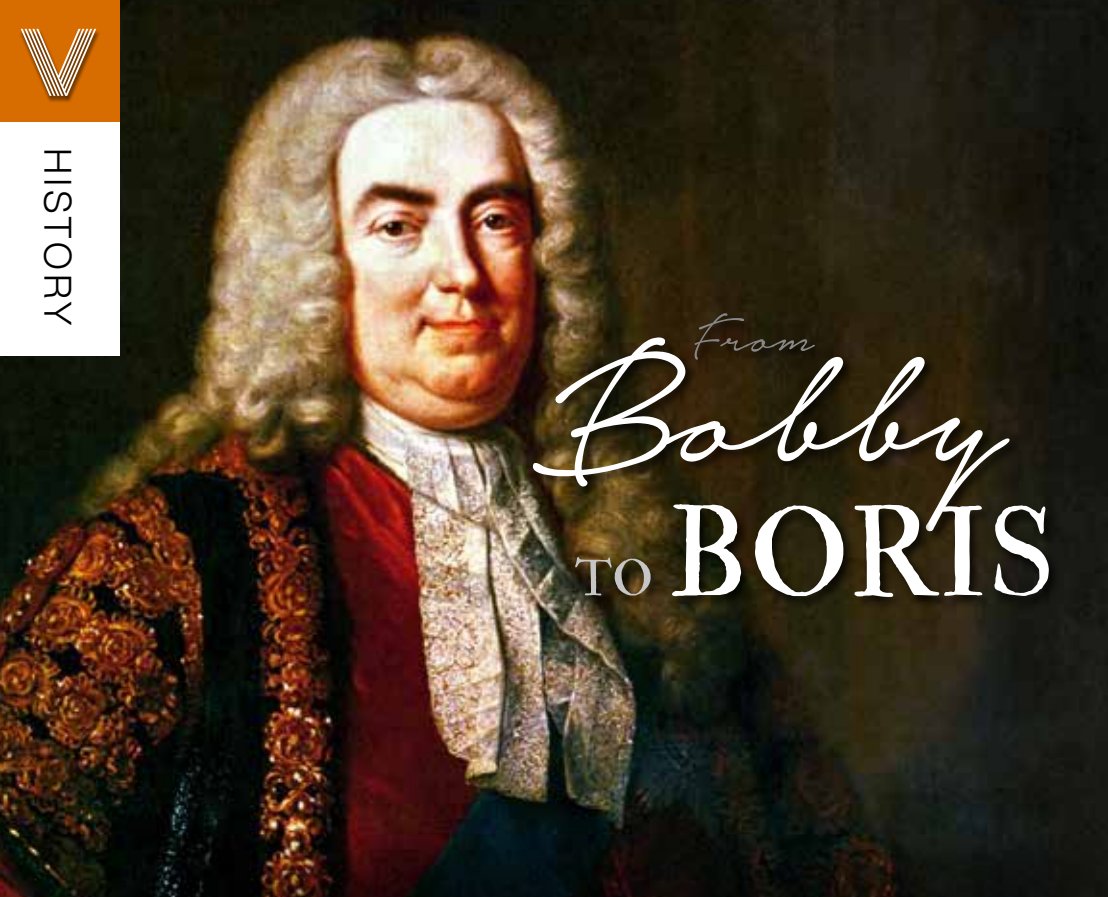
Councillor Kevin Robinson, cabinet member for business, culture and tourism, said: "Both awards are the quality marks for our beaches and mean those

visiting them can be sure that they are clean and safe and meet the highest environmental standards.

"Southend-on-Sea welcomes more than seven million visitors per year, and with Blue Flag and Seaside Awards flying above our beaches, residents and visitors will know that they are the best in the country.

"Being a seaside town, we hope that this helps set us apart as a perfect staycation destination and are hopeful that this will be a bumper summer season to really boost the local economy.

"We want everyone to help keep them award-winning."



From
Bobby
TO **BORIS**

MARKING 300 YEARS SINCE THE UK'S FIRST PRIME MINISTER

While the supposition – usually by members of the party in opposition, predictably – is that modern politics is decorated with elected representatives engaged in poor behaviour, underhand dealings and general miscreant activity, the reality is that this has been going on for centuries – all the way back to the time of Sir Robert Walpole.

“Who is he?” you ask. Well none other than the United Kingdom’s first Prime Minister.

This year marks the 300th anniversary of his appointment – a stirring rise to the top for someone born in 1676 to a wealthy landowning family in Norfolk.

Cambridge-educated, Walpole was named member of parliament for Castle Rising in 1701 for the Whigs; and while he briefly lost elected power when the Tories won a General Election in 1710 – at which point he was imprisoned briefly on charges of corruption – he returned to front-line duties when George I came to the throne in 1714.

His ascent was built on a desire for peace abroad, low taxation and a reduction of the national debt; and while he became embroiled in various scandals as First Lord of the Treasury, Chancellor of the Exchequer and Paymaster General, his ability to speak for both the people and the upper-class elite who ran the country ultimately preserved his time at the top table. It also ensured a gift from George II of 10 Downing Street, where the current Prime Minister still resides today.

Walpole was comfortable in his role until the late 1730s, when pressure began to build from within his party. A poor election result in 1741 followed and he resigned from his post shortly afterwards. Within three years he was dead, though his political legacy lives on.

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MY MUM SAVED MY LIFE...

PRESENTER AND BROADCASTER ROMAN KEMP ON A MENTAL HEALTH CAMPAIGN FROM THE HEART

The spectre of suicide in young people is one that looms large over modern society. Not in 20 years have so many people in the UK felt so low as to want to take their own lives, with men accounting for three-quarters of those.

Capital FM radio DJ Roman Kemp is not someone you would typically expect to want to talk about the subject. The son of Spandau Ballet icon Martin Kemp, the 28-year-old has grown up in the calm and comfort of a privileged life, has been afforded avenues into the entertainment world, and goes about his daily presenting duties with a breezy brand of optimistic irreverence that's fashionable and carefree.

Yet Kemp harbours a more solemn side, one that has driven him to campaign and champion mental health awareness. He brings an honesty and humility to his work that's been well-received, not least because of the struggles we have all encountered over the past year or so in light of COVID-19, lockdown, recession and the impact on our daily lives.

"At the heart of it is using a platform to do something worthwhile and meaningful," says Kemp, who has been at Capital FM for seven years and supplements his time on the airwaves with various entertainment shows, including *Martin & Roman's Weekend Best!* alongside his father.

One of the stars of *I'm a Celebrity...Get Me Out of Here!* in 2019 – he finished third behind Andrew Whyment and Jacqueline Jossa – the talented presenter has drawn on profound personal upset in putting together a recent BBC3 documentary, *Roman Kemp: Our Silent Emergency*, which was released in March 2021, has been nominated for a National Television Award.

"I come at this from the perspective of having known someone who took his own life, and having

lived through 13 years of on-and-off depression myself where, in my darkest hours, I have considered ending it."

Kemp said that his mum, famous singer Shirlie Holliman, actually saved his life. At his darkest moment, she made sure he wasn't alone and allowed him to confide in her about his suicidal thoughts. When he called her in crisis, she stayed on the phone with him as she travelled to London to be by his side.

Kemp was devastated by the loss of his close friend and fellow Capital Breakfast colleague, Joe Lyons, in August 2020. Recognising when friends are in trouble and encouraging people to open up about their emotions is at the heart of Kemp's work across both TV and radio, championing a trend for people to be outspoken and honest about their feelings.

He said: "It shook me back then and it continues to now. I still have days where I can't believe he isn't here, and I didn't see the signs.

"I actually think we're in a much better place than we were 10 years ago when it comes to speaking out and having the confidence to say what's really on our minds, what's really troubling us.

"The problem, I feel, is that this is being counterbalanced by so many other pressures, and lots of those stem from social media. I don't think we can change how Twitter, Facebook and Instagram have altered our lives, yet we can teach people to approach and view those influences in different ways. Obviously, the strands run much deeper than just that, but it is a good place to start.

"We all need to play our part. It's an old cliché, but to save just one life makes it all worthwhile."

Photo credit: PinPep/Shutterstock





PUZZLES & TRIVIA

PUZZLES

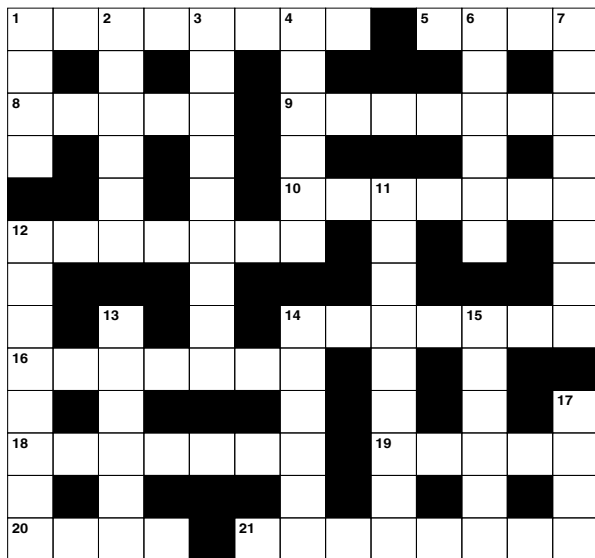
Answers: see end of The VISION Listings

ACROSS

- 1. Succession; series (8)
- 5. Run at a moderate pace (4)
- 8. Sag (5)
- 9. Sour in taste (7)
- 10. Mountain in the Himalayas (7)
- 12. Contemplations (7)
- 14. Subdivision (7)
- 16. Part of a chair (7)
- 18. Increasing rapidly (7)
- 19. Kingdom (5)
- 20. Japanese beverage (4)
- 21. Large metal pot (8)

DOWN

- 1. Soft drink (US) (4)
- 2. Cites (6)
- 3. Act of spying (9)
- 4. Stops (6)
- 6. Thief (6)
- 7. Not inclined to talk (8)
- 11. Let oracle (anag) (9)
- 12. Thick dark syrup (8)
- 13. Set out on a journey (6)
- 14. Mark of disgrace (6)



- 15. Make worse (6)
- 17. Word ending a prayer (4)

DID YOU KNOW?

- ▶ Pound cake got its name from its recipe – one pound each of butter, eggs, sugar and flour
- ▶ Most wasabi in supermarkets is made from coloured horseradish with flavourings, as real wasabi is expensive to make
- ▶ Crackers often have holes in them to prevent air bubbles from forming when cooking
- ▶ Farm-raised salmon is naturally white or grey. A pink colour is added to mimic the natural colour of a wild salmon
- ▶ Russian president Dmitry Medvedev signed a bill in 2011 officially classifying beer as alcohol. Previously, anything containing less than 10 per cent alcohol in Russia was considered foodstuff
- ▶ A typical ear of corn has an even number of rows

SUDOKU

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

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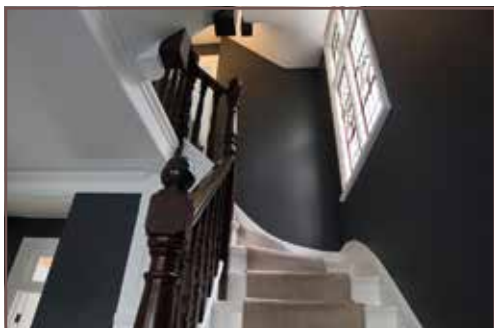
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GARDENING

A GUIDE TO PATIO FLOORING



A well-designed patio can act as a second living room for your home, transforming your garden from basic to beautiful. However, you need to make sure you choose the right materials and style for your property if you want a showstopping end result.

PICK PATIO FLOORING TYPE

WOOD – Timeless and extremely versatile, wood can be used to create a rustic or modern-styled patio area. You can also sand down wood multiple times, making it a great long-term investment for your home. Apply a protective wood oil for enhanced longevity.

NATURAL STONE – For the epitome of luxury, natural stone is hard to beat. Popular natural stone options include slate, travertine, granite and marble. Avoid light-coloured natural stones if you have pets or young children.

CERAMIC TILE – A classic flooring material, ceramic offers a durable and cost-effective way to create a patio area in your garden. Opt for unglazed tiles to reduce the risk of slipping and consider adding a sealant to protect from wear and tear.

BRICK – Low maintenance and slip resistant, brick gives off an old-world feel that is ideal for period properties. If cost is an issue, brick pavers make a cheaper alternative.

CONCRETE – Arguably the most versatile choice, concrete can be moulded to fit any shape, and you can personalise it with colouring, stamping, brushing, painting and patterning.

CHOOSE THE RIGHT SIZE

There are three steps involved in sizing your patio flooring:

1. Decide how big you want your patio to be
2. Determine the size of your chosen patio material
3. Work out how much flooring you need to cover your chosen area

PATIO STYLE IDEAS

- > Surround tiles with decorative stones for a more organic look
- > Swap grass for a paved patio and surround with raised flowerbeds
- > Select interior and exterior flooring in the same tone to create a seamless flow



GARDENING



Garden Goldmine

OUTDOOR FEATURES THAT ADD VALUE TO YOUR PROPERTY

COVID-19 and the associated stamp duty holiday have made a lot of us think about the saleability of our homes, and perhaps even consider a move. While countless television shows point us in the right direction as far as interior décor goes, what can we do to spruce things up on the outside?

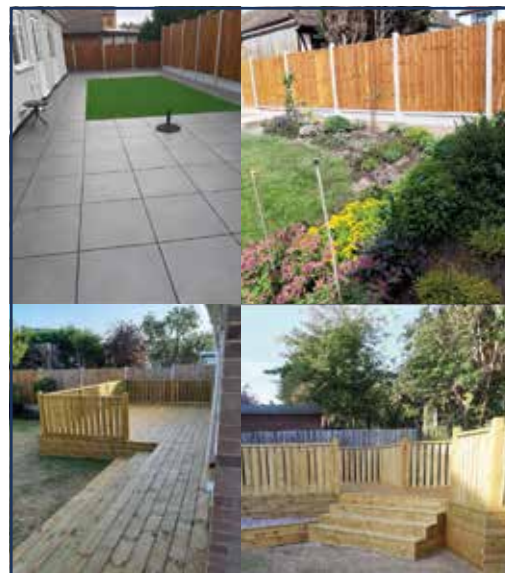
Natural landscaping: While for years we've obsessed over new kitchens, bathrooms, conservatories and more, it seems that landscaping garden spaces – from lawn care to water features and even planting small trees – will add more value to your property than any of the others listed, according to research undertaken last year.

In reality, it makes sense. In Britain we love the idea of reclining in peaceful, tranquil, stylish surroundings with a drink, a magazine, some music and the gentle breeze of summer... even if the season comes and goes in under a fortnight.

Wood you dare?: Wood effect adds a rustic, natural, earthy feel to any outside space, and the popularity of decking – and, to a lesser extent, patios – also makes a big difference when it comes to maximising property value. And the good news is that modern composites will give that 'indoor wood' finish and quality, even in exposed outdoor areas.

The paint saint: A paint job – the entire house, the front wall or perhaps just a new garden gate – will give a real sense of style and cleanliness. Our outer walls and pathways take a real battering across the seasons, so brightening them up can make a big difference when it comes to adding value.

Light show: We're very much in the area of strings of bulbs lighting up entrance ways, trees and even whole gardens. For a relatively low cost, it's possible to give those dusky evenings a real glow of homely warmth.




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The Volunteer Vibe



Big up the Bothie



Airmiles

While the COVID-19 pandemic has robbed many of us of the money to be able to venture off on holiday, it hasn't removed that passion to explore. Yet in the 'new normal', and having rediscovered a love of simpler things through lockdown, perhaps it doesn't have to cost the Earth in order to travel it.

House Swap: More than just the premise of endless reality shows, holiday house-swapping is a real thing, and is becoming more popular every year. After all, why not profit from someone house-sitting your abode by finding a holiday location that suits your needs perfectly, but is also free of charge? The website homelink.org.uk is one of those leading the way.

Work this Way: It's the age-old explorer's way, but working your way around the world on a backpacking mission is the extreme version, with many lower commitment job-based escapes closer to home. If you're young and without kids, consider fruit picking, event marshalling or even working in a bar as a way of putting in the hours to sustain that holiday vibe in a new place.

The Volunteer Vibe: In a similar way, pitching up somewhere willing to put the hours in for free can be a great way of securing accommodation, food and enough free time to explore the vicinity.

Big up the Bothie: You know those secluded stone buildings synonymous with the Highland Clearances... you can stay in them, for free. Sure, they may not protect you from the elements as would a five-star hotel – although many have been sensitively restored – but websites such as mountainbothies.org.uk arrange short-term stays in these mystical, remote former homes.

Airmiles: Finally, a fad of the Nineties, airmiles these days are for much more than business users, and the miles can really stack up if you are a frequent flyer.

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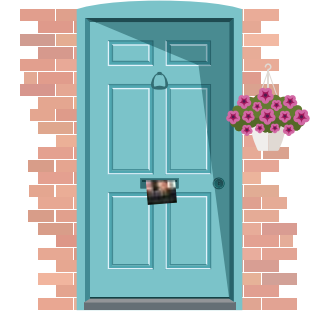
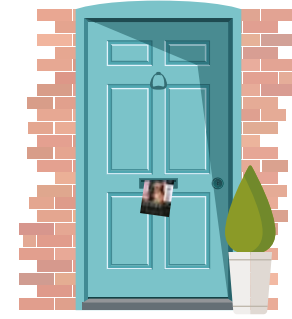
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UNUSUAL FRUIT OF THE MONTH:

Mangosteen

An undeniably attractive fruit, the bright purple mangosteen is so much more than just a pretty face. With a mouth-watering, fragrant flavour and a multitude of health benefits, this tropical fruit is definitely one you should try this summer.

WHAT DOES MANGOSTEEN TASTE LIKE?
Described as a delicious combination of lychee, peach, strawberry and pineapple, the mangosteen boasts a slightly sweet and sour flavour which is quite unlike any fruit you have tasted before.

WHAT ARE THE HEALTH BENEFITS OF MANGOSTEEN?
Offering a rich supply of nutrients, fibre and unique antioxidants, the mangosteen is low in calories and fat, making it a great snack for those who crave a sweet fix during the day.

WHERE CAN YOU BUY MANGOSTEEN?
Although this fruit is easy to eat and prepare, it can be a little bit more difficult to find, as mangosteen is only in season for a short period of time. Your best bet is to head to your local Asian market, or you may be able to find it frozen or canned at the supermarket.

HOW TO PREPARE MANGOSTEEN
To remove the fruit, cut a circle into the thick skin around the stalk and lift it off like a lid. This will reveal the segments of mangosteen, which resemble those of an orange, but are bright white in colour. The seeds are soft and edible so do not need to be taken out.

HOW TO EAT MANGOSTEEN

- > Eat fresh either on its own or combined with other fruits in a fruit salad
- > Juice them
- > Blend and make sorbet or ice cream
- > Add to a curry

HOW TO STORE MANGOSTEEN
Ripe, whole mangosteen will last a few days at room temperature, whereas unripe mangosteen can last 1-2 weeks. Store in the fridge for 3-4 weeks. Do not freeze as this will damage the flesh.



A VEGGIE VISION

WHY WE NEED TO UNDERSTAND THE HUGE IMPACT OF THE MEAT INDUSTRY

Though we may still umm and ahh over the full implications of climate change, there is one fact we are no longer able to deny, and that is that eating meat is not good for the environment.

In an era when our food comes perfectly packaged in innocent-looking fillet and steak packs, it is easy to detach ourselves from the reality of what we are consuming. Unfortunately, though, industrial meat farming has very real implications for our natural world.

For starters, there's the questionable treatment of animals being farmed on a large scale. Often kept in cramped and unsanitary conditions, these creatures have a poor quality of life and weak immune systems, which makes them more vulnerable to illness and the potential to spread disease.

Second, eating meat has a negative impact on climate change. Industrial meat is the biggest cause

of deforestation globally, as farmers in countries such as Brazil start forest fires to make room for cattle grazing and to grow industrial animal feed, such as soya. Removing the trees' ability to turn CO₂ into oxygen, these fires also release huge quantities of carbon dioxide into the air.

Finally, meat-eating is inefficient. It takes up to seven kilograms of grain to produce one kilogram of beef, which is incredibly wasteful in comparison to eating vegetables or grains, which we grow and then eat, cutting out the middleman (or cow).

However, dyed-in-the-wool carnivores need not fret, for no one is suggesting to remove meat entirely from your diet. Recent campaigns prefer to focus on the consideration of small changes, with quality over quantity. Eating local meat from a trusted and ethical farm is a great place to start, as is abstaining from the pleasure perhaps one day each week.



celebrate NATIONAL BEER DAY

To celebrate National Beer Day on June 15, we have gathered the top six beer and food pairings that are guaranteed to go down a treat either at your local pub or in the comfort of your own home.

Stout & Oysters

Although you may associate oysters with champagne, they actually go amazingly well with stout. In fact, the Oyster Festival has been sponsored by Guinness for the past 60 years.

Dark Ale & Steak Pie

More suited to the winter months, but a perfect pairing nonetheless. Braise your steak in beer and then enjoy your pie with a glass of dark ale for a rich and comforting dish.

British Bitter & a Ploughman's

If you love nothing better than sitting in a pub garden with a traditional ploughman's lunch, then you will be pleased to hear that this summertime dish can be made even better with the addition of a classic British bitter.

IPA & Curry

Who doesn't love a curry on a Friday night? And, of course, you can't have a curry without a nice cold beer. Opt for a lighter style of IPA and an aromatic but not too spicy curry for mouth-watering results.

Lager & Fish and Chips

A British classic, fish and chips is one of the nation's favourite dishes. As well as enjoying a refreshing pint of lager with your fish, why not add a dash of beer to your batter mixture for an even crisper and lighter texture.

Blonde Beer & Brie

You may be surprised to learn that beer can be a match made in heaven with cheese, and this is most certainly the case with a blonde beer and young brie. The combination of this nutty cheese and lightly acidic beer is, quite frankly, unbelievable.





BEAUTY

NAILED IT

Do you know your nail shapes?

If not, don't worry, we've got you covered. Learn how to pick the perfect shape for your lifestyle here. Plus, the best shades for each shape.

SQUARE

A square nail is straight with sharp edges that are squared off at the tip. This nail shape suits those with a shorter nail. Although you may be told that shorter nails do not suit darker shades, this nail shape can actually accommodate all polish colours.

OVAL

An oval nail is round in shape with corners that curve inwards. Ideal if you are growing a manicure out, this nail shape suits those with medium length nails and narrow nail beds. You can rock any shade with oval nails.

COFFIN

Similar to the square shape but slightly more angular, a coffin nail has a straight-edged tip that is tapered in. To achieve this shape, a long nail is needed. Dark shades can look harsh on coffin nails, so opt for lighter colours.

ROUND

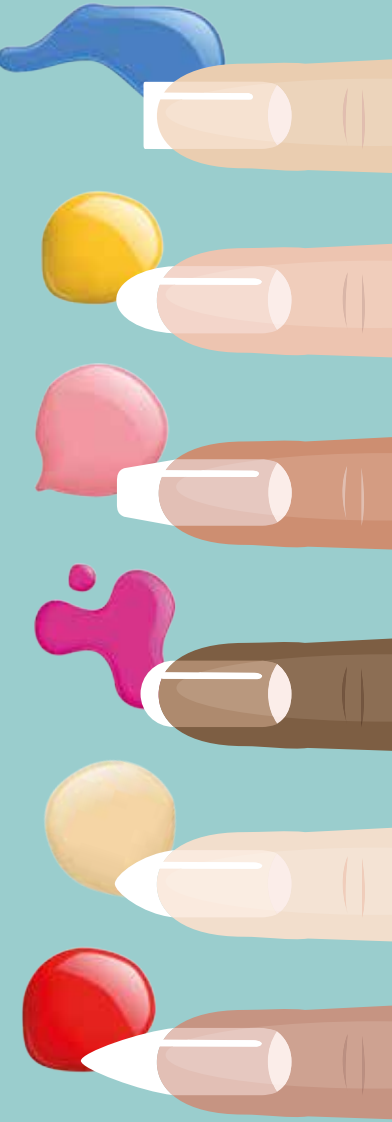
A round nail has straight sides that round up with a flat-edged tip. Best if you need short nails for work, round nails are easy to get used to and lend themselves well to bright-coloured polish and nail art.

ALMOND

An almond nail is essentially an oval shape that comes to a soft point. Suited to medium nails, this shape helps to slenderise wide fingers and to give the appearance of slimmer hands. Pair with a neutral polish.

STILETTO

Definitely one of the most eye-catching nail shapes, a stiletto nail is long and spiky, with the point curving to the base like a triangle. You must have long nails to achieve this shape. Not suited to those who type for a living or carry out manual labour, red is definitely the couleur du jour for stiletto nails.



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Refund rules

YOUR CONSUMER RIGHTS WHEN PURCHASES GO SOUR

We've all had purchases go bad, and when that happens the immediate fear is whether we'll get our money back.

In most instances, the answer is "yes". Certainly, if you buy anything online you are protected by the 2015 Consumer Rights Act. That means, for whatever reason – including simply changing your mind – you will be able to return your goods. You'll usually need to do this within 14 days in order to get a full refund, and obviously items must be sent back in the same condition as they were received.

When purchasing in store, things become a little different. You will struggle to get refunds for perishables unless you are returning in an almost

immediate timeframe – such as buying a sandwich only to immediately discover the bread is stale.

In other situations, the product will need to be defective or not fit for purpose, at which point the retailer is allowed to attempt to repair or replace. Be warned, though, simply having changed your mind isn't a verified reason for a refund, and you may discover some pushback.

Of course, while these hard and fast rules reflect a stated code of conduct when it comes to refund rights, things can often veer either side of the line. You may sometimes encounter an overly officious staff member or customer service agent who makes life difficult; though more likely you'll find retailers going the extra yard to refund in some circumstances when they perhaps don't need to legally. Ultimately, good publicity – and bad – travels.

As with all refunds, proof of purchase is important, and building rapport with the person you are liaising with will doubtless move you closer to the result you want, no matter what the circumstances.



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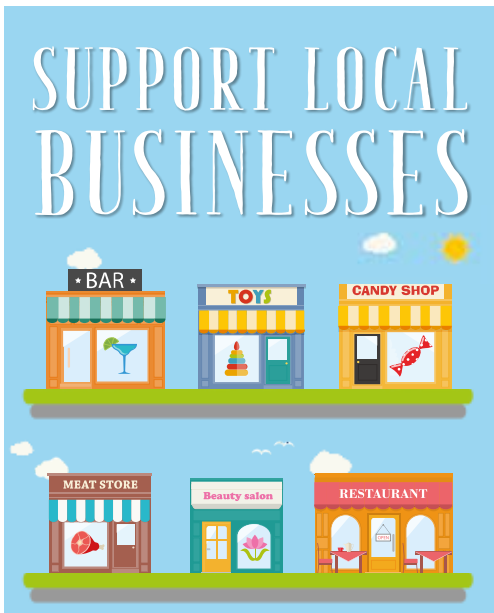
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Could you do with a COLD SHOWER?

From pop sensation Lady Gaga to body coach Joe Wicks to boxer Anthony Joshua, cold showers and baths are the lockdown wellness trend taking over the celebrity world.

So what has made these famous faces take the plunge?

faster to warm itself up, which in turn increases blood flow and promotes good circulation.

REDUCE STRESS LEVELS

Regularly taking cold showers imposes a small amount of stress on the body which results in a process called "hardening". This enables your nervous system to get used to moderate amounts of stress, which can help you keep a cool head.

INCREASE WILLPOWER

A case of mind over matter, forcing yourself to endure the cold for extended periods of time can help to strengthen your willpower and make you more ready to take on the challenges of daily life.

MORE ROBUST IMMUNE RESPONSE

Scientific studies have shown that taking a cold shower can increase the amount of white blood cells in your body, which helps to protect your body against diseases.

WEIGHT LOSS

Research has shown that exposure to the cold increases your metabolic rate and directly stimulates the generation of brown fat, which is a specific type of fat tissue that generates energy by burning calories.

BETTER CIRCULATION

By reducing your core temperature, a cold shower forces your body to work harder and

HOW TO TAKE A COLD SHOWER

- Enjoy your usual shower
- At the end, slowly lower the temperature
- Get the temperature low enough so that you start to feel slightly uncomfortable
- Stay there for 2-3 minutes
- Lower the temperature more with each shower

DID YOU KNOW...

...that the Guinness World Record for sitting in an ice bath is a whopping 1 hour, 52 minutes and 42 seconds? This record is held by Dutch adventurer Wim Hof, aka the "ICEMAN".



CRICKETERS

Good day.

CELEBRATING 50 YEARS OF THE ONE DAY INTERNATIONAL

It shows you just how far cricket has come when you consider that when England played Australia in the first ever ODI – that is, a ‘One Day International’, comprising 40 overs per side – the concept was seen as being somewhat pointless. It was staged as a money-making exercise Down Under after the Third Ashes test of 1971 had fallen foul of the weather.

To think that a new format could come into play to disrupt the five-day sensibilities of ‘traditional cricket’, where batsmen and bowlers would toil endlessly in a match lasting almost three-quarters of a week (with a common outcome being a draw), was churlish.

Indeed, the ODI, from the outset, wasn’t hugely popular. Australia won that first landmark game, predictably, and other nations around the world were nervous to throw caution to the wind in the same way as might a limited-over batsman tasked with both accelerated run-scoring and wicket preservation.

As time went on, the ODI set-up found its popularity climb thanks to World Cup cricket, particularly during the 1980s; and, of course, as long-suffering England fans, we had to wait until 2019 when Ben Stokes, Jos Buttler and co snatched a stunning victory against New Zealand at Lord’s to finally bring the trophy back to the shores where this great game was invented.

England have remained right up there with the world’s best at the one-day format, despite minor aberrations in form of late.

Its future does appear somewhat cloudy, though, given the popularity of T20 cricket and the emergence of The Hundred – both shorter, punchier forms of the game. Though like a middle-distance runner sneering at both sprinters and marathon runners alike as

he pursues a measured, masterful, classy approach to his craft, so too does the ODI package occupy a middle ground that now feels as much a part of our cricket heritage as leather, willow, pads, stumps and endless rain delays.

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KIDS



BAD BOUNCE

THE SAFETY MEASURES YOU NEED TO PUT IN PLACE WHEN PURCHASING A TRAMPOLINE

On the face of it, it's hard to believe that trampolining is one of the more hazardous leisure pursuits out there; yet the activity accounts for almost 100,000 injuries requiring medical attention every year. Put another way, more than half of parents with children aged 12 have said their child has come to harm at some point.

The reality is, while the spring-mounted tarpaulin offers the softest of landings, kids are making contact from considerable height, and with others close by. And with a prevalence of injuries being caused by freak, awkward landings – sprains and strains account for almost half of injuries recorded – even the most cautious of happy hoppers can come unstuck.

Of course, there are a few measures you can take in order to minimise the risk of injury:

likely knock a juvenile jumper off their feet if a friend lands a split-second earlier.

✓ PROTECTIVE WALL

Most trampolines nowadays come with 360-degree netting around the edges, eliminating the danger of kids being propelled off the apparatus and into nearby hedges. If any part of the edging is broken, however, your safety net is gone, both metaphorically and literally.

✓ SIX OF ONE

It's recommended that no children 'bounce' if under the age of six. The reason for this is younger kids lack the muscular strength to be able to trampoline safely, leaving them more likely to come to harm.

✓ SUPERVISION

Perhaps the greatest deterrent of all is adult supervision. Sure, you may not want to spend your summer afternoons watching kids bounce up and down repetitively, but it's sure as hell a better sight than the inside of the A&E department.

✓ BOUNCE ALONE

Guidelines suggest kids should trampoline by themselves rather than with buddies. Colliding with others in a confined space is common and dangerous, and the trampoline canvas will most



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MOTORING



WILL THE UK BE THE FIRST TO INTRODUCE 'NO HANDS' TECHNOLOGY ENABLING CARS TO BE DRIVEN BY COMPUTERS?

It was back in 2017 that former Transport Secretary Chris Grayling MP announced that self-driving cars could be present on UK roads by the year 2021, a claim reinforced by the head of the Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders as being a realistic aim.

In reality, we won't be seeing fleets of driverless cars tearing down our A roads in 2021, but we can expect the first few to pop up later in the year. Perhaps this delay is a result of lockdown, perhaps the dramatic slowing of the motor industry as a whole in light of the global pandemic.

And yet, the idea of self-driving cars still holds firm, and it may not be long until we do see high-end manufacturers fully embracing what will be the most dramatic motoring ever. The benefits include fewer incidents on the road (94 per cent of accidents are caused by human error), less congestion and improved transport connectivity, not to mention greater mobility options for elderly, disabled and

young users.

The UK wants to be regarded as a leader in this field, with the prediction being that by 2035 more than 40 per cent of new cars will have self-driving capabilities. Automated Vehicle (AV) technology could be worth more than £40billion, and will bring 40,000 jobs to the country.

More than £200million has been invested so far in start-ups looking to fuel this motoring revolution, with the advancement of Intelligent Roads helping to move ideas forward.

There is just one issue though – AVs work perfectly when surrounded by other AVs. It is only when these brilliant computers are asked to interact with human drivers that potential collisions occur. It seems the scientists will have to overcome this somewhat fundamental flaw before we can call on our trusty computerised four-wheeled motors to deposit us home safely.

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